

Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

Activity Report
2010-11

Honourable Joan Burke, Minister
Department of Advanced Education and Skills
Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities
P. O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Dear Minister Burke:

On behalf of the Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, I am pleased to submit our report for 2010-11.

The mandate of the Council is to advise and inform the Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities on matters concerning persons with disabilities in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Council brings knowledge and understanding of disability-related issues to the Provincial Government. The Council advises the Provincial Government as it develops policies, programs, strategies and recommendations to advance the inclusion of persons with disabilities. The Council also promotes awareness to the Provincial Government of barriers faced by individuals with disabilities.

In the development of this report, consideration was given to the strategic directions of government as communicated in the departmental strategic plan. While the Council supports the spirit and the intent of these strategic directions, its work focuses on Government's broader strategic direction for full inclusion.

This report covers the period of April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011 which was a transitional year in the planning cycle, as the Council was newly formed in 2009-10. A new three year plan (2011-14) will be reported on in the next planning cycle. My signature below is on behalf of the Council and indicates the Council is accountable for the results reported.

Respectfully submitted,



Joanne MacDonald, Chairperson

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Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

Overview

Mandate

The Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (the Council) was established in November 2009. The Council's mandate is to advise and inform the Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities on matters concerning persons with disabilities in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Vision

Newfoundland and Labrador will be a province where individuals with disabilities have the same opportunities as individuals without disabilities - a society that is accessible and inclusive of everyone.

Representation

The Council is comprised of 12 to 18 volunteer members appointed by the Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities (the Minister Responsible). The members of the Council have cross-disability representation, come from all regions of the province and have demonstrated leadership in the advancement of individuals with disabilities. The Council's membership reflects a balance of women and men who live in rural and urban locations throughout the province. From among the members, the Minister Responsible appoints the Chair of the Council to serve a three-year term. Council members are appointed for two years. The Council meets up to four times a year. (For more information, see Appendix A: Terms of Reference and Appendix B: Council Membership 2010-11.)

Physical Location

The Council does not have an office or physical location. The Council can be contacted through the Disability Policy Office, which is located within the Department of Advanced Education and Skills, 3rd Floor, West Block, Confederation Building, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. The Disability Policy Office provides secretariat and administrative support to the Council.

Primary Clients

The Council brings knowledge and understanding of disability issues to the Provincial Government and advises government on initiatives to advance the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of society. In this capacity, the Council serves its primary client, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, by providing advice to the Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

Description of Expenditures

Council members are appointed from the general public and receive remuneration in accordance with Level 3 of the Treasury Board Guidelines for Boards, Commissions, and Agencies. Remuneration is for expenses and travel costs only, and Council members are not paid for their work. The travel expenses and costs associated with the work of the Council are covered by the Department of Advanced Education and Skills and are included in its departmental budget.

Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

The first year of the Provincial Advisory Council has proven to be an exciting period as it contributed to the building of a provincial strategy for the inclusion of persons with disabilities. This strategy will seek to address the true meaning of inclusion, providing access and choices for individuals to participate in all aspects of life in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Council looks forward to working with the Provincial Government on the opportunities and challenges of implementing this strategy.

Report on Performance

In its 2010-11 Activity Plan, the Council identified two key activities that support its mandate and include performance measure information (i.e. measures and indicators). This assists both the Council and the public in monitoring and evaluating the success of the activity plan. The Council was successful in meeting each of its performance objectives in its 2010-11 Activity Plan.

The key activities of the Council are:

1. Provide input to the Provincial Government on the process for provincial consultation on the inclusion of persons with disabilities.
2. Advise the Provincial Government on the development of a provincial strategy that would achieve the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society.

Activity 1: Provincial Consultation and Strategy on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

The 2010 Speech from the Throne affirmed the Provincial Government's commitment to enhance the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society. This included consulting with individuals with disabilities in developing recommendations and strategies to address barriers (including barriers to public services, education and employment) effectively so individuals can take full advantage of opportunities in this province.

