

## **Transforming Services in Ontario for People who have a Developmental Disability**

### **Vita Community Living Services' Response to Questions for Discussion:**

#### **1. What should be the roles and responsibilities of different parts of society in supporting individuals who have a developmental disability?**

- Stable funding that includes cost of living
- Ensure Cross-Sector and Inter-Ministerial Planning and Collaboration
- Mandatory Services/Entitlement
- Address discrepancies in staff wages – compared to similar fields, i.e. average wage in school board for a DSW \$21.00/hr in community agency \$15.00/hr
- Employer Incentives to hire
- Education and Policy development/clarification on use of ODSP
- Portable funding
- Individualized funding
- Consistency and Definition of what is a developmental disability
- Public awareness campaign to address knowledge about our field and greater community acceptance.

#### **2. What strategies and resources would help individuals receive seamless supports throughout their lives, including points of transition?**

- Early Identification and Individualized impartial life plans
- Portable funding so family can move within Province without jeopardizing supports
- Individualized Funding
- Clear One Stop Access to Information on Resource and Services
- Equalization among ministries of resources, i.e. in school often get 1:1 support upon graduation nothing or if able to access a program ratio becomes 1:4/1:10, etc., lack of access to mental health, lack of appropriately trained health workers
- Partnership between community services and Ministry of Education to start planning for children at age 14.
- Ensure families are provided with thorough information throughout their child's life span of resources – this includes ensuring school boards and heads of special education are fully aware of all community supports

#### **3. What supports and services that are currently available work well and should be built on for the future?**

- Continued variety of models in all types of support, not all want individualized funding
- Centralized short term case management and individualized impartial life planning
- Crisis Supports
- Respite Supports, need more out of home options

- Need to set standards to ensure quality control, need to hold community accountable for funds and services being provided
- Foundations is great but too limiting, bigger waiting list of individuals not eligible for foundations, those with greater needs are more desperate for service
- Foundation or day programs should be available to all students leaving the school system

**4. How should a reasonable level of government funding for an individual be determined?**

- need an assessment tool used provincially that recognizes individual needs, quality of life, regional costs (i.e. cost of housing in Toronto compared to Timmins)
- assessment tools should be completed by both the agency and the family and/or an independent/impartial assessor.
- need annual cost of living increases to ensure stabilization of resources
- need early identification for future planning and allocation
- need inter-ministerial cooperation in identification and support provision
- need to recognize flexibility in funding to address changing needs

**5. Services are changing in Ontario for people who have a developmental disability. What would you like to see happen?**

- Changes to regulations pertaining to municipal and provincial by-laws on housing (i.e. fire code, location, etc.)
- Legislation on what services are mandatory
- Public Awareness about Sector
- Individualized Assessments and Funding based on those Assessments
- Development of more residential options

**6. What do you think are the priorities the government should address?**

- Funding for Community Awareness and Public Relations to build a caring a responsive community
- Stable Funding, cost of living, staff salaries, benefits and training, pay equity
- Development of Action Plan to address Waitlists
- New Resources not to be dictated for a specific service, i.e. SIL and not needing that resource in that community
- Housing
- Improved and Accountable Educational System that works in unison with developmental services.

**7. Is there anything else you would like to say about the ideas in this discussion paper, or ideas not included in the paper that you feel are important?**

- Change to current system is important but need to ensure we don't destroy what we have while we make changes
- Need to recognize what is working well
- Need to ensure follow through on implementation with a clear multi-year plan
- Need to ensure we don't develop a one plan fits all approach
- Need to ensure legislation changes before operational changes are made
- Need to ensure clear accountability on the use of all funds: ODSP, SSHP, TPA base funding