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1. IC user survey (Countries: US, UK, DE, ML, FR, IT), Jan 2016 (n=2942)

2. Clean Intermittent Urethral Catheterization in Adults – Canadian Best Practice Recommendations for Nurses. Developed by Nurses Specialized in Wound, ostomy and Continence Canada, Canadian Nurse Continence Advisors, Urology Nurses of Canada, and Infection Prevention and Control. 1st Ed. 2020.

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**Thank you to the  
Manitoba Paraplegia  
Foundation for their  
continued financial  
support of ParaTracks  
and Manitobans living  
with spinal cord injury.**

# Darlene Cooper Retirement

Earlier this year, Darlene Cooper announced her retirement after more than 35 years with Spinal Cord Injury Manitoba, and her last day of employment was on March 6, 2023.

As many of you will know, Darlene began her tenure with SCI Manitoba as the Vocational Rehabilitation Counsellor for 15 years, followed by 20 years as the Director of Rehabilitation Services. She also served the organization as Acting Executive Director on two occasions, and as Assistant Executive Director since June 2021.

Throughout her time with SCI Manitoba, Darlene championed the rehabilitation counselling profession not only within our group, but also within our province, across the SCI Canada network, in the US, and in El Salvador when SCI Canada was involved in growing the profession internationally.

Darlene has also been a mentor to many current and past SCI Manitoba employees, an ally to countless members, a source of support for many colleagues, and, most especially, she has been a formidable advocate for individuals and families impacted by SCI in Manitoba.

I know you will join us in wishing Darlene good health and happiness for a long and richly deserved retirement.



*SCI Manitoba extends its sympathies to the families of the following loved ones who recently passed away:*

*Jerry Boyko  
Gilbert Daignault  
Elizabeth Coutu  
Jennifer Delaquis  
Penny Graban*

*Janaya Hamrlík  
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# From There to Here

*In this article, Laurence Haien, Senior Rehabilitation Counsellor at SCI Manitoba, talks to Gio Calixto about his life before and following the onset of his spinal cord injury in 2020, and his plans for the future.*



*Please, tell the readers a little about yourself, where you grew up, your family, your hobbies, what you were doing before your spinal cord injury and what's kept you busy since?*

I grew up, partly in the Philippines. My parents and I lived in Bulacan which is a province outside of Manila. We shared a house with many members of our large, extended family. My parents and I came to Canada when I was about 13-years-old.

I enjoyed and continue to enjoy playing videogames. In the Philippines, there are gaming programs on television; these are very popular. They also have Internet cafes where people go to play videogames. Here, people purchase things, like PlayStation and other videogames rather than going to Internet cafes.

I have always enjoyed drawing anything, and this has continued to the present time. I took a lot of art classes when I was young. I was never really into sports.

Before my spinal cord injury, I worked part-time as a dietary aid while attending an IT program at Red River College full-time. I withdrew from the IT program and continued to work permanent, part-time as a dietary aide at a personal care home, picking up additional shifts when they required more help. I was responsible for cleaning the kitchen and dining room and serving meals to the residents. I enjoyed the work and continued this until I was diagnosed with a spinal cord injury.

I had applied for a position with the Canada Revenue Agency before my injury. I succeeded in making it through the last round of examinations and was called and set to start in March, 2020 but, by that time, I had sustained my injury and had been admitted to the Intensive Care Unit.

*Could you tell the readers about your spinal cord injury and how it affects you?*

Initially, the doctors thought my paralysis was the result of a spinal tumor. My parents and I were eventually told that my spinal cord injury resulted from a spinal stroke and had no association with my spinal tumor. At first, I was paralyzed from the neck down and felt discouraged. Eventually, I began to experience some recovery. I was able to use my hands and later my fingers. This improvement gave me hope.

I was a patient at the Rehabilitation Hospital and remained there from approximately February to July. I attended physiotherapy and occupational therapy daily. I progressed from being completely immobile to using a manual wheelchair. Currently, I use a walker for mobility and wear a left-sided leg brace. I didn't really meet many people my own age, most of the patients were quite a bit older. It wasn't until I was nearing my hospital discharge that some younger patients were admitted but I didn't really get to know them.

