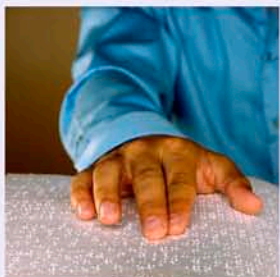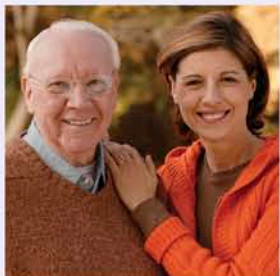# Disability Services Review
Final Report

Prepared by the Disability Services Review Committee
February, 2009

Prince Edward Island
CANADA

Social Services and Seniors

Disability Services Review II: Recommendations of the Disability Services Review Committee

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND SENIORS
FEBRUARY 11, 2009

HRA
we know **people**

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Executive Summary

The Disability Services Review Committee (the "Committee") was struck in December 2007 to consult the public and the community in support of persons with disabilities, review the range of services currently provided to Islanders living with disabilities, and scan the practices in other jurisdictions to identify best practices and alternate models as opportunities to improve service delivery. This preliminary work provided the Committee with an awareness of the issues of concern to Islanders which formed the foundation for the recommendations set out in this *Report*.

The Committee engaged in a rigorous process for developing its recommendations. It drew upon a number of people representing consumers of disability services, and service providers to form working groups. These working groups developed recommendations in key priority service areas for people living with disabilities, namely employment, housing, income, inclusion supports and services, recreation, and transportation. Their recommendations were then considered and further refined by the Committee.

The Committee recommendations range in breadth and depth in that they move from the strategic to the operational. They set out proposed legislative and policy directions and from that foundation further identify specific program goals and objectives. What was apparent across most of the working groups and to the Committee was the need for an agreed-upon set of core values and operating principles that would establish a foundation for the advancement of services and programs which embrace the following attributes: accommodation; accessibility; equality; accountability; and normalization. Therefore, in organizing the recommendations for this report, the Committee adopted a values-based framework. It clearly articulated its recommended Core Values and Operating Principles to be applied across all services and programs, and then proceeded to frame particular recommendations regarding leadership, policy, program delivery, resources, and public education & awareness.

There is a clear call for values-based leadership through the establishment of a coordinating mechanism for disability services which also facilitates access to information regarding services and supports available across the Island; however, the Committee was emphatic that visible, tangible steps also need to be taken to advance the recommendations set out in this *Report* in the near term so that the Province's commitment to improving the services and programming for persons living with disabilities in Prince Edward Island is evident and demonstrated in a timely fashion. The Committee recognized this can only be fully realized through a strong collaborative approach where the public and private sectors work in partnership with non-government organizations, Island communities,

families, advocacy organizations and persons living with disabilities. Such a values-based partnership will enhance efforts across the Island to improve services and supports to all Islanders, including Islanders living with disabilities.

Introduction

In December 2007, the Minister of Social Services and Seniors struck the Disability Services Review Committee (the "Committee"). The mandate of the committee was to:

1. Review the range of services currently provided to persons with disabilities,

2. Consult the public and the community in support of persons with disabilities; and

3. To advise government with respect to seven key issues:

    a. The many components which impact inclusion;
    b. The appropriate role of the individual, families, community, business and government in providing support to persons with disabilities;
    c. Gaps in services or changes required to existing services;
    d. Alternate structures or approaches which may be used;
    e. Gaps in legislation;
    f. The roles of the disability community in providing effective advice and input to public policy; and
    g. A long-term plan of action that responds to these priority areas.

The work of the Committee was carried out in three phases. First, the Committee conducted extensive consultations with stakeholders and the public to learn their views, concerns and priorities. This resulted in the Report on Phase I: Public Consultations.[1]

The Committee then mandated a scan of service delivery models for persons with disabilities in order to identify best practices and alternate models as opportunities to improve service delivery. This work was compiled by a consulting firm and submitted as *A Scan of Government-Based Service Delivery Models for Persons with Disabilities*.[2]

Using these two documents as the foundation for their work, the Committee embarked on an extensive series of facilitated sessions to develop and refine the insights gathered from the consultations and the jurisdictional scan into recommendations to the Minister.

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[1] http://www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/SSS_DSRP1.pdf

[2] An internal Department of Social Services and Seniors Document.

From October through December 2008, the working groups of the Committee met on a regular basis to consider the six priority areas identified in Phase I:

- Employment;
- Housing;
- Inclusion Supports and Services;
- Income;
- Recreation;
- Transportation.

The results of this work form the basis of this report. Each of the six priority areas is considered in turn. The recommendations are then thematically arranged to indicate order of priority and to also identify those recommendations that will have an impact on multiple issues.

Methodology

In addition to fulfilling the mandate of the Minister, the Committee was keenly aware that its recommendations must flow from and be grounded in sound process.

To that end, the Committee developed a collaborative process using working groups to continue to tap into the knowledge and experience within the disabilities community to move the review from the stage of gap identification to the stage of recommendation development.

Six Priority Service Areas:

Employment

Housing

Income

Inclusion Supports and Services

Recreation

Transportation

The working groups embraced far-ranging representation from the community including consumers of disability services, supports and programs with various needs, as well as service providers who serve Islanders (including Islanders living with disabilities) from the private sector, government and non-governmental organizations. At least one member from the Committee was represented on each working group. A full listing of the working group participants can be found in Appendix 1.

Each group was assigned a key priority area for persons living with disabilities:

- Employment;
- Housing;
- Inclusion Supports and Services;
- Income;
- Recreation; and,
- Transportation

The groups worked over the course of six to nine facilitated meetings through an interest-based model. Each group developed appropriate group norms, and defined their particular issue and mandate in order to optimize each group's working time, and to focus the energy in developing advice for the Minister with a view to the future. The generic schedule for the working groups included an introductory session allowing participants to become acquainted with each other as well as the work to be accomplished. Each group spent time clarifying their roles and expected outcomes. They developed their norms for decision making, and reviewed, revised and adopted criteria for making recommendations.

While each working group made some adjustments to the criteria, the basic criteria used are set out in the box below:

Criteria for Working Group Recommendations

Criteria

- Inform the long term policy direction of services for people living with disabilities in PEI at a strategic level;

- Include all disabilities for all ages;

- Promote collaboration between and among all service providers and consumers of disability services within PEI;

- Consider urban and rural needs within the province from east to west;

- Contribute to the "collective" benefit of persons living with disabilities to ensure that the primary focus is on people living with disabilities and not on other agendas;

- Improve the quality of life for people living with disabilities;

- Support the evolution of programming and service delivery from "institution-centred" programming to that delivered within the community for the benefit of individuals and their families;

- Identify results-oriented, measurable and sustainable goals;

- Provide strategic direction by including short, medium and long term goals;

- Inform development of government policy and legislation through the application of a social policy and a disability lens;

- Reflect the *Disability Services Review Committee Report on Phase 1: Public Consultations;*

- Reflect best practices in the area of disability services and programming that are applicable to the PEI context;

- Encourage shared leadership amongst government and community partners, with provincial government setting strategic policy and programming direction consistent with shared philosophy and values; and,

- Extend recommendations beyond financial approaches to improving services so that a range of approaches are developed which strengthen partnerships, community capacity building and family supports.

The recommendations of the working groups were to reflect a fundamental philosophy and set of values for services for people living with disabilities in PEI:

- a philosophy of inclusion that is people/person-centred;

- community-based approaches that improve quality of life; and,

- the promotion and preservation of a person's choice, opportunities, and rights in service delivery.

Applying these philosophies and criteria, the working groups then turned to in-depth considerations of the issues and interests represented by their group's topic.

In exploring their group understandings of the issues and interests, each working group invested time in reviewing the work of Phase I. The working groups then considered the *Scan* to inform their identification of optional strategies and potential recommendations. These were then evaluated against the agreed-upon criteria. The working groups set out the reasons underpinning the suggested recommendations and submitted their respective recommendations to the Disability Services Review Committee.

These recommendations were subsequently considered and further refined by the Committee. The result is a series of practical, prioritized recommendations to be submitted to the Minister, with the confident support of the Committee.

Phase I Overview

On behalf of the Committee, a consultant facilitated public meetings across the province. During this consultative process, over 300 people participated in public meetings; over 100 presentations and submissions were made to the Committee.

This work resulted in a report that summarized the strengths, gaps and issues, identified by the participants. During Phase I, the Committee received a clear message that the Province has an opportunity to build on the leadership shown through the Disability Services Review process by continuing to work with stakeholders and the public to:

• Increase public awareness of and sensitivity to disability issues;

• Establish policies and measures to ensure the fullest possible social and economic inclusion of persons living with disabilities;

• Enhance equity of access to disability supports;

• Develop integrated, seamless delivery models; and.

• Increase efforts to recruit and retain trained professional and community-based service providers;

The Phase I process revealed strong public and stakeholder support for the Province to re-establish a central access point, such as an Office or Secretariat of Disability Services as a vehicle for fulfilling this opportunity for stronger leadership.

Focus on Six Priority Service Areas

In addition to these high level strategic objectives, the Phase I report also identified gaps and unmet needs across all disability services and supports that required further consideration:

- *Employment:* consultations highlighted a need for employers to be more open to hiring persons living with disabilities, and an opportunity for government to show leadership in illustrating, and promoting the inclusion of persons living with disabilities in both the public sector and the private sector workforces;

> *The plan was always that I would retire and care for [my brother with Down's syndrome] - if I went, he would go to our brother - but we're all approaching our senior years. I don't know what would happen, I don't want to institutionalize him...it would kill him.*
>
> Participant at Public Consultations

- *Housing:* consultations identified that there are housing needs for persons living with disabilities that are well documented and represented. There is a critical need for housing supports that address three common scenarios:

  - people living with an intellectual disability residing with aging parents;
  - people living with disabilities living in inappropriate residential placements; and
  - people with physical needs requiring accessible housing.

