



Policy Watch

Board Voice board directors met with Social Development Minister Nicholas Simons and Parliamentary Secretary Niki Sharma this week. We're feeling encouraged by their enthusiasm for our sector!

PS Sharma has been tasked by the premier with being a key point of contact between BC non-profits and government. She clarified that she's doing that work at the sector level, and won't be fielding issues that are specific to a particular organization or contract-related.

One issue they want to explore with our sector: What could be done differently in government and beyond to increase the capacity of community social services? Send us your thoughts!

This is a big month for meetings! Our board meets with Attorney General David Eby on Feb. 22 to talk about housing (he has the portfolio) and justice. Then we'll join Roundtable colleagues FCSBC and the Provincial Association of Residential and Community Agencies for a Feb. 23 meeting with Finance Minister Selina Robinson on the problem of differing wage levels paid to housing support workers depending on who funds the work.

And on Feb. 24, the long-awaited procurement and contracting working group under the Social Services Sector Roundtable will have its first monthly meeting.

What you need to know...

Looking for the chance to work at the "big picture" level to make a difference in the lives of BC children and youth with special needs? Apply now to be part of [a new ministerial advisory council](#) that MCFD is putting together.

The council will be chaired by MCFD Minister Mitzi Dean. Its creation comes after a damning report in December from the Representative for Children and Youth, Jennifer Charlesworth, identified the scarce and inequitable supports available to BC families of children and youth with special needs.

The province is seeking people with a broad range of relevant backgrounds for the 15-member panel, whose work aims to ensure the ministry's new CYSN Service Framework supports a broad range of families. [Apply by Feb. 24.](#)

Life during COVID-19 has not been easy, as Vantage Point reminds us with its "[Unraveling](#)" [report](#), which features responses from 930 BC non-profits, almost half of them expecting to have to close operations if the situation continues as is for much longer.

Those at the highest risk are smaller non-profits with budgets under \$1 million,

particularly those in the arts, sports and recreation sectors.

In other charity news, the Canada Revenue Agency has released its [Report on the Charitable Sector 2018-20](#). An interesting read from the other side of the table! More than 90,000 Canadian charities applied for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy.

The BC government is selling off PPE at deep discounts. Look for the detailed list of supplies and prices attached to the same email that brought you this newsletter, or find the list on our [For Members Only page](#) (password: uptoalofus).

Forty-eight BC social service organizations received Work Opportunity grants of up to \$25,000 in the first round of funding for pre-employment services to people facing barriers to entering the workforce. [Apply by Feb. 16](#) for the second round.

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



Queries, questions, concerns, ideas:

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