

Canada-Nova Scotia
Labour Market Agreement
for Persons with Disabilities

Annual Report 2008-09

December 3, 2009



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Ministers' Message

On behalf of the Province of Nova Scotia, we are pleased to present the Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities Annual Report 2008-09. The Annual Report is designed to inform Nova Scotians of the effectiveness of the programs and services targeted to helping persons with disabilities participate in the labour force.

We believe the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in our community will not only improve their quality of life, it will make Nova Scotia a stronger province. Persons with disabilities have unique, diverse and sometimes complex needs. The key is to help persons with disabilities meet their full potential. Government sponsored labour market programs for persons with disabilities are intended to address the additional employment, education and training challenges that disabilities may create for people.

In Nova Scotia, the departments of Community Services, Education, Health, and Health Promotion and Protection work together to offer programs and services that support the employability of persons with disabilities. They include career counseling, campus-based supports, addiction treatment and mental health services. These programs have made and continue to make a profound difference in the lives of Nova Scotians with disabilities.

The Nova Scotia government is committed to working together with the disability community, the Government of Canada and other partners to continue offering services that meet the current and future needs of Nova Scotians with disabilities.

Denise Peterson-Rafuse
Minister of Community Services

Maureen MacDonald
Minister of Health
Minister of Health Promotion and Protection

Marilyn More
Minister of Education

Introduction

Nova Scotia and Canada recognize that persons with disabilities desire inclusion in society. Employment is a key component of social inclusion. Governments recognize that persons with disabilities want, and are able, to make an important contribution to Nova Scotian society. Consequently, governments have offered many programs over the years to help persons with disabilities find meaningful work. The province of Nova Scotia has partnered with the Government of Canada for more than 45 years delivering cost-shared programs to assist persons with disabilities making the transition to employment. This partnership began with the Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Agreement in 1962. In April 1998 the Employability Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Agreement was introduced, then subsequently replaced in 2003-04 with the current Multilateral Framework for Labour Market Agreements for Persons with Disabilities Agreement. The Multilateral Agreement provides the basis for bilateral agreements between individual provinces and the Government of Canada. The current agreement between Canada and Nova Scotia has been extended to March 2011. Nova Scotia is hopeful this partnership with the Government of Canada will continue beyond the end of the current extension of the agreement.

Nova Scotia is proud of the achievements made through this partnered, cost-shared agreement. It has provided the means to help Nova Scotians with disabilities into the labour force where they enjoy the same rights, privileges and opportunities as any employed Canadian.

The Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Development Agreement for Persons with Disabilities provides joint funding for programs and supports for persons with disabilities in Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia made a commitment to release an annual public report about the programs and services funded under the agreement. This is the fifth edition of the annual report and follows last year's Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities Report 2007-08. It describes the programs and services funded under this agreement. The report includes program objectives, descriptions, target populations and cost-shared expenditures for the Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities for the 2008-09 fiscal period.

Background

In November 2002, Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Social Services approved a process to guide the negotiation of a successor agreement to the Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD) agreement. The Multilateral Framework for Labour Market Agreements for Persons with Disabilities (LMAPD) was approved on December 5, 2003 and became effective on April 1, 2004. Subsequently Canada and Nova Scotia signed a bilateral agreement regarding the transfer of federal money to Nova Scotia to support programs and services identified as eligible for cost-shared funding under the multilateral and bilateral agreements.

The goal of the LMAPD agreement is to improve the employment situation for people with disabilities. The Agreement attempts to meet this goal by:

- enhancing the employability of persons with disabilities
- increasing the employment opportunities available to them
- building on the existing knowledge base

The 2004-05 federal budget announced an additional \$30 million for the LMAPD initiative. As a result of the additional funding, Nova Scotia received an increase of \$845,128 in funding (based on a per capita funding formula), bringing the total amount of federal recoveries to approximately \$8.3 million per year. The additional monies support LMAPD programs and services within Nova Scotia. The Province's annual investment in the program exceeds the cost-matching requirements for these federal funds with spending targeted toward employability and disability supports for Nova Scotians.

The Province of Nova Scotia offers a wide range of programs and services to support people with disabilities. These programs and services are delivered by the Department of Community Services, Department of Education, Department of Health, and Department of Health Promotion and Protection. This report describes the programs and services offered during the 2008-09 fiscal period, and provides statistical data and expenditures for the same period.

The Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities Baseline Report 2004 - 05 was publicly released on December 3, 2004. Subsequent annual reports have been released each year on or about December 3, the International Day of the Disabled Person. This report builds on the previous annual reports, and fulfills Nova Scotia's commitment to report annually on activities under the LMAPD agreement.

Programs and Services

Department of Community Services

Operating under the Canada/Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities, the primary objective of the Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities (LMAPWD) program offered by the Department of Community Services is to enhance the employability of people with disabilities. This is achieved through the provision of employment related services and supports that lead to full or part time employment in the competitive labour market.

