

Nidus *Personal Planning Resource Centre and Registry*

Welcome!

You are receiving this newsletter because you requested to be on our mailing list, you registered with the Nidus Registry or you are a Nidus member, volunteer or community partner. The purpose of this newsletter is to keep you informed of upcoming events, Registry news, tips on personal planning and progress of our projects. If you have any questions or want more information on Representation Agreements, Enduring Powers of Attorney and Living Wills/Advance Directives, please visit www.nidus.ca, call 604-408-7414 or come out to a free presentation!

Enjoy,
The Nidus Team

Maintaining Independence: Acquired Brain Injuries and Representation Agreements

In British Columbia, it is estimated that 14,000 people will acquire a brain injury each year. Currently there are approximately 160,000 British Columbians living with an acquired brain injury. These types of injuries are frequently a result of motor vehicle accidents but can also occur from any number of events such as a stroke, a fall or an aneurysm. What is especially unique about acquired brain injuries is that they often result in a dramatic range of mild to severe effects, and may affect a person's intellectual, physical, emotional and social abilities to varying degrees ([British Columbia Brain Injury Association](#)). Some people, for example, have problems retaining information and need to develop methods and cues to help them remember. Others may not be able to read or write and therefore rely on visual, audio and other aids to help them process information.

Nidus needs your help!

This fall, Nidus is developing a new brochure to help promote Representation Agreements and we want to include photos of real people - like you!

We are looking for volunteers willing to have their picture taken by a professional photographer.

This is your chance to spend a fun afternoon in front of the camera and enjoy some refreshments with the Nidus staff!

Please email info@nidus.ca if you are willing to help or call us at 604-408-7414.

A Special Thanks to...

Rick Hansen
Foundation 

...for funding our Acquired
Brain Injury Project.

In 2008, Nidus applied for a grant from the Rick Hansen Foundation BC Neurotrauma Fund. With support from key people and groups in the brain injury community, Nidus proposed a project to explore the use of Representation Agreements as a tool for supported decision-making and personal planning for brain injury survivors. The challenges faced by survivors can sometimes make decision making difficult and some may need assistance with decision making. With a Representation Agreement people can appoint someone they trust to assist them when needed, therefore enhancing their autonomy and self-determination.

For this project, Nidus partnered with the Fraser Valley Brain Injury Association (FVBIA), a non-profit organization that offers support and services to people with acquired brain injuries and their families and friends. The first part of the project was to develop a straightforward presentation format that would be accessible to brain injury survivors. FVBIA's Abbotsford survivors group provided Nidus with expert advice and feedback at focus group meetings.

The next part of the project involved using the new presentation format to help survivors and their supporters learn about Representation Agreements. Nidus gave presentations to FVBIA groups in Hope, Abbotsford, Chilliwack and Langley. Through the project, Nidus also helped interested individuals make and register Representation Agreements.

The last phase of the project is to share the knowledge and experience gained through the project with the broader brain injury community throughout British Columbia. Nidus and FVBIA are looking at the development of online resources and print materials.

Nidus thanks the Rick Hansen Foundation for the opportunity to work on such an exciting project, as well as the Fraser Valley Brain Injury Association for their expertise and support. Watch for information on further resources in future Newsletters!

Don't forget to visit the Fraser Valley Brain Injury Association at: <http://www.fvbia.org/>

Registry Tip:

Have you *revoked* (or cancelled) a Representation Agreement or Enduring Power of Attorney that you previously made? Did you know that you can register your Revocation with the Nidus Registry? If you have made a new legal document, be sure to register it as well!

NOTE: Registration does not make a Revocation effective, registration is about *communication*. Please continue reading for more information on the legal requirements for revoking your document(s).

What is a Revocation?

A Revocation is the cancellation of a previously-made legal document, such as a Representation Agreement or Enduring Power of Attorney.

The *Representation Agreement Act* outlines the specific requirements to revoke or cancel a Representation Agreement. You must provide written notice to each person appointed in the document



Nidus staff member, Charity Bengert, helps out at the FVBA presentation in Hope. Photo by Susanne Gray.

Thank You & Farewell Susanne Gray

If you have ever called Nidus to ask a question about Representation Agreements or to register a legal document, chances are that you have spoken with our Program Director Susanne Gray. Perhaps you've seen her in action at one of our informative presentations or at a past legal clinic – wherever she goes, Susanne's joyful personality and compassionate spirit are unforgettable. After eight years of providing personal planning education and support to the public, Susanne Gray is saying a fond farewell to Nidus.

Susanne's journey at Nidus began in 2001, after being 'borrowed' from the B.C. Coalition of People with Disabilities – one of the Resource Centre's founding members. Along the way, Susanne participated in four legislative consultations and helped hundreds of British Columbians learn about and make Representation Agreements. In Susanne's own words, "Nidus has come a long way from the very small operation we started as the Representation Agreement Resource Centre! The community has always stood strongly behind and fought for the Representation Agreement – an innovative and respectful legal document. We continually hear from people how grateful they are to have the Nidus

(representatives, alternate representatives, monitor). The Nidus Resource Centre has an information sheet and example available on our website. The *Power of Attorney Act* does not outline how to revoke an Enduring Power of Attorney. The general practice, however, is similar to that of revoking a Representation Agreement. Please refer to the information sheets on our website. Or you can find them here [Revoking an Enduring Power of Attorney](#) and here [Revoking a Representation Agreement](#).

One of the challenges of revoking a legal document is ensuring that third parties (hospitals, banks, government agencies, etc.) know about it. Registration helps you communicate this important information to others. The Nidus Registry allows your plans and wishes to stay current and accessible.

For more information, or to register your document, please contact the Nidus at 604-408-7414 or info@nidus.ca.

Nidus would like to thank

Resource Centre to help them make their legal plan and navigate the system, so that they can stay in control of their affairs.”

Beyond her dedication in the office, Susanne is an avid golfer and athlete. She recently placed first in her first-ever triathlon! Susanne would like to share these parting words – “It has been a great honour for me to be part of the Nidus team; I have learned so much and met so many interesting and caring people – staff, board members, volunteers and people that we have touched through our work.” Susanne’s zeal for life and her infinite patience and kindness make her an inspiration to all that cross her path. Best of luck in your future endeavours Susanne, you will be greatly missed.



Susanne Gray is all smiles in the Nidus office. Photo by Audrey Jun.

our project funders:

**The Law Foundation of
British Columbia
Vancouver Foundation
The Notary Foundation
Victoria Foundation
Service Canada**