

D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

From: Faith Bodnar <fbodnar@inclusionbc.org>
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2016 7:48 AM
To: Harrington, Molly SDSI:EX
Subject: RE: BUDGET - Stakeholder Communications

Thanks. I'll will advise s.22

Faith

Sent from my Windows Phone

From: Harrington, Molly SDSI:EX
Sent: 2016-02-18 7:38 AM
To: Faith Bodnar
Cc: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX
Subject: Re: BUDGET - Stakeholder Communications

?No the special transportation subsidy recipients will get \$11 more a month - they currently get \$66 a month (paid once a year). Bus passes vary by city, pwd recipients will have the option to purchase a ministry bus pass for a subsidized rate of \$52 per month - so in Victoria they can purchase it for \$52 a month and then have the extra \$25 a month.

Molly

From: Faith Bodnar
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2016 7:44 PM
To: Harrington, Molly SDSI:EX
Subject: RE: BUDGET - Stakeholder Communications

Hi, c s.22 receives a special transportation subsidy of \$77/month. I've also heard that adult bus passes in Victoria are \$85. We are being asked if that means some will owe money back.

Sorry for the after hours contact and I can wait till tomorrow but it seems things are get in more complex and I don't have answers.

Faith

Sent from my Windows Phone

From: Harrington, Molly SDSI:EX <mailto:Molly.Harrington@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: ?2016-?02-?17 1:50 PM
To: 'MORRIS, Jonny' <mailto:jonny.morris@cmha.bc.ca>; 'Vivian Lee' <mailto:Vivian.Lee@cmha.bc.ca>; 'jwd@disabilityalliancebc.org'; 'BELANGER, Neil' <mailto:exdir@bcands.bc.ca>; 'COPAS, Lorraine' <mailto:lcopas@sparc.bc.ca>; 'VULIMIRI, Amita' <mailto:AVulimiri@clasbc.net>; 'GUTRAY, Bev' <mailto:bev.gutrav@cmha.bc.ca>; 'LOXTON, Robin' <mailto:robin@disabilityalliancebc.org>; 'FBodnar@bcacl.org'; 'Karen Williams' <mailto:kwilliams@sparc.bc.ca>; Faith Bodnar <mailto:fbodnar@inclusionbc.org>
Subject: FW: BUDGET - Stakeholder Communications

Please find attached communication detail about the announcement yesterday.

Thank you

Molly
Molly Harrington

ADM Research, Innovation and Policy Division
Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation
Phone: 250-356-5065
Email: molly.harrington@gov.bc.ca

From: Anderson, Maryann GCPE:EX
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2016 1:40 PM
To: Harrington, Molly SDSI:EX
Cc: Fillion, Corinna GCPE:EX
Subject: Fwd: BUDGET - Stakeholder Communications Email

D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

From: Faith Bodnar <fbodnar@inclusionbc.org>
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2016 3:36 PM
To: Harrington, Molly SDSI:EX
Subject: RE: BUDGET - Stakeholder Communications

Thanks Molly. I appreciate the clarification. Some of us found it a difficult announcement to up pack. While we were correct in our initial Press Release, the impact of the transportation claw backs diminish what could have been an opportunity by government to do something important and signal to people on PWD and those who support and love them that things were on a different path that reflected the desperate need to increase PWD Rates in a truly meaningful way. I realize that this is a different conversation but also know it is the right conversation to have.

Thank you again for calling.

Faith

Faith Bodnar
Executive Director
Inclusion BC
604-777-9100 ext. 516
inclusionBC.org

[Watch the history of our movement.](#)



From: Harrington, Molly SDSI:EX [<mailto:Molly.Harrington@gov.bc.ca>]
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2016 1:50 PM
To: 'MORRIS, Jonny' ; 'Vivian Lee' ; 'jwd@disabilityalliancebc.org' ; 'BELANGER, Neil' ; 'COPAS, Lorraine' ; 'VULIMIRI, Amita' ; 'GUTRAY, Bev' ; 'LOXTON, Robin' ; 'FBodnar@bcac.org' ; 'Karen Williams' ; Faith Bodnar
Subject: FW: BUDGET - Stakeholder Communications

Please find attached communication detail about the announcement yesterday.