To be eligible for LMAPWD services provided by the Department of Community Services, individuals must meet the following criteria:

- be disabled to the extent that they are unable, at the time of requesting services, to seek any meaningful job because of a physical or mental disability, and there is a realistic possibility of benefiting from LMAPWD services; or
- the disability makes it difficult to complete the work requirements of the job; or
- the disability makes it difficult to undertake training which would lead to employment; and
- be at least 16 years of age; and
- not participating in the public school system at the time of requesting services; and
- be a Canadian citizen or a landed immigrant who is a resident of Nova Scotia; and
- must not be applying for the reimbursement of a good or service acquired prior to being approved both under the LMAPWD program and/or (in the case of a vocational crisis request) approved for that good or service;

Applicants are considered ineligible under the Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities Program if they:

- have a claim under the Workers' Compensation Act, Canadian Veteran's Rehabilitation Act, or through private insurance companies; or
- are eligible for services through Service Canada or CPP; or
- are currently receiving active medical/psychiatric treatment which would interfere with the rehabilitation process; or
- are currently under the jurisdiction of the provincial education (public school) system.

Employment Counselors work with eligible individuals to ensure they have access to the following services, which are available through the Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities Program:

- Information and direct referral - access to information and referral to support agencies;
- Assessment - access to vocational assessments, career assessments, academic assessments, etc;

-
- Employment and Career Counselling - access to employment support services and career counseling support;
 - Skills and educational supports - access to upgrading and short term training programs;
 - Provision of required technical aids - funding is provided for the purchase of eligible technical aids;
 - Job Coaching - funding to provide on-the-job support and training for a defined time period;
 - Wage Subsidy - funding provided to employers to facilitate a direct job placement for an individual;
 - Self-employment - assistance related to self-employment is in the form of support for goods & services directly related to supporting the person's disability, i.e. the adaptation of disability specific tools and equipment required to operate an approved business.

Individuals who have a disability and are currently employed are not eligible for services unless they are deemed to be experiencing a "vocational crisis". Individuals are considered to be in a "Vocational crisis" if:

- the circumstances with regard to the existing disability have changed and now prevent the individual from performing a job they once performed; or
- the nature of the work has changed and the individual needs support to adapt to the changed needs of the job.

Technical or Medical Aid Supports

The program provides disability-related supports to assist individuals as part of their employment plan or to individuals defined to be in a vocational crisis. An eligible support includes a medical or technical aid, or good, or service that would enable an individual to enhance their employability and/or continue in their employment. Medical and/or technical aids or goods or services are not provided to the individual for personal use only, but are provided to support the training and/or employment needs of individuals.

The following are considered eligible supports:

- Orthotic appliance - an apparatus used to support, align, prevent or correct deformities, or to improve the function of moveable parts of the body. Such appliances may include braces, splints, shoe modifications, and special seating molds for wheelchairs
- Canes, Crutches, Walkers - a mobility aid
- Wheelchairs and Similar Equipment - such mobility aid appliances include manual and electric wheelchairs, power carts and scooters. Requests for purchases of power or ultra light wheelchairs or scooters are considered based on medical necessity and to avert a vocational crisis.
- Appliances for the Hearing Impaired - such as hearing aids or personal FM systems;

- Appliances for the Vision Impaired – such as computers and software to support the disability, tape recorders, reading equipment, Braille calculator, high intensity lamps, brailler and in some cases, special lenses may also be provided.
- Modifications to Vehicles - modifications can be provided when an individual does not have access to accessible public transportation and needs a car or van to avert a vocational crisis. Vans may be converted to accommodate wheelchair use by the provision of a wheelchair lift. Driving controls may also be adapted.
- Tools and Equipment - the purchase of special equipment or modifications to tools and equipment to support an individual's disability
- Interpretative and Other Support Services - funding is available to purchase a limited number of hours of interpreting services from an approved source in the community to assist with training or employment opportunities.
- Wage Subsidy - a wage subsidy can be provided for an individual that is ready to work. The subsidy is provided for a defined period of time.
- Job Coaching - funding is available to provide the services of a job coach, or other types of work site training to help people deal with issues of the job. This support is generally provided when an individual is beginning a job.

Project Support

In addition to supporting individuals living with disabilities directly, a number of projects have received support through the Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities. A few examples include funding provided to the following projects:

Touch on Wood – funding is provided to support individuals living with a mental illness to assist them to receive the supports and gain skills that will move them toward employment.

Affirmative Industries of Nova Scotia – funding is provided to employ job coaching services to support individuals to attach to, or remain attached to, the labour market. The job coaching interventions are generally short term interventions.

Canning Area Parents for Real Employment - funding provided through this project supports disabled individuals to operate their own businesses in the Canning area.

