

# A year of transition



British Columbia  
College of Social Workers

2011 Annual Report



**British Columbia  
College of Social Workers**

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# College Governance and Administration

## 2011 Members of the Board

**Doris Darvasi**

Lower Mainland, Public member

**Lorna Dittmar**

Interior, Public member

**Bruce Hallsor**

Vancouver Island, Public member

**Susan Hogman, RSW**

Lower Mainland, Private practice

**Elizabeth (Liz) Jones, RSW**

Lower Mainland, Faculty member,  
University of British Columbia

**Curtis Magnuson, RSW**

Lower Mainland, Faculty member,  
University of the Fraser Valley

**Geraldine Manson**

Vancouver Island, Public member

**Gary Mavis, RSW**

Lower Mainland Executive Director,  
Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents

**Susan Noakes, RSW**

Vancouver Island,  
Social Worker, The Law Centre

**Bruce Northey, RSW**

Interior Faculty member,  
College of New Caledonia

**Glen Schmidt, RCSW**

Interior Faculty member,  
University of Northern British Columbia

**Chi Ying Wong, RCSW**

Lower Mainland Social Worker,  
Richmond Mental Health Team

## Executive

**Elizabeth Jones, RSW (Chair)**

**Susan Hogman, RSW (Vice-Chair)**

**Gary Mavis, RSW (Treasurer)**

## Staff

**Susan Irwin, RSW,**  
Registrar (until June 30th, 2011),

**John Mayr**  
(appointed July 1st, 2011), Registrar

**Sheila Begg, RSW**  
Director of Registration

**Nicole Abram**  
Registration Coordinator;

**Kirsten Dowd**  
Office Coordinator

## Practice Consultant

**Bonnie White, RSW**

A large crowd of people, mostly seen from behind, with a blue and yellow floral graphic overlay.

# A year of transition

# Letter from the Chair

It is with pleasure that I present the Annual Report for the British Columbia College of Social Workers for the year ending December 31, 2011 which is the third year of operation for the College of Social Workers. This year has been remarkable for the continued growth and development of the College and this report reflects the activities and ongoing business of the College.

As the designated regulatory body for the profession of social work in BC, the College acts within its statutory authority to develop policies and procedures consistent with the duty and objects established by the *Social Workers Act*.

Effective regulation relies on a balance between the functions of professional advocacy, which properly is the mandate of the BC Association of Social Workers, and the College's regulatory function. The College is keenly aware of its role as a regulator. As a member of the Canadian Council of Social Work Regulators and the Association of Social Work Boards, BC plays an active role, nationally and internationally, in professional regulatory matters related to social work, social policy, and social justice.

I would like to take this opportunity to honour the dedication and hard work of all members of the College's Board. The College is fortunate that each member brings value and knowledge benefitting both the organization and the public we serve. I equally honour the members of Committees as well as the numerous volunteers and staff of the College.

The work of the College also benefits greatly from a strong relationship with the Ministry of Children and Family Development. A strong and respectful relationship is fundamental to the continued success of the College and the profession of social work. By working together we seek to enhance the services provided by qualified and competent practitioners for the benefit of all British Columbians.

Yours truly



**Elizabeth (Liz) Jones, RSW**  
*Chair*

# Registrar's Report

It seems somehow fitting that 2011 was yet another year of transition for the BC College of Social Workers reflecting social work as a profession of change. Mid-year we bid a fond farewell to Susan Irwin, RSW who had been Registrar through the transition from the Board of Registration for Social Workers to the BC College of Social Workers. Susan had many accomplishments in her years as our Chief Administrative Officer and established a solid foundation for the College. Thanks to the hard work of Ms. Irwin, the College hosted a very successful meeting of the International Association of Social Work Boards in the spring of 2011.

The College continued its work on improving the effectiveness and efficiency of its registration processes. 2011 was the first year that the College offered on-line renewal – over 58% of registrants opted to renew that way. Importantly, on-line renewal helped the College reduce the amount of paper we use, our mailing costs, and, perhaps most importantly, our carbon footprint. This reduction in costs has however been offset by increased bank and credit card processing fees.

As reported by the Registration Committee, the registrant base of the College continues to grow. In part, this is a result of the Health Authorities looking to register all their social workers. We continue to work with the Ministry, Health Authorities and others towards the removal of the exemption for social workers employed by Health Authorities and look forward to welcoming all their social workers to the College.