Thank you

Molly
Molly Harrington
ADM Research, Innovation and Policy Division
Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation
Phone: 250-356-5065
Email: molly.harrington@gov.bc.ca

From: Anderson, Maryann GCPE:EX
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2016 1:40 PM
To: Harrington, Molly SDSI:EX
Cc: Fillion, Corinna GCPE:EX
Subject: Fwd: BUDGET - Stakeholder Communications Email

D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

From: BC News On Demand GCPE:EX
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2016 4:24 PM
To: Taylor, Sheila A SDSI:EX
Subject: BC News - More support, more choices for people with disabilities



Wednesday, February 17, 2016

More support, more choices for people with disabilities

To create equity in the system the Province is investing \$170 million over the next three years to ensure about 100,000 people on disability assistance in B.C. will receive a rate increase of up to \$77 a month as of Sept. 1, 2016.

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News by Sector - Economy
News by Sector - Government Operations
News by Sector - Services

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D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

From: Taylor, Sheila A SDSI:EX
Sent: Friday, January 29, 2016 10:55 AM
To: Dawes, Len SDSI:EX
Cc: Thomson, Craig S FIN:EX; Godin, Keith FIN:EX; Thomas, Martha O SDSI:EX
Subject: Re: Speech

Second bullet - can we say

- Some get a \$52 bus pass. Others get a \$66 transportation subsidy. Almost half of those on disability assistance get nothing.

For the last bullet issue could we say 'up to \$77'?

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 29, 2016, at 10:44 AM, Dawes, Len SDSI:EX <Len.Dawes@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

Hi Craig,

See small edits below. Thanks Len

From: Thomson, Craig S FIN:EX
Sent: Friday, January 29, 2016 10:09 AM
To: Dawes, Len SDSI:EX; Taylor, Sheila A SDSI:EX
Cc: Godin, Keith FIN:EX; Thomas, Martha O SDSI:EX
Subject: Speech
Importance: High

Len / Sheila: Could you please validate the following text for potential inclusion in budget speech ... need **reply soonest possible**. Thanks!

- there's a fundamental inequity that has arisen relating to the fact that depending on where you live, you may or may not receive assistance for a basic need like transportation costs. *[based on my understanding I believe this is true ... STS or bus pass only available to PWD living in transit served areas]*
- Some get \$52 for transportation in some areas. Others get \$66 for transportation. Almost half of those on disability assistance get nothing. *[as above, I believe this is true]*
- That's why effective September 1, irrespective of where they live, those on disability assistance will be receiving \$52 for transportation costs, on top of an increase to everyone's basic rate by \$25. *[are you ok with this characterization?]*
- s.13