  There are also persons living with disabilities whose housing needs are not as well known. A variety of housing options must be developed that are based upon these various needs;

- *Income:* many Islanders living with disabilities who rely on current programs and policies tend to find themselves in a state of lifelong poverty. There was a general consensus that there were opportunities to improve the ability of mechanisms and programs to support their needs and offer a greater level of comfort and quality of life;

- *Inclusion Supports and Services:* This area attracted a significant proportion of the attention of Phase I participants. Unmet needs were identified in the Disability Support Program, early intervention and treatment, transitions programming, accessibility, and safety;

- *Recreation:* As an important aspect of quality of life, Phase I participants identified a need for more availability and inclusion;

> *The lack of affordable transportation services for persons with disabilities has been identified as a major service gap in any review or report regarding disabilities over the years. This continues to be a major challenge, and is particularly difficult for any person living outside 'our' urban centres.*
>
> Presenter at Public Consultations

- *Transportation:* Significant disparities and unmet transportation needs suggested both province-wide public transit and various measures specifically targeted to the transportation needs of persons living with disabilities.

These six areas (Employment, Housing, Income, Inclusion Supports and Services, Recreation, and Transportation) formed the basis for designing the working groups for Phase II of the project, allowing for a more in-depth consideration of strategic recommendations.

Cross-Cutting Recommendations
The Phase I report also identified issues that were shared across all areas of concern including: public attitudes, beliefs, and awareness; philosophy of disability services; equity and consistency; leadership; system integration; and, human resources. These cross-cutting issues evolved somewhat during the Phase II work, but continued to be represented under the headings of :

- Overarching statements (philosophical underpinnings);
- Core Values;
- Operating Principles; and,
- Broad-based themes that cut across all functional issues:
  - Leadership;
  - Policy;
  - Program Delivery;
  - Resources; and,
  - Public Education & Awareness.

Cross-Jurisdictional Scan Overview

The cross-jurisdictional scan considered the delivery models used in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Saskatchewan and British Columbia to compare the frameworks and service delivery in the six priority service areas (Employment, Income, Inclusive Supports and Services, Housing, Recreation and Transportation).

Despite a popular preference for evidence-based practices, no generally accepted methodology or set of indicators for evaluation exist for assessing outcomes of disability services and programming. Not surprisingly, there is a lack of quantified outcomes documented. Furthermore, most programs and services for persons living with disabilities have grown from a complex mix of political, social, economic and cultural factors. They often develop in response to a particular need and adapt and evolve over time as different groups within the disabilities community advocate for a particular issue. Because programs are in constant flux, identifying an existing framework that has some history or evidence of sustainability was challenging.

While the *Scan* did not identify any single, all-encompassing best practice for consideration, it did provide working groups with useful background information that helped generate ideas and consideration for recommendations in the Island context. Some of the key observations from the *Scan* are set out below:

- *Collaboration between government and disability community:* relating to funding priorities, resource distribution, and identifying new sources of funding;

- *Performance measurement*: there is a need for accountability and evidence-based practice, therefore, it is essential that programs and services have measurement systems in place;

- *Partner with NGOs*: most jurisdictions are delegating or partnering with non-government, community-based organizations to administer and manage the delivery of programs and services, such as employment development activities;

- *Flexibility, choice and client-centred:* there is a general trend to increasing flexibility and choice for clients with increased opportunity for direct funding to clients who purchase supports and services;

- *There is never enough money:* regardless of the fiscal capacity of jurisdictions, public funding was insufficient to meet the desired levels of support or services;

- *Create mechanisms for enabling primary caregivers to provide for the needs of a family member living with disabilities*: other jurisdictions are implementing income trusts, income exemptions, and other means;

- *PEI is a leader in separating disability income support from social assistance:* sustaining that separation in a system that lacks any measures other than dollars is a challenge*;*

- *Avoid inappropriate residential placement:* while jurisdictions continue to espouse the value of community-based, personalized living environments, a significant lack of housing resources threatens the realization of this value;

> *...our sons or daughters will have a place to live, but they will not have a life..."*
>
> Participant at Public Consultations

- *Choice and control of the client maximized:* jurisdictions continue to strive for client-centred supports and services;

- *Funding models do not scale:* funding for services and supports are based on population and service use resulting in under-funding for rural communities and special needs communities as they receive significantly less money despite the fact that there are basic expenses regardless of the size of the population being served; and,

- *Fragmented and decentralized services and supports have consequences for clients:*
  - in terms of different criteria for different programs;
  - perceptions of inequitable support;
  - challenges in learning of available supports and services; and
  - individual needs being unmet.

However, the strongest message from the *Scan* was that there is little value in undertaking new services or delivery models without a solid understanding of the basis for these offerings. Services and programs designed for Islanders with disabilities need to stem from clearly stated core values and guiding principles. Individual departmental statements or reports are insufficient. The broader the application of these values, and the more deeply entrenched they can be in the public realm, the more likely that services and programs will reflect and promote these values.

> While there is no best tool for establishing government's commitment or expectations, enshrining them in legislation if at all possible, as opposed to policy directives or strategic plans, appears to be a desirable practice.

Determining Directions

Without a principled approach from which all programs and services stem, the challenges of a fragmented approach to disability programs and services will continue to undermine the benefits of these supports and services.

The consultant authoring the *Scan* proposed a framework of core values that underpin how our Island society should interact with persons living with disability; it also proposed a framework of operational principles that should drive the design of social programs and services (see Figure 1, below).

The *Scan* went on to note that to ensure that such a framework remains stable and sustainable, legislation, regulation, and public policy need to enshrine and enforce these values and principles.

Figure 1: Initial Framework of Core Values and Operational Principles
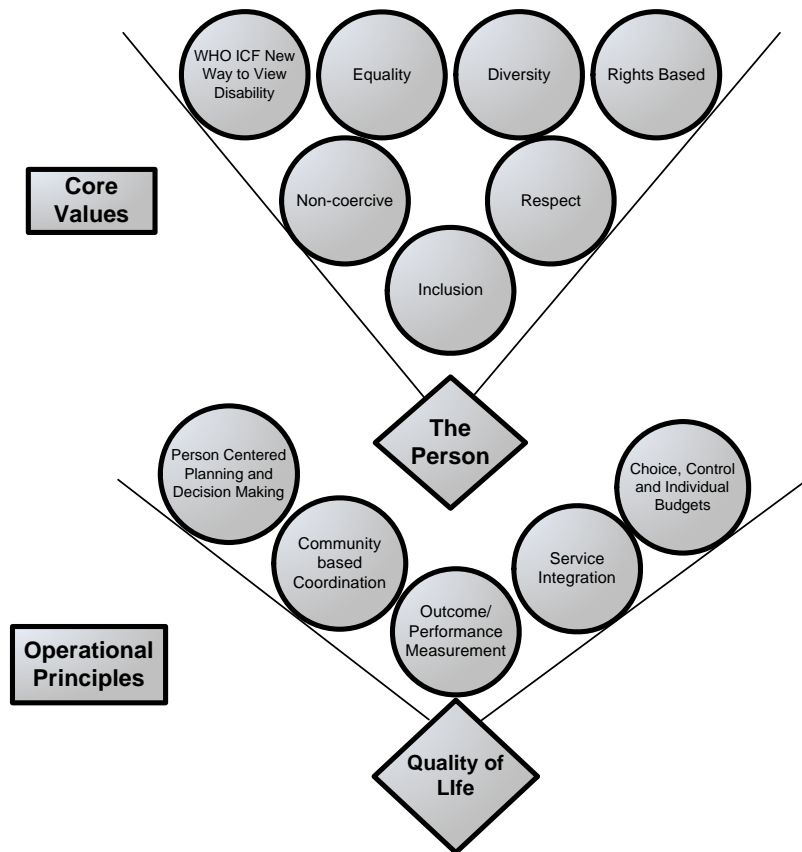
Some of the working groups used this framework to assist them as a starting point from which their recommendations would flow. Their results are considered in the following Recommendations section.

*NB, the WHO ICF referred to in the Figure 1 is the World Health Organization's International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health framework. Also note that this is relatively new in its application.   (Appendix 2)

Recommendations

While working group participants brought their own individual perspectives, experience and knowledge to the issues identified in the Phase I report, their recommendations resonated strongly with input received in the course of public consultations and in the experience identified in the *Scan*.

As noted above, the working groups had several tools to assist them in grounding the recommendations from a values-based framework, and in assessing recommendations in light of an agreed upon set of criteria. The working groups also referenced a tool called *The Disability Lens* for identifying and clarifying issues affecting persons with disabilities by offering sets of questions that challenged participants to think outside of their own experience. A sample set of Disability Lens questions are attached as Appendix 3.

Because each working group had its own unique composition of participants, and priority area to consider, the formats of the recommendations from each group are also unique.

The Committee invested three full-day facilitated sessions working through the recommendations of the working groups. The Committee was highly appreciative of the work done by the working groups, and were particularly impressed with the over-arching statements that were developed as an expression of the fundamental philosophy and objectives of the work.

