

Home Supports for Persons with an Intellectual Disability

The Issue:

The support needs of persons with a disability are not served best in an environment that focuses more on medical need vs social need as most require support to live and participate in their communities.

Current status:

- The Home Support Program currently delivered by Health and Community Services (HCS) is inclusive of seniors and persons with a disability.
- It focuses more on medical need vs social need. Whereas some persons with a disability may have medical needs, their main requirement is for support to live and participate in their communities.
- Assessment styles, staff training, recruitment and case management requirements differ and can be better managed separately.
- Persons with a disability need supports to live and participate as full citizens in the community during their formative years.
- Conversely many seniors require home support and assistance with medications/medical appointments to remain in their homes/communities throughout their retirement years.

Conclusion:

- Historically programs and services for persons with a disability were developed under the medical model and many found themselves in institutions and excluded from society. Individuals and families in NL fought for change and were successful in seeing institutions closed and persons with a disability supported in their communities.
- Literature and best practice support the focus on social support. There is a need to begin discussions of the implications of having a medical focus on supports and services for persons with a disability with a view to identifying a way forward that separates the medical and social supports.

- Disability Programs in the other Atlantic Provinces are no longer part of the government department that is responsible for hospitals and health care. In PEI they are included in the Family and Human Services Department, in New Brunswick the program is in the Department of Social Development and in Nova Scotia it is in the Department of Community Services. In each of these jurisdictions they are separate program areas. This enables more focus on the social needs of persons with a disability.

Recommendations:

- Inclusion Canada NL (ICNL, formerly known as NLACL) needs to request a meeting with the Minister/Deputy Minister of HCS to discuss this issue and make recommendations for future changes.

Contact Information:

For further inquiries or meeting arrangements, please contact
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