Cheers,

C.

~~~~~  
**Craig Thomson**

Strategic Advisor, Treasury Board Staff  
desk: 250.356.5911

## **D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Taylor, Sheila A SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 22, 2015 6:08 PM  
**To:** Dawes, Len SDSI:EX  
**Cc:** D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX; MacMillan, Karen SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: REVIEW/APPROVAL DN-Transportation Allowance V7  
**Attachments:** DN-Transportation Allowance V7.docx

Sorry -- found 1 more typo so use this version, Len.

---

**From:** Taylor, Sheila A SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 22, 2015 5:55 PM  
**To:** D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX  
**Cc:** Dawes, Len SDSI:EX; MacMillan, Karen SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: REVIEW/APPROVAL DN-Transportation Allowance V7

I've reviewed and made a few more edits. The attached version is approved.

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**From:** D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 22, 2015 3:54 PM  
**To:** Taylor, Sheila A SDSI:EX  
**Cc:** Dawes, Len SDSI:EX; MacMillan, Karen SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** REVIEW/APPROVAL DN-Transportation Allowance V7

Hi Sheila,

Attached is from Len for your review and approval.

Thanks,  
Julie

# **MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION**

## **INFORMATION NOTE**

**DATE:** December 23, 2015

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Minister Michelle Stilwell

**ISSUE:** Persons With Disability Rates and Transportation Allowances

### **BACKGROUND:**

Assistance rates in British Columbia (B.C.) reflect individual and family needs including nutrition, shelter and clothing. In recognition that Persons With Disabilities (PWD) face more barriers to employment their rates are higher. Advocates typically criticize the adequacy of B.C.'s assistance rates. They believe the rates do not meet a person's long-term basic needs and often refer to a study ranking BC fifth in the country for PWD rates (appendix 1).

One of the reasons BC's PWD rates appear so low is that many of the supplementary programs available to our clients are not included in rate calculations. In particular, the ministry currently has two basic transportation supplements for PWD clients – an annual bus pass and the Special Transportation Subsidy (STS). These supplements aren't generally captured in cross-jurisdictional rate comparisons because they are not available to all PWD clients.

Annual bus passes are provided to PWD clients where public transit is available. The cost to the client is \$45 annually for the annual pass. The ministry pays the subsidized costs monthly to BC Transit and Translink for an equivalent benefit of \$52/month. An annual application/renewal process is used to confirm eligibility, collect the \$45 payment, and mail passes to clients.

The STS is provided to PWDs who reside in an area where public transit is available, but are unable to use public transit due to their disability. The STS rate is \$790/year, \$66/month (equivalent to the highest bus pass subsidy in the province), and is paid directly to clients in a lump sum each April (prorated if required). STS costs have been steadily increasing by over \$1 million each fiscal year. In total, the ministry pays an additional \$34 million in benefits to PWD clients annually.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The current transportation assistance provided to clients is inequitable because almost half of the PWD clients do not receive either an annual bus pass or the STS. In addition, because the STS is a cash benefit to clients, it is often preferred to a bus pass and as a result, the STS cost has been rising steadily by over 10% annually.



# MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION INFORMATION NOTE

s.12,s.13

There is building public pressure to increase income assistance rates. The last PWD rate increase occurred in 2007 and was for \$50.00/month. The current PWD rate for a single individual is \$906/month.

The ministry has considered various rate increase options and the cost impacts, which are outlined in appendix 2. <sup>s.13</sup>  
s.12,s.13

|           |      |           |
|-----------|------|-----------|
| s.12,s.13 | s.12 | s.12,s.13 |
| s.12,s.13 | -    |           |

## **CONCLUSION:**

The ministry has outlined five options for consideration, dependent on the level of funding available.

## **Attachments**

Appendix 1: Cross-jurisdictional rate comparisons  
Appendix 2: Costing options

## **Prepared by:**

Name Len Dawes  
Title ADM, Corporate Services

# MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION

## INFORMATION NOTE

### Appendix 1 - Jurisdictional Comparison:

#### Monthly Total Income Assistance Rates by Province as of November 2015 (including federal and provincial child benefits)

| Province                             | Employable | Barriers/<br>PPMB | Person<br>with a<br>Disability |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| British Columbia                     | 610.00     | 657.92            | 906.42                         |
| Alberta <sup>1</sup>                 | 627.00     | 809.00            | 1,588.00                       |
| Saskatchewan <sup>2</sup>            | 678.21     | 825.37            | 1,391.00                       |
| Manitoba <sup>3</sup>                | 655.00     | 871.00            | 871.00                         |