*Please tell the readers about the effects of spinal cord injury that you continue to experience today?*

As I said, I use a walker for mobility and wear a left-sided leg brace. My balance is unsteady. I can't walk

long distances and fatigue fairly easily. I'm limited in my ability to bend, lift and reach. It really wasn't until I returned to school and started to venture out into the community that I became more aware of other things. I found, for example, that not all public washrooms were big enough to accommodate me and my walker. My dad would sometimes have to wait outside the washroom door in a restaurant to provide me with assistance to get into and out of the stall.

It was helpful that I had attended Red River College Polytechnic before because I knew the campus and the location of the accessible washrooms. It was difficult, at first, for me to accept some of the equipment that I required at home, such as, handle bars on either side of the toilet and the bath seat. My acceptance of these things and my need for them came over time.

I find it difficult to know if I need to go to the washroom. I use a walker and cannot walk quickly, so I am often fearful that I might not make it to the washroom in time.

### *How do you plan around this?*

I look at my school schedule. Let's say I have 20 minutes before my next class. I'll pack my stuff and make my way to the washroom. Or if the instructor gives us a break, I'll go to the washroom so I don't need to go to the washroom during the lecture.

### *What if you have an accident at school?*

I have a locker at school where I have extra clothing and wipes. I often keep a bag on my walker that has an extra set of clothes in case of an emergency.

### *Walking long distances continues to be a challenge for you. How do you navigate the college campus?*

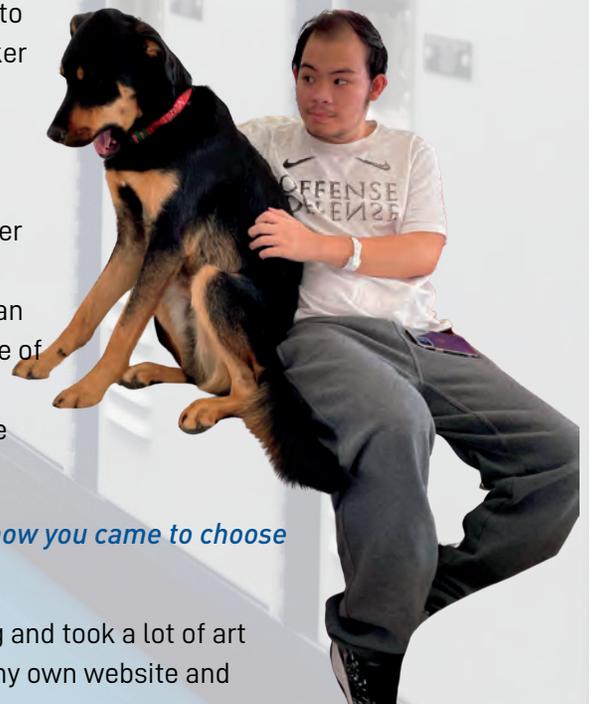
Sometimes my classes are in different buildings so I have to make sure I'm rested so I don't get tired walking to class. The campus is big so I have to plan my trips to conserve my energy. At the end of the day, my parents will send me a text message because they pick me up, and depending on how I'm feeling, one of my parents will come into the school and grab my stuff. This reduces the weight on my walker and makes it easier to walk.

### *Have you considered using a manual wheelchair on campus?*

Yeah, but I'm just accustomed to using the walker and this is easier for me. I can put more stuff on my walker, including my backpack that I often put on the seat. With a wheelchair, this would just be an additional load for me to wheel around. Another thing is that some of the classrooms are not spacious so getting a wheelchair into the room might be a bit cramped. Also, by using the walker, I get more exercise. It's a trade off that I've been willing to make.

### *Please tell the readers about the graphic design program and how you came to choose that as your area of study?*

I said earlier that I have always been interested in art and drawing and took a lot of art classes. Training as a graphic designer will enable me to create my own website and



lends itself to different types of work, creating illustrations, calendars, magazine layouts, logos, and websites – being creative. This is a perfect match for my interests and growing abilities.