Another important event occurred when the

Supreme Court of British Columbia upheld the *Social Workers Act* which was challenged by a former registrant who resigned his licence after the College issued a citation for a disciplinary hearing. (For more details please see the Discipline Committee's report.)

The report of the Inquiry Committee is testimony to the fact that there are few complaints made against Registered Social Workers. While we are pleased with the low number of complaints, we continue to work with our registrants to monitor practice trends and encourage high practice standards.

In November the College hosted an education day in conjunction with the BC Association of Social Workers. Speaking on the topic of social media, Susan Mankita brought into sharp focus just a few of the challenges and opportunities facing social workers and the dynamics of social work practice. Those same dynamics also drive much of the work of the College as we strive to improve services to the public and to registrants.

Positive outcomes require dialogue so I encourage every registrant to call with concerns and comments and to consider participating in the regulation of social work as a Committee member or running for election as a Board member. Things are happening and I am privileged to be part of the College during these exciting times.



**John Mayr**  
*Registrar*

# Highlights

## Quality Assurance

The Quality Assurance Committee presented to the Board a plan to implement a system of continuing education and quality assurance. Based on a broad range of activities and opportunities to cater to all aspects of social work practice, the implementation of a professional development program is an important aspect of the development of the profession. The Board requested that the Committee next develop a consultation plan so that the College may implement a system that will benefit registrants and the members of the public who receive social work services.

Quality assurance programs are a requirement of those professions regulated under the *Health Professions Act* in BC and are currently in place for social workers in many jurisdictions in North America. The Association of Social Work Boards has an extensive system of approval known as ACE.

In 2003, the Ministry of Health commissioned a report on quality assurance programs in regulated professions. It is an interesting read and highlights many of the challenges the Committee faces in developing a suitable program. That report can be found on the Legislation and Professional Regulation website of the Ministry of Health.

## Governance and Board

The College welcomed the appointment of Doris Darvasi as a public member of the Board in September. Ms. Darvasi brings a perspective to the Board. As the year came to a close, two other public members indicated that they would not be returning. The continuing members of the Board would like to thank Lorna Dittmar and Geraldine Manson for their contributions and commitment to public service. The College requested the continued appointment of Bruce Hallsor and it was anticipated that two new public members would be appointed in 2012.

The composition of the Board is established by the *Social Workers Act* which requires that not less than one-third of its members are appointed by the Minister.

## Registration of Social Workers in Health Authorities

The Health Authorities Exemptions Workgroup met monthly through 2011 for the purpose of removing the exemption from the Social Workers Regulation. During 2011, the group developed a transition plan and continues to work on a communications strategy. Adult Guardianship legislation provides for Registered Social Workers to act as designated healthcare providers. By being registered, social workers will not have to be as concerned about the loss of social work positions to other regulated professions while the public will continue to access the services of qualified social workers. If the exemption is not removed, Health Authorities would likely reassign social work positions to other registered professionals even though those services are best provided by a qualified social worker.

## Canadian Council of Social Work Regulators

The Canadian Council of Social Work Regulators (CCSWR) is a pan-Canadian organization with representatives from the ten provinces. The main focus of the group in 2011 was the development of a competency profile for social work. With funding from Human Resources and Development Canada, CCSWR engaged the services of Directions LLP to assist in the project. Not surprisingly, there are diverging opinions on the value and utility of a competency profile. Initial survey results are encouraging, however. With an expected completion date of mid-2012, CCSWR is looking forward to continuing the conversation about the profile and to taking the next steps in the process to creating a national social work competency profile.

# Committee Reports

## Finance Committee

Members: **Gary Mavis** (Chair);  
**Susan Hogman; Elizabeth (Liz) Jones**

Staff: **Susan Irwin** (to June 30, 2011) and  
**John Mayr**

The Finance Committee manages the College's system of financial administration and makes recommendations to the Board regarding financial policies, systems and procedures.

The Committee presented and the Board approved a draft budget at the November Board meeting. There was no increase in fees for 2012 registration or renewals as the College realized benefits from efforts to control costs.

The Committee also oversees the Audit. A summary of the Audit for the year ending December 31, 2011 is included in this Annual Report. For a complete version, please visit the College's website or contact the College office.