| Ontario                              | 681.00     | 681.00            | 1,110.00                       |
| Quebec <sup>4</sup>                  | 646.00     | 937.00            | 937.00                         |
| New Brunswick <sup>5</sup>           | 537.00     | 576.00            | 763.00                         |
| Prince Edward Island <sup>6</sup>    | 619.00     | 812.00            | 812.00                         |
| Nova Scotia <sup>7</sup>             | 555.00     | 790.00            | 790.00                         |
| Newfoundland & Labrador <sup>8</sup> | 733.00     | 733.00            | 733.00                         |
| <b>BC RANK</b>                       | <b>8</b>   | <b>8</b>          | <b>5</b>                       |

<sup>1</sup>Barriers to Full Employment category includes Personal Needs Supplement.

<sup>2</sup>Saskatchewan will pay for actual utility costs if they are not included in rent. Figures include average utility costs for FY2013/14.

<sup>3</sup> Manitoba will also pay for actual utility costs if they are not included in rent.

<sup>4</sup> Employable rate includes Allowance for Single Employable.

<sup>5</sup> Disability rate includes monthly Disability Supplement.

<sup>6</sup> Rates include Travel Allowance.

<sup>7</sup> Nova Scotia also provides a Poverty Reduction Credit (introduced in July 2010) for those on IA who have no children and were on IA for the whole of the previous tax year.

<sup>8</sup> Rates include Island Fuel Supplement. Rates for singles (except PWD) are for those over age 30 years. Lower rates apply to employable singles and singles with barriers to employment who are under age 30.

# MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION

## INFORMATION NOTE

### Appendix 2 - Options for PWD rate changes:

| Option    | Pros/ Cons                                                            | Additional Annual Cost (millions) | # of PWD Clients Benefiting | # of PWD Clients not Benefiting | New Rate (Increase in brackets) |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| s.12      |                                                                       |                                   |                             |                                 |                                 |
| s.12,s.13 |                                                                       |                                   |                             |                                 |                                 |
| s.12      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All PWD clients not</li> </ul> |                                   |                             |                                 |                                 |
| s.12,s.13 |                                                                       |                                   |                             |                                 |                                 |
| s.12      |                                                                       |                                   |                             |                                 |                                 |

**Evans Locker, Ann SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Bandechha, Pardip SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Friday, February 19, 2016 4:23 PM  
**To:** Vachon, Kellie SDSI:EX  
**Cc:** Lauzon, Michele SDSI:EX; Archer, Terri SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: URGENT REQUEST: ADM Message: PWD rate increase

Hi Kellie

Please see the approved response.

The annual bus pass program is not changing. Those who have been receiving a subsidized bus pass and want to keep it, will get an increase of \$25.

---

**From:** Vachon, Kellie SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 18, 2016 4:06 PM  
**To:** Bandechha, Pardip SDSI:EX  
**Cc:** Lauzon, Michele SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: URGENT REQUEST: ADM Message: PWD rate increase

Hi Pardip,

Please see the supervisors comments below. I wanted to confirm with you before I respond that there is no intent to eliminate the Bus Pass Program.

Thank you.

---

*Kellie Vachon Manager, Community Relations & Service Quality*  
Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation  
Operations Support – Service Delivery Division  
BlackBerry: 604-999-6476 / Fax: 1-855-771-8737

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**From:** Vachon, Kellie SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 18, 2016 3:56 PM  
**To:** SDSI Lowermainland MCRSQ SDSI:EX <[Lowermainland.MCRSQ@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Lowermainland.MCRSQ@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** FW: URGENT REQUEST: ADM Message: PWD rate increase

**From:** Campo, Leah SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 18, 2016 3:53 PM  
**To:** Lauzon, Michele SDSI:EX ; Vachon, Kellie SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: URGENT REQUEST: ADM Message: PWD rate increase

Hello,

Just wanting to pass along some information from some community agencies who are getting additional information about the increase in PWD rates and the resulting elimination of the bus pass program.

It wasn't clear in the messaging if the bus pass program would be phased out.

Have you heard anything else yet?

**Leah Campo**

Outreach Supervisor, Local Office Services

☎ (604) 660-1764 cell (604)910-2147

📠 1-855-771-8741

[Leah.Campo@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Leah.Campo@gov.bc.ca)

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**From:** Dobie, Kathlene SDSI:EX

