



MetroScope

March/April 2009

Published bimonthly by the Toronto Chapter
of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada

Theme this issue: Incontinence and Bladder Symptoms

Yes, you can have control over your bladder symptoms

guest article by Jennifer Skelly



Jennifer Skelly

Jennifer Skelly, RN, PhD, is the director of the Continence Program at St. Joseph's Healthcare, Hamilton, Ontario.

Having good bladder control is something we learn as children and then most of us take for granted the rest of our lives. Nine out of 10 people living with multiple sclerosis are likely to experience some sort of bladder control problem.


Loss of urine is referred to as incontinence. For some it may be a few drops of urine that leaks out when they cough, laugh or sneeze. Others may lose urine as they rush to the bathroom. Fortunately, we now understand a lot more about the factors that can contribute to greater risk for urine loss. This means that we can try to control or correct these factors and reduce the chance of leaking.

Multiple sclerosis can be a factor by reducing our awareness of the urge to go to the bathroom and our ability to walk quickly to get there in time. It can also mean we have a difficult time getting started once we get there.

If you have reduced awareness of the urge to go then one suggestion would be going to the toilet at regular intervals and not waiting for the urge to occur. This idea is called "prompted voiding," which means

that the person or caregiver will be reminded to go to the bathroom at intervals of two to three hours during the day. Once you determine the schedule that works best for you, then you can follow it. It also helps with the problem of needing more time to get to the bathroom.

There are a number of other factors that we can modify, for example, the amount of fluids we drink in a day. It is quite common for those who experience incontinence or frequency of urination to reduce the amount of liquids they drink thinking that "the less you drink the less you pee." In fact, this makes the problem worse. Low fluid intake makes the urine more concentrated, and concentrated urine will increase the feelings of urgency and frequency. It is important to try to drink at

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- 3... Chapter Events
- 4... Holiday Party 2008/Resources
- 5... Members Helping Members
- 6... Donations
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...and much more!

Upcoming issues: ♦ May/June: Emergency Preparation
♦ July/August: Sexuality and MS ♦ September/October: MS Myths

Taking action on bladder symptoms can lead to independence

In 2003, Marilyn Cairns visited a urologist after her doctor noted recurring bladder infections. The urologist sent her to a specialist for a urodynamics study – a series of tests to discover how the bladder is working.

"The technicians were very patient in explaining the entire procedure, but modesty goes out the window when you are lying on a stretcher with your feet up in the air, and a bunch of people are staring at you," Marilyn jokes.

Marilyn was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in February 1994 after several visits to a neurologist, an evoked potential test and finally an MRI.

Her symptoms began in 1975, when she had six weeks of double vision and in 1980, she experienced the loss of hearing in one ear for one week.

"The follow-up letters to my family doctor said "possible demyelination; did not discuss with patient,"" Marilyn says.

Marilyn then stayed mainly symptom free for many years until 1993, when she noticed that some toes on her right foot were slightly numb and she was limping more frequently.

Marilyn's urinary symptoms are both with urgency and not being able to void when needed. After the study, Marilyn thought a medication would be recommended for her, but she says she was surprised at what was recommended.

"The specialist said, "Your bladder does not empty completely, that is why you are having continuing bladder infections. You need to start intermittent self-catheterization.""

Marilyn says after her reaction of shock and disbelief, the specialist continued to explain why it is so important to be able to empty the bladder. It was arranged for a

nurse to come to her house to teach her how to use the catheter. Marilyn eventually came to accept that it would be positive for her health.

"I did not want chronic urinary tract infections, which, if left untreated, could lead to kidney damage," she says.

Marilyn says she uses her catheter before she goes to bed at night, and 90 per cent of the time she says she doesn't need to use the washroom before 8 a.m. She also uses a catheter before she goes out shopping.

"I usually have at least three hours of time without needing to find a washroom. I would much rather spend my time shopping instead of sitting in a tiny cubicle reading bathroom graffiti."

Marilyn also travels frequently with her husband, and says that she brings extra catheters along with her

She has also taken medication to help with urgency, which she says helps to control her incontinence.