I think my favourite part of the program so far is having to do a rough drawing or illustration by hand, applying the rules and principles related to graphic design, and then transforming this into a digital print.

***You said you'd attended Red River College previously. What was it like to return to the campus?***

Initially, I felt anxious and uncertain because I wasn't sure what to expect. What made it easy for me is that the instructors and students were very welcoming. After about two weeks, I began to feel comfortable and less self-conscious; I no longer felt that people were looking at me.

***Could you explain what you mean when you say the students and instructors were welcoming?***

I was treated like every other student by the instructors and the other students related to me as a peer. At first, I was afraid to speak to them because I didn't want to be treated differently because of my disability. But my fears decreased after I spoke to them; this made it easier for me to be at school.

***Can you talk about the supports that are available on campus and how you were able to access these?***

I took a portfolio development course before I'd applied for admission to the graphic design program. All applicants have to create and submit a portfolio for evaluation. While I was attending that course, the instructor connected me to an accessibility specialist from Student Support Services. I met with the accessibility specialist, and we discussed seating options, room accessibility, elevator usage, tutoring, proctoring and other services that were available.

Additionally, the instructors have been very supportive and have accommodated my needs without being intrusive. For example, there have been assignments that have entailed physical demands that I could not perform, so the instructors adapted some of the assignments.

For one assignment, I was required to draw the layout of a campus interior and to do so on an 18" x 24" sheet of paper. The point of this assignment was to recreate an interior that was perfect in scale. Because of my physical limitations, the instructor assisted me in locating an area of the campus where I could sit and draw since I was unable to stand and draw for any length of time.

An additional assignment, required groups of students to take turns creating portraits of one another. This required individuals to remain still and motionless for a long time. If I remain still, I get spasms. So, the instructor reconfigured the groups so that I was not required to be the subject for a portrait sitting, just the artist.

***Please tell readers about the graphic design industry, job market, and salary range for new graduates?***

The graphic design industry is competitive and involves deadlines. I've learned a couple of valuable lessons from my instructors and other students. Criticism is a part of the industry. I have learned not to take criticism as an insult on my skill but, instead, to view it as another learning opportunity and a chance to enhance my skill. I think it will be important for the duration of my career to learn daily and to always improve my skill.

I've also learned that time management is key. There will always be deadlines. Sometimes working too



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The salary a new graduate can expect to earn is somewhere in the range of \$30 - \$40,000 per year. New graduates can find employment with companies or work on a contractual basis. Individuals can create their own websites with a portfolio of their work and secure contract work based on their websites.

*Do you have any advice for readers who may be considering graphic design as a career choice or who are thinking about pursuing further education to prepare for work?*

My advice is that people should follow their interests and consider what they enjoy doing. I think it's also important to speak with individuals who are familiar with the area of work you are considering. I spoke to a family member who works in graphic design and that conversation was very helpful and confirmed I was on the right path.

I think, too, that it's important to keep in mind that some things will be difficult to deal with and it's helpful to speak with others who deal with similar challenges and to get their support and ideas to deal with those challenges.

Remember that you don't have to do everything all at once. Take one step at a time. Learn about the program you're interested in and move at a speed that is comfortable for you. For example, I decided it was best to extend my program rather than completing it in two years. I had to consider my energy and stamina.

I had attended Red River College Polytechnic before. I remember staying up until 11:00 p.m. nightly to complete assignments and homework for the following day. I was exhausted and burned out. It was really hard for me to accept, at first, that I was not going to be able to manage full-time attendance. I had to accept my reality and have come to terms with this. This does not mean that I am weak; it just means that I have to pace myself differently.

*Can you think of anything I haven't asked that you would like to comment on?*

Yes. Making friends was difficult, at first. In the Philippines, it is not common to see people with disabilities and I think they are treated differently. In Canada, you see people with disabilities who work full-time, part-time, who go to school and have families. So, people here are used to seeing people with disabilities. When students talk to me and treat me the same way they treat other students, it makes me feel accepted and just like another student.

