

Winter 2009/10

Services to Adults Client Newsletter

Message from the Public Guardian and Trustee

I am pleased to present *Reaching Out*, the annual newsletter from the Services to Adults Division of the Public Guardian and Trustee (PGT). This year, we are marking the 10th anniversary of adult guardianship services in British Columbia. While services of the PGT date back for many decades, the first phase of BC's modern guardianship law came into force in 2000.



Jay Chalke, Q.C.
Public Guardian
and Trustee

Over the past year, we have continued to be very busy providing our traditional services as well as engaging in new activities that will be of benefit to you. These include new government programs such as the federal Registered Disability Savings Plans (RDSPs), which are described elsewhere in this newsletter. In addition to external programs, we have implemented changes of our own that improve service to you. An example of these is a new insurance plan that provides expanded service at lower costs for clients.

We continued to protect your legal interests in a variety of ways, including representing eligible clients in various class actions. You will find updates on the major class actions elsewhere in this newsletter. We also continued to protect your financial interests. This has included participating in national discussions with the banking industry to make it more efficient for us to conduct business on your behalf. This newsletter also includes an update on our investment activity.

We reported last year that we were very actively preparing for the coming into force of new legislation relating to adult guardianship and consent for admission to care facilities. We made significant progress, including securing consensus with health and other involved sectors, developing policies and otherwise taking steps to be prepared to implement the legislation.

While implementation of the new guardianship law has now been deferred because of the economic downturn, I have encouraged the government to proceed with the new law at the earliest possible time. It is important to modernize the legal framework for supporting vulnerable and incapable adults who require protection and assistance with decision making. A phased approach first focusing on incapacity planning is likely.

There is more information on PGT activities in our *2008-2009 Annual Report*. We are enclosing a copy of our *Year at a Glance* brochure that highlights PGT accomplishments of this past year.

If you would like to have a copy of the annual report or any of our other helpful publications, please contact your Case Manager or go to the Publications page on our website at: www.trustee.bc.ca.

I hope you find this issue of *Reaching Out* to be informative and enjoyable. I welcome comments from you about either this newsletter or PGT services. You are the focus of our services and we constantly strive to provide quality service to you.



Jay Chalke, Q.C., Public Guardian and Trustee

IMPORTANT NOTICES ABOUT CLASS ACTIONS

You may be eligible for compensation under one of these class action lawsuits:

If you are a PGT client and you meet any of the criteria listed below, please contact your PGT Case Manager **right away** as there are time limits for making a claim. The PGT will assist you in determining if you qualify for compensation and make the claim for you.

1. Indian Residential Schools

Anyone who resided at an Indian Residential School is eligible for a Common Experience Payment of \$10,000 for the first year of residence, plus \$3,000 for each school year (or part year) after that. Anyone who suffered physical or sexual abuse at an Indian Residential School whether they resided there or not, may make a claim for additional compensation. Please contact your PGT Case Manager right away if you (or you know of a PGT client who) resided or suffered abuse at an Indian Residential School.

For more information, please visit the web link: www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/rqpi/index-eng.asp

2. Hepatitis C

There are two class action lawsuits for people who were infected with Hepatitis C and some other diseases from blood transfusions. One class action is for people who received blood between January 1, 1986 and July 1, 1990. The second class action is for people who received blood before January 1, 1986 or between July 2, 1990 and September 28, 1998. There is also a compensation package for loss suffered due to a family member being infected from a blood transfusion. The claim deadline is **June 30, 2010 or earlier**. Please contact your PGT Case Manager right away if any of the following applies to you (or you know of a PGT client it applies to):

- **You have Hepatitis C, HIV, or Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease**
- **You received a blood transfusion or blood products before September 28, 1998, or**
- **A family member has Hepatitis C, HIV, or Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.** (Family members include: parents, grandparents, spouse, former spouse, cohabiting partner of one year or longer, cohabiting partner who supported you, child, stepchild who lives with you, brother or sister, half brother or half sister, grandchildren, great grandchildren and someone who supports or supported you.)

For more information, please visit the web link: www.kleinlyons.com/class/settled/hepc/

3. Woodlands School

This is a class action for former residents of Woodlands School who suffered physical, sexual or psychological abuse or wrongful injury while a resident of Woodlands school after July 31, 1974. A settlement agreement has been reached which must be approved by the court. To ensure your claim is considered, contact your Case Manager right away if you (or if you know of a PGT client who) resided at Woodlands school after July 31, 1974.

The PGT website has current information updates and other helpful links related to the Woodlands class action. We will be keeping the information on our website as current as possible. Any questions or concerns may be directed to your Case Manager or visit the web link: www.kleinlyons.com/class/woodlands/index.php

Registered Disability Savings Plans

Last year, the federal government launched a new savings plan for persons with disabilities, the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP). These plans allow access to substantial federal bond and grant funds in order for persons with disabilities to build savings. We are very pleased that over 450 of our clients were considered eligible and now have an account established.

The benefits of an RDSP can be significant. By making a total of \$262,000 in client contributions this past year, we were able to access grants of \$529,000 as well as over \$326,000 in bonds for eligible clients.

To further promote these plans, the Vancouver Foundation has a new program called Endowment 150. Some of you may have received notice about this if you receive provincial income assistance.

The Endowment 150 program will provide eligible BC residents with \$150 to encourage setting up a savings plan within an RDSP. We will be working with the Vancouver Foundation to ensure that this benefit is obtained for all our clients who qualify.

For more information visit: www.rdsp.com and www.endowment150.ca or contact your Case Manager.

Approximately 1,800 PGT adult clients have additional assets besides their trust account cash balances. Some of these clients own term deposits, Canada Savings Bonds, Mutual Funds, or RRSPs.