Society of Deaf and Hard of Hearing - funding is provided to this organization to support individuals with hearing disabilities.

On a yearly basis, the Department of Community Services, Employment Support and Income Assistance Program staff serves a caseload of approximately 38,000 individuals and families. Approximately 40% of this caseload has been identified as individuals living with a disability. During the 2008-2009 fiscal year, caseworkers provided various types of support to these individuals including support for the development of employability plans as a means to attach to the labour market. Other direct services provided include:

- Assessment Services
- Employment and Career Counseling
- Referrals to appropriate service providers
- Referrals for training programs
- Support for individuals requiring a job coach
- Support for employment participation

In addition to the direct services provided, approximately 200 interventions were made through the LMAPWD program to support individuals to receive the technical aids, tools and other supports they required to participate in their employment plans or to remain employed.

Department of Education

Post-Secondary Disability Services (PSDS) provides grants, goods and services to support students with disabilities. With themes of accessibility, equity, and inclusion, PSDS actively demonstrates leadership by:

- setting priorities and policies based on consultation, research and proven results
- allocating funding that supports these priorities and policies
- demonstrating the benefits of system-wide co-ordination and collaboration in everything from decision-making to delivery of services and
- being transparent in processes and accountable for results - evidence based management

Post-Secondary Disability Services' mission is to assist students with permanent disabilities in achieving individual success in their post secondary studies by reducing or removing educational-related barriers through the provision of grants, goods, and services. Ultimately, achieving individual success translates to enhanced employability.

Not all students with disabilities attending post secondary institutions receive support. Being disabled does not necessarily mean needing help. For those who do require support, however, the Post-Secondary Disability Services division does ensure that all reasonable disability related supports are available and provided in a timely and professional manner. The division's service delivery is progressive ensuring students with disabilities have better opportunities to succeed.

It is now four years since the Baseline Annual Report (2004/2005) and the numbers of students with disabilities attending and graduating from post secondary continues to grow. PSDS has tracked students with disabilities participation, supports provided and graduation from post secondary training for Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities (LMAPWD) eligible students. This fifth Annual Report builds upon previous statistics and profiles trends and themes from statistical recording and research activities. The data profiled provides evidence that the programs offered by PSDS and its post secondary partners are having a meaningful impact on the lives of thousands of Nova Scotia post secondary students with disabilities.

Participation and Graduation

Each year since 2004/2005 the number of students with disabilities attending and self-disclosing their disability to their post secondary institute has risen. In 2008/2009 the number grew to 2927 an increase of 82.9% since 2003/2004. Table 1 provides the number of post secondary students who self identify as having a disability. The trend is positive; each year more persons with disabilities are making the commitment to attend post secondary training.

Table 1: Number of self-identifying Students with Disabilities (SwD) attending post secondary training from 2003/2004 to 2007/2008		
School year	Number of self-identifying students	% Increase
2003/2004	1600	Baseline year
2004/2005	1949	21.8%
2005/2006	2273	16.6%
2006/2007	2469	8.6%
2007/2008	2738	11%
2008/2009	2927	6.9%

As can be seen in Table 2 between the 2004/2005 school year and the 2007/2008 school year there was a 57% increase in the number of students with disabilities graduating from post secondary training. There is little change between 2007/2008 and 2008/2009. This reflects the increase in the number of University students enrolled in the last several years, which will take four or five years to see graduation results.

Table 2: 2004/2005 to 2008/2009 student with disability graduates		
School year	Number of graduates	% Increase
2004/2005	369	baseline
2005/2006	517	41%
2006/2007	537	4%
2007/2008	578	8%
2008/2009	574	0%

Employment

In March of 2007 the Canadian Council on Learning and the Department of Education represented by the Post-Secondary Disability Services Division agreed to collaboratively engage in a five year study on student success, employment related outcomes and life's experiences of graduating and non-graduating students with disabilities. In the summer of 2008, the second in a yearly series of one year post-graduation or withdrawal follow-up surveys of students with disabilities was completed.

Educational attainment is a key determinant of both labour force outcomes and of societal and individual health in Canada. There is a growing body of evidence that the association of these outcomes to educational attainment is especially important to adults with disabilities. Several studies in Canada and the U.S. in recent years have demonstrated dramatic improvements in employment outcomes for adults with disabilities who have completed a post secondary credential. Overall, these studies observe that employment outcomes are significantly improved

for adults with disabilities who have completed some post secondary education. Specific observations include:

- increasing labour force participation since 1999 but still a gap compared to those without disabilities remains
- employment rates roughly equal to non-disabled peers
- employment in occupations related to studies still lagging for disabled graduates relative to those without disabilities
- no significant difference in earnings for similar work

Results at a Glance

Similar to the findings from the 2007 survey, results from the 2008 survey provided evidence of favourable employment and satisfaction outcomes of Nova Scotia post secondary students with disabilities one year after program graduation or withdrawal. In comparing overall results to those of the 2005-06 cohort (2007), labour force participation¹ remains strong at 87 percent, the employment rate² of respondents has increased from 81 to 90 percent, and two-thirds of respondents experience employment relatedness³. Additionally, participants from the 2006-2007 survey reported comparable earnings for full-time related positions at \$29,650, and a large majority (89 percent) continue to live and work in Nova Scotia.⁴ Respondents also expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their learning program and overall experience at the institution, with 75% of respondents reporting that they would recommend their program and 84% that they would recommend their institution.

