



Update on safety measures for adults receiving Developmental Services



In the past year, the Ministry of Community and Social Services has taken steps to further improve the safety of adults with developmental disabilities in government-funded programs. These measures will help people live independently and safely in their communities, while supporting the full inclusion of Ontarians with disabilities.

Measures include:

- A stronger compliance inspection program for community agencies that provide services and supports. The new inspection framework, which took effect in January 2016, includes:

- Conducting annual inspections of all agencies, and ensuring all residential sites are visited by an inspector within five to seven years
 - Stricter follow-up, requiring agencies to address issues resulting from inspections faster than they did in the past; and
 - Agencies must now post the results of ministry inspections.
- New requirements have been established to enhance oversight for adults with developmental disabilities who are living with Host Families. For information on the requirements, [see page 4](#).
 - ReportON, a new 24/7 telephone hotline and email address to promote safety for individuals with developmental disabilities. The ministry has plans in development to help create greater public awareness in fall 2016.

These measures are consistent with jury recommendations related to two Coroner's Inquests in 2015 into the deaths of individuals with developmental disabilities.

Housing Task Force Update: six innovative housing projects receive funding

Minister Jaczek visited York Support Services Network (YSSN) in May to announce funding for six projects selected during the Ontario's Developmental Services Housing Task Force's second call for proposals. Over \$2 million will be invested in six creative community-based housing initiatives in Ottawa, Sarnia, Essex County and York Region over the next two years.

These projects are in addition to the 12 projects that were funded through the first call for proposals. These projects are part of Ontario's three-year, \$810 million investment to support the transformation of developmental services.

"It's about exploring creative partnerships to design innovative housing solutions that can meet the unique needs of a wide range of individuals," said Hon. Dr. Helena Jaczek, Minister of Community and Social Services.

"The government's funding commitment to the Housing Task Force's efforts from this second round will generate new partnerships between individuals, families, communities and agencies. This will in turn help us to develop a broader set of residential options that can help more people in the long term," said Ron Pruessen, chair of the task force.

One of the selected projects will provide will provide affordable housing for two people to live in their own homes, led by Lambton County Developmental Services. The project is called "A Devine Life"- Community Partners Initiative", which focuses on person-directed planning and

promotes independence by giving people a home in the community of their choice.

"We're excited to explore these ideas that promote community collaboration while ensuring people are at the centre of planning where and how they live in their community," said Carla Alway, Quality Assurance Manager at Lambton County Developmental Services.

The lessons learned from these six projects will be used to develop residential options that can be replicated across the province and help more people, as Ontario provides residential supports to more than 18,000 adults with developmental disabilities.

For details about the projects being funded, visit the [Housing Task Force webpage](#).

You can connect with task force members and join the conversation on the [Housing Task Force Facebook page](#).



From left to right: Hon. Chris Ballard, MPP, Newmarket-Aurora, Hon. Dr. Helena Jaczek, Minister of Community and Social Services, Marie Lauzier, Executive Director of YSSN, Geoffrey Dawe, Mayor of Aurora.



Selected Projects

“A Devine Life”- Community Partners Initiative

Lambton County Developmental Services

in partnership with Habitat for Humanity and Circles – County of Lambton Social Planning and Program Support/Lambton College

This project will provide affordable housing for two people, while promoting independence, community inclusion and awareness through creating partnerships.

Developmental Service Worker Co-operative Development Project

Algonquin College of Applied Arts and Technology in partnership with United Families of Eastern Ontario and LiveWorkPlay

This project will tackle the need for support services and increase the number of Developmental Service Workers in the community families could hire directly.

Just Enough Support: Living in the Haven in Barrhaven and Deschatelets Old Ottawa East

LiveWorkPlay in partnership with Multifaith Housing Initiative, Centretown Citizens Ottawa Corporation and The Mills Community Support

This project will support 12 people moving into one-bedroom apartments, and provide training to create and apply community-based support plans.

Passage vers mon propre toit (Moving To A Place of My Own)

Coalition des familles francophones d’Ottawa and Association pour l’intégration sociale d’Ottawa (AISO)

This project will create a guide and tools, which will be used to create and support housing projects for up to five people.

Smart Support-Technology Enabled Services

Community Living Essex County in collaboration with Onsite Services, Imagine! Smart Home and the University of Windsor

This project will equip living spaces with innovative, technology-enabled services for people with developmental disabilities.