In preparing a report, the Committee directed that these over-arching statements be set out clearly as setting the foundational approach to all subsequent recommendations:

Over-Arching Statements

Employment
People with disabilities have the right to participate in the labor market and Prince Edward Island private and public sector employers have the obligation to ensure that people with disabilities have equal opportunity to participate.

Housing
Housing is a major determinant of a person's quality of life and is directly linked to their health and well-being, educational achievement, social connections, success in the labour market and poverty alleviation.

Recreation
All people have a right to social, recreational and cultural experiences, activities and relationships. Often persons with disabilities are isolated, limiting their access to these experiences.

Inclusion Supports and Services
All eligible Disability Support Program clients need to have their needs met in a timely, fair, efficient, effective way, in a manner that assists and supports them in articulating those needs on an ongoing basis.

Income Support
People with a disability need their stories heard and understood by those purporting to be providing supports to meet their needs. This requires a deeper understanding than simply meeting eligibility requirements.

Transportation
All Islanders should have access to an Island-wide, accessible and affordable public transit system.

The Committee's over-arching statements originated from the priority service area of each of the working groups (Employment, Housing, Inclusion Supports and Services, Income, Recreation, Transportation). However, these statements emphasized the need to adopt a framework that addresses issues that cut across the service area silos. This provides an opportunity for all organizations and individuals who design, develop, deliver, or use services and supports for people living with disabilities to adopt this framework so that Islanders living with disabilities have an integrated and consistent array of options that address a wide variety of needs.

To this end, the Committee synthesized a comprehensive set of recommendations that formed around core values and operating principles as well as five broad cross-cutting themes:
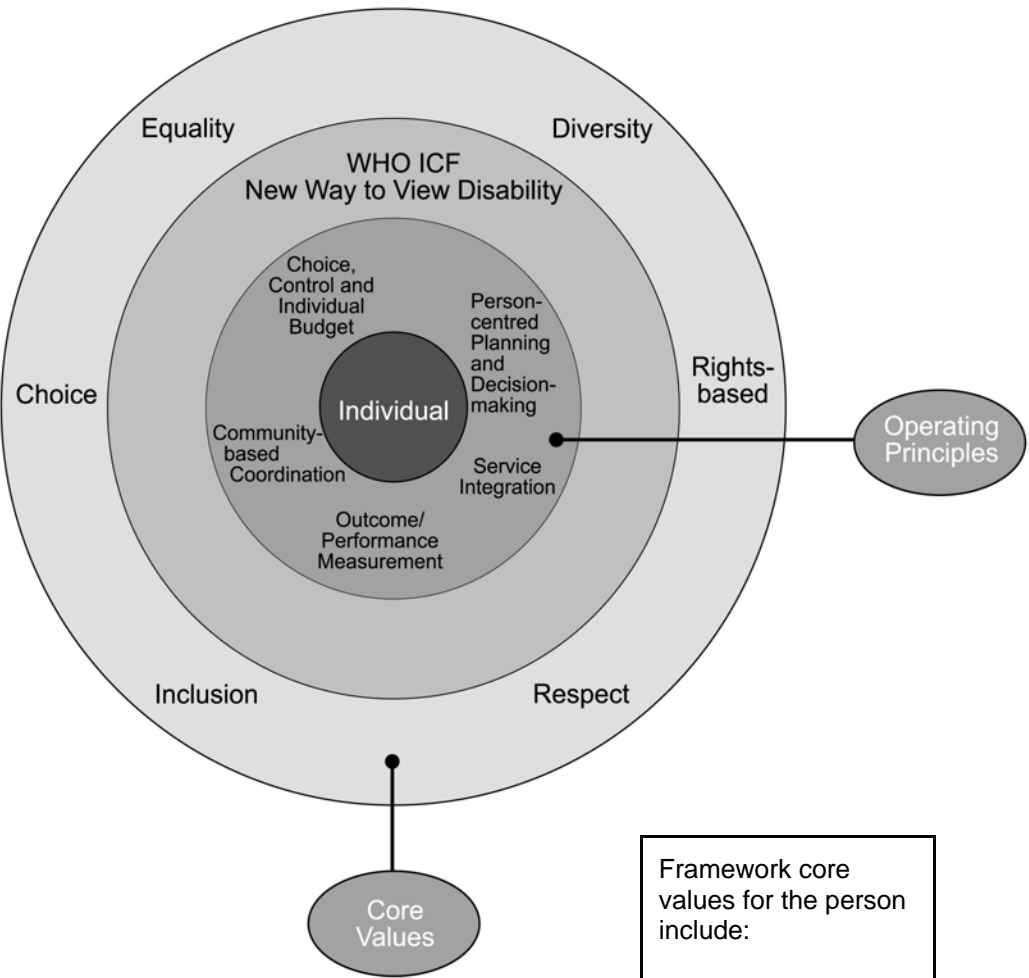
- Leadership
- Policy
- Program Delivery
- Resources
  - Financial
  - Human
- Public Education & Awareness

The Committee's recommendations are presented using this framework.

Core Values

Core Values Recommendation #1: All organizations and individuals who design, develop, deliver, or use services and supports for people living with disabilities adopt the elements of the disability framework that was proposed in *A Scan of Government Based Service Delivery Models for Persons with Disabilities*[1].

The revised graphic of these values below represents the values-driven, client-centred approach:

Equality

Diversity

WHO ICF
New Way to View Disability

Choice,
Control and
Individual
Budget

Person-
centred
Planning
and
Decision-
making

Choice

Rights-
based

Operating
Principles

Individual

Community-
based
Coordination

Service
Integration

Outcome/
Performance
Measurement

Inclusion

Respect

Core
Values

Framework core
values for the person
include:

- Equality
- Diversity
- Rights-based
- Non-coercive,
  choice and self-
  determination
- Respect
- Inclusion

[1]Executive Summary, pp. ix

Operating Principles

To operationalize the Core Values adopted above, the Committee identified a framework of operating principles to ensure that programs and services would support quality of life for persons with disabilities.

Operating Principles Recommendation #1
The Province adopt the following Operating Principles for services for persons living with disabilities:

• Person Centred Planning & Decision Making

• Community-based Coordination

• Choice Control & Individual Budgets

• Service Integration

• Outcome / Performance Measurement

The Committee identified key attributes indicating successful outcomes or positive performance that reflect the values-based framework.

Operational Principles Recommendation#2
The Province will assess the outcomes and performance of all services and supports for Islanders, including Islanders living with disabilities, according to these attributes

• Accommodation;

• Access;

• Equality;

• Accountability; and

• Normalization.

The Committee provided commentary on their selection of these attributes:

Accommodation: Persons with disabilities have the right to fully participate in mainstream society and the right to independent access. Appropriate accommodations may include: altering the physical access to a building, providing technical and adaptive aids and human support, allowing flexibility of hours and time lines, using alternative communication formats and alternative transportation options;

Access: Persons with disabilities have seamless access to all that society has to offer. Environment plays a crucial role in determining the degree of barriers which a person experiences. Attitudes, assumptions, and stereotyping create barriers to access. Promoting positive attitudes and raising awareness can remove barriers;

Equality: Persons with disabilities have equal participation in society. They achieve economic equality and income parity, equal access to education, training and employment opportunities;

Accountability: Government at all levels (Provincial, Federal, Municipal), communities, service providers, employers, and individuals are responsible to ensure that performance measures exist to determine that desired outcomes are being achieved and provide a basis for improvements to services; and,

Normalization: A concept explained by Dr. Wolf Wolfensberger as an approach which acknowledges the concept that supports and services for people living with disabilities should be designed to enable these people to experience a daily, and seasonal pattern of living as do other people in society (Appendix 4).

While the endorsement and publication of these principles is important, provincial leadership is needed to ensure that the Core Values and Operating Principles are actioned.

Leadership

> *For the past 15 years there has been no one in government responsible or accountable for developing, implementing or evaluating services and supports for people with intellectual disabilities.*
>
> Public participant at Public Consultations

Throughout the consultations, working groups and Committee work, there was a consistent call for the Province to provide leadership through the establishment of an accountable, coordinating mechanism. Strategic leadership is required to ensure that legislation, policy, programs and services are inclusive of persons with disabilities, respect the rights and needs of persons with disabilities, avoid unintended negative outcomes, and support equity and fairness for all Islanders.

Structurally, the Province must lead by example by creating opportunities for the Core Values and Operating Principles to be applied throughout the work of Government. To that end, the Committee recommends the following:

Coordinating Mechanism

Leadership Recommendation #1
Establish a provincial coordinating mechanism within Executive Council to:

- Develop and implement a framework for a client-centred approach to services and programming for persons living with disabilities in PEI;

- Give the coordinating mechanism the mandate and authority to review and recommend on legislation, policy, programs and services and their impact on persons living with disabilities; and,

- Require the coordinating mechanism to report annually on progress made on its mandate.

> *If you develop a disability, where do you go, what door do you knock on first, how many doors before you get help, who makes a decision on help?*
>
> Public participant at Public Consultations

The Committee invested time in identifying key attributes, roles and tasks for the coordinating mechanism:

Coordinating Mechanism Description

- Has authority for application and implementation of disability framework across all provincial government departments;

- Transcends administrative considerations;

- Establishes core values and operating principles for persons living with disabilities to guide, through reviews and recommendations, legislative program, policy and services;

- Is supported and informed by an advisory body;

- Works collaboratively with departments;

- Has authority to ensure departments apply the Disability Lens tool;

- Streamlines and enhances the use of human resources, within the proposed service delivery model, to reduce duplication/fragmentation.