Investing Your Funds

2009 was a better year than 2008 for investors with financial markets enjoying positive results.

Some or all funds of every PGT adult client are invested in the PGT Premium Money Market Fund Account. Interest paid on the client cash balances in 2009 averaged 2.14 %.

The PGT Premium Money Market Fund is made up of 35% short term bonds and 65% short term money market instruments like Government of Canada Treasury Bills.

For more information on Public Guardian and Trustee investments, see the *2008/09 Annual Report* at:

www.trustee.bc.ca/reports_publications/2008-2009%20Annual%20Report.pdf, or contact your Case Manager.

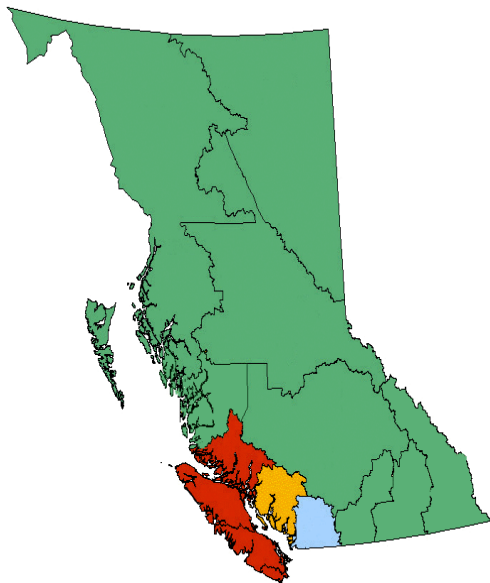
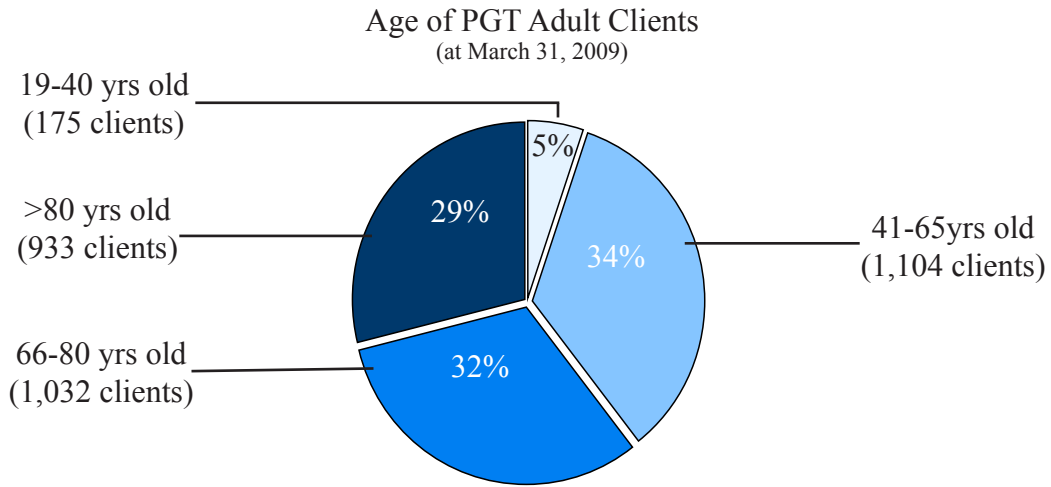
PGT Wins Premier's Innovation and Excellence Award

The PGT won a Bronze Award at the North Region Premier's Awards on March 4, 2009 in Prince George. The award was in the category of Partnerships and resulted from work done to develop a protocol between the PGT and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). The Protocol was designed to improve protection, security and support for First Nations members by providing seamless service delivery. The team was led by Betty McCabe, a Regional Consultant in the Interior North Office, with the assistance of Perry Krogfoss, the Regional Manager, and Reagen Wright, Regional Consultant.

We have seen a substantial increase in referrals for First Nations adults over the last five years. This increase is related to factors including the Indian Residential School Settlement process and the associated need for legal representatives to assist in making claims and managing funds; increased awareness of abuse, neglect and self neglect; PGT's First Nations Dialogues held provincially; and increased visibility and interaction by the PGT Interior-North Office with First Nations groups and community resources.

We are pleased that the protocol developed with INAC continues to help us work efficiently with that agency to ensure quality service to members of First Nations in British Columbia.

PGT FACTS AND FIGURES



Did You KNOW?
The PGT managed 430 real properties on behalf of adult clients during 2008/09

Our Four Regional Teams

<p>Greater Vancouver Region 700-808 West Hastings St. Vancouver, BC V6C 3L3 Tel: 604.775.1007 Fax: 604.660.9498</p>	<p>Vancouver Island Region 1019 Wharf Street, 4th floor Victoria, BC V8W 9J2 Tel: 250.356.8160 Fax: 250.356.7442</p>
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<p>Lower Mainland Region 700-808 West Hastings St. Vancouver, BC V6C 3L3 Tel: 604.775.1001 Fax: 604.660.9479</p>	<p>Interior-North Region 1345 St. Paul Street Kelowna, BC V1Y 2E2 Tel: 250.712.7576 Fax: 250.712.7578</p>
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Toll-free calling is available through Service BC. After dialing the appropriate number for your area (below), request to be transferred to the Public Guardian and Trustee.

Vancouver:	604.660.2421
Victoria:	250.387.6121
Other areas of BC:	800.663.7867

Adult Client Services 2009

(at January 3, 2010)

<p>■ Vancouver Island Region</p> <p>■ Lower Mainland Region</p> <p>■ Greater Vancouver Region</p> <p>■ Interior/North region</p> <p>Total:</p>	<p>655 clients</p> <p>952 clients</p> <p>791 clients</p> <p>829 clients</p> <p>3227 clients</p>
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