The overall results of this survey are summarized as follows,⁵ with comparison to the results of the 2007 survey:

Table 3: Results at a Glance	2007	2008
Labour force participation rate	86%	87%
Employment rate	81%	90%
Relatedness of employment	70%	67%
Annual average earnings of directly related full-time work	\$29,136	\$29,650
Employment is in Nova Scotia ⁷	90%	89%
Respondents would recommend program to another person	81%	75%
Respondents would recommend institution to another person	91%	84%

¹ Labour force participation is calculated as the % of respondents who are either working or looking for work.

² Employment rate is calculated as the percentage of labour force participants who are working in paid employment.

³ Employment relatedness is calculated as the % of employed respondents working in a field directly or indirectly related to program of study.

⁴ Percentage of respondents who studied in Nova Scotia. Overall 83% of respondents work in Nova Scotia

⁵ Summary results by institution type and program status are found in Appendix C:

In total, 219 surveys were completed from 507 eligible participants, 95 percent of which were completed on-line and the remaining 5% completed by telephone or printed copy returned post-mail. With 219 respondents from a population of 507, there is a margin of error of 5% using a 95% confidence interval. This margin of error assumes that the respondents are representative of the eligible population. Caution is advised when interpreting or using survey findings, particularly where sample sizes are small, as sampling and selection bias may affect the reliability of results.

Respondent Profile

The breakdown of survey respondents by institution type is provided in Table 4-A. Overall, 58% of the survey respondents had studied at a college while 42% had studied at a university. As shown in Table 4-B, when the respondents are broken down by program status, 70% had graduated while 30% had withdrawn from their program.⁶

Institution type	Respondent profile	
College	127	58%
University	92	42%
Total	219	100%

Program status	Respondent profile	
Graduated	153	70%
Withdrew	66	30%
Total	219	100%

As outlined in Table 4-C, survey participation rates range from 39 percent for those who had attended college to 50% for those who attended university. Even with a lower participation rate for college students, there were more survey respondents from colleges (the survey population was comprised of a higher number of college than university students).

Institution type	Population	Respondents	Participation rate
College	323	127	39%
University	184	92	50%
Total institution type	507	219	43%

Of the 507 leavers included in the sample, 297 attended the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC), 133 attended a university in Nova Scotia, and 77 were enrolled at a college (26) or university (51) outside of Nova Scotia. For the 430 students attending a post secondary institution in Nova Scotia, 258 graduated from their program while 172 students withdrew from

⁶ The survey population was 60% graduated and 40% withdrawn. The non-response of withdrawn students may have introduced some bias in the results.

the institution prior to completion. The program status was not known for the majority of the 77 leavers who attended a college or university outside of Nova Scotia.

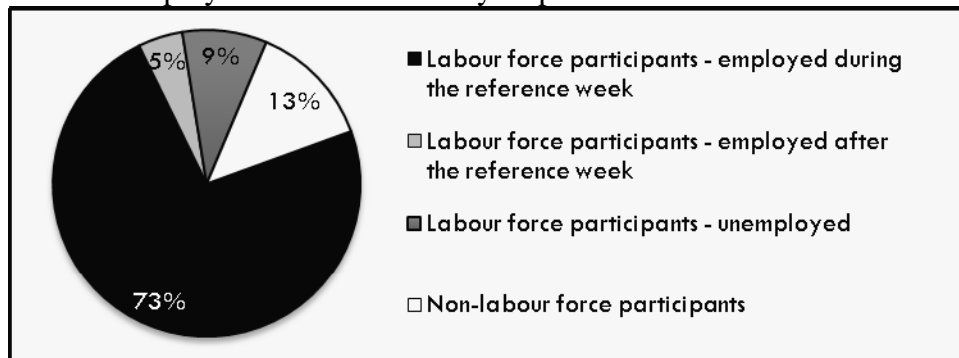
Employment Outcomes

The survey included a series of questions related to employment outcomes, labour force participation, employment relatedness and employment earnings.

Employment Status

The breakdown of the employment status of survey participants is shown in Chart 1, as detailed in the following sections.

Chart 1: Employment status of survey respondents



Labour Force Participation

Overall, 87% of respondents indicated they were participating in the labour force (either employed or looking for employment). Labour force participation is slightly higher among college respondents than university respondents, and is higher among graduates than those who withdrew before completion of their program.

