



Chairs: Kim Presser, Karen Dommett

Present

Scott Godfrey (AAFSC)

Karen Dommett (Calgary Adaptive Hub)

Mezaun Lakha-Evin (CPA/AAN)

Leonard O'Keefe (DDRC)

Kim Yager (Vecova)

Kim Presser (Between Friends)

Tom Naested (Vecova)

Meeting Minutes

Land Acknowledgement (http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)

Welcome and Introductions

Agency spotlight: Vecova

- The Aquatics Center underwent renovations prior to Covid which brings the total time that it has been closed to two years. During this time, Vecova focused on their programming and the core values.
- Focused on creating a space where people who do not belong in other areas of traditional health and wellness, to feel a sense of belonging and a space that meet their needs.
- All programs are open and Vecova strive to ensure that anyone who expressed interest in the programs and enrolls in them, is able to participate. Focusing on training for trainers and staff so that they can adapt programs.
- Physical rehab/maintenance: gentle fitness programs in aquatics and dry land, specialized in helping individuals to maintain or increase their level of function.
- The aquatics program is well attended because of the warm water pool (34.5 degrees), the warmest in the province. Vecova was one of the partners that brought about the Adapted Swim protocols for the Red Cross. The protocols are the same as for other classes, but they are done in smaller groups with specialized coaches.
- Empower Abilities program: children and youth with coordination disabilities.
- Explore Abilities program: cater to individuals that have a level of external supports with them.
- There is also a Parkinson's specific program and are currently working on a Dementia program in the fall in coordination with the Alzheimer's Society, Dementia Network and the University of Calgary. The Dementia program includes fitness and creative programming as well as social programming. Secondarily also helping with caregiver support and respite. Specialized programming have hence expanded, and more partners are brought in such as Wheelchair Sport.
- Have been working with the Ability Center in Whitby, Ontario to start bringing a mixed ability sport, launching in January (planned).

Q&A

1. Are you offering personal training, in addition to the mentioned programs?

Yes, still working through it as we navigate Covid-19, while ensuring that the right people are available to assist with it and that it is affordable. Moving forward, ensuring to have the right people who are trained, specialized and have the necessary background.

2. What does staff training look like?

Did the Inclusion Training through the Ability Center. Have been using a similar one over the years, but this helps to align with what other organization have been doing as well. E.g. for the Dementia program, we are bringing in a recreational therapist and as such shifting the focus and approach.

More info: <https://vecova.ca/aquaticshealthfitness/>

Member Spotlight Series Sign-up:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KAh5_7ou1uRE2ITDXGHXyf6R_YpGkJs mza8xCNIFY0/edit?usp=sharing

Agency Updates

AAFSC

- Getting through the first years of days camps and one-off day community outings.
- Active Life program: developing a program called Lacrossing Barriers to teach wheelchair users to play lacrosse. Some members are receiving their coaching certifications from the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Department of USA Lacrosse and other partners, therefore people with lived experience are teaching other people with lived experiences how to play lacrosse, boxing, rugby and fly fishing. Currently working on an overview of the program.
- Launching the fall programming in a more traditional sense.
- Moving forward with positivity and hope that these programs will carry out as planned.

DDRC

- Things are continuing to be business as usual supporting members in person and virtually.
- Trying to move from home-based services (implemented during the pandemic) to community-based services. It has been encouraging to see people that staff have not seen since last March, while continuing to remain safe such as reduced capacity, masking up and physical distancing until the Delta variant is under control. The demand continues to be in demand.

Calgary Adapted Hub

- Have been working over the past several months with the Ability Center, One Ability in Victoria and Ability Center Ottawa on a project when the need for virtual was higher in the sports sector. Developed a training series for programmers to deliver fully inclusive and accessible virtual programming; a series of short clips of things to consider when developing the programming. Planning to roll it out in a few weeks – Karen will share with the group.

Vecova:

- Trying to get members into service and planning to have the majority of members they support back in-person with a few that have chosen the hybrid model. Moving away from the home-based model into the community-based model.

Between Friends

- Between Friends is running in person Rec & Respite programs this summer instead of Camp Bonaventure which is smaller groups throughout the city. We also started our WESOAR programs in-person for adults only this summer. So far everything has been successful, and we are learning new ways to support our families.

- We are also experimenting with skill-based workshops in the fall which we are calling GLOW. More information to come on that.

Cerebral Palsy Alberta

- CPA will be moving ahead with a hybrid program. For members who have not been able to attend programs online, they will be offered the opportunity to come to in-person programs.

- The CPA office is currently undergoing renovations to add accessibility features therefore

- Program with members over the age of 18 are still very popular but struggling with under 18 programs.

Recreation outreach partners and Draft letter for public facility advocacy

- Planning how we position ourselves and get engagement through the members of the table for projects taking place across the province and how to best be proactive and ensure the voice of persons with lived experience are heard.

- The letter (drafted by Kim Yager) has been finalized and sent off to officials involved in the Repsol Sport Center and the Foothills/McMahon project regarding their facility expansion. We received quick responses from both with thank you notes for reaching out and noted that both projects are in their stages of infancy. They noted that they would contact us (Foothills/McMahon), and Repsol expressed interest to meet with the table or table representatives.

- Proposed that Repsol Sports Center representatives present to the entire table.

AAN Recreation Table

August 19, 2021

- Potential to send to Tuxedo Park Community looking for feedback on playground development: <https://www.tuxedoparkcommunity.ca/park-envisioning-and-dry-pond/Playground>.

Accessing respite resources and other updates

- Some families have noted that while they have a contract in place however they have not been able to access their respite resources because things are backlogged (3 month wait to get the contract fulfilled)
- Families are encouraged to write to the Disability Advocate in Alberta and to the FSCD office. The offices have noted that there is no backlog therefore there might be a breakdown in communication.
- Other agencies have noted that there is a gap in respite services, especially for members with Alzheimer's and Dementia.
- Have experienced issues with campers no longer being funded by FSCD for camp fees as well as 1:1 support worker. FSCD is now requiring families to choose one option which is usually a community aide as its financially better and allows campers to do what they want in a 1:1 setting. So we are becoming fearful of registration rates in the future.
- With the change in the CSS Minister, the focus of the Ministry will shift to Employment and there could be potential cuts with the a high probability that Recreation will be impacted first. The table should look at a letter writing campaign promoting recreation and its importance.
- Karen has been invited to join the leadership teams of the ISR group. The group is working on an advocacy letter piece regarding investing in accessible and inclusive sport and recreation through the Minister Culture, Multiculturalism, and Status of Women and we can follow suit as a table focusing on the other direction but parallel to ISR.
- There have been other cases where members have been denied other services such as housing therefore there is not necessarily certain criteria. It is possible that we might see changes and cuts in AISH as well in terms of the new people that are approved and accepted into the program.
- The Employment Program announced by the Government of Alberta has been off to a very rocky start with only 10% uptake and the majority of it is due to the fact that there was no awareness campaign to share with the agencies that support such a program regarding what exactly it entails. There has been some changes made to the program since then.

WeThe15 Campaign

- Leading to the Paralympic games, it is the biggest Sports Human Rights campaign.
- <https://www.wethe15.org/>

AAN Recreation Table

August 19, 2021

Action Items

- Extend invitation to Repsol Sports Center to attend the AAN Recreation table meeting
- Edit the advocacy letter for the Tuxedo Park project
- Promote WeThe15

Wrap-Up/Adjournment

Next meeting:

Date: September 16, 2021

Time: 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Location: Zoom