Marilyn says she wants to share her story with others because many people find it difficult to talk about incontinence, so they try to put up with it instead of finding ways to manage the symptom.

"I urge anyone with problems to talk to others and seek help from a doctor. "Have catheter, will travel" is one of my mottos. This six-inch clear tube has made my life easier, especially when traveling," she says. "There are different treatments, medications and procedures that may help you."♦

Do you have an experience of living with MS that you'd like to share? Call Julie at 416-967-3046.

Upcoming themes: Emergency Preparation (May/June); Sex (July/August); MS Myths (September/October)

The Toronto Chapter presents.....

MS 101

An informative seminar for those newly diagnosed and friends & family.

MS 101

April 2, 2009

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

(Latecomers will not be admitted after 6:30 p.m.)

Church St./Bloor St.

Light supper

\$5 registration fee

With speaker Aprile Royal, MS Society of Canada

Aprile will provide an interactive presentation, which will offer learning opportunities, communication with others in a similar situation and sharing of issues related to MS. Anyone affected by an MS diagnosis including individuals, partners, parents, grandparents, sibling groups, extended family and friends is encouraged to attend.

Practical Emergency Preparedness Information for People with Disabilities/Special Needs

What you need to know to be better prepared for an emergency when at home, work or travelling



With guest speaker Maxine Marz
Maxine is the Diversity Outreach Officer with Emergency Management Ontario. Maxine has written the provincial publication "Emergency Preparedness Guide for People with Disability/Needs."

Saturday March 28, 2009

1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Willowdale Ave./Cummer Ave.

No fee

Drinks and snacks will be available.

Sponsored by



Register by one of the following methods:

☎ 416-922-6600 x.2501

✉ torontoevents@mssociety.ca

🌐 www.mssociety.ca/toronto/events.htm

Spring education session

⇒ Cognition & MS

More details coming soon.

Are you a parent with MS who has kids under 19?

The chapter would like your help in determining your service needs. Call Angela at 416-967-3034.

Toronto Chapter holiday party 2008: A magical afternoon



The tables at the CNIB.



Magician Bill Abbott performs a trick with the assistance of Angela Rodriguez, manager of client services.

On December 11, MS Society, Toronto Chapter members, staff and friends gathered to celebrate the holiday season. The event was held at the CNIB and attended by approximately 120 guests.

The tables at the CNIB were beautifully set with poinsettia flower centrepieces and green linens. The day's menu included salad, turkey with all the fixings and a chocolate torte for dessert. Many members and guests commented on the quality and freshness of the meal, which was provided by the CNIB's catering staff.

After dinner, magician Bill Abbott wowed the audience with his mind-reading tricks. His entertaining presentation was a great ending to a lovely afternoon.

The staff of the Toronto Chapter sincerely thank the CNIB for their dedication and attentiveness in putting on a wonderful event. ♦

Resources

MS Society Toronto chapter
Incontinence Supplies program
Up to \$25 monthly subsidy
416-967-3033

Ability Health Care Supplies Inc.
Variety of products available for purchase
416-444-4470
info@abilityhealthcare.ca

The Canadian Continence Foundation
705-750-4600
www.continence-fdn.ca

Incontinence supplies consultations & free next day home delivery

Do you really know if you are using the best product to meet your needs?

Home Care Supplies' professional staff will work with you one on one to identify the most suitable product to assist you in regaining some independence. Home Care Supplies specializes in incontinence products. All of the products come with free next day delivery.

For your free consultation or product sample, please call **416-750-1928**. Home Care Supplies is a division of Scarborough Support Services, a nonprofit charitable organization.

Visit the website at www.ssse.on.ca/hcs/hcs.html. ♦

EXECUTIVE REPORT



Lynn Laccohee (L), Angela Rodriguez (R), co-acting executive directors.

The Toronto Chapter's 2007-2008 fiscal year was a dynamic time. New programs and initiatives were developed and change was weathered in a way that positively impacted the chapter.