Why Wait

York Region Lifetime Independent Facilitation, in partnership with Montage Support Services and York Support Services Network

This project will support eight individuals in four unique housing models, and includes a learning and collaborative series.

Host Family Program tightens safety and security

As previously mentioned, new requirements that aim to increase the safety and security of adults with developmental disabilities who choose to live with a host family came into effect on April 1, 2016.

The Host Family Program (formerly known as the Family Home Program) enables adults with developmental disabilities to live in a home with people who provide care and support in a family setting. The program is funded by the ministry and offered by service agencies.

Over the past 18 months, the ministry has worked closely with partners to develop the [new policy directives](#) that spell out the rules for the program, including:

- the Family Home Program Provincial Coordinators' Association
- Ontario Agencies Supporting Individuals with Special Needs
- Community Living Ontario
- the Provincial Network on Developmental Services, and
- the working group formed as a result of the Coroner's Inquest into the death of Guy Mitchell.

Last fall, the ministry also posted the draft policy directives on its website and invited stakeholders to provide feedback.



The new directives strengthen the way agencies screen, select and evaluate host families. They also contribute to a creating a consistent delivery model for the Host Family Program province-wide.

To help agencies comply with the directives, the ministry has also developed [Operational Guidelines](#) in consultation with the working group formed following the Coroner's Inquest.

[Visit the MCSS website for more information about the Host Family Program.](#) What's included in the new requirements?

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What's included in the new requirements?

Among many things, the new policy directives require service agencies to:

- conduct in-person home visits, including a separate visit with the individual with a developmental disability (with a support person, if needed), and at least one unannounced visit per year
- screen Host Family providers, by checking police records and Vulnerable Sector Screenings
- check the safety of the home, and
- ensure that Host Family providers have training in CPR, first aid, confidentiality, abuse prevention, complaints, rights and care.

As of April 1, 2016, Host Families can have no more than two people (adults or children) placed by the Ministry of Community and Social Services or the Ministry of Children and Youth Services in a Host Family provider home. Existing families who have more than two people will not be affected, and there are exceptions and exemptions to this rule. However, if a person leaves an existing host family with more than two people placed, that spot cannot be filled again.

Community Living Algoma: “Building a good life in community”

In May 2014, Community Living Algoma's Board of Directors decided to shift away from its sheltered workshop model. Instead, the agency wanted to focus on community participation and competitive, integrated employment.

They made the decision, which would impact 97 people with developmental disabilities supported by the agency, because continuing to run sheltered settings would not help them fulfill their mission.

The agency aims to support people with developmental disabilities to:

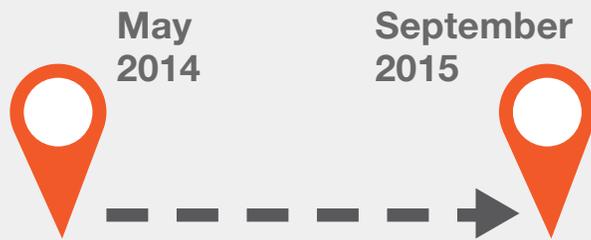
- participate as full citizens in the community
- achieve personal dignity
- enjoy the benefits and responsibilities of independence, and
- reach their full potential.

Recent research and evidence, such as a study from Brigham Young University, highlighting how important it is for people of all abilities to be connected with and participate in their community strengthened the agency's decision.

To begin its transition, Community Living Algoma developed a plan to make sure the people they supported, their families and the agency's employees were informed and educated about the decision. They held many meetings with everyone involved to share information and decisions.

They used person-centred approaches to plan and transition **one person at a time** to
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Community Living Algoma started its sheltered transition in May 2014 and completed it in September 2015.

community engagement and/or employment. To help do this, they presented individuals with new opportunities and experiences, as many didn't know what community engagement and competitive employment could include after years of participating in a sheltered workshop.

They worked with the [Ontario Disability Employment Network](#) to make employment services for people with disabilities one of the agency's specializations. They also used the [JobStart Toolkit](#), developed by Bob Vansickle at Community Living Sarnia-Lambton, to establish a summer employment program for youth. This year, the agency will be supporting more than 20 youth in summer employment opportunities.

Community Living Algoma focused on after-school and summer jobs within the community for youth and jobs in the community for adults. During the transition, they kept the former workshop location open to provide a safety net for people during the transition period.

Results

By September 2015, Community Living Algoma completed the transition from its sheltered workshop to community engagement and/or employment.

