

Parkinson's Buddies Program

Piloting a New Support Model for People Living with Parkinson's

Barbara Snelgrove¹, Bill Sloan², Louise Leblanc³, Marjie Zacks⁴

¹Director, National Education & Programs, Parkinson Society Canada; ²Coordinator, WPC 2013 Buddies Program;

³Coordinator of Volunteers, Parkinson Society Central & Northern Ontario; ⁴Chair, World Parkinson Congress, Communications Committee



OBJECTIVE

- To pilot the Buddy concept as a model support program for people living with Parkinson's.
- To strengthen the global Parkinson's community and to create a lasting legacy of the World Parkinson Congress.

BACKGROUND

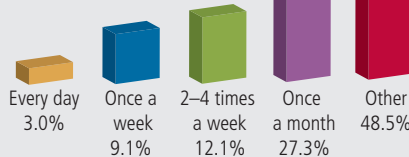
World Parkinson Coalition and Parkinson Society Canada launched a Buddies program matching registrants from around the world with a Canadian Buddy to share their experiences living with Parkinson's. The Buddies program had 200 participants of people living with Parkinson's, care partners or couples. We surveyed the participants and got 33 completed surveys (17% response rate).

SURVEY RESULTS

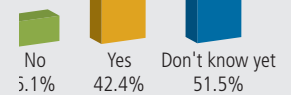
How did you interact with your Buddy?



How often are you in touch with your Buddy?



Do you think being a Buddy will lead to a long-term connection after WPC?



Do you think the Buddies program could be adapted as a one-to-one support program?

YES
57.6%

Would you be interested in building a Buddies network?

YES
54.45%

"I would be honoured to volunteer my time to discussing and implementing strategies."

What did you hope to get out of the program?

"To connect with a like-minded individual with PD to exchange information and hopefully remain lifelong friends."

"... knowing that ... I will have at least one friend to greet when I get to Montreal for the WPC."

What do you like about the program?

"I like the way we were very carefully matched in terms of our PD as well as our other life experiences."

"Bill Sloan's personal dedication, sense of humour, and the perfectly matched buddy he connected me with."

What have you learned from your Buddy about living with PD?

"We are all in this together even though each one of us has different degrees of symptoms."

"There is a sense of community that lightens the burden when we have an opportunity to share strategies, concerns and challenges."

What suggestions would you make to adapt the Buddies model as a support program?

"Form a larger community ... let people make their own connections as they get to know each other online."

"... creative leadership is essential ... it is vital that people with Parkinson's provide leadership"

Buddy Program Participants

17 countries:

Canada 45	Japan 2	Sweden 1
USA 41	Ireland 1	Romania 1
UK / England 5	South Korea 1	Brazil 1
Germany 4	Malaysia 1	Norway 1
New Zealand 3	Switzerland 1	Puerto Rico 1
Austria 2	Israel 1	

105 people with Parkinson's (PWP)
7 caregivers
Average age: 58.9
53% female, 47% males

48 couples (PWP and caregivers)
Average age 62.1

PWP FACTS

65 females or 62%

40 males or 38%

Average length of diagnosis 8.7 years

 Parkinson Society Canada
Société Parkinson Canada
parkinson.ca


3rd WORLD PARKINSON CONGRESS
Montréal 2013
worldpdcongress.org