

**Janet Noel-Annable**, Chief Executive Officer with Christian Horizons

I wonder if this happens to you... Sometimes when I am talking to people about where I work, they ask: “*What is Christian Horizons?*” In a split second, I have to decide whether to share the thirty second answer or the five-minute answer!

Over the past year, we’ve been on a journey of clarity. We have been asking the question,

*“Do the people who should know us best really know who we are,  
what we do, and why we do it?”*

You may have participated in this journey through a focus group or by responding to a survey with Graf-Martin Communications. If so - **thank you!** You are part of a group of over 1,000 people who responded and are helping us to listen well.

People shared encouraging feedback. They know about the work we do to promote communities where everybody belongs. They recognize that we are willing to support folks with complex needs... and that we don’t give up on people. Many connected the dots on seeing this commitment as a reflection of our Christian faith roots and the belief that all people are created in the image of God. Families were quick to complement our awesome teams who support the people they love!

We also heard feedback that tells me that some people aren’t aware of all the things we are doing and why we do the work that we do. While we carry on supporting people in group living, our services are much broader – and we continue to grow!

From a recruitment perspective, we heard that we need to be clear about our inclusive and progressive hiring practices and that we welcome *everybody* to join our mission.

*Overall, there is a need for greater clarity and communication around who Christian Horizons is, what we do, and why we do it.*

This clarity is important for several reasons:

- First, our mission matters! We want our neighbours to know who we are so we can promote communities where everybody belongs. Communities need to know and receive the gifts of people who use the services of Christian Horizons. Our communities are not whole without people with developmental disabilities!

- Second, our sector is transforming. As people with disabilities and their families receive the funding they need to choose their supports and services, we want them to know about the good work we do and how we can support them. We also need skilled job seekers to understand who we are and the diverse opportunities for them to join Christian Horizons and be a part of this mission.

We will be on this journey to bring clarity to what we do for the next while. On December 2nd, 2022 we will host a webinar to celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (officially, December 3<sup>rd</sup> each year). This webinar will include an Advent reflection and I will also bring an update on the work that is happening.\* On December 16th, we will have a further opportunity to learn together and engage on our journey of clarity. **To register for either or both of these webinars, please [click here](#).**

We remain convinced that our Values, Vision, and Mission are right for us. Communities need the services we provide and appreciate it when we live out these values. Our “customers” are changing, though. As the next generation looks for services, we want them to discover us and to be excited about who we are and what we have to offer.

We will continue to take steps toward this clarity over the next few months. Thank you for the incredible work you do every day. On behalf of Christian Horizons, Merry Christmas and happy holidays – however you celebrate. I’m grateful we are on this journey together.

### Making the Connection

- How have you answered the question: “What is Christian Horizons?” Have you ever run into someone who made strange assumptions about who we are and what we do? What are the misconceptions people might have?
- If you have recommended someone apply to work for Christian Horizons, what do you think convinced them to do so?
- Thinking about the people we will support in the future; what do you think we need to consider in future planning?

*\* As part of the time leading up to Christmas, the Advent season reflects Christian Horizons’ roots in the Christian faith and is open and welcoming for all to participate.*