Every person impacted by the transition is being supported to participate and engage with their community through clubs, volunteer activities and recreation programs. More than two dozen people obtained competitive, integrated employment.

By presenting individuals with new opportunities and experiences, they could make informed choices about what they wanted to do. All of the new opportunities and experiences have helped them form new relationships, increase self-esteem and increase their sense of pride and joy. Many people have also earned money, purchased new things and improved their housing.

Community Living Algoma worked with staff that were supporting the agency's sheltered settings to help them grow and develop into seven new full-time community support workers. They've helped connect sheltered workshop participants with the community and competitive employment opportunities.

Learn more

The agency wants to help others transition people with developmental disabilities from sheltered workshops to community engagement and employment. Recently, John Policicchio, Community Living Algoma's executive director, participated as a keynote speaker in a series of sessions hosted by the ministry. These sessions featured agencies talking about their transition experience, employment and more inclusive alternatives in the community.

For more information on Community Living Algoma's transition, please contact John Policicchio.

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Carol's story

Carol Daynard participated in a sheltered workshop program through Community Living Algoma for 20 years. She was one of several individuals with developmental disabilities working together as a group at a cafeteria.



Thanks to Community Living Algoma's transition away from sheltered workshops, Carol Daynard is making her dreams come true.

When Community Living Algoma decided to transition away from its sheltered workshop programs, Carol learned her position at the cafeteria would end.

"When I first heard changes were coming, I was truly scared and angry," said Carol. "Why do I have to lose my job? What am I going to do? I was happy with my job. It's what I knew."

Community Living Algoma matched Carol with Jen Chapman, one of the agency's new community support workers.

"She got to know me, listened to my dreams and focused on my talents," said Carol.

Jen helped Carol, who loves kids, knitting and making earrings, join a local club that makes crafts and start volunteering at a community organization, teaching kids.

"Once a month I help to host a crafting project with a group of kids that age from 1 to 12 years old," said Carol.

Before long, the crafting club offered Carol space at their table at the local market. This led Carol to a big decision: whether to pursue the service of a job coach or a more entrepreneurial route. She chose the latter.

"I gave [up] a support I did not want any more to make my dreams come true," said Carol.

Carol donates a portion of the money she makes selling her earrings to a local charity and uses the rest to buy supplies and "a coffee now and then."

Carol is thankful for Community Living Algoma's decision to transition away from sheltered workshops. It's helping her participate in the community in new and meaningful ways.

"It started with someone who had a vision," said Carol. "Then someone who chose a great match for me and someone who believed in the change to make my life go beyond my dreams."

Culinary program helps students build job skills and confidence

For Scott and Maddie, graduating from the Culinary Skills Employment Program at Humber College may be a game changer.

They are two of the 13 Toronto-area students with developmental disabilities who participated in a new job training program. The students learned food preparation and serving skills from a professional chef. They also had an internship at local bakeries or restaurants for three days a week. The program was developed through a partnership between Christian Horizons and Humber College, with funding support from the ministry.

Scott McHattie, who has Down Syndrome, said the program “helped me get skills for getting jobs and made me more self-confident...and to work in a team.” He worked in a short term job at a food preparation business and is now employed in a full time position.

Scott’s father, Ross McHattie, praised the program for making students more marketable to employers by including professional accreditation for skills such as safe food handling.

“The Culinary Skills Employment Program at Humber taught Scott a lot of skills that can be applied to other jobs. My expectation is Scott will be competitively employed for his whole life,” said Ross.

Maddie McDonald, a 27-year-old student in the program, said it was hard to travel to get to Humber College and the job placement locations. But the experience made her to become more resourceful travelling on her own.

She said “the most important thing was to have a lot of support and learn new skills.”

Valerie McDonald, Maddie’s mother, said the program is wonderful because it taught her daughter real skills beyond food preparation, with support from her caring and respectful teachers.

“They received a tremendous amount of support in job coaching. The (program) tried to find placements that would teach them skills without being overwhelmed. They also checked in on them regularly at the job placements, which is quite unusual,” said Valerie.

“Our goal would ultimately be to get Maddie more full time work...she is quite capable of that with all the training she’s now had,” said Valerie.

Irene Moore, area manager for Christian Horizons, said they are working with Humber College to expand the culinary arts program model to other career paths.