Objective: By March 31, 2011, the Provincial Advisory Council will have provided input on the process for provincial consultation on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities.

Measure: Provided input on process used for the Provincial Consultation for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

Indicator 1:

Provided advice for the development of the consultation plan

Actual Results:

- Council members provided advice on the development of an extensive, accessible consultation plan that would invite input from individuals with disabilities and the general public throughout the province (June 14-15, 2010 Council meeting).
- Ideas were shared with the Disability Policy Office through additional meetings and communications with the Council Chair.
- Suggestions included: offering a wide range of methods for consultation input to ensure individuals had choice in how they could participate (focus groups, public meetings, interviews and print submissions); providing accessibility features such as American Sign Language interpretation, captioning, and physical accessibility as part of a consultation process.

Indicator 2:

Advised the Provincial Government through the Disability Policy Office on how to promote consultations to local communities

Actual Results:

- Council members provided the Disability Policy Office with suggestions on promotion of the consultations (June 14-15, 2010 Council meeting and other communications).
- The Council suggested advertising in a variety of ways to ensure cross disability access. These included advertising in provincial and regional papers; radio announcements; sharing information through community networks (i.e. community bulletin boards, announcements during community events); Council members spreading the word to individuals and groups via their respective networks and Council members placing posters in their local areas.
- The Council further advised on measures to engage the Innu community as well as the Deaf community.
- It was suggested that the use of TV coverage of the Ministerial announcement as well as cable channel advertising would be useful for reaching the Deaf community as well as reaching individuals living in rural areas of the province.

Indicator 3:

Advised the Provincial Government through the Disability Policy Office on how to remove barriers to ensure people with disabilities can participate in consultations

Actual Results:

- Council members endorsed the accessibility features of the consultation plan presented by Disability Policy Office (June 14-15, 2010 Council meeting).
- This plan included the provision of documents in alternate formats (i.e. discussion booklet, signage, feedback forms). In addition, Council members suggested support for individuals to participate (i.e. transportation, respite care costs).
- Council members, who resided in or near locations where consultations were being held, also provided advice about venue accessibility in those areas.

Indicator 4:
Attended consultations in local regions

Actual Results:

- Council members attended consultation sessions in their local regions as observers to hear solutions raised by participants (September to November 2010). A list of consultation sessions is attached in Appendix C.
- Council members also met consumers before and after the consultations to gain a greater understanding of issues and solutions, to enrich their advice to government.
- Note: The consultation timeframe was extended due to unavoidable delays including those caused by Hurricane Igor.

Activity 2: Provincial Strategy for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

In the 2010 Speech from the Throne, the Provincial Government of Newfoundland and Labrador stated that it will develop a new provincial strategy for the inclusion of persons with disabilities. The Council's terms of reference include advising the Provincial Government on issues of importance to persons with disabilities such as the development of a strategy.

Objective: By March 31, 2011, the Council will have advised the Provincial Government on the development of a provincial strategy for the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Measure: Council advised the Provincial Government on the development of a provincial strategy.

Indicator 1:
Reviewed consultation results

Actual Results:

- Consultation results were shared with Council members (November 8-9, 2010 Council meeting).
- The Council Chair discussed consultation results with the Minister Responsible through various dialogues.
- There was positive feedback on the consultation process and the participation level.
- The Council endorsed the accessible consultation process as a model for all future government consultations, with further recommendations concerning adequate notice and accessible advertising.

Indicator 2:
Provided input incorporating what they heard at consultations

Actual Results:

- The Council shared their perspectives and observations on what they heard at consultations (November 8-9, 2010 Council meeting and other communications).
- The Council Chair also provided input through meetings and dialogues with the Minister Responsible and the Director of the Disability Policy Office.
- The Council endorsed the consultation themes (i.e. access to buildings, assistive technology, awareness, community capacity, disability-related supports including home supports, education, employment, health services, housing, information and communications, and transportation) as being reflective of the areas in which individuals experience barriers.
- The Council endorsed many of the solutions offered by participants (for example: programs/services being needs-based versus criteria based).

