



# NDAD

helping others to help themselves

Summer 2020

# Insider

**NDAD'S MISSION:**

Enhance the quality of lives  
of individuals facing health challenges.

## Safety first

*Changes ensure access to  
NDAD's popular HELP*

“**B**y appointment only.” Those three words help charitable nonprofit NDAD to provide clean durable medical equipment loans free of charge during the uncertainties of a pandemic while enhancing conditions for you to safely borrow and later return that equipment.

Our Healthcare Equipment Loan Program (HELP) removes any worries you may have about personal contact.

Even though NDAD offices are closed to the public, a phone call or email to your nearest NDAD client services representative office in North Dakota ([ndad.org/](http://ndad.org/) contact) puts you in touch with a staff member to determine your equipment needs and begin the appointment process.

Read on about how NDAD has maintained multiple client services for people with disabilities and health concerns despite the pandemic.





# NDAD at your service

*Charity maintains client operations during pandemic*

**N**DAD has never faced challenges to its charitable operations in its 45 years of operation like those presented by COVID-19.

Yet clients with disabilities and health concerns whose health and independence rely greatly on ongoing NDAD assistance most likely have seen no difference in service - even with offices that remain closed to the public for the safety of both our clients and staff, and to help reduce spread of the virus.

NDAD's client services staff has continued to provide vital services with no financial cuts to programming, Chief Program Officer Leslie Stastny said.

## **Nonstop help 'great relief' to clients**

NDAD helped pay for travel for clients who, despite the pandemic, needed to make out-of-town medical trips. Our organization assisted with personal attendant care and durable medical equipment.

NDAD purchased necessary prescription medications and supplies for more clients. One of them, Grand Forks' Sandra Norgard, 75, is a type II



**Lennie Anderson, Grand Forks, completes paperwork outside NDAD's locked front door to borrow several durable medical equipment pieces. She said the new safety protocols for the Healthcare Equipment Loan Program (HELP) are understandable and the program overall remains "real easy" to use.**

diabetic and colon cancer survivor with kidney disease who has been isolated at home. She was relieved knowing the insulin and pen needle supplies she receives for her Type II diabetes would not end.

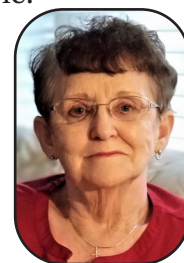
"A great relief!" Sandra exclaimed. "I just don't know what I would do without it. I'm so thankful for NDAD. I don't know if I could continue

with so many other expenses. ... Without the insulin, that would have been horrible."

## **Communications make it work**

Client services staff remained available via phone and email for information and referrals, too, and to both accept and review new applications for assistance. NDAD's social media and also our website, NDAD.org, have remained active throughout the pandemic to assist the public with program information, and news and events of interest.

After a temporary suspension in mid-March, our charity's most-used service - the



**Sandra Norgard**



**Marsha Dupré, NDAD client services rep, speaks from her Minot office to Chief Program Officer Leslie Stastny (foreground), based in Grand Forks and working from home.**

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Healthcare Equipment Loan Program (HELP) - returned May 18 with new safety protocols to assist clients with free loans from our office locations in Fargo, Grand Forks, Minot and Williston.

*“Our client services staff... has continued to provide seamless services to our most vulnerable citizens.”*

**Leslie Stastny**  
NDAD Chief Program Officer

“It’s really gone well,” said Lora Machart, NDAD’s client services representative in Grand Forks. (She’s shown retrieving returned equipment on this newsletter’s cover). Lora said HELP users and

other clients have expressed their gratitude. Loans and returns by appointment has worked well “because I know what to expect. . . . I have no face-to-face contact with people,” Lora said. “They’re all in for it as long as they can get (equipment).”

NDAD also has slowly lifted a temporary suspension of accessible van loans, but on a very limited schedule and only for medical travel purposes, Stastny said.