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Students in the Culinary Skill Development and Employment program during a visit with Hon. Dr. Helena Jaczek, Minister of Community and Social Services. From left to right: Katie Hemphil, Dori James, Maddie Stratton, Scott MacHattie, Melonie Wong, Miriam Gil, Joshua Susman, Kristen Calderon, Minister Jaczek, Jim Maize, Joseph Stevenson, Jonathan Kavanagh, Anthony Marshall (Absent: Larry Wideman)

“This program is about employment advantage through a college education for students with disabilities. It has shown very clearly that with the right education format and the necessary technical teaching from a college instructor that people with intellectual disabilities can be successful in a career outcome education,” said Irene.

A Better Slice of Life, a new documentary profiling Scott, Maddie and other culinary arts students was publicly screened for the first time at the Toronto Hot Docs Theatre recently. The film was warmly received by the several hundred people attending and may be entered later this year in several film festivals.

Visit [A Better Slice of Life's website](#) for more information.

Online resource inspires families across Ontario



Partners for Planning is celebrating the re-design and re-launch of its P4P Planning Network. It is an online resource packed with creative strategies, tools and solutions to help families support loved ones living with a disability to live their best possible life, today and in the future.

“It was created to help families and caregivers plan for the future,” said Jeff Dobbin, Executive Director of Partners for Planning, a non-profit and family-directed organization. “It inspires families to think of new possibilities to create a good life for their relatives with disabilities.”

The Planning Network is a collaborative platform connecting individuals, families, corporations and organizations across Ontario. For example, it features webcasts that offer innovative ideas and expertise to families and caregivers. They bring in professionals from various areas, such as lawyers and financial advisors.

There are also practical resources for families to use on a variety of topics, such as legal and financial planning, housing solutions, government supports, community involvement and employment.

Additional resources include:

- learning modules
- a provincial directory of legal and financial experts with disability expertise
- documentary videos featuring people with disabilities fulfilling their dreams and goals, and
- an interactive forum where families can post questions and share ideas.

“It’s our objective to share the Planning Network as widely as possible. Anyone may use the Planning Network at no charge,” said Jeff. “We want our resources to help families and caregivers create new and exciting opportunities for their loved ones.”

The P4P Planning Network first launched on April 1, 2014, with funding support from the ministry. With over 100 organizations sharing the resource across Ontario, over 30,000 people have used the P4P Planning Network to date.

A housing solution built for Ashley



Ashley and her dog Ginger

Ashley, a bright and energetic young woman, has become an active member in her community thanks to the support she has received from the “Intensive Individualized Support Project”, a partnership between Montage Support Services and Family Service Toronto. The ministry funded this pilot project, which was recommended by the [Housing Task Force](#) in 2015.

Living in traditional supported living arrangements wasn’t working for Ashley and made it hard for her to manage her anxiety. Montage Support Services teamed up with Family Service Toronto, Ashley and her family to develop a housing solution that was right for her.

Under this project, Ashley receives funding tailored to the amount and frequency of staffing supports she needs. This contrasts with traditional group living arrangements where staffing isn’t necessarily allocated based on individuals’ needs. Ashley’s parents provide the funding for her housing. “It puts the control into Ashley’s hands to individualize the funding, based on her needs,” said Brian.

This allows Ashley to learn how to become independent and to develop coping skills. Ashley’s support staff help her with her chores and activities, connect her with her community, support her with her fitness goals and teach her how to be safe at home and in the community. She gets the support she needs to deal with her anxiety, which was preventing her from fully participating in her community.

“This project is about creating support around a person and not putting a person into a support structure,” said Brian Woodman, Director of Services at Montage. “This housing option is nimble and flexible, as it revolves around Ashley’s life and what she wants to do in the community. At the same time, it provides her with the flexibility in support when she needs it.”

Ashley is able to use the funding to participate in activities and hands-on classes within her community, and it gives her a voice in what she wants to do.

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“The hands-on learning she receives allows her to engage her problem solving skills,” said Adam, one of Ashley’s support staff. “She is now self-confident and relies on her own navigational system to direct her life.”

Since the project began, Montage staff have noticed a drastic improvement in Ashley’s anxiety level. Montage’s long-term goal is to help Ashley maintain independence beyond the project because it has been having such a positive impact on her life. Ashley agrees.

“I like the support that I am getting, and I am very happy with it,” said Ashley.

Montage Support Services created the Intensive Individualized Support Project through a partnership with Family Service Toronto. Its goal is to provide a residential support arrangement for Ashley, which provides emotional support and builds her daily living skills and routines.

Ministry of Community and Social Services Community Supports Policy Branch

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