*How has making friends on campus helped?*

The more I get out of my comfort zone and initiate contact with other students, the more confident and comfortable I feel. After I become comfortable with one person, it makes it easier for me to initiate contact others. The conversations usually start with something we have in common: an assignment. The next thing I know we're hanging out together and becoming friends. This feels good.

*Thanks for sharing your story with the readers of ParaTracks, Gio. I appreciate your willingness to talk about the challenges you have experienced, how you've overcome some of these, and your plans for the future. I'm sure many readers will be able to identify with your story and it may encourage and motivate some to consider exploring further education to prepare for a rewarding career.*

Laurence Haien, Senior Rehabilitation Counsellor - Vocational Services

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# Ask a Rehabilitation Counsellor



*In this issue of [Ask a Rehabilitation Counsellor](#), we are responding to a member's question about employment, financial supports, and resources following the onset of spinal cord injury, given the many disability-related costs that frequently accompany living with a disability in Canada. Also, remember that questions for future issues of ParaTracks can be submitted through your counsellor or anonymously through our website: [scimanitoba.ca/ask](https://scimanitoba.ca/ask).*

*To answer this issue's question, we have called on Darell Hominuk, Rehabilitation Counsellor - Vocational Services.*

Sustaining a spinal cord injury can result in a lot of uncertainty about the future, including concerns about financial security. It's normal to feel overwhelmed - spinal cord injuries vary considerably from person to person, so it is only natural to wonder how it might affect your pocket book and/or your ability to work. An important thing to remember is to resist making quick decisions regarding work and finances because hasty decisions could have long lasting effects.

Think about the work you do and the physical requirements associated with it, such as lifting, keyboarding, standing, etc. in relation to the effects of your spinal cord injury. Moreover, consider that you may experience degrees of recovery from your spinal cord injury over time, so accommodations your employer has made may need to be reviewed and modified in the future.

If your employer has a benefits plan, make sure you're aware of your entitlements and take your time before making any changes. For instance, if you're thinking about moving to part-time employment, did you know that some plans do not provide the same coverage for part-time

employees? Finally, it's important to know your rights. You have more control over your rights employed than unemployed.

A common question that is often posed is "should I disclose my diagnosis to an employer?" There is no right or wrong way to do this. Keep in mind that you are not required by law to disclose your diagnosis. More often than not, it is at your own discretion. There are pros and cons when disclosing this information, so take your time before deciding. Alternatively, you might consider talking about the physical



effects of your condition and the accommodations you may require such as an elevated or sit-stand desk, an accessible washroom, or voice activated software. Disclosure could lead to positive changes such as a better adapted situation, but it can also work against you in some cases, so use your best judgement and consider your decision carefully.



The Human Rights Code is the paramount statute in Manitoba, so when a conflict arises between it and a competing law, the Human Rights Code prevails. This means employers cannot refuse to hire or fire you because you have a disability, nor can they pay you less, change your hours of work, or give you fewer hours. Employers are required by law to provide job accommodations to the point of 'undue hardship'. The meaning of 'undue hardship' varies from one situation to another, and is dependent on a number of factors such as the financial resources of the employer, the capacity of the employer, and whether the workplace is unionized, to mention a few. Negotiating a reasonable accommodation engages both the employer and employee, and the common goal is job retention. Together, the two of you would thoroughly examine your job responsibilities to meet a viable job accommodation.

Some individuals may leave the workplace temporarily while they focus on their rehabilitation while others may leave the workforce permanently after considering carefully their ability to work in any capacity, the ability of the employer to provide job accommodations, financial resources, and family needs. As mentioned earlier, the decision to leave should be considered carefully, taking into account health status, eligibility for disability and health benefits, personal and family finances, and life beyond work.

There are a number of financial support programs that can help:

Employment and Social Development Canada offers [Employment Insurance](#) in the forms of sickness benefits, benefits for the self-employed, caregiving benefits and leave, fishing benefits, and regular benefits. If you have paid EI premiums, you could receive up to 55% of your earnings for up to a maximum of 45 weeks. Calculating the extent of your eligibility is dependent on the unemployment rate in your region.