### More changes due to pandemic

Client services have been unable to sidestep the pandemic in only a few instances. NDAD’s annual June adaptive water recreation extravaganza on Nelson Lake near Center, N.D., was canceled this year. It’s set to return in 2021. A Grand Forks community benefit for a woman with advanced cancer also was postponed.

At the time of publication, NDAD hadn’t determined when to reopen its offices to the public. A key consideration: many NDAD clients and some employees have underlying conditions that make them more vulnerable to COVID-19.

NDAD has added hand sanitizing stations and other safety features and continues to follow state and local pandemic response guidelines. ■

## Pandemic response grants help Minot, Fargo, Grand Forks area NDAD clients

NDAD has received three emergency relief grants this spring to help people with health challenges and disabilities in portions of our charitable nonprofit’s service area affected by COVID-19.

FM Area Foundation’s Community Response Fund of Cass and Clay Counties provided a grant to help NDAD purchase prescription medications and supplies for clients with disabilities and health challenges in those counties.

Souris Valley United Way awarded NDAD a grant to provide transportation to medical



**Souris Valley  
United Way**



**FM Area Foundation**  
Connecting people and purpose.

appointments and much-needed medications for clients with disabilities and health issues in Bottineau, Burke, McHenry, McLean, Mountrail, Renville and Ward counties.

Community Foundation of Grand Forks, East Grand Forks & Region awarded a Nonprofit Relief Fund grant to NDAD to help with prescription medication and medical supplies in Grand Forks and Walsh County and Minnesota’s Polk County. ■

**Community  
Foundation**  
GRAND FORKS, EAST GRAND FORKS & REGION  
Connecting people who care with causes that matter.

### Equipment Cleaning & Disinfecting Guide

Follow these steps to clean and disinfect equipment before returning to NDAD.

- 1. CLEAN EQUIPMENT**  
Use soap and water to thoroughly clean all parts of the equipment.
- 2. DISINFECT EQUIPMENT**
  - Mix bleach water solution (follow instructions on bleach label)
  - Spray and/or wipe equipment with bleach water
  - Let air dry for at least 6 minutes

Now the equipment is ready to return to NDAD!

- 3. CALL TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT TO RETURN EQUIPMENT**
  - Grand Forks: (701) 775-5577
  - Minot: (701) 838-8414
  - Fargo: (701) 281-8215
  - Williston: (701) 774-0741

Download a copy of this equipment cleaning and disinfecting guide, and get other important info about NDAD’s HELP at [ndad.org/services/equipment/](https://ndad.org/services/equipment/).



# Lance Gunsch

*Without NDAD's help, Bismarck man 'probably wouldn't be here'*

End-stage renal disease has led to dialysis - three times a week, four hours each session - in recent years for Lance Gunsch.

"Not much you can do. You've got to go," said the Bismarck man, who turns 61 on July 11. Someday, he hopes to be eligible for a kidney transplant.

Meanwhile, the former motorcycle mechanic and custom gun restoration craftsman credits NDAD for helping to keep him around. For more than a year, our charitable nonprofit has helped purchase vital medication for Lance.

"I appreciate you guys," Lance said of NDAD. "I can pretty much say that without you guys, I probably would have been dead already. There's just no way I can afford these types of medications. I've had (health) insurance my whole life, but it only covers so much."

Lance has been on Social Security Disability since 2009. "You go from making really good money to go into survival mode. All the bills you have - they don't quit.... I had some savings, but that kind of got burned up trying to pay for all these meds."

Gunsch learned of NDAD from a hospital social worker who then helped him apply. Working through NDAD's client services representative in Minot, Marsha Dupré, NDAD fulfilled Lance's need after free medications programs from several large pharmaceutical

*"I'm just very grateful for what NDAD does for me. Definitely without 'em, I probably wouldn't be here."*

**Lance Gunsch**  
Bismarck

do," Lance said. "Believe me, being sick isn't

companies ended, he said.

"I feel very lucky you guys did pick me up because I really didn't know what I was going to



cheap."

