



# BC Epilepsy Society

ANNUAL REPORT  
2016



## Mission Statement

To empower, educate and support British Columbians living with epilepsy and their families, and support research to make their lives easier.

"Epilepsy is the most common serious brain disorder worldwide with no age, race, social class, national, nor geographic boundaries."

*World Health Organization*

## Welcome New Executive Director

BC Epilepsy Society welcomes **Lisa Westermark** as our new Executive Director. Lisa brings 25+ years of experience in non-profit leadership in local, provincial and national organizations. Expertise in strategic planning, philanthropy, governance, government and public relations.



### Message from the Chair and Executive Director

We proudly reflect on the many accomplishments in 2016. We experienced a change in leadership, growth in our program delivery, new approaches to fundraising, improved communication strategies, all while striving to increase relevance and furthering our mission and vision.

*Dan O'Brien, Chair & Lisa Westermark, Executive Director*

### Introduction

In this report we will discuss:

- Programs and Services
- Research
- Welcome New Directors
- Outlook for 2017



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## Programs & Services

### Partnership with BC Children's Hospital Neurology Team

Our partnership with the neurology team at BCCH is now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year. The Society's staff assist families in connecting with our services or finding the appropriate community support to meet their individual needs. We are proud to have assisted over 2,000 families on their journey with epilepsy.



### Partnership with Vancouver General Hospital, Epilepsy Clinic

We have entered our second year of service with the epilepsy clinic at VGH. Our staff provide a community presence and offer information on Society services, programs and resources to adult patients living with epilepsy.



### Partners in Teaching

Staff delivered 77 workshops to teachers, students, child care providers, disability support workers and others. Workshops focus on facts and myths about epilepsy, recognizing and responding to a seizure, and the psychosocial implications of living with epilepsy. Teachers' kits are provided to each group. The program continues to grow.



### Scholarships

Scholarships are awarded to youth with epilepsy toward their university tuition. We have awarded 64 scholarships since 2007.

Our awards were on hold for 2016, however we are pleased that they will be available again for 2017 and applications are currently under review.



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# Programs & Services



## Kids Up Front

This partnership of 5 years, allows us to offer families living with epilepsy the opportunity to access entertainment and sports events at no charge. Currently 47 families participate in this program.



## Camp Subsidies

On hold for 2016. We are pleased to offer camp subsidies again in 2017.



## Monthly Support Groups

In-Person: has been active for 13 years. A peer-led vibrant community helping each other on their journey.

On-Line: an option for people who cannot attend in-person due to geography, health or logistics. This group has been successful and continues to grow.



## E-Newsletter

Now in it's 9<sup>th</sup> year, we have changed the look and feel of our monthly newsletter and continuously strive to improve the content to ensure it is relevant and interesting to subscribers.

Circulated to over 2,500 members.



## Information Sheets

We have over 75 information sheets

on a wide range of topics relating to living with epilepsy. They are updated at least every five years with the assistance medical professionals. Info sheets are available at BCCH clinic, VGH clinic, BC Epilepsy Society office and on our website.



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# Programs & Services

## New Website Launched

Our new site is easier to navigate and hosts a wealth of resources for people living with epilepsy and caregivers. Visit us at [www.bcepilepsy.com](http://www.bcepilepsy.com)

## Olympian Marion Clignet

On August 14 we were honoured to host Olympian Marion Clignet's inspirational talk about her journey with epilepsy. Followed by a 5km walk around Burnaby Lake. 37 people attended her talk and 26 participated in the walk.



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# Research

## Dr. Stuart Cain

The Society proudly supported Dr. Cain's work (2014-16), to characterize and establish a novel mouse model of Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP). This research benefits scientists and clinicians investigating the underlying mechanisms and promote the evaluation of new therapies to prevent it.

Publications are available on our website.



# Welcome New Directors



## Katy Fairley

VP, Business Development, Kinetic Construction.

Board member, Vancouver Island Construction Association. Awarded "Outstanding Woman in Construction" in 2014.

Diagnosed with Juvenile Myoclonic Epilepsy at age 17 and has been seizure free for 3 years and counting!



## Carmen Ekelund

National Accounts On Premise, E&J Gallo Canada.

Returning to the Board after a brief hiatus.

She is an experienced professional in the food and beverage industry. Her extensive expertise in sales and marketing is a great asset to the Society.



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# In Appreciation

## Thank you

The BC Epilepsy Society is deeply grateful for the unrelenting and deeply rooted commitment of our Members, Board of Directors, Professional Advisory Committee, Donors, Volunteers and Staff.



## Chalet Lights 2016

Thank you to the Ribalkin/Viau family for donating \$6,927 as part proceeds from their amazing light display of their home in North Vancouver. The project required many hours of labour and love on the part of the family.

L-R John Ribalkin, Aurore Viau & Ethan Ribalkin, Verico Nova Financial Services, Jas Lachar, BC Epilepsy Society, John Ranking, North Shore Shrine Club




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Our goal for 2017 is to continue to grow and expand our existing programs and services. We are looking forward to strengthening our core service delivery and to seeking new opportunities for partnership and growth. We will engage new initiatives that increase our reach throughout the province.

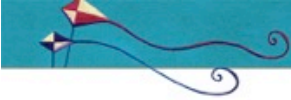
The BC Epilepsy Society has been serving people living with epilepsy for 58 years and we remain committed to our mission.

New areas include:

- New Partnership with Surrey Memorial Hospital Neurology team
- Webinars
- Shakin' not Cured Gala
- Pursue new partnerships with other organizations
- Infrastructure (database, policies, systems)
- Fundraising opportunities



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## Staff, Board and PAC

### Staff Team

**Lisa Westermark**, Executive Director  
**Marlyn Chow**, RSW, Support Services  
**Jasdeep (Jas) Lachar**, BSW, Support Services  
**Julie Holeksa**, MSc, Communications  
**Kayte Gillespie**, CB, Bookkeeper  
**Chris Lal**, Peer Support Lead

### Board of Directors


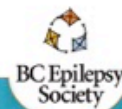
**Dan O'Brien**, CPA, CA, Chair  
**Steven Fruitman**, LLB, Secretary  
**Trevor Young**, MBA, Treasurer  
**Stuart Cain**, PhD, PAC, Co-Chair  
**Linda Huh**, MD, FRCPC, PAC, Co-Chair  
**Carmen Ekelund**, Director  
**Katy Fairley**, Director

### Professional Advisory Committee

**Stuart Cain**, PhD, Co-Chair  
**Linda Huh**, MD, FRCPC, Co-Chair  
**Mary Connolly**, MB, BCh, FRCP(C), FRCP(I), FRCP(Edin)  
**Anita Datta**, MD, FRCPC  
**Islam Hassan**, MBChB, MMedSc, MPsy, MRCP(UK), MRCPsych,  
FRANZCP, FRCPC  
**Chantelle Hrazdil**, MD, FRCPC  
**Sharon Peinhof**, RN, BSN  
**Sherri Purves**, MD, PhD, FRCPC, FAAN  
**Jing Tan**, PhD, ABPP-CN

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