[Employee Benefit Plans](#) are offered by many employers. Much like no two snowflakes are alike, the same can be said about employee benefit plans. In general, if you are employed and have a plan, you may be eligible for taxable short-term disability (STD) and long-term disability (LTD) benefits. STD benefits usually begin when your sick days at work run out. Most plans pay a percentage of normal earnings up to a maximum dollar amount in periods ranging from 15 to 52 weeks. Generally, LTD benefits begin when STD benefits run out, or at the end of an elimination period. If you are unable to do your normal job and you cannot do any job, the plan continues to pay

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the prescribed percentage of normal earnings with benefits usually running up to a period of two years. During that time, many disability insurance plans require you apply for the Canada Pension Plan-Disability (CPP-D) benefits when you move to LTD status. Any benefit received from CPP-D will be deducted dollar for dollar by your insurer.

Service Canada provides the [Canada Pension Plan - Disability \(CPP-D\)](#) benefit, a monthly, taxable benefit that replaces part of your income when you are unable to work due to a disability. To qualify you must be under the age of 65, have made enough contributions to CPP, have a mental or physical disability that regularly stops you from doing any type of substantially gainful work, and your condition must be determined by a doctor to be both severe and prolonged. It can take up to four months for a decision to be made so have someone review the form with you to ensure it is fully completed and accurate. You will continue to receive your disability benefits if you are in volunteer work and education/training. If you are volunteering in-person or online, you must inform Service Canada if you are doing any combination of these activities for 15 hours a week or more, and you have been doing these activities on a regular basis for 4 continuous months or longer. Anything longer can signal your ability to work and can impact whether you still qualify to receive disability benefits. You must contact Service Canada when you begin working, and once you have earned \$6,600 (before tax) in 2023. Your disability benefits may be impacted by your gross (before tax) earnings. Automatic Reinstatement provides you with a financial safety net. If your benefits stopped because you returned to employment and your disability recurs within two years and you can't continue working, your CCP-D benefits can be quickly re-started without having to reapply and re-qualify.

The Manitoba Government officially launched [Manitoba Supports for Persons with Disabilities](#) on April 1, 2023. This new disability income support program was designed to provide better supports and services for Manitobans living with severe and prolonged disabilities. The program provides tax-free financial help to Manitobans with disabilities who have no other way to support themselves or their families. People in receipt of income support also get Rent Assist if they need help with their shelter and utility costs. Eligibility is determined by a test of need. For instance, a single adult may be eligible to receive \$1,093 per month and a single adult with one child under 6 years may be eligible to receive \$2,071 per month. Additional health needs are also covered including ambulance service, basic dental care costs, prescription drugs without paying the deductible, to mention a few. Persons with disabilities are not required to look for work in order to receive income support, but are encouraged to take advantage of their employment services voluntarily. The program ensures you will always have more money when you work. Individuals have the ability to earn up to \$12,000 per year before benefits are impacted. Under the Get Ready! policy, you may continue to receive income support while you attend a training or education program for up to four years.

This article is only a snapshot and provides a current overview of the federal and provincial income support programs and considerations for individuals who are newly injured. If you have more specific questions, don't hesitate to discuss them with your rehabilitation counsellor.

Darell Hominuk, Rehabilitation Counsellor - Vocational Services

# Successful Businesses Begin with Brilliant Ideas



*Many people living with a disability don't let it prevent them from leading full and rich lives, indeed some are an inspiration to both people with and without a disability. Corey Mazinke is one of these people. He recently launched a new business and has not let his spinal cord injury hold him back in any aspect of his life. He was recently interviewed by Darell Hominuk about his injury, his journey, and his business.*

## *Could you tell us a little about yourself?*

Sure, and thanks for interviewing me for ParaTracks. I'm 27 years old, have a spinal cord injury, and live with my girlfriend, Hali. I'm close to my parents, two brothers and two sisters. I'm a naturally curious person that likes to learn new things. Being bold and adventurous have always been a part of me. Following and playing sports such as golf and hockey, getting outdoors and spending time with close friends are things I enjoy most.