**Sent:** Thursday, February 18, 2016 3:38 PM

**To:** Campo, Leah SDSI:EX

**Subject:** RE: URGENT REQUEST: ADM Message: PWD rate increase

Just passing on feedback – had another conversation with a support agency who are stating that they were told by another agency in another cmnty (word spreads) that bus pass program is finished and that clients will now pay an additional fee per month for access to transit – cmnty agency re iterating that the wording on this info was poor and causing panic in the affected client group.

I offered to speak direct w/ the other agency to clarify info if needed.

They asked that I pass this feedback along. Thank you.

---

**From:** Campo, Leah SDSI:EX

**Sent:** Thursday, February 18, 2016 1:06 PM

**To:** Dobie, Kathlene SDSI:EX

**Subject:** RE: URGENT REQUEST: ADM Message: PWD rate Increase

I am hearing the same concerns. I have shared this snip of the information below:

Beginning September 1, clients can choose to receive the full \$77 increase or receive a subsidized bus pass and a lower rate increase of \$25 a month; the Special Transportation Subsidy will be phased out.

The rate increase will affect clients differently, depending on their current circumstances:

- For PWD clients who do not have a Special Transportation Subsidy (STS) or a bus pass, the rate increase will be \$77/month (this is per PWD client).
- Clients who have a bus pass will automatically receive a rate increase of \$25 (\$77 less \$52 value of the bus pass) starting September 2016. They also have the choice of turning in their bus pass and collecting the full \$77 per month.
- STS will be replaced by the monthly \$77 rate increase, effective September benefit month. Clients who have 2016 STS will receive a pro-rated amount (\$329) for five benefit months (April to August).

The bus pass program is not ending from what I understand but is changing and will involve an additional \$52/mth fee.

**Leah Campo**

Outreach Supervisor, Local Office Services

☎ (604) 660-1764 cell (604)910-2147

1-855-771-8741

[Leah.Campo@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Leah.Campo@gov.bc.ca)

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**From:** Dobie, Kathlene SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 18, 2016 12:41 PM  
**To:** Campo, Leah SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** RE: URGENT REQUEST: ADM Message: PWD rate increase

Hi Leah:

I am getting questions from cmnty agencies about bus pass program – I am assuming based on media releases clients/support staff think the bus pass program is being ended – is the email below for sharing and if not this specific email, can I confirm that bus pass program is not ending (is not the proposed change) to alleviate client concerns?

I looked for some public releases on the proposed rate change but nothing jumped up?

Thanks Leah.

**From:** Kerr, Christie SDSI:EX On Behalf Of Galbraith, David J SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2016 3:36 PM  
**To:** SDSI SDD All  
**Subject:** URGENT REQUEST: ADM Message: PWD rate increase  
**Importance:** High

What's new in the

## SERVICE DELIVERY DIVISION

Hello Team,

Today the 2016/17 Provincial Budget was tabled. The following policy changes have been announced:

**Effective September 2016**, all Persons with Disability (PWD) clients will receive a rate increase of up to \$77 a month. The change realigns our system of transportation supports and brings fairness to people on disability assistance.

Currently, a little more than half the people with the Person's with Disabilities Designation receive funding for transportation costs, through either a subsidized bus pass (valued at up to \$52 a month) or a Special Transportation Subsidy of up to \$66 a month. The remainder don't receive any money for transportation, primarily because they don't live in communities served by BC Transit or Translink.

Beginning September 1, clients can choose to receive the full \$77 increase or receive a subsidized bus pass and a lower rate increase of \$25 a month; the Special Transportation Subsidy will be phased out.

The rate increase will affect clients differently, depending on their current circumstances:

- For PWD clients who do not have a Special Transportation Subsidy (STS) or a bus pass, the rate increase will be \$77/month (this is per PWD client).
- Clients who have a bus pass will automatically receive a rate increase of \$25 (\$77 less \$52 value of the bus pass) starting September 2016. They also have the choice of turning in their bus pass and collecting the full \$77 per month.
- STS will be replaced by the monthly \$77 rate increase, effective September benefit month. Clients who have 2016 STS will receive a pro-rated amount (\$329) for five benefit months (April to August).

I understand these changes impact your work and you will have a lot of questions. Please know your leadership team is working hard to further assess the system, process and policy implications and will share details with you as they unfold in the coming days.

David Galbraith  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Service Delivery Division

Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation  
Tel: 250.387.7032  
fax: 250.387.2418

**ONE PROVINCE, ONE TEAM**



Where ideas work



## Evans Locker, Ann SDSI:EX

---

**From:** Vachon, Kellie SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Friday, February 19, 2016 9:51 AM  
**To:** Bandechha, Pardip SDSI:EX  
**Cc:** SDSI Community Relations and Service Quality Managers; LaHue, Anita SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: FYI Petition around Bus pass and PWD rates.

Good morning,

