

Level III and Level IV Care for Persons with an Intellectual Disability

The Issue:

Young men and women with intellectual disabilities who are assessed as requiring Level III/IV Care are being forced to move from their homes in the community to live in long term care homes, which we consider to be institutions.

Current status:

- This was policy for seniors in Personal Care Homes but it was never policy for individuals with intellectual disabilities.
- It was confirmed with the Department of Health and Community Services (HCS) that there has been no policy change; however, there is a practice developing that seems to have the support of staff within HCS.
- It was brought to the attention of Inclusion Canada NL (ICNL, formerly known as NLACL) that staff from Western Health required a man living in a cooperative apartment to move to a long term care home because he was assessed as requiring Level III care. His move occurred despite the fact that his family and the local ACL met with the staff and tried to offer suggestions to have him remain in his home in the community.
- This is also happening in other regions and we fear that many persons with intellectual disabilities are being forced to live in long term care homes which we consider to be institutions.
- We have heard reports from our local ACLs and others who work in the community that there are an increasing number of younger persons in these settings, some as young as 30 and 40 years old.
- This blending of disability care and seniors care is of concern to ICNL as the needs of those two populations are very different.

Conclusion:

- This practice does not comply with Article 19 of the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.
- We have always understood that this was policy for seniors in Personal Care Homes but it was never policy in residential services for individuals with intellectual disabilities.
- ICNL adamantly believes that institutions have no place in the lives of persons with a disability. Newfoundland and Labrador has been a national leader in supporting individuals to live in the community and we would seek to confirm that we are not losing our way by repeating the tragic history of institutional life.
- Newfoundland and Labrador led the country in the effort to connect people to their families and communities. ICNL was heavily involved in the closing of Exon House and Children's Home, as well as the Right Futures Project, and we fear such policy interpretations as these will result in re-institutionalization.
- ICNL will seek the Government's affirmation to support the rights of persons with a disability to live in their community.

Recommendations:

- ICNL shall request a meeting with the Minister/ Deputy Minister of HCS to address this concern and help find a way to work with them to provide a solution.
- ICNL shall offer to help develop a collaborative strategy for increasing options and choice in housing in the community for persons with a disability.

Contact Information:

For further inquiries or meeting arrangements, please contact

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