Education sessions once again delivered engaging expert speakers. Aprile Royal and Linda Gruson presented to newly diagnosed individuals and families at MS 101; Lynn McEwan spoke about fatigue management; representatives from TTC Wheel-Trans presented updates to service; and the summer event highlighted travelling with a disability, presented by Access Holidays. Many of these sessions have been placed on the chapter website as audio files, which helps us reach a wider audience (www.mssociety.ca/toronto/elibrary.htm).

Along with educational events, our members also enjoyed social events like our annual holiday party, which included an entertaining presentation by David Phillips, senior climatologist.

Chapter staff has each pursued activities to increase the chapter's profile and improve community services.

Lynn Laccohee chairs the Network of Neurological Diseases, which is comprised of many different agencies. She also is a member of the Disability Issues Committee with the City of Toronto.

Angela Rodriguez continues to chair the MS Resource Network comprised of healthcare and community service professionals within Toronto providing services to persons with MS.

Angela, along with Lisa Landriault, attended an MPP reception at Queen's Park in May highlighting the home care needs of persons with MS.

Lisa organized an open house at Ability Health Care Supplies Inc. for community occupational therapists. She created information folders for the OTs, which provide them with information to distribute to their clients with MS.

The chapter benefited from various foundation and individual donations, including the Takla Foundation donating \$3,000 and BMO Employee Charitable Foundation donating \$10,000.

In the past fiscal year, 408 individuals received services through the funding program. The total value of donated equipment items was \$78,550. Two hundred and ten equipment items were loaned to members.

Julie Crljen arranged for an archiving service to preserve all chapter newsletters dating back to the 1950s. She encouraged members to be active participants in *MetroScope* through the Living with MS and Members Helping Members columns. Julie also designed new display boards for community events that clearly present our mission and services. She also continues to ensure the volunteer program meets the chapter's needs while being rewarding to those giving their time to the chapter.

Under Patricia Cole's direction, the chapter's in honour and in memoriam programs raised \$59,130. Patricia also maintains the chapter membership, which is currently around 1200 members.

We thank you for your financial support, equipment donations, education suggestions and volunteer hours during 2007-2008. Thank you to the board of directors for their continued leadership and the staff for your dedication.

May we serve you well in 2008-2009. ♦


Angela Rodriguez


Lynn Laccohee



MAKING A DIFFERENCE...

Message from the board of directors chair

by Colin Rickards



Colin Rickards,
Toronto Chapter
board chair with
Linda Lumsden,
Ontario Division
board chair,
signing the MOU.

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada is 60 years old this year, slightly older than the Toronto Chapter, which is itself slightly older than Ontario Division. At the National and Ontario Division levels there have been changes during the past fiscal year that will have some effect on our activities, but not of an adverse nature.

At the chapter level, we completed two forward-looking initiatives. Led by Vice Chair Sean Foran, we renegotiated our existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which is our grant agreement with Ontario Division. Concurrently, Treasurer Ivor Gottschalk, assisted by chapter staff, negotiated an arrangement with Ontario Division for them to handle much of our financial processing.

Both these tasks were time consuming and somewhat complex, needing to be done in such a way to protect the chapter's autonomy and control. I would like to thank Sean and Ivor for their staying power and skills. The time and attention expended by the Ontario Division board members and staff is also gratefully acknowledged.

At last year's AGM, I advised you that executive director Pamela Freedman was on long leave. Please be advised that she will not be returning to the chapter. We wish her well as she devotes her considerable energies and talents to new interests. We will, in the coming year, be involved in a search for a new fulltime executive director.

I do not need to speak of chapter activities, as Lynn Laccohee and Angela Rodriguez, our co-acting executive directors, have covered everything of importance in their Executive Report (see page 1).

Toronto Chapter has been blessed with excellent board members – some leaving us as they complete their term – and a hard working staff. We welcome four new board members. I thank all the directors – going, staying and arriving – and the chapter staff for their dedication to our mission. ♦



Colin Rickards, Chair

2007-2008 In Honour & In Memoriam program

This past year, the chapter's in memory and in honour donations program raised \$59,130. Supporters made generous gifts to the chapter to mark the passing of loved ones and special events.

The chapter's enhancements to this program include our relaunch of the program as the "Commemorative Giving" program. We think this name captures the essence of the program as a wonderful way to remember a person or event.