## *How did you become diagnosed with a spinal cord injury?*

In the summer of 2019, I went boating and came to an area where I thought the water was deep. I dove in for a swim and quickly realized it was shallow when I hit my head on the bottom, damaging my spinal cord. This resulted in a C5 spinal cord injury.

## *What helped you to manage the challenges of living with a spinal cord injury?*

The rehab personnel at HSC (Health Sciences Centre) are exceptional and helped me adjust to my new body. Coming home was a challenge. There were things that I could not do that I used to. These were things I did not prepare for. I had to cope and learn new ways of doing old things. Because I'm close to my family, they all came together to support me. My girlfriend became my primary caregiver and it all came together naturally.

## *What was your occupation before your injury?*

My family runs a grain farm and I learned how to operate a lot of machinery to plant, manage crops

and harvest grain. It was this experience that led to my interest in engineering and later obtaining my degree in engineering. After I graduated, I went on to work for a company that manufactured farming equipment.

*It's exciting to hear that you recently launched your own business. There is no doubt that successful businesses begin with brilliant ideas. Could you tell us what convinced you to start your own business?*

Shortly after my injury, I quickly realized my reliance on equipment and products such as a wheelchair, commode, adaptive cutlery, etc. With so many products, I was curious how they were made, and even more importantly, how they can be made better. To start this process, I invested in an updated 3D Printer and a desktop computer with a computer aided design (CAD) package. CAD allows users to digitally create 2D drawings and 3D models of real-world products before they are manufactured. Initially, I was creating products that would benefit my life. For instance, I built an elevator for my home and a lift into my swimming pool. Somewhere along the way it occurred to me that other people living with disabilities could also benefit from these devices. I wanted to design products to help others with disabilities enhance their quality of life. I decided to launch my own business and called it C5 Mobility. I did not want my C5 spinal cord injury to be seen as a negative, rather I want to pay homage to my injury by making the best of the situation and helping others to improve their lives.

*What makes your business unique?*

As a person who is very physically impaired, I have the perspective of someone who uses many mobility products daily. From my prior education and experience I understand how products are designed and manufactured so I feel like I can leverage my situation to create some innovative products. I think people with disabilities are incredibly creative, but often don't have the time or resources to turn their ideas into reality. Since I have that ability, it would be a disservice not to create something out of it.

*As a first-time entrepreneur, what challenges did you experience and how did you manage them?*

Well, it's a big learning curve. Making products for myself and then transitioning to manufacturing these products for others took a lot of work. Fortunately, I have huge support from my girlfriend, family and close friends. Moving from fulltime employment to self-employment is different. I was driven to



**Beach Explorer by C5 Mobility**

# Manitoba Paraplegia Foundation (MPF) News

## MPF Trustees

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MPF funds go to work in four main areas that are not supported by any other sources in Manitoba: special projects, product testing, research, and direct aid to Manitobans living with spinal cord injury who do not have the necessary financial resources for equipment and/or services. All requests for direct aid are initiated through SCI Manitoba. Individuals must provide information on their finances, explain why they cannot meet the expense within their own budget, and identify any other potential sources to support the request, including potential for contribution from family.

SCI Manitoba thanks MPF for its continued support and commitment to improving the quality of life of Manitobans living with spinal cord injury.

MPF has approved several requests for financial support totaling \$27,682 since the last issue of ParaTracks, including:

- To purchase seating equipment for two SCI Manitoba members, which is needed to promote healing, to prevent future skin breakdown, optimize mobility and independence, and improve social participation and emotional health.
- To purchase a power elevating seat that will allow a member to access areas of the home that were previously inaccessible, and to increase independence in activities of daily living such as cooking, housekeeping, and grocery shopping.
- To purchase a wheelchair cushion and gel inserts for a member to allow proper pressure management and continued protection and mobility - and prevent social isolation - if and when equipment repairs are needed.
- To purchase an electric tricycle (e-trike) for a member with an incomplete SCI who can walk short distances but lacks balance, stamina and energy to use a regular bicycle. The e-trike will allow the member to continue participation in recreation activities independently, and help obtain an optimal level of physical activity, well-being and life satisfaction.
- To purchase vehicle hand controls and an elevating and folding transfer seat for a member who uses their vehicle for work. This equipment will allow the member to independently operate and safely access the vehicle for optimal functioning at work.
- To purchase a low air loss, pressure relieving turn mattress for a member who has a history of pressure ulcers and is unable to change position independently in bed during the night. This mattress will assist with position changes during the night and allow current ulcers to heal faster while also preventing future skin breakdown. The member's quality of life will improve as a result of improved health outcomes.