Indicator 3:

Provided input based on their own knowledge regarding issues of importance for persons with disabilities

Actual Results:

- The Council agreed on the following principles that will guide the advice and expertise they provide: access with dignity, equity and fairness, and design for all (cross disability perspective).
- In preparation to provide input, the Council identified various issues of importance facing individuals with disabilities (June 14-15, 2010; November 8-9, 2010; and January 27-28, 2011 Council meetings; various other communications and dialogues).
- Issues highlighted to date include: awareness, building accessibility, disability-related supports (including assistive technology), student supports, employment, accessible housing, health services, home supports/long-term care, transportation, access to government services, inclusive legislation/policies, access to public services, and tools for data collection/analysis (June 14-15, 2010; November 8-9, 2010; and January 27-28, 2011 Council meetings).
- The Council has done much work to become informed about the factors related to these identified issues (i.e. invited guest speakers to meetings, reviewed background papers, held brainstorm sessions, etc.) to ensure advice on issues is relevant and effective.
- The Council has begun developing an internal protocol for providing advice to the Minister Responsible.
- Council members attended meetings with government departments and agencies to provide advice concerning accessibility and visitability (Department of Transportation and Works; Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation; and Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation)
- The Council also advised government on respectful language and accessible communications (i.e. captioning for government advertising).

Indicator 4:

Provided input on the draft provincial strategy

Actual Results:

- The Council provided input on the development of a strategy including: framework, approach, vision, direction and goals (June 14-15, 2010; November 8-9, 2010; and January 27-28, 2011 Council meetings).
- The Council Chair also met with the Minister Responsible to advise on the development of a strategy, including discussion on a long-term vision of a strategy - one that is inclusive of persons with disabilities, and that provides equal access to participate in all aspects of society.

Appendix A

Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

Terms of Reference

Mandate

The Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities advises and informs the Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities on matters concerning persons with disabilities in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Role and Functions

The Council:

- Brings knowledge and understanding of disability-related issues to government
- Advises government as it develops policies, programs, strategies and recommendations to advance the inclusion of persons with disabilities
- Promotes awareness of disabilities and the barriers faced by persons with disabilities

Membership and Structure

The Advisory Council is composed of 12 to 18 members appointed by the Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities. From amongst the members, the Minister Responsible appoints the Chair of the Council to serve a three-year term. Council members are appointed for two years.

Appendix B

Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

Council Membership 2010-11

The Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities is composed of 15 community leaders from across the province. The Council is cross-disability. The current Council appointments include Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who have disabilities, including mobility, sensory (vision, hearing), intellectual, mental health and individuals with multiple disabilities. It also includes family members and others who have expertise in the area of inclusion.

The Council's membership reflects a balance of women and men who live in rural and urban locations throughout the province.

Joanne MacDonald, Chair

Joanne MacDonald is a member of the Order of Newfoundland and Labrador and Officer of the Order of Canada. She has over 25 years experience as a community activist promoting equality for individuals with disabilities. Joanne is the Chair of the Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities.

Carmel Casey

Carmel Casey is a family physician in Gander. She has over 13 years of experience volunteering with individuals with intellectual disabilities. She is Chairperson of the VON Broadening Horizons and is very involved in the Special Olympics. She has been Team Doctor for the Canadian National Team at two world games and coach for provincial teams at national games on three occasions. She has a sister who has an intellectual disability.

Elizabeth Chaulk

Elizabeth Chaulk is Associate Vice-President of Learner Services, College of the North Atlantic. She is also Past Chair and current member of both the Newfoundland and Labrador Regional Economic Development Association and Red Ochre Regional Economic Development Board, as well as a member of the provincial Conservation Corps Board.

