



Policy Watch

Procurement and contracting remain major concerns, and we're newly aware that the issue extends to the Advanced Education Ministry portfolio as well, as the awarding of a 24/7 mental health and counselling helpline for post-secondary students - modelled on one delivered by Ontario non-profits – just went to a multinational. As with the WorkBC contracts awarded in December, the weighting criteria for the \$1.5 million bid did not include points for criteria where non-profits uniquely excel.

Getting on top of this issue is vital. Think of it as similar to climate change – if we don't get a handle on procurement practices that could push more social care toward multinational providers, nothing else matters.

The province holds 10,000 contracts for social services and is looking for ways to reduce that load. Unfortunately, the for-profit sector is noted for coming up with quick solutions to governments' problems. We urgently need to unite our sector and provide our own solutions that maintain non-profits at the centre of social care. We invented it and still do it best!

The second meeting of the Social Services Roundtable is Aug. 1, and board co-chair Terry Anne Boyles will be attending. Procurement and contracting are priority issues at that table. Thanks for keeping us informed so we can jump in on advocacy.

What you need to know...

All BC societies are now bound by a new dispute resolution mechanism after changes under the revised **BC Societies Act** came into force this month. Any member of your society can bring a dispute, at no cost, to the **Civil Resolution Tribunal**, which up until now has handled only disputes between condo owners and strata councils.

Board Voice recently met with lawyer Martha Rans, of **Pacific Legal Education and Outreach Society**. She's concerned that non-profits aren't aware of the changes that this dispute resolution mechanism is going to bring, as members bringing a complaint will now have access to more society documents than was the case up to now. And while disputes between a member and a society used to go first to the society board and then to court at a cost, members can now take disputes directly to the CRT.

Martha will be conducting a workshop on these issues at our November conference. Find a list [here](#) of what records your society now has to make available. It's important to note that boards can restrict some of that access by revising their bylaws where necessary – for instance, to prevent access to a register of members that includes everyone who has ever

received services at a particular non-profit, which is one of the real-life issues Martha brought to our attention! And if you have yet to make **the transition to the new Act**, do that ASAP, as the deadline was November 2018 and government can dissolve a society that doesn't make that transition.

Meantime, Board Voice is talking with the Federation of Community Social Services of BC about a webinar on this issue. Stay tuned.

Please take a moment to complete this **Clinical Supervision Survey** that FCSSBC has put out to members. Your agency may have its own FCSSBC membership, but all of you are associate members through Board Voice. And as we know when it comes to surveys, the more responses the better! Deadline is July 31.

Conference 2019, Nov.1-2 in Richmond – Mental Health & Addictions Minister Judy Darcy now confirmed!

Let's connect! Look for Board Voice on these social media platforms:



Queries, questions, concerns, ideas:

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