- Builds, supports and promotes community partnerships;

- Responds to evolving and emerging issues in the community;

- Has resources to fulfill its mandate;

- Provides a single entry point or portal to information regarding supports and services for people living with disabilities;

- Creates and maintains an up-to-date directory or database of programs and services available to persons living with disabilities;

- Gathers data for outcomes and performance measurement, including appropriate demographic information; and,

- Reports to government on annual basis regarding outcomes of its work.

Departmental accountability

> **Leadership Recommendation #2**
> Establish position(s) within the provincial government with responsibility
> to coordinate provincial disability supports, programs and services. This
> role has authority to enforce adherence to the Core Values and Operating
> Principles across provincial government services and programming.

> **Leadership Recommendation #3**
> All provincial government departments and agencies are accountable for
> partnership support and collaboration regarding disability issues.

Advisory Body

> **Leadership Recommendation #4**
> Mandate an advisory body to support and inform the coordinating
> mechanism on issues relevant to supports and services for people living
> with disabilities.

Existing Leadership Opportunities

The Committee noted that opportunities exist for the coordinating
mechanism to collaborate with both provincial departments and bodies
(such as the provincial Seniors' Secretariat) as well as with the federal
government.

The Committee is aware that the Labour Market Development Agreement
(LMDA) and Labour Market Agreement (LMA) are being devolved from a
co-managed model between the federal and provincial government to a
model solely managed by the province, as early as October 2009. The
Province is already taking steps to manage this transition. The Committee
suggested the LMDA-NB model as a positive model to adapt to Island
needs.

> **Leadership Recommendation #5**
> The Province establish an ongoing mechanism to ensure that those
> managing and implementing the LMDA and LMA have knowledge
> regarding employment issues specific to people with disabilities to ensure
> barriers to employment are addressed, including post-secondary
> education issues.

Policy

> *...a fundamental shift in the way the general public views those persons living with a disability, [not as] 'objects of pity' [but rather] ...first and foremost as residents of Prince Edward Island. Inherent in residency is the right to have access to any services and supports available to all other islanders.*
>
> Advocacy Group Presentation at Public Consultation

A fundamental learning from the consultation and working group process was the value of the *process* itself as a vehicle for engaging Islanders in much-needed discussion regarding our values, principles and desires relating to people with disabilities. The Committee acknowledged that Islanders need an opportunity to dialogue about how they will live interdependently with persons with disabilities.

Rights Framework
As noted in the Phase I report, Canada and Prince Edward Island have a number of commitments and obligations with regard to national policy frameworks and international human rights agreements that are fundamental to understanding the duties owed to all people, including those living with disabilities.

People living with disabilities have rights under the Canadian *Constitution*:

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

15. (1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

15. (2) Subsection (1) does not preclude any law, program or activity that has as its object the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups including those that are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Furthermore, in 1991, Canada ratified the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* which provides for the rights of children with disabilities;

Article 23 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

1. States Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.

2. States Parties recognize the right of the disabled child to special care and shall encourage and ensure the extension, subject to available resources, to the eligible child and those responsible for his or her care, of assistance for which application is made and which is appropriate to the child's condition and to the circumstances of the parents or others caring for the child.

3. Recognizing the special needs of a disabled child, assistance extended in accordance with paragraph 2 of the present article shall be provided free of charge, whenever possible, taking into account the financial resources of the parents or others caring for the child, and shall be designed to ensure that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development.

4. States Parties shall promote, in the spirit of international cooperation, the exchange of appropriate information in the field of preventive health care and of medical, psychological and functional treatment of disabled children, including dissemination of and access to information concerning methods of rehabilitation, education and vocational services, with the aim of enabling States Parties to improve their capabilities and skills and to widen their experience in these areas. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

In 2006, Canada was one of twenty countries to first sign the *United Nations Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities*. Presenters at the public consultations urged the Committee to recommend that Canada ratify the treaty in the Spring of 2009, and move forward with measures to ensure the full inclusion of persons with disabilities, as twenty other countries have already done.

Therefore, the Province's approach to providing supports and services to people with disabilities is not just about "doing the right thing", but is also about rights.

Social Framework

In addition to the rights-based framework, the Canadian First Ministers initiated a collaborative effort which resulted in the vision paper called *In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues* in the 1990s which offered a general roadmap enabling Canada's provinces to be better aligned in their approaches to meeting the needs of people living with disabilities.

Given the passage of time, and the input received throughout the Disability Review consultation process, there is an opportunity for Prince Edward Island to refresh the dialogue on how our One Island Community responds to the needs of people living with disabilities.

Policy Recommendation #1

Government leaders come together to create a PEI social framework for the rights of people with disabilities reflecting the Provincial vision of *One Island, One Community, One Future*. Such a framework will identify criteria for determining how to support persons living with disabilities.

Legislative Framework

In addition to wanting to ensure an on-going dialogue, the Committee also expressed considerable concern that commitment to values and principles tended to ebb and flow in light of competing priorities on the public agenda. To stabilize and ensure its continuing resolve, the Committee strongly recommends that the Core Values and Operating Principles be enshrined in legislation.

Policy Recommendation #2

All programs and services for persons with disabilities be based upon prescribing legislation, regulations and policies. The elements of such legislation, regulation and policy ensure:

- program accountability;
- consistency;
- equitable treatment[2];
- common definition of disability;

and include:

- program objectives;
- eligibility factors;
- standards based on research and best practices;
- identified roles and responsibilities;
- evaluation framework.

Framework Tool: Disability Lens

The working groups and the Committee frequently used the fundamental principles and elements of the 2005 draft "Disability Lens" tool in considering issues and forming recommendations. This tool proved to be useful for the review process and would be beneficial for ongoing work relating to disability issues.

Policy Recommendation #3

The Province accept the "Disability Lens" tool and approve its use for the purposes of developing provincial legislation, policy, programs and services and assessing and addressing the impacts of all initiatives on persons with disabilities.

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[2]The DSR Committee recognized that "equal" does not necessarily mean "exactly the same"; instead, it used this term as meaning equitable.

The Committee noted that many programs and services are not directly designed or delivered by the Provincial government. However, the Province provides funding for these programs and services to municipalities and Island communities. Similarly, the Province provides funding to organizations and businesses for a variety of purposes. The Committee sees this as a prime opportunity to promote the Core Values and Operating Principles by requiring that any municipality, community, organization or business seeking funding from the Province be required to address all real or potential barriers affecting persons with disabilities in their funding proposal. The granting of such funding be contingent on such barriers being satisfactorily addressed.

Policy Recommendation #4
Funding recipients, such as municipalities and Island communities be mandated to deliver inclusive and accessible services for persons living with disabilities with reference to applicable elements of the Disability Lens tool.

- Accessible services and supports for persons living with disabilities includes ensuring that the Island's Acadian and Francophone population have equitable access to services and supports.

One Island Community Partnerships

Policy Recommendation #5
The provincial government work collaboratively with the federal government to :

- encourage flexibility in current Employment Assistance Services programs to support planning for high school students, and ensure that the allocation of staff is adequate to support the transition; and

- adjust the current federal Employment Benefit & Support Measures under LMDA such as Employment Assistance Services so that it has sufficient flexibility to accommodate the individual needs of persons living with disabilities.

The Committee recognized that there is a disparity in some services and supports between rural and urban Island residents. This was of particular concern with respect to housing as well as transportation options. While existing door-to-door service should continue to be offered for those people with disabilities who require more support in travel, there is an opportunity for the Province to develop transportation solutions in partnership.

Policy Recommendation #6
The Province initiate a partnership between governments, private sector and community-based service organizations to implement:

•   ways to meet the housing and transportation needs in under-served communities across the province; and

•   the gathering and verification of specific information to create a business plan for each of the under-served communities.

There are any number of opportunities for successful community partnerships. For example, the Committee took note of the Residential Resource Service Delivery Model. The Residential Resource Committee (RRC) is a partnership of service providers including staff and volunteers from the former West Prince Health (Child and Family Services, Home Care) Social Assistance and Disability Support Program, Community Inclusions and The Canadian Mental Health Association (West Prince). The RRC works to coordinate resource development to strengthen the community's capacity to care for clients who require private community-based housing options in the West Prince Region. To this end the RRC designed a Service Delivery Model and established non-negotiable criteria for an applicant interested in listing his or her name as a residential resource.

Flowing from the rights, social and legislative frameworks, the Committee identified a number of policy approaches that would help move forward their application. While the Committee believed that the values-based approach was essential to framing its recommendations, it is essential that the Province not only declare its intent, but demonstrate its commitment through immediate, tangible action.

To that end, the Committee identified the following policy approaches to integrate core values and operating principles into the priority service areas.

Integrating social policy in employment

> "Through work we meet new people and establish new friendships, increase feelings of self worth, enable greater independence, become part of community and contribute to that community. Perhaps more importantly it affects feelings of value, contribution, ability and capacity"
>
>   Public consultation participant.

The Committee not only wanted to ensure improved opportunities for people with disabilities, but also improved quality of life. To that end, the Committee endorsed specific recommendations to establish policies, protocols and measures to encourage sustainable employment for persons living with a disability that provides a liveable income:

Policy Recommendation #7
The Province make the following policy adjustments to employment related services:

- increase the wage exemption under the Social Assistance Program;

- the Province to work with the Federal Government to ensure there are reduced barriers to employment training programs such as restoring Skills Development Benefits to 100% coverage; and,

- the Province to partner with the Federal Government to provide transition supports to persons with disabilities prior to transition from high school.