Respondents not in the labour force were asked why they were not engaged in the labour market. Overall, nearly two-thirds of respondents reported the reason that they were not in the labour force was because of a medical or disability circumstance, while nearly one-third of respondents indicated that they were attending school.

Employment Rates

Of the respondents in the labour force, 84% indicated they were employed during the reference week of the survey (June 23–29, 2008) and another 5% started employment after July 1st. Ten % of labour force participants reported to be unemployed but seeking employment. As evidenced in Charts 2 and 3, employment outcomes are consistent across institution type, and have a larger variance by program status.

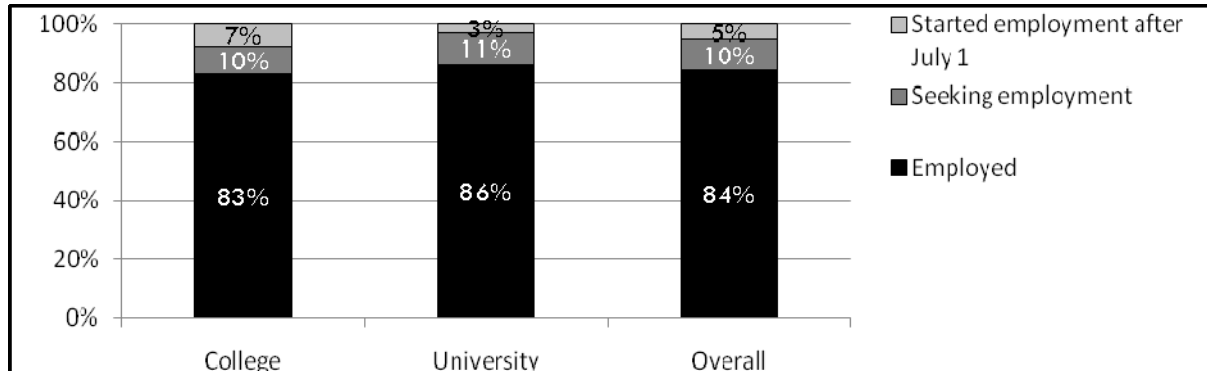


Chart 2: Employment rate by institution type

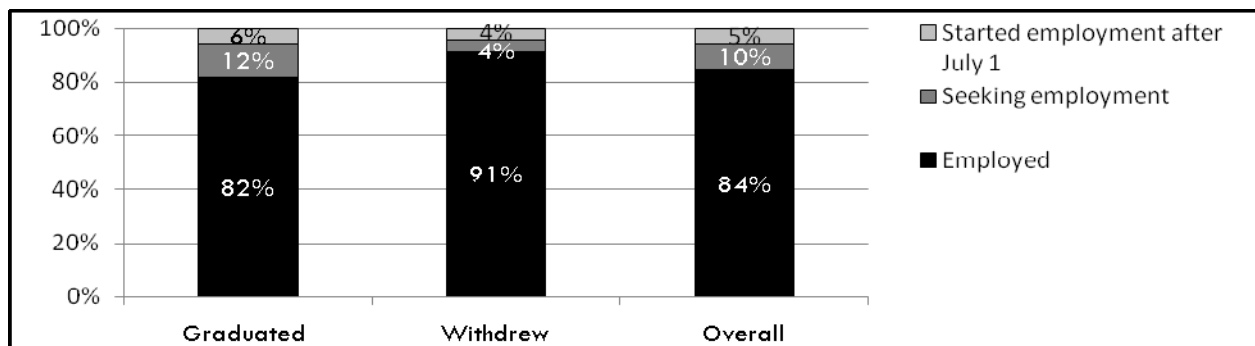


Chart 3: Employment rate by program status

Unemployed Profile

Table 5: Summary profile of unemployed respondents				
Unemployed respondent profile	Status			Total -all survey respondents
	Unemployed – labour force participant unknown status	Unemployed – non-labour force participant	Total - unemployed respondents	
Total number of respondents	n=26	n=24	n=50	n=219
Average age	32 years	33 years	32 years	30 years
Median ⁷ age	26 years	25 years	25 years	25 years
Gender	Male 65% Female 35%	Male 38% Female 63%	Male 52% Female 48%	Male 46% Female 54%
Institution type	College 69% University 31%	College 62% University 38%	College 66% University 34%	College 58% University 42%
Program status	Graduated 77% Withdrew 23%	Graduated 46% Withdrew 54%	Graduated 62% Withdrew 38%	Graduated 70% Withdrew 30%
Average debt owed	\$13,015	\$27,738	\$22,129	\$17,941
Median debt owed	\$7,500	\$10,000	\$9,000	\$10,000
Most commonly reported disability	Learning disability 38%	Learning disability 35%	Learning disability 37%	Learning disability 38%

⁷ Median is defined as the middle number when the numbers are put in order, from the lowest to the highest.

