



Vectis Support Services Ltd.

5783 East Sooke Rd. Sooke, B.C. V9Z 0Z6

Phone: (250) 642-5510 Fax: (250) 642-5584

Cell: (250) 744-6273

Email sarahbalazs@shaw.ca

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Hi, All parents and family members,

I would like to apologize for my lack of contact lately. I haven't had a voice since a week before Christmas, and generally my time has been taken up trying to advocate for our clients with CLBC and the Government.

General overview and update.

For the past 18 months or more I have been fighting with CLBC to maintain our level of support and staffing currently offered to your loved ones. (See attached emails and letters)

When CLBC initially introduced the new funding guide templates, they had said it would show if organizations were either over or underfunded, those that were underfunded would be better off. Since then CLBC's position has changed numerous times but eventually came to, they would not fund any deficits and that we had to work within our current funding.

Vectis is running a deficit of roughly \$60000 a year, since all the cuts, clever manipulation of funding structures and no increase for cost of living. We still receive the same amount for costs, e.g. food, gas etc, as we got in 1994. Up until the past couple of years we have managed to back fill the funding deficit with monies Vectis had accumulated from private contracts (not taking a management wage myself), using our administration and generally tightening our belts. My main focus has been to maintain service levels and quality of care, and therefore preserve quality of life for our clients.

For the past 18 months, in the hopes of a resolution from CLBC, Bruce and I have been using our personal money from our other businesses to keep Vectis afloat. Once we were given the refusal to pay the deficit from CLBC, I immediately let them know that neither Vectis or Bruce and I could continue to fund CLBC's shortfall. When asking CLBC how we were supposed to carry on I was informed that; I was a bad business person, I should change (reduce) our staffing ratio (we now run some of the highest staffed homes in BC), or you've managed up to now just carry on.

As you can see I have sent emails to all sorts of people, getting very few responses. Once I resent the email with Media contacts on, I got a call from CLBC summoning us to their office. After being asked what are concerns were, (like they didn't already know). CLBC agreed to pay the

majority of the staffing deficit, not all and no costs deficits, with a verbal promise to look at the cost deficits in the near future. At this point we were happy with anything but the battle still continues. We still have deficits some still in staffing but mainly just living costs.

The one positive thing that has come out of this is we are getting a visit from Tim Cottrell a Director in the Ministry of Social Development's Disability Services Branch., Odette Dantzer (who has done a lot of work in the same area) and the Branch Executive Director Harb Sihota, on behalf of Minister Cadieux. The visit will take place on Jan 31st, 1:30 at Viewmont and 2:45 at Weaver. They only wanted to visit one house so I suggested these two, as they represent both ends of the spectrum of 24hr care that we offer. As you are aware this is the most expensive type of care that CLBC fund, it is also the biggest area they are trying to cut by moving people into home shares which cost them a third.

I did ask Tim as they wouldn't get to see the other houses could I invite any clients, staff and family members to come to these venues. He was very happy for as many people to come and share with them as possible. "Visiting two homes would be fine, I think. I think I can carve out two hours, say from 1:30 – 3:30, for the visit. Meeting parents/family and persons from the other homes is a great idea." Tim Cottrell

So I am asking for your support in person at either of the venues, or with emails, letters or faxes, to let them know how you feel about the support your loved one needs, especially for the future. I'm sure that they will not get time to talk to everyone and hear the intricacies of each person's needs, so I do suggest that you also bring something in writing that they can take away. Preferably with pictures attached so it becomes a little more personal for them as they will have met some of our clients. I feel that we have been given a chance to speak up and advocate for our loved ones, so please, let's make the most of it.

I apologize for not letting you know earlier but I was pressured by CLBC not to keep you informed. With veiled threats of not being able to continue contracting with them if I was to persist in telling family members what was happening.

On behalf of all our clients and staff at Vectis

Yours truly

Sarah Balazs.

Executive Director, Vectis Support Services Ltd