The Committee noted that Island demographics suggest that people with disabilities are under-represented in the provincial workforce. The Committee believes that there is an opportunity for the Province to illustrate its commitment to improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Policy Recommendation #8
The percentage of people with disabilities working with the provincial government be increased to a minimum of 5% by 2012;

Integrating social policy in the Disability Support Program
Consultations indicated that financial supports often do not meet the full needs of recipients. The need for a policy review of funding rates was identified by the Committee with respect to the Disability Support Program (DSP) and other aspects of public financial supports.

Policy Recommendation #9
The Department of Social Services and Seniors explore the following policy changes within the DSP program:

- Reassess DSP funding rates to match with qualifications, experience, market and geographic conditions and have the rates indexed annually to match the Consumer Price Index (CPI);

- Investigate a "no cap" needs-based approach to DSP funding, in particular for individuals at either end of the needs spectrum: those with minimal needs and those with extreme high needs;

- Introduce a systematic rate review process that reflects the cost of living;

- Investigate removing the cost of transportation from the cost of the DSP case plan;

- Introduce flexibility into the DSP Policy regarding client co-pay to address exceptional circumstances; and

- Assess the feasibility and implications of using the person with disability's income instead of spousal or spousal-equivalent income, to assess eligibility for the DSP.

Integrating social policy in asset management
In addition to public funding sources, the Committee identified opportunities to enable individuals with disabilities to have greater opportunity to manage what assets they have, and for their families to be able to make provisions to support a family member with a disability without depriving the individual from access to other social funding and supports.

Policy Recommendation #10
Investigate ways and means to exempt Income Trusts for people with disabilities from Income testing.

Policy Recommendation #11
Advance the following policy changes to the Social Assistance Program:

•   Increase the rates to reflect actual costs of living, such as rent, food, clothing and transportation; and

•   Increase the liquid asset exemption.

Integrating social policy in early intervention
The Committee's deliberations relating to early intervention issues gave rise to several specific policy recommendations.

"Early childhood is an important time in any child's life. For children with disabilities, the early years are critical for a number of reasons. First, the earlier a child is identified as having a developmental delay or disability, the greater the likelihood that the child will benefit from intervention strategies designed to compensate for the child's needs. Second, families benefit from the support given to them through the intervention process. Third, schools and communities benefit from a decrease in costs because more children come to school ready to learn.

Public participant at Public Consultations

Policy Recommendation #12
The Early Intervention working group of the Children's Secretariat be mandated to develop an Early Intervention Strategy that would address:

•   an inclusion approach;

•   a disability lens; and,

•   a balance of child-centred intervention and family support.

Policy Recommendation #13
Intervention for children living with disabilities will occur based on need and the development of the child, not diagnosis.

Policy Recommendation #14
Early intervention delivery personnel should not be involved in determining financial support issues.

Policy Recommendation #15
A continuum of screening and assessment be developed from birth to early school years and include such factors as:

• Ability to do data linkages across departments to support research on best practices and program planning; and,

• An enhanced 18 months, 3.5 year and entry to kindergarten (5year) assessment.

The Committee noted that, as a separate process from the Disability Services Review, representatives from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Department of Social Services and Seniors, the Department of Health, as well as representatives from the Autism Society of P.E.I., are currently reviewing programming offered in Prince Edward Island to children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Integrating social policy in housing
The Committee also made specific recommendations relating to housing policy that will affect the design and development of program delivery.

Policy Recommendation #16
The Province establish provincial housing policy that:

• Respects a person's choice and individual needs;

• Is person-centered and not based on an institutional or medical model;

• Provides flexibility and is designed to meet the needs of individual and family circumstances in a timely and effective manner;

• Values the family unit and their need for financial support;

• Is proactive, rather than reactive, and values the service provided by family members to the person with a disability;

• Promotes and requires that a certain percentage of homes, units, or facilities built in PEI be barrier free or meet universal design requirements.

Policy Recommendation #17

Federal, provincial, municipal and private sector partners establish housing solutions for persons living with disabilities that:

- Use the principle of "normalization"[3] and include a variety of housing options and supports;

- Partner with persons living with disabilities and their advocates, other levels of government, private service providers, and not-for-profit organizations;

- Consider regional issues within the province such as the disparity between urban and rural situations;

- Develop consistent standards tied to funding for public and private sector housing options with respect to:
  - safety;
  - staffing ratios;
  - staff qualifications; and
  - client programming; and,

- Explore the viability of offering an incentive program for contractors and builders.

Policy Recommendation #18

The Province establish ways and means to:

- Compensate family members for the services they provide to a person living with a disability who is residing with them that would otherwise be provided by a service provider; and,

- Provide adequate financial and human support to a person with disabilities that would enable them to remain in the family home following the death of their parent where the parent has bequeathed the family home to them.

Integrating social policy in transportation services

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[3]Refer to Appendix "4" for a definition of the principle of normalization.

The Committee also felt that the Island Community shares some needs with people with disabilities. This was particularly evident with respect to transportation services.

Policy Recommendation #19
All Islanders should have access to an Island-wide, accessible and affordable public transit system:

- To be truly coordinated, the system would require a central dispatch and route planning to be part of a Transit Authority, as recommended in the *Island Wide Transit Feasibility Study.*[4]

- Transportation planners identify options for connecting smaller communities to major routes; and

- Provide a reduced bus fare for people with a disabling condition to remove barriers for inclusion.

Policy Recommendation #20
Increase social assistance travel rates for persons living with disabilities because transportation costs should not absorbed by an individual's DSP case plan.

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[4] PEI Transit Coalition Final Report, June 2008

Integrating social policy in recreation services
Recreation is a positive use of one's leisure time which enhances quality of life. Participation in recreation activities:

> *Often forgotten is a child's right to recreation - to have fun. For a disabled child to participate in recreation, two things are needed: specialized equipment, and someone to help with it.*
>
> Presenter at Public Consultations

- is essential to personal growth;
- is key to balanced human development;
- reduces isolation and promotes inclusion;
- builds strong families and healthy communities;
- promotes independence and enhances self-esteem; and
- reduces the need for health care and social services and the reliance on such systems.

> **Policy Recommendation #21**
> Municipalities and Island Communities receiving funding (grants) to deliver recreation services be mandated to deliver inclusive and accessible services for persons living with disabilities.

Program Delivery

While the Committee recognized that its mandate was to address strategic, or high level, issues, there was an opportunity to apply the Core Values and Operating Principles as well as the policy recommendations to the program delivery level.

The point from which to launch this level of the recommendations is to acknowledge that the current array of programs and services available to people with disabilities tends to be fragmented along functional or service lines. An individual might be eligible for a variety of supports, but must make separate inquiries and establish eligibility on a repeated basis in order to access these supports. The Committee believes that this does not meet the Core Values and Operating Principles set out in this document.

Client-centered service delivery models should be developed to offer a range of programming that maximizes integration (as opposed to fragmentation of services) such that programs:

- are age appropriate across the life span;

- recognize cultural diversity;

- are accessible financially, physically, geographically;

- involve a grass-roots based component;

- respect client confidentiality;

- address risk and liability issues for client and service providers;

- promote best practices;

- recognize service providers who use best practices; and

- monitor outcomes through demonstrated evidence that actions are having a positive impact for client.

With these factors in mind, the Committee made the following recommendations:

Case Management

Program Delivery Recommendation #1
A client-centered service, involving a multi-disciplinary approach, be used in providing services to persons living with disabilities, including case management where required. The competencies of persons providing services to persons living with disabilities be matched with the needs of the person and be based on their disability.

Program Delivery Recommendation #2
Delivery models provide seamless supports and services including:

- standard needs identification;

- consistent case management;

- services and programs working together in a coordinated manner; and

- a single-point of entry for services.

DSP workers have been challenged by the balancing of case management needs with financial management. Currently, a financial management approach tends to overwhelm case management practices. The Committee believed that, in keeping with its Core Values and Operating Principles, steps need to be taken to shift that balance in favour of case management.

Program Delivery Recommendation #3
Provide DSP workers with enhanced case management skills, such as interviewing skills and interpersonal communication skills, that facilitate the client's ability to express their needs and concerns:

- Require DSP workers to direct more focus on the typical day of the person with disabilities, his or her functioning and needs, rather than adopting the gatekeeper approach of starting from the eligibility criteria .
.

> **Program Delivery Recommendation #4**
> Provide consistent training to all service providers across the Island to improve case-management abilities and consistent application of policy and procedures.

Client information support
Clients and their families are sometimes uncertain as to what information has been recorded and retained. The Committee noted that proactive sharing of information will help build confidence in the choices of services and supports offered.

> **Program Delivery Recommendation #5**
> Support transparent sharing of assessment results by professional service providers with the client and family.

Under the current model of service delivery, parents or caregivers may employ other care givers to assist in providing services to a person with disabilities.

> **Program Delivery Recommendation #6**
> Provide parents, family or primary care givers access to accurate information regarding the Canada Revenue Agency employer guidelines.

Resources

> *"How can the benefit of access be compared to its cost? How much is the benefit of someone's dignity worth? Let's stop the indignity of unleashing accountants on the intangible question of whether we can afford to treat people as equals. There are not two sides to the justice ledger. All this talk of tightening our belt in hard times assumes that everyone has a belt. Some people can't afford one. Why do I always get the sense that when people talk about fiscal responsibility; they mean cut social programs, and when they talk about cutting social programs, they mean women and disabled persons and minorities can wait a little longer. For what? For the perfect economy we can never have? What gives us the right to declare the disadvantaged as the economy's shock absorbers?"*
>
> *Madame Justice Rosalie Abella*

The Committee was aware that the values-based approach has a tangible impact on the resources used to deliver services and supports. While recognizing that Government administrations do not have unlimited resources and must identify priorities in the delivery of public services, Madame Justice Abella's quote reminds us all that the needs of vulnerable members of society must rise to the top at some point in a just and caring society.