Also, donors can now visit the website to let us know that they want to donate to the chapter by taking a moment to fill out an online form (www.mssociety.ca/toronto/donation_form.htm).

When a donation is made to the chapter in honour or in memory of someone, the chapter will send a personalized card to the individual or the individual's family. When a donation is made to celebrate an event, the chapter can provide a

plaque for display at the event.

Each year, stories that touch us come our way through this program. This past year we have come across many brides and grooms giving donation wedding favours; children who ask for donations instead of birthday gifts; couples who are celebrating anniversaries and ask for donations in lieu of gifts; and groups who make contributions to honour the retirement of a special co-worker.

We were also saddened by the loss of long-time members and friends of the chapter. The friends and relatives of many of these individuals made gifts to the chapter and encouraged others to give to the chapter in memory of their loved one. Their legacy lives on in these contributions.

The chapter thanks everyone who made gifts to remember or to honour a special someone. ♦

**MS SOCIETY OF CANADA,
TORONTO CHAPTER
FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS**

Balance Sheet

As at August 31, 2008

	2008	2007
	\$	\$
	(unaudited)	(unaudited)
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash	293,087	204,948
Accounts receivable	6,268	1,091
Prepaid expenses	100	951
	<u>299,455</u>	<u>206,990</u>
Capital Assets – Net	<u>2,479</u>	<u>4,799</u>
	<u>301,934</u>	<u>211,789</u>
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	74,491	17,560
Due to other MS Society of Canada offices	88,208	30,738
Deferred revenue	10,743	10,000
	<u>173,442</u>	<u>58,298</u>
Net Assets		
Invested in Capital Assets	2,479	4,799
Unrestricted	126,013	148,692
	<u>128,492</u>	<u>153,491</u>
	<u>301,934</u>	<u>211,789</u>

Approved by the board of directors


Ivor Gotschalk, Treasurer


Colin Rickards, Chair

Statement of Revenue and Expenditures and Changes in Net Assets

For the year ended August 31, 2008

	2008	2007
	\$	\$
	(unaudited)	(unaudited)
Revenue		
Allocation from United Way	140,332	135,004
Allocation from United Way – Donor's Choice		
Unrestricted	116,826	116,395
Restricted for research	15,816	6,410
Donations from individuals and groups		
Unrestricted	101,182	96,909
Restricted for research	17,247	35,073
Membership dues	11,838	11,483
Investment income	6,727	10,021
Grants	24,362	9,168
Miscellaneous	1,539	740
	<u>435,869</u>	<u>421,203</u>
MS Society, Ontario Division grant	301,678	287,312
Bequests	10,000	22,720
	<u>747,547</u>	<u>731,235</u>
Less: Funds remitted to Ontario Division for programs and services	<u>(21,763)</u>	<u>(20,959)</u>
	<u>725,784</u>	<u>710,276</u>
Expenditures		
Program services		
Client services	502,152	458,168
Public education	77,620	70,270
Chapter resources	68,715	62,495
Social action	14,384	13,075
Funds remitted to National Office for research	32,903	40,237
	<u>695,774</u>	<u>644,245</u>
Support Services		
Administration	55,009	53,420
	<u>750,783</u>	<u>697,665</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures for the year.	<u>(24,999)</u>	<u>12,611</u>
Unrestricted net assets – Beginning of year	<u>153,491</u>	<u>140,880</u>
Unrestricted net assets – End of year	<u>128,492</u>	<u>153,491</u>

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 08-09



(Top row, L-R):

Sarah Azargive, Michael Binder, Krista Corbeil, Sean Foran (vice-chair).

(Middle row, L-R):

Ivor Gottschalk (treasurer), David McClung (vice-chair), Patricia McQuillan, Colin Rickards (chair).

(Bottom row, L-R):

Christopher J. Staples, Deborah Worrad

(Absent:)

Kelly Kimens

Chapter Services

- Counselling & referral
- Workshops
- Resource library
- Equipment loans and funding assistance
- Home help and incontinence supplies subsidies
- Bimonthly newsletter
- E-mail bulletin
- Advocacy
- Support Groups

The Toronto Chapter would like to thank our many donors for their support during the 2007-2008 fiscal year. It is only with your help that we are able to make a difference in the lives of those living with MS and the people close to them by providing information, services and programs. Thank you very much!