Looking forward to your response on this per the issue yesterday, as there is now a petition being circulated.

Thank you.

---

*Kellie Vachon Manager, Community Relations & Service Quality*  
Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation  
Operations Support – Service Delivery Division  
BlackBerry: 604-999-6476 / Fax: 1-855-771-8737

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**From:** Rice, David SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Friday, February 19, 2016 9:46 AM  
**To:** Harrower, Ian SDSI:EX ; Vachon, Kellie SDSI:EX ; Lauzon, Michele SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FYI Petition around Bus pass and PWD rates.

Good morning,

I was speaking to a CA for Rich Coleman

Inclusion BC is apparently starting a petition to keep the bus pass going or leave the bus pass the way it was. 'Raise the PWD rates and Leave bus pass alone' It sounds like there is a miss-communication about are rate increase up to \$77 per person, not up to \$77 per person.

<http://www.inclusionbc.org/whats-new/sign-petition-raise-rates-leave-our-bus-pass-alone>

---

David Rice ∞ Supervisor, Provincial Contact Center (PCC)  
Service Delivery Division  
Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation  
Suite 400-13401 108th | Surrey, BC V2T 5T4 |  
Msg. Ph: 604-586-8021 | Fax: 1-844-371-8729  
Received this mail in error? Please delete it and notify me.

**From:** Mamone, Jennifer [mailto:Jennifer.Mamone@leg.bc.ca]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 19, 2016 9:41 AM  
**To:** Rice, David SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Link to Inclusion BC Petition



<http://www.inclusionbc.org/whats-new/sign-petition-raise-rates-leave-our-bus-pass-alone>

*Jennifer Mamone*

Constituency Assistant  
to Rich Coleman, MLA  
Fort Langley/Aldergrove  
Telephone (604) 882-3151

## Evans Locker, Ann SDSI:EX

---

**From:** Ruel, Janis M SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 29, 2016 2:35 PM  
**To:** Ruel, Janis M SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FOI Request: 1-866 Wait Times/Bus Pass: Fraser Health Social Workers  
**Attachments:** 2016 Budget Announcement.docx

---

**From:** Ruel, Janis M SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 24, 2016 3:54 PM  
**To:** Evans Locker, Ann SDSI:EX; LaHue, Anita SDSI:EX  
**Cc:** Kelly, Georgina SDSI:EX; Archer, Terri SDSI:EX; Brown, Trent D SDSI:EX; Simpson, Yvette SDSI:EX; Lauzon, Michele SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** 1-866 Wait Times/Bus Pass: Fraser Health Social Workers

Hi Ann and Anita, Michele Lauzon forwarded some concerns from the Terry Brock with the Fraser Health Social Work department regarding access to staff through 1-866 and obtaining more on the PWD Rate Increase. They are expressing concerns about how the PWD rate increase and Bus Pass will effect individuals they work with. I cut and pasted below out of a long chain. Michele provided Trent with the approved messaging to share with the Social Workers. Thank you, Janis

*Hi everyone*

*I don't know if you heard, but last week's budget noted that the PWD rates are increasing soon. However, the transportation portion patients receive is being affected. Patients will need to pay a monthly amount for bus/handidart payments (instead of just the annual registration fee that they used to have to pay) which will virtually use up all of the increase.*

*I would like very much for our department to register our concern about this change. In past, I have advocated for us to write a letter, but Terry has said that our discipline as a whole will do that. I feel that our department should encourage Terry to ensure that our concerns are expressed in writing to the MSDSI, as this will surely affect many of our patients, and it is another barrier to accessing affordable transportation for so many.*

*Any thoughts?*

*CGH SW*

---

**From:** Lauzon, Michele SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 24, 2016 3:10 PM  
**To:** Brown, Trent D SDSI:EX  
**Cc:** Forland, Steve SDSI:EX; Mendoza-Novara, Eloisa F SDSI:EX; Harrison, Susan M SDSI:EX; Beardmore, Paul SDSI:EX; Stoyanowski, Sandy SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Response: Fraser Health Social Work

Hi Trent, attached is the link to the media release and stakeholder messaging.

### Media Release

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2016SDSI0005-000239>

Michele Lauzon  
Manager, Community Relations and Service Quality  
Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation  
Operations Support, Service Delivery Division  
400 - 13401 108 Avenue  
Surrey, BC V3T 5T4

Cell: 604-760-4471  
Fax: 1-855-771-8737

---

**From:** Brown, Trent D SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 24, 2016 2:57 PM  
**To:** Lauzon, Michele SDSI:EX  
**Cc:** Forland, Steve SDSI:EX; Mendoza-Novara, Eloisa F SDSI:EX; Harrison, Susan M SDSI:EX; Beardmore, Paul SDSI:EX; Stoyanowski, Sandy SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Fraser Health Social Work  
**Importance:** High

Michele

I am getting the following concern from Fraser Health Social workers in regards to recent announcements can you assist me with a fact sheet or communication that can be sent to Fraser Health on the upcoming changes?

Steve keeping you in the loop on this.

Also getting calls on how we are going to manage the open files in hospitals. Looking for some wording to share and what Social workers can expect – time frame, etc