Table 5 shows summary profile of the 23% of survey respondents who indicated that they had never been employed for a period of six weeks or more in their work history. Of these respondents, 48% were non-labour force participants. The remaining unemployed respondents of this group include labour force participants and those whose labour force status was not known.

Of the unemployed respondents, labour force participants tended to be male (65%) and a large majority had graduated from their program (77%). Conversely, non-labour force participants tended to be female (63%) and less than half had graduated from their institution (46%). Of the unemployed, the average debt owed by the non-labour force participants was twice that amount owed by the labour force participants, at \$27, 738 and \$13,015 respectively.

Comparative Rates

Statistics Canada's *Participation and Activities Limitation Survey, 2006* (PALS) provides data on labour force activity for adults with and without disabilities in Nova Scotia. Table 6 provides comparative data from the 2006 PALS⁸ and 2005 *Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics* (SLID)⁹ to provide comparisons to the employment results observed in this survey.

Table 6: Employment rates in comparison to PALS and SLID data for Nova Scotia			2006 PALS Data for NS, age 25-54		2005 SLID Data for NS	
Comparative Employment Statistics	2008 survey of post-secondary education (PSE) leavers with disabilities	May 2008 labour force survey, Nova Scotia, age 25-54, with post secondary	With disabilities	Without disabilities	With disabilities	Without disabilities
Labour force participation rate	87%	90%	62%	88%		
Not in labour force	13%	10%	38%	12%	35%	13%
Employment rate of total survey population	73%	85%	55%	83%	47%*	63%*
Employment rate of labour force participants	84%	95%	91%	94%		
Unemployment rate of labour force participants	16%	5%	9%	6%		

*There are some differences in the nature of these three data sources that affect the comparability across data sets. The main differences in the SLID data are that it reports on all ages (15-64), all levels of education and employment statistics includes only full-year, full-time employment. The PALS data reports only for ages 25 to 54 to approximate the age cohort included in the PSE leavers survey, but does not account for differences in education levels. Additionally PALS and this longitudinal survey use a reference week in reporting employment status, and labour force participation includes full and part time employment for both surveys.

⁸ Canada. Statistics Canada. *Participation and Activities Limitation Survey, 2006*, cat. no.89M0023XCB2006, microdata file.

⁹ Nova Scotia, Department of Education and Department of Health, *Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities, Annual Report 2006-07, 2007*.

Overall, the labour force participation rate for the 2006-07 cohort of post secondary leavers was 87%. When compared with the Nova Scotian 2006 PALS data (for population aged 25-54), this is substantially higher than what was reported for adults with disabilities (62%) and similar to what was reported for adults without disabilities (88%). The employment rate of labour force participants for the 2006-07 cohort (84%) is lower than what was reported in the 2006 PALS data for adults both with and without disabilities (91% and 94% respectively).

When compared with results from the 2008 Labour Force Survey (for population aged 25 to 54 with at least high school completion), the labour force participation rate for the 2006-07 cohort (87%) is similar to that of the larger Nova Scotian population (90%), while the employment rate is notably lower (84% for the 2006-07 cohort and 95% for the larger Nova Scotian population).

Relatedness of Employment to Studies

Respondents who indicated they were employed were asked about the relatedness of employment to their field of study. Overall, two-thirds reported to be working in employment that is either directly or indirectly related to their program of study. Employment relatedness does not differ statistically significant between college and university respondents, but there is a statistically significant difference for those who graduated versus those who withdrew; withdrawals are less likely to be employed in a field related to program of study.

Comparative Data

Table 7 compares the employment relatedness (both direct and indirect) of respondents who had graduated from either college or university with the most recent data from follow-up studies of Nova Scotia university and NSCC graduates. Within the college sector, graduates with disabilities reported a 4% lower employment relatedness than the overall results from the NSCC One Year Graduate Follow-Up Survey. Within the university sector, graduates with disabilities experienced employment relatedness of 5 % higher than the overall results from the MPHEC Survey of Maritime University Graduates. These results should be interpreted with some caution given the small sample size and differences in the survey methodologies. Nevertheless, the data does suggest that the employment relatedness of the graduates in this survey is comparable to that of graduates from colleges and universities generally.

Table 7: Graduate employment relatedness	College N=56	University N=43
Survey respondents (graduated)	84%	74%
2007 NSCC graduates ¹⁰	88%	
2003 NS university graduates ¹¹		69%

Earnings of Respondents

Survey respondents who were employed were asked about their annual earnings. The average annual earnings are summarized by employment relatedness in Chart 4-A (by institution type) and 4-B (by program status).