CHAPTER STAFF



(L-R):

Lisa Landriault (Manager, Funding Programs), Angela Rodriguez (Manager, Client Services), Patricia Cole (Manager, Administration), Julie Crljen (Manager, Communications & Volunteers), Lynn Laccohee (Manager, Client Services).

Using a catheter to help with bladder retention is a relief

by guest columnist Linda Hindin*

Dear Linda,

I am a female. I experience retention and have difficulty voiding urine. Recently it was suggested that I start using a catheter for this symptom. I'm hesitant to start using it because it sounds uncomfortable and hard to insert. I just don't think I can get used to it. Did you feel this way?

Signed,

Hesitant

Dear Hesitant,

At first, I was upset that I would have to do this forever, but I had to get used to the idea quickly.

It did grant me freedom, in that I wouldn't feel the physical pressure of having to urinate every few minutes. In other words, for me it was literally and figuratively a relief.

There was some discomfort for a couple of days, but I would like to share with you some tips to make it easier.

In my case, after undergoing tests, a urologist sent a visiting nurse to instruct. I was told to use a lubricant, which is at first most

helpful. I used a numbing lubricant. After some time, I realized I did not need the lubricant as a callous develops and the catheter becomes easier to insert dry.

I also re-use the catheter for many days at home, otherwise it gets costly. It doesn't have to be boiled, I just rinse after using and set it in a glass. When I want to use it again, I wash it with soap and water.

I also make sure my catheter has polished holes, or bleeding might occur.

I try not to use public toilets, but if I must, it is essential to keep my hands clean. I find that the raised toilet seats make it more difficult to manoeuvre. It can be difficult to position yourself when you are not in your own washroom.

Also, if you think you have a bladder infection, don't hesitate to take a urine sample to your doctor as often as needed.

Good luck, you will get used to every new challenge. ♦

**Name changed to protect privacy.*



ABILITY
HEALTH CARE SUPPLIES

The Toronto Chapter thanks Ability for maintaining our equipment loans cupboard.

For all your needs call
416-444-4470

A round of applause please...

for Toronto Chapter
volunteers!

Call Julie to ask about
current opportunities
(416) 967-3046



Donations



Thank you donors!

Your thoughtful contributions help to provide equipment and services specific to the needs of individuals and families, including educational and social programs and advocacy initiatives.

Donations December 16, 2008 – February 15, 2009

Financial:

Memberships:	\$6,725
Donations, General:	\$5,841
In Honour & In Memoriam:	\$1,710
Gifts in Kind:	\$12,630
United Way of Greater Toronto, Donor's Choice:	\$1,086

A reminder



If you are making a donation to the MS Society and want it to be used for Toronto Chapter programs & services, please make your cheque payable to:

Toronto Chapter, MS Society

and address it to the attention of Patricia Cole. Thank you!

Bulletin Board



Thank you to the members and contractors of IBEW Local 35, who raised \$8,000 for the Toronto Chapter. Joe Fashion (*above right*), business manager/financial secretary, presented the cheque to Toronto Chapter board chair Colin Rickards (*above left*).

The Toronto Chapter has the following items available for loan:

- Rollators
- Transport chairs
- Manual wheelchairs
- Power wheelchairs
- Scooters
- Hospital beds
- Shower commodes
- Bath equipment

To find out how to access any of these items, please contact Lisa by calling 416-967-3033 or by e-mail at lisa.landriault@mssociety.ca.

Want to go paperless?

The Toronto Chapter is looking for individuals who would be interested in receiving chapter materials by e-mail on a trial basis. Please contact Julie at 416-967-3046 or julie.crljen@mssociety.ca.

Meet the Board

Meet one of our new board members: Krista Corbeil

Krista Corbeil, one of the Toronto Chapter's new 2008-2009 board members, brings to the board years of experience in a number of areas. She works at the Ontario Public Service and has built networks and knowledge at senior levels of operation. Her experience includes working on justice relations at both federal and provincial levels, and developing relationships with stakeholders.