Visit MPF's website for more information at [www.scimanitoba.ca/mpf](http://www.scimanitoba.ca/mpf). Information about applying for assistance is available by contacting SCI Manitoba by email at [info@scimanitoba.ca](mailto:info@scimanitoba.ca) or by phone at 204-786-4753 (toll-free 800-720-4933 within Manitoba).

meeting my goal and had to be more focused, responsible, and accountable.

***What supports or services helped you in launching your business?***

Of course, my girlfriend, family and close friends were there to help and support me. I also appreciated the support and advice from my rehabilitation counsellor at Spinal Cord Injury Manitoba and the assistance provided by the Community Futures Manitoba office in my district.

***It's quite an adjustment when making the decision to launch a business. Do you have some advice to offer to our readers who are considering turning their ideas into a business?***

It's important to identify and focus on your mission and vision of your business. I was very passionate about creating products that positively impacted my life and from this spawned the core values of the business. I think if you stay true to your initial values, the outcome will be successful in some form.

***Any final thoughts that you'd like to share?***

For me, it's not about becoming a millionaire, it's about helping people live a rewarding life and have more fun. I feel the industry has adequate products that are required for people with disabilities to live such as wheelchairs, seating cushions and urology products, but severely lacks in the recreational "for fun" product categories. C5 Mobility plans to target this category and create products that seem to be overlooked by the larger companies. One of my initial goals is to get my beach wheelchair available at all Manitoba beaches. Anyone with ideas on beach locations or has insights that may make this possible, feel free to contact me at [corey@c5mobility.com](mailto:corey@c5mobility.com).

Darell Hominuk, Rehabilitation Counsellor - Vocational Services



**Swing Mate by C5 Mobility**



**Pen Mate by C5 Mobility**

# Why you should only use your catheter once



## **Did you know? Canadian urologists and nurses recommend single-use of intermittent catheters.**<sup>1,2</sup>

To help reduce the risk of urinary tract infections (UTIs), Canadian healthcare practitioners recommend using a new, sterile, pre-lubricated catheter every time you catheterize.<sup>1,2</sup>

International and Canadian clinical evidence suggest that hydrophilic catheters can help reduce the risk of UTIs and urethral damage.<sup>3,4,5,6</sup>

Reusing catheters may lead to a change of physical properties of the catheter material and there is a risk of introducing unnecessary bacteria contamination, which may result in UTIs.<sup>3,4</sup>

## **Use a sterile catheter every time you catheterize.**

Canadian urologists and nurses recommend using single-use hydrophilic catheters, especially for those with repeated symptomatic UTIs.<sup>1,2</sup> A coated catheter (hydrophilic-coated or pre-lubricated) can help lessen friction as you insert and remove your catheter. It makes catheterization more comfortable and convenient. Studies, data, and findings also link them to lower rates of infection<sup>3,4</sup> and less urethral damage<sup>3,5,6</sup> compared with other catheters.



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1. Clean Intermittent Urethral Catheterization in Adults – Canadian Best Practice Recommendations for Nurses. Developed by Nurses Specialized in Wound, Ostomy and Continence Canada, Canadian Nurse Continence Advisors, Urology Nurses of Canada, and Infection Prevention and Control. 1st Ed. 2020.
2. Can Urol Assoc J 2020;14(7):E281-9. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5489/cuaj.6697>
3. Cardenas et al. 2011
4. De Ridder et al. 2005
5. Stensballe et al. 2005
6. Sutherland et al. 1996



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Our Mission

We firmly believe in promoting accessibility and aim to make the Beach Explorer wheelchair available at all of Manitoba's beaches. We hope to partner with the province and local municipalities to make this mobility solution widespread and create inclusive memories for many years to come.

