



Policy Watch

Canada's Advisory Committee on the Charitable Sector (ACCS) is looking to the non-profit sector for conversations on how to address five priority areas where ACCS – launched in 2019 - will be focusing its work.

Each priority has its own working group, and here are the topics for exploration: Regulatory Framework; Vulnerable Populations; Indigenous Peoples; Purposes and Activities; and Charitable Sector Data.

Board Voice will be reaching out to the ACCS secretariat to explore what role we can play in ensuring the working groups hear the perspective of our organizations. Perhaps a Zoom consultation with interested members?

Board Voice was busy in the run-up to the holiday season, getting letters out to seven BC ministers who hold social portfolios.

We're asking for Zoom meetings for our board with each of the ministers, many of whom are new to cabinet but not to social care. [Find out more about those ministers here.](#)

We've got a tentative call later in January with Social Development and Poverty Reduction Minister Nicholas Simons. We're also planning a Jan. 12 call with MCFD Critic Karin Kirkpatrick, who is freshly into this big portfolio after leaving her position as CEO of Family Services of Greater Vancouver to run as a Liberal candidate in the 2020 election.

What you need to know...

If you've checked out the COVID-19 vaccination distribution plan for BC, you might rightly be asking: Why aren't community social service workers on that priority list?

Those who work in our sector are notably absent from prioritized groups to be targeted in the first two waves of vaccination, though some of our organization's clients are listed (at the link, scroll down to "Getting Vaccinated" to see the priority populations government has identified).

It seems unlikely that government envisages vaccinating our sector's clients without vaccinating those who work with them, but our important workers ought to be specifically identified on the list.

Yes, millions of British Columbians will be clamouring to get vaccinated. It's a daunting and no-win task to have to prioritize who gets the vaccine first. Still, government's priority list raises questions as to the groups not listed. At the very least, British Columbians deserve to hear how the list has been arrived at.

Among those left out are children and youth with special needs, who were the subject of [an alarming and heartbreaking report](#) last month (titled "Left Out") from the Representative for Children and Youth.

Many have fragile health and multiple challenges. Many of their services are provided via their schools. Getting vaccinated is vital for these children (and their siblings) to get back to school and their supports and therapies.

The question of the missing CSS workers has now been raised with the Public Health Office, which has participated during the pandemic in the Social Services Sector Roundtable meetings that Board Voice is part of. (Next meeting: early February.) Stay tuned!

A second round of Work Experience Opportunities Grants will be announced later this month. Non-profits are eligible for up to \$25,000 by providing 12 weeks of pre-employment training to people designated either as Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers designation or Persons with Disabilities.

Funding of \$5,000 per participant (maximum five per organization) includes payment of \$1,200 a month to participants.

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



Queries, questions, concerns, ideas:

Jody Paterson, ED
jpaterson@boardvoice.ca