Delia Connell

Delia Connell is a social worker and is active with the Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living. She is Vice-President of Children's and Community Services with Labrador Grenfell Health and has worked with a variety of community groups with close to 30 years experience working with individuals with disabilities.

Sheryl (Sherry) Gambin-Walsh

Sheryl (Sherry) Gambin-Walsh is a registered nurse who works as the Provincial Community Inclusion Coordinator for the Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living. She has a son who is a fifteen year old individual with autism and she is a member of the Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador's Models of Practice Committee. Sherry represents individuals with disabilities, seniors and youth as the human resources representative on the Avalon Gateway Regional Economic Development Board.

Dennis Gill

Dennis Gill is a retired high school administrator. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Newfoundland & Labrador Association for Community Living, and is Chair of the Provincial Advisory Committee on Supported Employment Newfoundland and Labrador. Dennis Gill is a parent of a 30 year old son who has significant intellectual and physical disabilities.

Lynn Green

Lynn Green is Chair of the Learning Disabilities Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, National Chair of the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada, a Board member of the Community Services Council, and is a member of the College of the North Atlantic's Advisory Committee for Learners with Disabilities.

Oswald Gould

Oswald Gould is a retired teacher of children with exceptionalities and is active with the Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living.

Raymond McIsaac

Raymond McIsaac is President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living. He has an adult son and an adult daughter with autism. He has been extensively involved in the issues connected to the recognition of legal capacity for over 20 years. He is an immediate past board member of the Canadian Association for Community Living and chairs the Working Committee on the Recognition of Legal Capacity and Supported Decision Making. He has an extensive background working on issues in a cross disability forum. He was the representative of 26 national organizations of persons with disabilities on the Canadian Labour Force Development Board in the 1990's.

Leon Mills

Leon Mills has worked in the hard of hearing sector for 15 years. He is the Executive Director of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association Newfoundland and Labrador, Co-Chair of Marine Atlantic's Accessibility Committee, Chair of the College of North Atlantic's Advisory Committee for Learners with Disabilities and Co-Chair of the Buildings Accessibility Appeal Tribunal.

Ian Murley

Ian Murley is a recent business graduate and is Vice-President Internal (Newfoundland and Labrador representative) with the National Educational Association of Disabled Students.

Myles Murphy

Myles Murphy is Employment Facilitator with Newfoundland and Labrador Association of the Deaf. Myles has been an active advocate for the Deaf community for more than 30 years. He has held various positions on numerous provincial and national boards.

Karon-Ann Parsons

Karon-Ann Parsons is Executive Director of the Consumers' Health Awareness Network Newfoundland and Labrador. Karon-Ann is active with advisory committees for Western and Eastern Health Boards, as well as other community boards focusing on mental health.

Susan Ralph

Susan Ralph has 16 years experience working in the community of individuals with disabilities. She is the Past President of the Coalition of Persons with Disabilities (COD) - Newfoundland and Labrador and member at large with the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD). She is Past Chair of the AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Karen Westcott

Karen Westcott is active with local, provincial and national organizations including the Independent Living Resource Centre, People First Newfoundland, Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living, and the Coalition of Persons with Disabilities (COD) - Newfoundland and Labrador.

Appendix C

Public Consultations to Develop a Provincial Strategy for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

Schedule of Public Sessions - Fall 2010

Date	Town
Sept 14	Bonavista
Sept 15	Clareville
Sept 16	Carbonear
Sept 23	Labrador City
Sept 28	Grand Falls/ Windsor
Sept 29	Lewisporte
Sept 30	Conne River Harbour Breton
Oct 1	Gander
Oct 4	Port aux Basques
Oct 5	Stephenville
Oct 12	St. John's
Oct 13	Marystown
Oct 18	Deer Lake
Oct 18	Corner Brook
Oct 19	St. Anthony
Oct 26	Hopedale
Nov 1	Happy Valley/ Goose Bay