Join us in allowing everyone to embrace the joys of the beach. Please help raise awareness and share the project to the governing body at your local beach. Thank you!

# 2023 E. Arthur Braid SCI Manitoba Merit Award

It was my absolute honour to present this year's E. Arthur Braid SCI Manitoba Merit Award to Yvette Cenerini at our Annual General Meeting on June 20, 2023.

I first met Yvette many years ago when we were both newly injured patients at HSC, when she was just 15 years old. We were going through an obviously difficult period in our lives, but what struck me more than anything was Yvette's maturity and poise at such a young age. Despite the challenge of adjusting and adapting to her spinal cord injury, Yvette hardly missed a beat – she graduated from high school on time with her classmates by juggling the rigors of rehabilitation while also attending classes and completing school assignments during the day. And while her injury was a life-changing event, it was also a defining moment that crystallized her desire to lead a full and rewarding life and to rise to the height of her full potential.

Yvette later attended university and obtained undergraduate degrees in education and fine arts, and has for many years successfully managed a busy professional career as an educator, nurtured her talents as an artist, and tended to the needs of a busy home life with husband Alain, son Adriel, and daughter Lydia.

But like many people living with spinal cord injury in the early years, Yvette benefitted immensely from opportunities to meet and talk with peers who were willing to share experiences - good and bad - and valuable lessons from their own journeys. When Spinal Cord Injury Canada and its network of provincial affiliates were formed by paralyzed veterans returning to Canada after WWII, there were no programs or services available to help them find traction in their own lives, so they learned to work things out for themselves and to share knowledge with others, locally and across the country. This was the beginning of peer support, and it continues to be a core service offering more than 75 years later.

In Manitoba, we routinely supplement our professional service delivery by calling on members to act as peer mentors for individuals with new injuries, and for members facing a specific hardship. In that respect, Yvette has been one of our most active peer support volunteers, dealing with a wide range of issues from adjustment to disability, working with home care providers, driving and vehicle modifications, home accessibility, managing career and family responsibilities, and pregnancy and parenting. Whatever the need and whenever called upon, Yvette has proven to be a formidable, highly reliable ally to our members - and the SCI Manitoba service team - in what can sometimes be challenging and emotionally taxing work.

To the great fortune of all who come into her orbit, Yvette gets along with everyone and has an easygoing manner that naturally engages other people. But that doesn't go nearly far enough in



describing who she is at her core, and the reason why she is so effective at relating to others on an individual level - it's because Yvette genuinely cares about other people, and because of this, she is infinitely unselfish with her time and her energy.

In the words of Laurence Haien, Senior Rehabilitation Counsellor:

*Yvette has never refused a request to serve as a peer to anyone newly injured. I have no doubt that her schedule has always been full with responsibilities for family, work, and her artistic endeavors but she has always accommodated these requests. I would think that serving as a peer has put Yvette into situations where her own memories of being newly injured and coping with uncertainty and loss have been resurrected. In my mind, it takes an exceptional person to allow themselves to be vulnerable while providing emotional support and hard-won wisdom to lessen the fears and anxieties of those she serves.*

*My sense, too, is that Yvette probably does not realize the good that she has done for many SCI members over the years and the ways in which her words of support and encouragement have profoundly influenced or changed their lives, for the better. I think Yvette probably sees herself as a woman who is just living her life and happens to do so with a spinal cord injury. I think those who have known Yvette as a mother, wife, family member, friend, fellow artist or co-worker would likely see her as a caring, talented, and dedicated person who has committed to living a full life and happens to be doing so with a spinal cord injury.*

Congratulations, Yvette, on more than 30 years of commitment as a peer support volunteer helping Manitobans living with spinal cord injury and other physical disabilities achieve independence, self-reliance, and full community participation!

Dan Joanisse, Executive Director



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