



## **Council Quarterly Report May 2020**

This quarter, Council has been having a lot of conversations about the COVID-19 pandemic. Council members have shared with each other how it has affected them mentally and emotionally, financially, and even shared what they have been doing to keep busy while they stay safe at home. Three Council members also participated in a webinar hosted by Community Living Ontario where they shared their experiences during COVID-19 with almost 100 viewers. It was a huge success and each member should be proud for participating in a conversation that is so important to self-advocates across the province at this time.

Council also participated in a letter writing campaign initiated by Jill Teeple and CACL. Each member was asked to write a letter to the government urging them to increase the amount of financial support to people who have a disability and their families. Council saw this as an excellent advocacy opportunity and took action to submit their plies for those struggling during this pandemic.

The Freedom From Harm Committee, a sub-committee of Council, also had a teleconference recently to discuss the impact that COVID-19 has had on large institutional like living environments. We specifically spoke about the devastating impact at Participation House in Markham, Ontario. Most of the people who live there have contracted COVID-19 and 5 have died. The committee spoke about how they plan to continue to support their views against large congregate living environments and how the situation at Participation house highlights the reason why they so strongly support CLO's watchdog policy.

During the last Council meeting, Nicole Flynn, a member of Council from Belleville, Ontario, came up with the idea to write a letter to those who live at Participation House to let them know that Council is dedicated to advocating on their behalf and how they will not be forgotten. The letter has been attached to this report for you to read.

During the next quarter, Council plans to support Community Living Ontario against the passing of Bill C-7, which, if passed will allow people who have a disability to die with medical assistance simply because they have a disability. Council has had medically assisted dying as a priority advocacy topic for years and they will continue to support and advocate to get the voices of self-advocates across Ontario heard.