## Registration Committee

Members: **Susan Hogman** (Chair);  
**Dawn Branswell; Susara Joubert;**  
**Glen Schmidt; Susan Waldron**

Staff: **Sheila Begg**

The Registration Committee establishes policies regarding matters related to applications and registration. Issues considered by the Committee include:

- cross-jurisdictional counselling
- criminal record checks from foreign countries
- licensure to practice examination.

## Statistics

As of December 31, 2011 there were 2,627 Registered Social Workers:

Registered, Full	<b>2,367</b>
Registered, Clinical	<b>124</b>
Registered, Non-Practising	<b>136</b>

\* Total registrants as of December 31, 2010: 2462

## Quality Assurance Committee

Members: **Glen Schmidt** (Chair); **Lorna Dittmar;**  
**Andrea Harstone; Susan Noakes;**  
**Bruce Northey; Chi Ying Wong**

Staff: **Bonnie White**

The Quality Assurance Committee is responsible for developing and maintaining the College's *Standards of Practice*. Throughout the year the Committee's primary focus was related to the development of a continuing competency program and related policies and requirements.

Committee members examined definitions of continuing competency and looked at the continuing competency programs from other social work regulatory bodies and other professions. Research included a literature review and consideration of a number of background papers prepared for the BC College of Social Workers and, earlier, the Board of Registration. The Committee focussed on requirements that would be designed to improve the quality of practice while reflecting social work practice throughout British Columbia.

It recognized that social workers have differing levels of access to activities and different interests that might form the basis for program objectives. A draft proposal was presented to the Board at its September meeting. Based on feedback from the Board, the Committee began revising some aspects of the program. A consultative process will take place in the coming months.

## Inquiry Committee

Members: **Susan Noakes** (Chair);  
**Curtis Magnuson; Geraldine Manson;**  
**Janice Murphy; Bruce Northey**

Staff: **Susan Irwin** (to June 30, 2011)  
and **John Mayr**

The Inquiry Committee is responsible for inquiries into complaints and matters related to professional conduct.

The following statistics reflect the number of complaints received, and the action taken, during 2011 to date:

files brought forward from previous year	13
new files	12
total files	25

The following actions were taken on these 25 files :

no further action	13
Complaint Resolution Agreements outstanding	3
Complaint Resolution Agreements completed	4
active investigations	3
Complaint Resolution Agreements signed	1
Citations issued (hearing to be scheduled)	1

## Registration Appeals Committee

Members: **Bruce Hallsor** (Chair); **Gary Mavis;**  
**Chi Ying Wong**

The Registration Appeals Committee is established by the *Social Workers Act* for the purpose of hearing appeals from decisions of the Registration Committee.

The Registration Appeals Committee conducted a hearing in 2010 and issued one decision in 2011. The issue was the good character of the applicant. On the basis of the evidence, the Committee found certain facts that, in the opinion of the Committee's members,

demonstrated that the applicant did not meet the test of good character. The decision of the Registration Appeals Committee was to uphold the decision of the Registration Committee and reject the application.

## Discipline Committee

Members: **Bruce Hallsor** (Chair); **Lorna Dittmar;**  
**Liz Jones; Gary Mavis; Chi Ying Wong**

The Discipline Committee is established by the *Social Workers Act* to hold formal hearings into serious matters. Serious matters are those that, after investigation by the Inquiry Committee or upon the Inquiry Committee reporting to the Board, require the issuance of a Citation for Hearing.

There is currently one Citation for Hearing outstanding. In this matter it is alleged that a former registrant of the College misconducted himself as follows:

1. He prepared a custody and access report for a court that failed to meet the *Standards of Practice*.
2. He administered a personality inventory test in a manner that failed to meet the *Standards of Practice*.
3. He failed to advise the court or a parent of their role in the court proceedings subsequent to the custody and access report in question.
4. He diagnosed and provided opinions which were beyond the scope of his practice.
5. He charged excessive fees.

The registrant involved applied to the Supreme Court of BC for a judicial review of the decision that the College had authority under the *Social Workers Act* (2008) over a registrant registered under the previous *Social Workers Act* with the Board of Registration for Social Workers.

The College was successful in the Supreme Court and is currently awaiting other proceedings before scheduling the hearing.

