

**Ending Committeeships**

We often get questions on how PGT committeeships are ended. PGT committeeships end when the court declares the client capable of managing their own affairs or appoints someone else to be the committee. Also, in some cases where the PGT became committee through a certificate of incapability, the PGT can formally discharge authority and end the committeeship without going to court. Over recent years, we have carried out several projects and improved our discharge procedures to identify and discharge clients who no longer require PGT services.

If you believe that your committeeship should be ended, speak to your Case Manager who will provide more information.

**Proposed Changes to Adult Guardianship Laws**

In the spring of 2004, the PGT proposed improvements to BC adult guardianship laws for long-term substitute decision-making. The PGT report includes recommendations for improving procedural fairness, ensuring consistency with other laws and reducing the cost associated with guardianship arrangements for individuals and their families.

A copy of the report, *Court and Statutory Guardianship: The Patients Property Act and the Adult Guardianship Act (Part 2) - A Discussion Paper on Modernizing the Legal Framework*, is available on the Publications page of the PGT website.

**CRN Foundation Conference**

The PGT and the BC Community Response Network (CRN) Foundation co-hosted a conference on October 14, 2004 to explain the role of CRNs working to ensure people who need help get it and working towards preventing the abuse of seniors and other vulnerable adults. A summary of this and the related BC Coalition to Eliminate the Abuse of Seniors (BCCEAS)

conference is included in the August 2004 issue of *A Shared Concern* (the BCCEAS newsletter), available online at [www.bcceas.ca](http://www.bcceas.ca).

**A Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday!**

In August, we had the privilege of wishing Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday to one of our Vancouver Island clients. Our client had been living independently until 2003 when she moved from her apartment to a care home with nursing staff. She is an accomplished classical musician who performed on CBC radio and in front of audiences. Over the years, she had lost contact with her family members.

PGT staff worked with the care home staff to organize a special 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration. Through their efforts, they were able to locate family who were able to make the trip from another province to reunite and join in the celebration. *"It was so nice to see our client, her family and her friends at the care home having a good time and it was an honour to join in the celebration and congratulate her on this tremendous achievement."* - Norm, PGT Case Manager

**Your Comments and Suggestions**

Thank you to those of you who answered our newsletter survey last year. Of the responses we received, 72% were from clients, 16% from family and friends of clients and 12% from service providers. We were pleased to hear that generally, you are pleased with the services that you are receiving and that you like the newsletter! Some of you indicated that you would like to see your Case Manager more often and we are happy to report that once again, we made over 1200 visits to our clients over the past year.

We encourage you to let us know what you would like to see in future newsletters and other services by completing the enclosed comment form. Thank you!



**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

We would like to wish our clients, their families and caregivers a very happy new year.

We're pleased to have the opportunity to report on some of the news and progress made in 2004 and we look ahead at what promises to be an exciting year, marked by continued improvements to client services.



NEW! Interior-North Team

**Access to PGT Services Improved**

Plans to make services more accessible to clients living outside of the Lower Mainland began in 2001. Part of this included restructuring our service departments so that assessments and investigations (AIS), health care decisions and financial and personal care management services could all be delivered closer to our clients.

In June 2003, we opened our first Regional Office in Victoria to deliver services closer to clients living on Vancouver Island.

In September 2004, we opened our new Interior-North Regional Office in Kelowna. Nineteen staff work from the Kelowna office, serving clients who live in the Interior and Northern BC. Our Interior-North Office provides assessments and investigations, client services and health care decisions.

We have restructured our services to create a consistent regional model. As of November 2004, we now have four regional teams to serve our clients.



Client Services*	2004
A - Vancouver Island Region	537 clients
B - Greater Vancouver	850 clients
C - Lower Mainland	1,072 clients
D - Interior/North	762 clients
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3,221 clients</b>

\*These are clients for whom the PGT has formal authority, primarily as Committee of Estate.

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We look forward to bringing our services closer to clients and to having more personal contact with families, caregivers and local service providers.

We have enclosed a summary of current services and contact information with this newsletter mailing that we hope you find helpful.