The average earnings of college leavers employed full time experienced a decline as their employment became less related to their studies; ranging from \$26,915 in directly related occupations to \$22,824 in unrelated occupations. The average annual earnings of university leavers employed in positions unrelated to their field of study was \$39,120, significant higher than the reported \$34,028 of those employed in positions directly related to their field. Chart 4-B indicates that respondents who graduated are most likely to earn more if they are employed in a related occupation, while withdrawals reported higher earnings working in unrelated occupations.

When annual earnings are reported by the median¹², college and university leavers both experienced an increase in salary as relatedness of studies increased. When compared by program status, the same relationship is observed for graduated leavers. Average annual salaries are consistently higher than the median annual salary. Chart 4-A and 4-B show the greatest difference appearing in university leavers of unrelated studies, at \$39,120 (average) and \$22,620 (median).

¹⁰ The Nova Scotia Community College, *One Year Graduate Follow-Up Survey, 2008*, conducted its survey of graduates using the same methodology for determining if graduates were employed and the same reference week for reporting employment (June 23-29, 2008). The sample frame for the NSCC survey did not include graduates who had self reported disabilities as students. The NSCC study indicates that 88 percent of its respondents reported working in occupations directly or indirectly related to their studies.

¹¹ Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission, 2005 Survey of 2003 Maritime University Graduates: Selected Provincial Statistics, 2007, Table 1.8a. This survey is a two year follow-up study. The study indicates that 69 percent of first degree holders from Nova Scotia universities reported in 2005 that their job is somewhat or closely related to their 2003 program of study.

¹² Median is defined as the middle number when the numbers are put in order, from the lowest to the highest.

Chart 4-A: Average salary by employment relatedness and institution type*

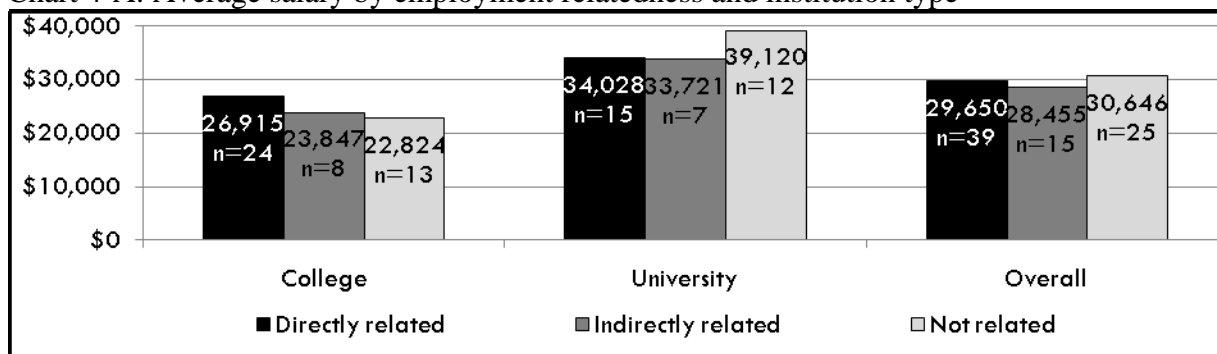
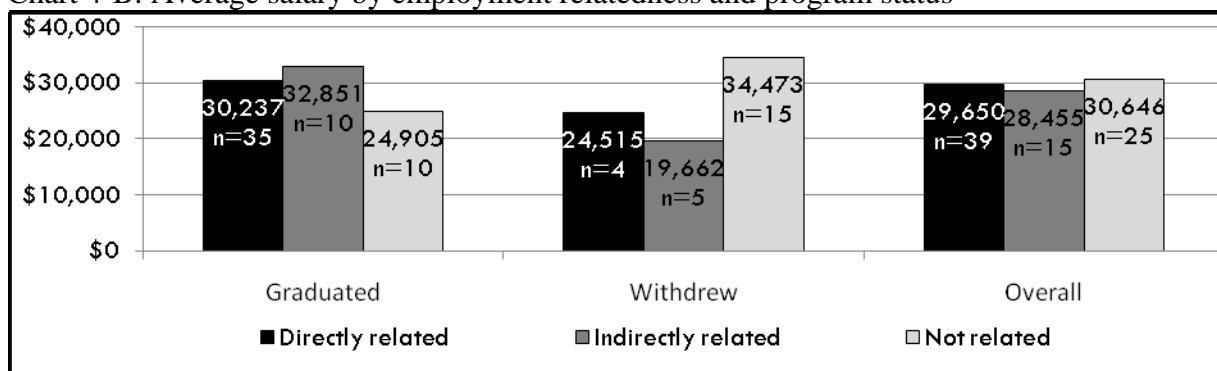


Chart 4-B: Average salary by employment relatedness and program status*



*It is difficult to attribute for these differences from this data alone. Caution should be used in interpreting these results for two reasons: 1) a small number of leavers earning significantly more or less than the average could skew the results; and 2) annual earnings are self-reported by the respondents and may be under or over-reported.