Along with her professional credentials, Krista has a personal connection with multiple sclerosis and has been on MS treatment since April 2007. Recently, she volunteered to share her experiences in the MS Society of Canada video *Choosing an MS Therapy* to help those newly diagnosed consider treatment options.

Krista is also a fundraiser for MS, last year she participated in the RONA MS Bike Tour as team captain, and her team raised over \$9,000. Although she got soaked, she is already putting a team together for this year.

More recently, Krista has been involved in recruitment and Aboriginal relations training for new staff at the newly created Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and currently is a project coordinator of special projects such as leading the development, coordination and implementation of the new ministry's employee recognition program.

She also volunteers and supports such non-profit organizations as United Way Toronto and Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Toronto, as well as volunteering with Women of Influence and Inspiration for Women in the Ontario Public Service. Krista was recently nominated at United Way's Spirit Awards, which recognize the campaigns of hundreds of organizations and the contributions of thousands of volunteers. She led an exemplary campaign demonstrated by coordination, successful planning and improved results over the previous year. Krista was born and raised in Sudbury, Ontario, and now resides in Toronto. ♦



Krista Corbeil

Bladder Control...(Continued from page 1.)

least six 8 ounce glasses of fluid per day. This may require some organization on your part as you will need to think about where you will be and if you can get to a bathroom easily.

It is a good idea to try and do most of your drinking during the day and taper off by supper time. This will reduce the number of times you have to get up at night. The type of fluids we drink is also a factor because beverages that contain caffeine (coffee, tea and colas) have an irritating effect on the lining of the bladder. Caffeine also has a "diuretic" effect which means it increases the amount of urine that is produced. This results in more frequent trips to the bathroom with a feeling of urgency and increasing the risk of urine loss. Limiting your caffeine intake to one a day or switching to decaffeinated beverages can eliminate this problem and put you in control. ♦

Bulletin Board



**Do you have a new e-mail account
or has your e-mail address changed?**

**Please let us know. Call Patricia at
416-967-3036 or patricia.cole@mssociety.ca.**



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**We would like to thank
A Budget for helping the
Toronto Chapter to
provide air conditioners
to members.**

Commemorative Giving

**Mark a special occasion or the passing of a loved one
through the chapter's Commemorative Giving program.**

Call 416-967-3036 or visit www.mssociety.ca/toronto.htm.

Toronto Chapter, Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada

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**Patricia Cole, Manager, Administration
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The MS Society, Toronto Chapter, subscribes to a workplace relationship policy and multicultural/antiracism implementation plan.

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada Privacy and Confidentiality Policy protects the privacy and confidentiality of people with MS, members, clients and donors.

METROSCOPE

Chair: Colin Rickards
Co-Acting Executive Directors:
Angela Rodriguez
Lynn Laccohee
Editor: Julie Crljen

MetroScope is published bimonthly by the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, Toronto Chapter. The contents may be reprinted with customary credit. Your submissions are welcomed. Please note that we do not publish information about alternative treatments, therapies and natural remedies.

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Toronto, ON M4W 3R8

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Fax: (416) 967-3044

Comments Line: (416) 922-6600, ext. 2501

E-mail: toronto@mssociety.ca

Website: www.mssociety.ca/toronto

MS Society of Canada Mission

To be a leader in finding a cure for multiple sclerosis and enabling people affected by MS to enhance their quality of life.

Toronto Chapter Vision

To maximize the quality of life for persons with MS and their support network living in Toronto Chapter's geographic boundaries.

The opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of MetroScope and of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada. Articles on products and services are for information only and are not meant to be seen as endorsements.



**The Toronto Chapter,
Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada
is a United Way member agency.**

**The Toronto Chapter supports people
living with MS through:**

Education, Information & Referral

- Bi-monthly newsletter, literature, resource room and a website
- Education workshops and specialized courses including MS 101

Equipment Loans & Funding

**Subsidies for Home Help &
Incontinence Supplies**

Counselling & Support Groups

Recreation Programs

Volunteer Services

Social Action & Advocacy