Greater Vancouver Team



Lower Mainland Team



Vancouver Island Team

### 2003-2004 Annual Report

We recently released our 2003-04 Annual Report, which provides detailed information on our programs, service performance and financial position. We met or exceeded 28 of 32 performance targets, including:

- The opening of our Vancouver Island Regional Office means that 72% of adult clients are now served locally.
- PGT staff visited 95% of clients for whom the PGT is Committee of Person.
- 98% of major health care decisions were made within 3 days and 97% of minor health care decisions were made within 1 day of all relevant information being received.

We also conducted over 800 AIS investigations and made 460 health care decisions.

A copy of the full report is available on the Publications page of our website ([www.trustee.bc.ca](http://www.trustee.bc.ca)) along with a request for comments. Read our Annual Report and let us know what you think!

### Investing Your Money

The PGT takes great care in investing client funds. The past year was very good in terms of investment returns for our clients' funds. The PGT has three pooled funds – the Premium Money Market Fund, the Balanced Income Fund and the Balanced Growth Fund. For example, one year returns to September 30, 2004 were:

- *Premium Money Market Fund* 3.56%
- *Balanced Income Fund* 9.29%
- *Balanced Growth Fund* 10.69%

If you have questions about how your money is invested, please contact your Case Manager.

### Protecting the Interests of Clients

**Riverview Downsizing** - The Provincial Mental Health Plan outlines changes to mental health services in BC. This includes closing Riverview Hospital and moving patients into new, more home-like facilities and group homes in communities around the province by 2007. Riverview has established Transition Planning Committees in each health region to identify individual patients' needs.

The PGT has approximately 200 clients who are patients at Riverview Hospital. We are working to ensure that the interests of our clients continue to be addressed through the transition to their new communities. For more information, visit the Riverview website at [www.bcmhs.bc.ca](http://www.bcmhs.bc.ca).

**Woodlands** - In August 2004, the PGT released a report

summarizing the 2-year Woodlands Project following allegations of abuse of residents of Woodlands, a provincial institution closed in 1996. A team of PGT staff



Woodlands Project Team

reviewed over 100,000 pages of records concerning 255 former residents. About half of these residents were interviewed and for some, this interview was the first time they had told anyone about their experiences at Woodlands.

Visit the Woodlands page of our website for the full Woodlands Project Report, available in print and audio format.

Note: BC Association for Community Living will be publishing a special issue of *The Voice* on Woodlands and institutional abuse in February 2005. *The Voice* is a plain language newsletter for people with developmental disabilities. See BCACL's website for more information - [www.bcacl.org](http://www.bcacl.org).

**Jericho Hill** - In April 2004, the Supreme Court of BC approved a settlement of the Jericho Hill class action lawsuit for sexual abuse experienced by former residents of Jericho Hill School for the Deaf. The settlement package went beyond financial compensation and included an apology by the Province of BC, counselling and other assistance.

The PGT has been actively involved throughout this process to ensure the interests of all incapable adults were protected. In addition, the PGT is Committee of Estate for 10 former residents. We were pleased to represent these clients and negotiate settlements for them.

**Other Class Actions** - Class action lawsuits are relatively new in BC and are becoming more common. The PGT is currently following a number of these lawsuits as some of our clients may be entitled to compensation. For example, some relate to calculations of federal pension benefits while others for abuse suffered at institutions like Woodlands School, native residential schools and foster homes. The Hepatitis C settlement may also be broadened to include pre-1986 cases. Please let your Case Manager know if you think you might have a legal claim.

**Assisted Living** - In May 2004, the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* was proclaimed. This new law protects adults and children in licensed care and introduces a regulatory system for assisted living residences. Assisted living is a housing and care option for seniors and people with disabilities who do not require the 24-hour care of a residential care facility. The PGT has been working with the government, the new Assisted Living Registrar and others in reviewing service agreements. The PGT goal is to ensure that people's rights are protected in these new arrangements.

Office of the Assisted Living Registrar - [www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/assisted/](http://www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/assisted/)

Independent Living BC  
[www.bchousing.org/ILBC/](http://www.bchousing.org/ILBC/)