

COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY

RESPONSE TO

“TRANSFORMING SERVICES IN ONTARIO FOR

PEOPLE WHO HAVE A DEVELOPMENTAL

DISABILITY,”

OCTOBER, 2004

1. WHAT SHOULD BE THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIFFERENT PARTS OF SOCIETY IN SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY?

A) INDIVIDUAL WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY

- To insist that they be treated with the dignity and respect that non-disabled society experience;
 - To be informed about their rights and responsibilities in society
 - To be an active self advocate who plays an active role in the planning and delivery of their supports and services and to be educated in this process;
 - To actively contribute to their own independence
 - To assist their fellows with disabilities in educating the community about barriers and the role of the community in working with individuals, families and the disability services system to remove them;
 - To be actively involved in advocating with politicians for necessary change in the disability services system .
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- **FAMILIES**
 - To be informed about services and issues facing system stakeholders;
 - To actively advocate at all levels, on behalf of their family members and all who rely upon the disability services system:lobbying for system change that results in a system that is accessible, equitable and sustainable and most importantly, one which is responsive to people's needs;
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- To be actively involved to the extent possible, in the lives of their family member who is using the disability services system. This involvement could be directly in support provision and in the planning of their family member's supports, if appropriate.

- **GOVERNMENTS**

- To develop and enact legislation and regulations that facilitate the full inclusion of people with developmental disabilities into all aspects of citizenship in our society;
- To hold communities and service providers accountable for compliance with legislation, regulations and service standards;
- To develop, in consultation with all system stakeholders, a system of supports and services which is responsive, inclusive, accessible when needed and sustainable in the face of ongoing increases in service delivery costs: equitability in the system will be attained if services are based on people's unique needs;
- To allow sufficient flexibility in the system structure and its accountabilities, to facilitate movement of people through various parts of the system as their needs change;
- To create incentives for innovation and the development and implementation of best practice in service delivery;
- To create policy which facilitates inter-ministerial collaboration in policy development, service planning and delivery and system funding.

- **SERVICE PROVIDERS**

- To provide services and supports that are responsive to the changing needs of clients and their families
- To be actively involved in advocacy for necessary change at all levels of government and in the community;
- To reflect best practice in service planning and delivery;
- To be involved in service evaluation and quality improvement on an ongoing basis;
- To be actively involved as a key stakeholder in system transformation;
- To be compliant with government legislation, regulations and service standards;

To provide ongoing training for staff which is reflective of the changing needs of those we serve.

OTHER PARTS OF SOCIETY

To assist in the inclusion of people with disabilities into society in all its aspects, via job opportunities, inclusive social and recreational programs, volunteer opportunities;

To complement programs and services provided by agencies through volunteerism, grants and education.

2. WHAT STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES WOULD HELP INDIVIDUALS RECEIVE SEAMLESS SUPPORTS THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES, INCLUDING POINTS OF TRANSITION?

Lifelong planning needs to occur for people with developmental disabilities. In order to have clients move seamlessly from one system to another requires consistency in legislation, regulation and system flexibility.

Inclusive policy and practice needs to be developed in the school system, the Children's Aid system and the Adult Disability Services system. There needs to be conjoint interagency, inter-sectoral planning that occurs in advance of a person moving into another aspect of supports and services. Each part of the system needs to be held accountable for deploying resources in the areas for which they were intended.

Funding and related accountabilities need to be portable and move with the client or transitional dollars need to be available to allow the receiving part of the system the ability to provide supports at the client's point of entry.

The Adult Disability Services system should have a funding methodology which considers the movement of people into various parts of the system (flexibility) and which is weighted to consider that direct supports may increase as people age and move toward retirement.

3. WHAT SUPPORTS AND SERVICES THAT ARE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE WORK WELL AND SHOULD BE BUILT ON FOR THE FUTURE?

Those supports and services which result in the best quality of life for the client and their family.

Services such as Special Services at Home should be maintained, provided with annual increases to address cost increases in existing services and/or changes in the support needs of an individual.

This program is particularly valuable because it assists the client in living and growing at home with their families. Family supports supplement purchased services and are typically provided at no cost to the system.

Funded respite care needs to continue to assist families providing services in not burning out.

Day Services are critical for those people who have left the school system. They typically provide supported employment opportunities, social/recreational programs, life skills training, literacy, numeracy and contribute significantly to the development of social skills and self esteem.

Funding needs to be responsive to the changing needs of young adults entering our system who want something more meaningful than a “sheltered workshop” experience and to differences in the volume and type of day supports appropriate for an aging population.

Transitional Services need to continue to be funded through the Foundations Program.

Individualized funding which is based upon a Person-Centred Planning Model and which provides individuals and their families with a greater control over how and which services are provided to their family member.

Accountabilities need to be built in to ensure service volume and quality are at an acceptable standard.

4. HOW SHOULD A REASONABLE LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR AN INDIVIDUAL BE DETERMINED?

Governments need to establish mandated services for people with developmental disabilities. Minimum standards of service based upon best practices need to be established and their needs to be some sort of weighting attributed to key factors which influence the type and volume of supports and services provided: transition from home to the school system, out of the school system, into employment / skills development, aging, dual diagnosis, end of life care are examples of such key factors.

Government funding also needs to provide for annual COLA to base funding so that service providers are not compelled to dilute services in order to meet increases in the cost of doing business.

Funding also needs to consider the capital costs of developing appropriate housing models and for equipment needed to address health and safety or changing client needs.

Government needs to develop a predictable, sustainable, multi-year funding model which would facilitate longer range planning for service providers.

5. SERVICES ARE CHANGING IN ONTARIO FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN?

We would like to see a service system which has the following characteristics:

- Allows a level and range of services and which supports dignity, respect and the safety of client and service providers;
- Flexibility for movement of funding between program lines as people's needs change;
- Timely access to various service systems and within service systems;
- Is collaborative and encourages dialogue between service systems so that life long planning and support provision are continuous and not stop and start in nature as a person's needs change;

- Minimum qualifications and ongoing training requirements which are funded ,for agency staff;
- Becoming a legislatively mandated service to ensure access is available.

6. WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE PRIORITIES THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ADDRESS?

- The critical need to additionally resource the base budgets of service providers to enable them to address significant increases in the cost of doing business; annualized cost of living adjustments should be built into agency base budgets;
- Capital funding to promote necessary change and innovation in housing models available to clients;
- Capital funding to ensure the timely provision of health and safety and aids to daily living equipment for clients and staff;
- Establishment of new transitional funding which would help ensure the smooth and timely movement of people through the various parts of the system as their needs require;
- Funding incentives for establishing partnerships with other stakeholders;
- Development or expansion of those programs which provide for the best quality of life for clients and also are sometimes the least cost intensive- such as Special Services at Home, Respite, Family Home;
- Dedicated resources to facilitate ongoing training of staff.

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?

Government needs to keep the vision of full citizenship and the principles of dignity and respect, building on community, fairness and responsiveness, accountability, practicality and sustainability at the front and centre of system transformation.

The input of key stakeholders (clients, families, service providers, community partners) needs to be actively solicited and reflected in the transformed system model.

There needs to be a fundamental recognition on the part of government that the Adult Disability Services Sector has been significantly underfunded for more than a decade and that meaningful system reform cannot occur without additional and ongoing resource increases.