# Independent Auditor's Report

## To the Members of British Columbia College of Social Workers

(These pages are only part of the full Audit report. To obtain a copy of the full Audit, please visit the College's website at [www.bccollegeofsocialworkers.ca](http://www.bccollegeofsocialworkers.ca) or contact the College's office at 604-737-4916.)

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of British Columbia College of Social Workers, which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2011 and the statements of revenues and expenditures, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

### Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial

statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of British Columbia College of Social Workers as at December 31, 2011, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

The financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2010 are unaudited and were reviewed by another chartered accounting firm and are presented for comparative purposes only.

Originals Signed

**Burnaby, British Columbia**  
**February 29, 2012**  
**McDonald Rickett, Chartered Accountants**

# British Columbia College of Social Workers

## Statement of Financial Position, Year Ended December 31, 2011

	2011	2010 <i>Unaudited</i>
<b>Assets</b>		
Current		
Cash	\$ 312,423	\$ 115,076
Term deposits	562,908	622,850
Accounts receivable	5,271	12,073
Prepaid expenses	20,921	6,986
	<b>901,523</b>	756,985
Capital assets ( <i>Note 4, see full report on the BCCSW website</i> )	\$ 14,223	\$ 3,782
Long term deposits	24,277	24,277
	<b>\$ 940,023</b>	<b>\$ 785,044</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Current		
Accounts payable	\$ 12,537	\$ 22,284
Deferred income	120,491	100,877
	<b>133,028</b>	123,161
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Operating fund	\$ 386,614	\$ 241,502
Operating reserve fund	240,000	240,000
Hearings fund	180,381	180,381
	<b>806,995</b>	661,883
	<b>\$ 940,023</b>	<b>\$ 785,044</b>

# British Columbia College of Social Workers

## Statement of Revenues and Expenditures, December 31, 2011

	2011	2010 <i>Unaudited</i>
<b>Revenues</b>		
Registration fees	\$ 603,295	\$ 580,303
Application fees	52,974	44,106
Interest and other	14,660	10,555
	<u>670,929</u>	<u>634,964</u>
<b>Administration expenses</b>		
Accounting	12,432	15,931
Amortization	4,774	2,050
Bank and credit card charges	17,971	13,020
Computer support	17,009	94,701
Criminal records review program costs	13,525	20,251
Insurance	3,762	5,945
Newsletter	20,906	16,107
Office equipment	4,653	4,442
Office supplies	6,821	4,164
Postage and courier	27,603	19,486
Printing	9,081	54,315
Rent	32,411	31,427
Telephone and internet	4,312	6,078
	<u>175,260</u>	<u>287,917</u>
<b>Professional activities</b>		
Legal	20,077	48,151
Consultation	4,721	8,106
Hearings	5,506	25,360
Subscriptions and memberships	3,966	3,298
Professional development	1,350	842
Registrar's travel	6,590	3,278
AGM	14,251	-
	<u>56,461</u>	<u>89,035</u>
<b>Board activities</b>		
Board travel	25,898	29,015
Development	-	481
Honorarium	3,900	3,900
Meetings	7,478	10,358
	<u>37,276</u>	<u>43,754</u>
<b>Staffing</b>		
Salaries	204,659	185,463
Staff contract	20,081	24,574
Benefits	32,081	27,704
	<u>256,821</u>	<u>237,741</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over board activities,	<u>\$ 145,112</u>	<u>\$ (23,483)</u>

The BC College of Social Workers has the following duty and objects as established by Section 3 of the *Social Workers Act*

**Duty and objects**

**3 (1).** In carrying out its objects, it is the duty of the college at all times

- (a) to serve and protect the public, and
- (b) to exercise its powers and discharge its responsibilities under this Act in the public interest.

**(2).** The college has the following objects:

- (a) to superintend the practice of social work;
- (b) to govern registrants according to this Act;
- (c) to establish the qualifications required for registration as a registrant;
- (d) to establish and employ registration, inquiry and discipline practices which are transparent, objective, impartial and fair;
- (e) to establish, monitor and enforce standards of practice and establish ethical standards to enhance the quality of practice;
- (f) to establish and maintain a continuing competence program to promote high practice standards amongst registrants;
- (g) to receive and investigate complaints against registrants and to deal with issues of discipline, professional misconduct, incompetence and incapacity;
- (h) to administer the affairs of the college and perform other duties through the exercise of the powers conferred under this Act.