Despite the need for dialysis and other life-sustaining medications, Gunsch says significant weight loss, healthy eating and quitting smoking has helped him feel better "than I've been for about 20 years." While he's also being treated for high blood

pressure and diabetes, Lance and his doctors like "my forward momentum," he said.

His kidney issues began in 1988, when a vehicle turned in front of his motorcycle during a group ride with 26 other bikers north of Jamestown, where he once lived.

"It was virtually like stepping out of a car at 65 mph," he recalled. "I did 30 feet before me and the bike hit the ground, then another 75 feet before we separated. I ended up on the highway on my back, and my bike in the ditch at a barbed-wire fence."

The accident damaged his kidneys and tore up a wrist, elbow, calf muscle and both knees, and he suffered nerve damage in his neck.

That still wasn't enough to spare Lance a moniker given by several pals who visited him at the hospital. "What's the last thing you heard when you hit that car? 'Crunch!'" one of them told Lance, who's known for his sense of humor. His visitors turned it into Lance's nickname.

"Crunch" Gunsch's kidney health did not stick around, though, failing him in the years that followed while also contributing toward his other health woes.

All the more reason, Lance says, to appreciate the valuable prescription medicine assistance he receives from NDAD. ■

# Kenneth McGath

*NDAD's help with trach supplies gives Devils Lake man great comfort*

**K**en McGath doesn't need any prompting to recall how much pain he felt before NDAD began helping him - and how much that help has meant to him.

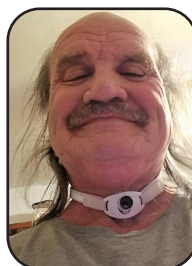
"They were lifesavers as far as I'm concerned," the 58-year-old Devils Lake father of three and former construction worker said.

"If it weren't for NDAD, I and probably a lot of other people would be in a lot worse shape."

Since 2013, when he received an artificial larynx following cancer surgery and treatment, McGath has received tracheostomy pads from NDAD to keep his tube opening clean and free from debris, and to protect his skin.

"It eases the pain," he explained about the pads. "I have to keep it moist so it doesn't dry up. Keeps my

skin from peeling and all that good stuff," which is important since radiation treatments had been hard on his skin.



McGath hasn't worked in construction since his larynx cancer was diagnosed and he received surgery and radiation treatment in 2013. His insurance covers his needed tracheostomy kits, including sponges and collars. But as a dad on a fixed income

with two children living at home, he needed help affording the pads.

A healthcare worker at the Cancer Center of North Dakota in Grand Forks told him NDAD may be able to help.

NDAD has been "fantastic," he said. "I don't even call them up. They just automatically send me the new ones every three months."

If not for NDAD's help getting pads, Ken said, "I'd be in a heck of a lot of more pain all the time," he said. "I've had no problem with (NDAD). They've always been there for me." ■

## Help NDAD keep costs low and go paperless by subscribing to our electronic version.

It's easy to do. Provide your email address at [NDAD.org](http://NDAD.org).

Or, contact [mbrue@ndad.org](mailto:mbrue@ndad.org), or call (800) 532-NDAD if you cannot access our electronic version.

**Thank you for your interest in NDAD.**

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### NDAD OFFICES

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Grand Forks, ND 58201

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1808 20th Ave. S.E.  
Minot, ND 58701

#### FARGO

(701) 281-8215  
(888) 363-NDAD  
21 N. University Drive  
Fargo, ND 58102

#### WILLISTON

(701) 774-0741  
(877) 777-NDAD  
P.O. Box 1503  
309 Washington Ave.  
Williston, ND 58801

NDAD is a nonprofit, charitable organization founded by concerned citizens to assist mentally and physically disadvantaged people in North Dakota, many of whom are not eligible for services from other agencies.

NDAD provides financial assistance through funds generated by both the organization and community projects. NDAD also provides information and referral services to help people receive assistance through other agencies, when possible.

***It's **AMAZING** what people can do when there's **help**.***