Financial Resources

Resources Recommendation #1
Dedicate adequate financial supports to services for persons with disabilities.

Human Resources – Service Provider Training
The Committee acknowledged service provider training as an important aspect of improvement in program delivery to people with disabilities. Collaborative training partnerships were identified as an opportunity for exploration amongst provincial government departments, post-secondary institutions, not-for-profit organizations, and private sector partners.

Resources Recommendation #2
Equip human service providers supporting persons with disabilities with the appropriate professional qualifications related to the human services field.

Resources Recommendation #3
Introducing distance and extension programming through post-secondary education institutions to meet continuing education needs of service providers.

Resources Recommendation #4
Identify a viable model to train people to work with people with disabilities to provide a variety of supports such as respite, tutoring, one-to-one support services.[5]

Resources Recommendation #5
The Province enhance funding resources to existing NGO's that offer social skills training, supportive communities, social networking and self-advocacy in violent situations.

While it was noted that women with disabilities are at higher risk for experiencing violence,[6] this is a potential risk for all people with disabilities. Therefore, training also needs to equip service providers with the awareness of the safety and security needs of people with disabilities.

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[5]This does not necessarily mean the creation of a new model. See for example, Opal Family Services, New Brunswick, www.opalfamilyservices.ca

[6]*Phase I report,* p. 46

Resources Recommendation #6
Training be provided to those who work with people living with disabilities in violent situations.

Resources Recommendation #7
Training be provided for service providers who work with people with disabilities living in residential situations.

Human Resources – Compensation

Resources Recommendation #8
Ensure that qualified persons providing support to persons living with disabilities receive adequate compensation which is commensurate with qualifications to support successful recruitment and retention of persons working in the field.

Public Education & Awareness

The return on investment for the public sector modelling its values and principles is not fully realized if other segments of Island society are not aware and are not challenged to modify their own approaches and perspectives regarding their interaction with people living with disabilities.

> *...there continues to be to be a lack of awareness about the real impacts living with a disability can have for an individual and his/her family. This lack of awareness can sometimes translate into "indifference...*
>
> Advisory Group
> Presentation a Public Consultations

Therefore, the Province needs to engage in social marketing of these issues:

Awareness Recommendation #1
The Province lead a sustainable social marketing approach in partnership with not-for-profit government organizations, the private sector, persons living with disabilities, their families, Advocacy Groups and Island communities[7] designed to;

- provide information about the needs of persons living with disabilities;

- demonstrate that appropriate, affordable, accessible services are a priority issue for persons living with disabilities;

- highlight the social isolation arising from living with a disability;

- illustrate the benefits of inclusion in the community through participation in activities;

- assist provincial and private sector organizations and businesses in their understanding of the importance and value of accommodating persons living with disabilities in the workplace;

- include personal stories about inappropriate residential placement situations and highlight best practices for options that are possible; and

- demonstrate examples where the province leads by example in inclusion activities or initiatives.

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[7]Consideration be given to modeling the approach after the "Open Your Mind" campaign used in Alberta http://www.cab-acr.ca/english/social/diversity/disabilities/psa.shtm

Awareness Recommendation #2
The Province in partnership with not-for-profit government organizations, the private sector, persons living with disabilities, their families, and Advocacy Groups encourage the increased implementation of barrier free or universal design requirements for homes and buildings constructed in PEI by developing:

•   an awareness and education program for the construction industry, and municipalities and communities; and,

•   an awareness and education program for provincial, municipal, or community planners who issue building permits.

Beyond Strategy

In the course of the consultations and public input, several specific issues and challenges were identified that were at the more operational level rather than the strategic level. Some of those items were challenges such as:

- Children in the school system who are at risk and need alternative programming;

- Insufficient, designated appropriate parking spaces;

- Businesses need incentive/motivation to meet needs of persons with disabilities;

- Groups need information on how to access user-friendly media;

- People need literature, forms in person-friendly format, including plain language, Braille, RTC;

- People with visual impairments need better signage; and,

- Persons with disabilities need access to all public buildings.

Recognizing that the Committee was mandated to consider issues at the strategic level, the Committee nevertheless wanted to acknowledge these concerns.

Conclusion

The Disability Services Review Committee is pleased to present this report to the Minister for consideration and action. It was a privilege to offer our guidance and support.

While this report sets out a large number of recommendations, from the identification of Core Values and Operating Principles to program delivery, the Committee felt strongly about making a concluding recommendation that the Province not only declare its intent, but illustrate its intent through action:

> **Concluding Recommendation**
> It is imperative that there be simultaneous implementation of provincial legislation and policy development through the provincial coordinating mechanism along with the implementation of tangible, practical recommendations in the near term so that the Province's commitment to improving services and programming for persons living with disabilities in Prince Edward Island is evident and demonstrated in a timely fashion.

This document represents the successful outcome of bringing together people with an extraordinary commitment and passion to improve the services and supports available to people living with disabilities. The Committee extends its heartfelt thanks to the members of the public who participated in the consultation phase, and the members of the six working groups who gave eight to nine full days of hard work. Their energy, commitment and passion not only resulted in a series of values-based, thought-provoking, and practical recommendations, but also an improved sense of community and a desire to sustain a dialogue on the many challenging questions this work brought to light.

The interest-based approach to addressing a wide-range of service and support issues has prepared the way for an on-going dialogue within our Island Community.

> **Observation: The Importance of Process**
> *The involvement of stakeholders and the community throughout the process had, in itself, a positive effect. It helped establish a basis for meaningful discussions. For example, participants in the Phase II working groups expressed a greater awareness of the issues and challenges facing the persons living with disabilities. The consultative process was an initial step in raising community awareness. It created a springboard for launching needed social marketing and awareness campaigns that were identified by most of the working groups as an essential strategy to moving forward.*

By identifying recommendations grounded in Core Values and Operating Principles, and cross-cutting themes, the Committee is confident that this report lays the groundwork for a values-based approach that will enhance the Province's efforts to improve its services and supports to *all* Islanders, *including* Islanders living with disabilities.

Appendix 1

Disability Services Review Working Group Participants

Name	Business
Aitken, Theresa	Disability Services Review Committee
Bertelsen, Brian	Policy Analyst, Corporate Services, Department of Health
Cairns, Bridget	Executive Director, PEI Association for Community Living; Disability Services Review Committee
Clow, Joanne	Functional Assessment Coordinator, Social Programs and Seniors, Department of Social Services and Seniors
Costain, Corinna	Co-owner and Operator of Scotcor Construction Ltd. and Scotcor Rentals; Disability Services Review Committee
Costello, Trent	Manager, Pat & Elephant
Doucette, Kathy	K&K Quality Care
Dunn, Bobby	Manager, Trius Tours
Ferguson, Eleanor	Queens County Residential Services Inc.
Fleming, Bill	Provincial Housing Coordinator, Pharmacy, Housing, Dentistry & Seniors, Department of Social Services and Seniors
Francis, Kateri	Child and Family Services, Department of Social Services and Seniors
Fraser-MacKay, Winnie	Seniors' Secretariat; Disability Services Review Committee
Freeze, Catherine	Seniors' Policy Advisor, Pharmacy, Housing, Dentistry & Seniors, Department of Social Services and Seniors
Gallant, Sharon	Disability Services Review Committee
Guindon, Wendy	Employer Services Manager, PEI Council of the Disabled
Hendricken, Sue	Manager of Parks & Recreation, City of Charlottetown
Henry, Sarah	Child Development Coordinator, Early Childhood Services, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Howatt, Peter	Special Olympics Volunteer; Human Resources Officer, Corporate Services, Department of Health
Larkin, Peter	Community Connections
Lewellyn, Preston	Business Development Officer, Kings County, PEI Business Development
MacAulay, Rita	Disability Support Worker, Social Programs and Seniors, Department of Social Services and Seniors
MacDonald, Pat	Social Assistance/Disability Support Coordinator, Social Programs, Department of Social Services and Seniors

Disability Services Review Working Group Participants

Name	**Business**
MacDonald, Peter	Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation
MacEwen, Alida	Service Canada
MacKay, David	Chair of Transportation Coalition
MacLeod, Gerard	Social Assistance Disability Support Supervisor, Social Programs, Department of Social Services and Seniors
Martin, John	Transportation West
McCabe, Joanne	Co-ordinator, Student Accessibility Services, University of Prince Edward Island
Meggs, Peter	Special Education Coordinator, Student Support Services, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Montigny, Richard, Chair	Chairperson, PEI Human Rights Commission
Murphy, Dale	Vocational Counsellor, Workers Compensation Board
Nelson, Shelley	Community Access Facilitator, Student Support Services, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
O'Brien, Krista	Executive Director, Boys and Girls Club of Charlottetown
Pilkington, Kathy	Teacher, Birchwood Intermediate School; Disability Services Review Committee
Porter, Kevin	Disability Services Review Committee; Executive Director, Community Inclusions
Redmond, Danny	Department of Social Services and Seniors
Rendell, Jason	A/Supervisor Social Assistance & Disability Support Programs, Social Programs, Department of Social Services and Seniors
Sentner, Janet	Income Support Worker, Social Programs, Department of Social Services and Seniors
Stevens, Charlene	RN branch director for WeCare Home Health Company; Disability Services Review Committee
Stone, Twilah	Human Services Program Instructor, Holland College; Disability Services Review Committee
Watts, Shelley	Business Manager, Tremploy; Disability Services Review Committee

