

February 28, 2019

Disability Policy Office
Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

The Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Social Workers (NLASW) participated in the 2010 process to inform the Strategy for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities. As part of the 2019 Accessibility Legislation Engagement Process, the NLASW would like to highlight the following points for consideration:

- The Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) refer to the social and economic conditions that impact on the health and well-being of individuals, families, groups and communities. It is through this framework that accessible legislation, policies and programs should be informed.
- The intersection with other relevant legislation and provincial strategies (i.e., poverty reduction strategy) is an important consideration as new legislation is being drafted. Identifying where there are linkages and intersection is important in ensuring that policies, programs and services are developed and/or enhanced to promote optimal health and well-being for persons living with a disability.
- Making the connection between inclusion/accessibility and improved health outcomes explicit is important and in keeping with a health in all policies direction.
- The additional principles of self-determination, autonomy, privacy, flexibility and collaboration are important in shaping legislation and service delivery.
- Ensuring that accessibility issues impacted by the rural/urban context are addressed to ensure equitable access to programs, services and supports.
- Building socially inclusive communities needs to be a priority. Heightened public awareness and community development initiatives to ensure accessibility and inclusion in all communities is important.
- Flexibility based on individual need should be the standard in education. Supportive education models are necessary for creating opportunities for learning for persons living with a disability. There needs to be flexibility built into post-secondary education programs to increase successful program completion that meets a person's individual needs. This need could be identified through individual assessments. Another supportive factor is financial supports.

- The lack of safe, accessible and affordable housing for individuals with complex needs is a gap in service delivery that has been identified. This is an issue that needs to be considered and addressed as part of the built environment.
- Transitions that impact on a person's overall health (mental, social and physical) can be a stressful time for individuals living with a disability and their families (e.g., clients moving from the Janeway to acute care; an adult with a disability turning 65, a young adult moving from home to a long-term care facility, etc.). An integrated continuum of services should be a key priority.
- Part of building inclusive communities is providing people with the opportunities to make meaningful contributions to the workforce in a way that meets their needs. This requires a shift in looking at someone's ability and revamping how we view successful employment including policies and programs that allow for gradual, part-time participation in the labour market without lost benefits or services.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide input during this consultation process to inform the development of accessibility legislation. Please contact the undersigned if you have any questions about this submission.

Sincerely,



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NLASW