Thanks

---

**From:** Brock, Terry [<mailto:Terry.Brock@fraserhealth.ca>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 24, 2016 2:49 PM  
**To:** Brown, Trent D SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Fraser Health Social Work

Hi Trent. I hope you are well. Any word about the details you were referring to below?

I am sorry to add another issue to the table, but can you assist me in understanding if this is in fact occurring and is there merit to our SW concerns about the change?

*Hi everyone*

*I don't know if you heard, but last week's budget noted that the PWD rates are increasing soon. However, the transportation portion patients receive is being affected. Patients will need to pay a monthly amount for bus/handidart payments (instead of just the annual registration fee that they used to have to pay) which will virtually use up all of the increase.*

*I would like very much for our department to register our concern about this change. In past, I have advocated for us to write a letter, but Terry has said that our discipline as a whole will do that. I feel that our department should encourage Terry to ensure that our concerns are expressed in writing to the MSDSI, as this will surely affect many of our patients, and it is another barrier to accessing affordable transportation for so many.*

*Any thoughts?*

CGH SW

Thanks  
Terry

**Terry Brock BA, BSW, MSW, RSW**

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**From:** Brown, Trent D SDSI:EX [<mailto:Trent.Brown@gov.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 10, 2016 12:47 PM  
**To:** Brock, Terry  
**Subject:** RE: Fraser Health Social Work

Terry

Yes, we have been working on the issues you have identified and I am working with my colleague managers on an approach to help all provincial social workers. I do apologize for the delay on getting back to you.

I need to work out a few finer details.

In meantime, please continue to call our specialized intake workers as the need arises and we will serve you in that capacity on an interim basis.

When I have something more concrete to share I will connect with you. Does this work for now?

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**From:** Brock, Terry [<mailto:Terry.Brock@fraserhealth.ca>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2016 11:39 AM  
**To:** Brown, Trent D SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Fraser Health Social Work

Hi Trent. I hope you are well. Have you had a chance to review the email below? It would be great if we could meet with yourself and your counterparts in other departments of MSDSI. Let me know if/when you can be available to talk about the issues mentioned below.

Thanks  
Terry

**Terry Brock BA, BSW, MSW, RSW**

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Yesterday the 2016/17 Provincial Budget was tabled. This is government's direction for the coming year.

**Effective September 2016**, all Persons with Disability (PWD) clients will receive a rate increase of up to \$77 a month.

The rate increase includes changes to realign transportation supports and provides greater equity and choice for all PWD clients.

There are approximately 100,000 people with the PWD designation. About 55,000 receive funding for transportation costs, through either a subsidized bus pass or a Special Transportation Subsidy. About another 45,000 people do not receive transportation assistance, many because they do not live in communities served by public transit.

Starting September 1, 2016, the rate increase will come into effect and PWD clients will be able to choose how they receive transportation support.

- PWD clients who do not have a BC Bus Pass or Special Transportation Supplement will receive a \$77 per month increase to their support allowance.
- PWD clients who access the BC Bus Pass Program will receive a \$25 per month increase to their support allowance plus the subsidized bus pass. After September 1, clients will have the option to turn in their bus pass at any time and receive the full \$77 in the following months.
- PWD clients receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy (which is equivalent to \$66 a month) will see this included within the monthly \$77 rate increase effective September 1; this provides an additional \$11 per month to their support allowance. The 2016 lump-sum payment for STS that will be included with April's Disability Assistance payment will be pro-rated for 5 months (April - August).

The BC Bus Pass program remains in place. Currently, BC Bus Pass holders receive \$52 in value a month in the form of a bus pass. Once the changes are effective, all people with the PWD designation will receive up to \$77 cash per month, and they can decide how to spend it.

People on disability assistance will still have access to a subsidized bus pass for \$52 per month plus the annual \$45 administration fee. However, in some communities, a bus pass costs less than \$52 a month and people may be better off purchasing a pass directly from BC Transit.

There is no change to the BC Bus Pass Program for low-income seniors. The ministry will continue to provide a subsidized pass to eligible seniors for the annual \$45 administration fee.

In summary, Budget 2016 provides an extra \$170 million over the next three years to support rate increase and an additional \$250 million over the next three years to address caseload pressure for temporary income assistance, disability assistance and related supplementary benefits.