Appendix 2

Health condition
(disorder or disease)

**Body Functions
& Structure** ⟷ **Activity** ⟷ **Participation**

**Environmental
Factors** **Personal
Factors**

Contextual factors
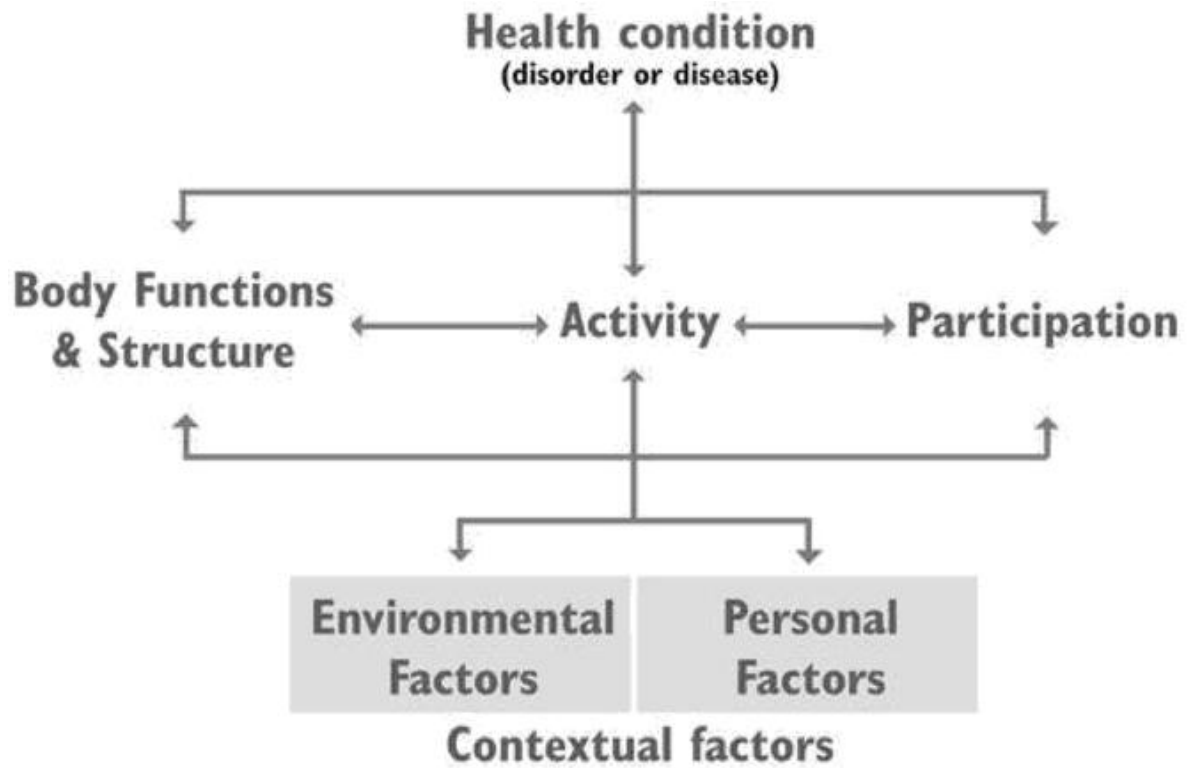
Appendix 3

THE DISABILITY LENS

Defining Disability:

The Disability Lens accepts, but is not limited to, the World Health Organization's (WHO) definition of disability, which defines **disability** as "the loss or reduction of functional ability and activity that is consequent upon impairment", and **impairment** as "any disturbance of or interference with the normal structure and functioning of the body, including the systems of mental function".

The words **disability** and **handicap** are often incorrectly assumed to be interchangeable. A **handicap** is an environmental or attitudinal barrier that limits the opportunity for a person to participate fully. Negative attitudes or inaccessible entrances to buildings are examples of handicaps. A person is considered *not* to have a disability, if the use of a technical aid, such as glasses or a hearing aid, completely compensates for it.

The Disability Lens recognizes that people with disabilities are not homogeneous and that there is a broad range of disabilities and issues. Disabilities may be: apparent or hidden, severe or mild, singular or multiple, chronic or intermittent. Types of disabilities include mobility/agility, mental/cognitive, hearing, speaking, and visual impairments. Life experiences of persons with disabilities are not only influenced by the nature of the disability; factors such as gender, age, geographic location, ethnicity, culture and social values, and sexual orientation also have a pervasive effect on individual experience. Diverse life experiences create distinct needs, expectations, and life choices.

The Disability Lens is:
- a tool for identifying and clarifying issues affecting persons with disabilities;
- for policy and program developers and analysts to assess and address the impacts of all initiatives (policies, programs or decisions) on persons with disabilities;
- a resource for all ministries to assist in creating policies and programs reflective of the rights and needs of persons with disabilities.

The Disability Lens is guided by the following principles:
- respect for individual diversity and experience
- equal access to opportunity and to pursue one's full potential
- self-determination, independence and dignity
- community partnership and joint decision-making
- ongoing communication and continual progress.

Why Do We Need A Disability Lens?

Given that persons with disabilities are present in all social environments (home, work, community), all legislation, policies, programs and services will impact on persons with disabilities. Legislation, policy, programs and services that do not consider the unique life experiences and needs of persons with disabilities may inadvertently discriminate and create systemic barriers. In order for initiatives to be truly reflective of, and useful to all persons, we must continue to ask ourselves questions which challenge us to think outside of our own experience. The Disability Lens helps bring focus to issues affecting persons with disabilities. Integrating diverse perspectives and experiences into an initiative not only helps to ensure equity, but also fosters partnerships and builds support.

The Goal of the Disability Lens is to ensure that all government initiatives are equitable in that they are: accessible and inclusive, respect the rights and needs of persons with disabilities, promote positive attitudes, and raise awareness.

Using The Disability Lens

The Disability Lens is applicable to all government initiatives, internal or external, preexisting or under development, and especially those initiatives which are not directed towards or related to disability issues. It assists the user to focus on and identify issues within any initiative which may affect persons with disabilities. The issues have been carefully grouped to focus on seven primary areas of impact so that no aspect of the experience and rights of persons with disabilities is overlooked or minimized. They are as follows:

1. Consultation and Data Collection
2. Accessibility and Appropriate Accommodation
3. Systemic, Indirect Discrimination and Legal Obligations
4. Economic Status, Education, Training, and Employment
5. Communication
6. Safety and Protection from Victimization
7. Health and Well-being

For developers of policies and programs, the Disability Lens Issues Analysis provides a framework of issues to consider and a checklist of general practices and activities to incorporate into the design of an initiative. Analysts can use the Issues Analysis checklist questions to assess if an initiative is equitable for persons with disabilities. The questions also act as a guide for making recommendations and/or necessary changes.

For the Disability Lens to be effective, it is important that all of the questions posed under each issue be fully addressed. This will take time and likely require some research and/or consultation.

DISABILITY ISSUES ANALYSIS

CONSULTATION and DATA COLLECTION

Consultation, such as focus groups, surveys and anecdotal research, elicits critical information from experts and from those who may be impacted. Research methods and information sources used will affect findings and future decisions. It is essential that all information collected is comprehensive and accurate to ensure equitable outcomes.

Questions to ask of this initiative:	YES	NO	Notations of actions required/taken:
a) Has qualitative as well as quantitative data been used?	❑	❑	
b) Does this initiative consider the varied needs of a wide range of persons with disabilities at different stages of life and development?	❑	❑	
c) Have all stakeholders, and consumers, including relevant organizations, been consulted to collect specific information regarding issues to consider?	❑	❑	
d) Have persons with disabilities of diverse backgrounds, cultures, and experiences been included in all stages of this initiative?	❑	❑	
e) Have all appropriate areas of the province been represented in this consultation?	❑	❑	

If necessary, attach or continue additional notations on the back of this page.

DISABILITY ISSUES ANALYSIS

ACCESSIBILITY and
APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATION

Persons with disabilities have the right to fully participate in mainstream society and the right to independent access. Environment plays a crucial role in determining the degree of "handicap" which a person experiences. Appropriate accommodations can eliminate handicapping conditions. Such accommodations may include: altering the physical access to a building; providing technical and adaptive aids and human support; allowing flexibility of hours and time lines; using alternative communication formats and alternative transportation options. Attitudes, assumptions, and stereotyping create barriers to access. Promoting positive attitudes and raising awareness can remove barriers.

Questions to ask of this initiative:	YES	NO	Notations of actions required/taken:
a) Have disability related organizations been consulted regarding specific types of accommodations to improve access for persons with disabilities?	❏	❏	
b) Are accommodations planned for and integrated into systems to the greatest degree possible?	❏	❏	
c) Is the environment physically accessible for persons with a broad range of disabilities?	❏	❏	
d) Where transportation is concerned are the needs of persons with disabilities and their families provided for?	❏	❏	
e) Is this initiative flexible enough to facilitate individualized service delivery and special accommodations?	❏	❏	
f) Does it encourage independence and respect for persons with disabilities?	❏	❏	

If necessary, attach or continue additional notations on the back of this page.

DISABILITY ISSUES ANALYSIS

SYSTEMIC, INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION and LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Systemic discrimination is caused by social, economic, legal and political structures which support the prosperity of some groups and do not consider the different experiences and needs of others. Treating all people as if they are the same may produce inequitable opportunities and outcomes for some groups. Developing true equality may require different treatment and individual accommodation. Discrimination has a compounding effect on persons with disabilities who are also members of other marginalized groups.

Government and the private sector must ensure that legislation, policy, programs and services are equitable and do not discriminate against the rights of persons with disabilities. These rights are enshrined in the following codes and laws which prohibit discrimination and allow for special measures to improve conditions for designated populations: The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Human Rights Codes, and Employment Equity legislation and policy.

	Questions to ask of this initiative:	YES	NO	Notations of actions required/taken:
a)	Do any requirements or restrictions contained in this initiative impede the full participation of persons with disabilities?	❏	❏	
b)	Have the legal implications of how this initiative may impact on persons with disabilities been analyzed?	❏	❏	
c)	Have policies which address the rights and needs of persons with disabilities been developed or put in place?	❏	❏	
d)	Have organizations representing marginalized people been consulted to ensure the particular needs of persons with disabilities in these populations are considered?	❏	❏	

If necessary, attach or continue additional notations on the back of this page.

DISABILITY ISSUES ANALYSIS

ECONOMIC STATUS, EDUCATION, TRAINING, and EMPLOYMENT

Education (formal and informal), contributes to the well-being and economic independence of an individual. Statistically, persons with disabilities have lower levels of educational attainment, lower employment incomes and higher unemployment rates than the general population. Most live below the poverty line and those who are not working generally must rely on other types of income which usually provide only minimal support, such as disability pensions or income assistance. Often additional disability related expenses consume income and erode the standard of living. There are fewer opportunities for persons with disabilities to i resulting mprove their economic standing. A lower economic status creates a lower social profile, in further marginalization.

In addition to economic status, physical and attitudinal barriers also prevent access to skill development and learning opportunities within both educational and workplace settings. For persons with disabilities to achieve economic equality and income parity, equal access to education, training, and employment opportunities is a necessity.

Questions to ask of this initiative:	YES	NO	Notations of actions required/taken:
a) Does this initiative facilitate equitable access to education, training, and employment opportunities (including public programs, staff development and learning opportunities) for persons with a broad range of disabilities?	❑	❑	
b) Are persons with disabilities included in relevant economic decision making?	❑	❑	
c) Is this initiative accessible to persons with low incomes?	❑	❑	
d) Does the selection process of participants consider the differing needs of persons with disabilities?	❑	❑	

If necessary, attach or continue additional notations on the back of this page.

DISABILITY ISSUES ANALYSIS

COMMUNICATION

Communication is vital to a healthy functioning society. Careful presentation of information about, and to, persons with disabilities can help overcome negative attitudes and shape positive ones. Language as well as the physical location of documents can limit access to information and create barriers to full participation of persons with disabilities.

For communication to be inclusive and therefore effective, the differing needs of persons with disabilities must be considered. Persons with disabilities may have added difficulty in accessing information in standard format. Alternative formats are necessary to communicate information to persons with sensory or cognitive disabilities. (i.e. Braille, TDD/TTY for the deaf, large print, computer disk, bliss symbols, sign language, translators, intervenors, interpreters.)

Questions to ask of this initiative:	YES	NO	Notations of actions required/taken:
a) Does this initiative use inclusive language and images which focus attention on ability rather than disability?	❏	❏	
b) Does it use language that supports self-determination and dignity?	❏	❏	
c) Are all documents and communication material written in plain language?	❏	❏	
d) Are communication documents available in alternative formats, (i.e. Braille, audio tape)?	❏	❏	
e) Are they located in an environment which is physically accessible and are persons with disabilities informed of the availability of materials in alternative formats?	❏	❏	

If necessary, attach or continue additional notations on the back of this page.

DISABILITY ISSUES ANALYSIS

SAFETY and
PROTECTION FROM VICTIMIZATION

Safety and protection from victimization are essential for individuals to fully participate in society. Fear and the experience of victimization (abuse, violence, neglect, harassment, and discrimination) limit the choices and opportunities. Economic and physical dependency increase opportunity for victimization to occur and reduce the options to escape such situations. The diverse needs of persons with disabilities must also be included in all environmental safety and preventable injury considerations.

Questions to ask of this initiative:	YES	NO	Notations of actions required/taken:
a) Does this initiative use every opportunity to challenge stereotypes which promote dependency, isolation, and powerlessness?	❑	❑	
b) Does this initiative protect the safety of people with a broad range of disabilities against violence, victimization, harassment, personal and environmental injuries, where it relates with the home, community, and workplace?	❑	❑	

If necessary, attach or continue additional notations on the back of this page.

DISABILITY ISSUES ANALYSIS

HEALTH and WELL-BEING

All people have a right to social, recreational and cultural experiences, activities and relationships. Often persons with disabilities are isolated, limiting their access to these experiences. People with supportive social relationships are less susceptible to health problems. The unique physical and emotional needs of persons with disabilities must be considered. The low economic status of some persons with disabilities also affects their ability to maintain good health.

Questions to ask of this initiative:	YES	NO	Notations of actions required/taken:
a) Does this initiative give equal consideration to the health, well-being and independence of persons with disabilities?	❏	❏	
b) Are all social opportunities, events and activities in the related environment and community accessible and inclusive?	❏	❏	
c) Does this initiative encourage a variety of social and inter-personal relationships, especially those that provide emotional support and social participation?	❏	❏	
d) Are all opportunities for personal growth and advancement equally accessible?	❏	❏	

If necessary, attach or continue additional notations on the back of this page.

DISABILITY ISSUES ANALYSIS

CONCLUSION

Every "Yes" response reflects positive impacts on persons with disabilities and moves this initiative another step closer towards equity. Positive responses to the following over-arching questions affirms that every attempt has been made to ensure this initiative is equitable for persons with disabilities.

SUMMARY QUESTIONS	YES	NO
a) Have all components of this initiative been reviewed using the Disability Lens?	❏	❏
b) Were the possible impacts of this initiative for persons with agility, mobility, mental/cognitive, hearing, speech, and visual disabilities accounted for?	❏	❏
c) Have the impacts of this initiative been considered according to gender, culture, age, marital status, sexual orientation, geographic location, and income level?	❏	❏
d) Does this initiative support full participation and independence and reflect positive images of persons with disabilities?	❏	❏
e) Have specific actions been taken to remove existing barriers and increase opportunities and choices for persons with disabilities?	❏	❏
f) Have accommodations been identified which someone with a disability would need to participate in this initiative?	❏	❏
g) Have all NO responses to the questions in the Disability Lens Issues Analysis been addressed to reflect positive outcomes and equity for persons with disabilities?	❏	❏
h) Was consultation sought from the Department of Health and Social Services as well as experts drawn from the communities of persons with disabilities and/or other disability related resources?	❏	❏

If necessary, attach or continue additional notations on the back of this page.

Appendix 4

Definition of Normalization:

Normalization is the utilization of means which are as culturally normative as possible, in order to establish, enable, or support behaviours and appearances which are as culturally normative as possible.

Dr. Wolf Wolfensberger states that, "Normalization is not just about giving people with disabilities opportunities, experiences, skills etc. which are considered culturally normative; it also implies that the means used to reach those ends encompass normative approaches on the part of others".

According to Bengt Nirge (paraphrased) Normalization means:

A normal rhythm of the day:
You get out of bed in the morning, no matter how severe your disability;
You get dressed,
And leave the house for school or work,
You don't stay home;
In the morning you anticipate events,
In the evening you think back on what you have accomplished;
The day is not a monotonous 24 hours with every minute endless

You eat at normal times of the day and in a normal fashion:
Not just with a spoon, unless you are an infant;
Not in bed, but at a table;
Not early in the afternoon for the convenience of the staff.

A normal rhythm of the week:
You live in one place,
Go to work or school in another,
And participate in leisure activities in yet another.
You anticipate leisure activities on weekends,
And look forward to getting back to school
Or work on Monday.

A normal rhythm of the year:
A vacation to break routines of the year.
Seasonal changes bring with them a variety
Of types of food, work, cultural events, sports,
Leisure activities.
Just think….We thrive on these seasonal changes!

Normal developmental experiences of the Life cycle:
In childhood, children, but not adults go to summer camps.
In adolescence one is interested in grooming, hairstyles,
Music, boy friends and girl fiends.
In adulthood, Life is filled with work and responsibilities.
In old age, one has memories to look back on, and can
Enjoy the wisdom of experience.

Having a range of choices:
Wishes, and desires respected and considered.
Adults have the freedom to decide
Where they would like to live,
What kind of job they would like to have, and can best perform.
Whether they would prefer to go bowling, with a group,
Instead of staying home to watch television.

Living in a world of two sexes:
Children and adults both develop relationships with
Members of the opposite sex.
Teenagers become interested in having
Boy friends and girl fiends.
Adults may fall in love, and decide to marry.

The right to normal economic standards:
All of us have basic financial privileges, and responsibilities,
Are able to take advantage of
Compensatory economic security means,
Such as child allowances, old age pensions, and
Minimum wage regulations.
We should have money to decide how to spend;
On personal luxuries, or necessities.

Living in normal housing:
In a normal neighborhood
Not in a large facility with 20, 50 or 100 other people
Because you are intellectually disabled,
And not isolated from the rest of the community.
Normal locations and normal size homes will give residents
Better opportunities for successful integration
With their communities