Comparative Findings

In this longitudinal survey, university respondents with disabilities working in directly related employment reported average annual earnings of \$34,028. This is comparable to the findings

from the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) 2005 Survey of 2003 Maritime University Graduates where the reported average annual earnings was \$34,853. The NSCC 2008 One Year Graduate Follow-up Survey (of 2007 graduates) reported average annual earnings of \$33,029, higher than the average annual earnings of college graduates participating in this study. Graduates working in related employment reported average annual earnings of \$26,915, considerably less than the overall NSCC average annual earnings.

Table 8-A: Comparative employment earnings - university	
Employment earnings - university	Annual full-time earnings
University respondents in directly related employment, 2008	\$ 34,028
MPHEC Study of 2003 Graduates in 2005, employed first degree holders	\$ 34,853
Gap (2%)	\$ 825

Table 8-B: Comparative employment earnings - college	
Employment earnings - college	Annual full-time earnings
College respondents in directly related employment, 2008	\$ 26,915
NSCC One Year Graduate Follow-up Survey - graduates without disabilities in related employment, 2008	\$ 33,029
Gap (19%)	\$ 6,114

The findings indicate a very small gap of 2% in the earnings of university graduates with disabilities compared to the overall MPHEC results, while a statistically significant gap of 19% in the earnings of college graduates with disabilities when compared to their non-disabled peers.

Location of Employment

A summary of respondents' employment location and institution location are outlined in Table 9. Overall, 83% of respondents were living and working in Nova Scotia at the time of the survey. This percentage is slightly lower than that of employed respondents who had studied at a Nova Scotia institution (89%). Of those living in Nova Scotia, over one-half are working in the province's two metropolitan areas: Halifax Regional Municipality (42% of respondents) and Cape Breton Regional Municipality (11%). The remaining 17% of those who are employed are working outside the province, most commonly in Ontario. Generally, employed university respondents are concentrated in urban areas, while employed college respondents are more distributed in counties throughout the province.

Table 9: Respondent employment location by institution location			
Employment location	In-province institution	Out-of province institution	Total
Outside Nova Scotia	11% (n=15)	58% (n=11)	17% (n=26)
Nova Scotia	89% (n=115)	42% (n=8)	83% (n=123)
Respondents total	100% (n=130)	100% (n=19)	100% (n=149)

Tables 10-A and 10-B show that college respondents are more commonly working in Nova Scotia (86%) than are university respondents (78%). When compared by program status, there is

no statistically significant difference between those who graduated and those who withdrew from their program and are working in Nova Scotia (at 82 and 84 % respectively).

Table 10-A: Employment location by institution type			
Employment location	Status		Total
	College	University	
Outside Nova Scotia	14% (n=12)	22% (n=14)	17% (n=26)
Nova Scotia	86% (n=73)	78% (n=50)	83% (n=123)
Respondents total	100% (n=85)	100% (n=64)	100% (n=149)

Table 10-B: Employment location by program status			
Employment location	Status		Total
	College	University	
Outside Nova Scotia	18% (n=19)	16% (n=7)	17% (n=26)
Nova Scotia	82% (n=87)	84% (n=36)	83% (n=123)
Respondents total	100% (n=106)	100% (43)	100% (n=149)

Overall Satisfaction and Evaluation of the Learning Experience

The survey included a series of questions around overall satisfaction with the learning experience. To measure satisfaction, survey respondents were asked whether or not they would recommend the institution and/or program to other students with a similar disability who were considering post secondary studies. Overall, over two-thirds of respondents would recommend both their program and institution. This satisfaction is consistent across institution type, and is higher among graduates than those respondents who withdrew from their studies. Of the respondents who would not recommend both their program *and* institution, many would recommend either their program or their institution. Overall, 10% of respondents would recommend neither their program nor their institution.

Table 11: Ratings of learning experience				
Please think about your learning experiences at your college/university and indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
(i) I felt that I was treated with dignity and respect by the disability services staff on campus	12 6%	7 4%	67 34%	111 56%
(ii) Disability services staff on campus responded quickly and effectively to my requests for supports	13 7%	16 8%	63 33%	101 52%
(iii) I felt that I was treated with dignity and respect by my instructors / professors	13 6%	24 12%	80 39%	86 42%
(iv) I was able to access the supports I needed to assist me with my disability related learning needs	11 6%	17 9%	78 41%	85 44%
(v) Having access to the supports I needed allowed me to focus on learning	12 6%	15 8%	77 41%	86 45%
(vi) My disability affected socializing and studying with other students	39 21%	56 30%	44 23%	50 26%
(vii) I was comfortable asking for additional help with my courses when it was needed	14 7%	38 19%	97 48%	52 26%
(viii) I came to my institution well prepared to be a successful student	11 5%	27 13%	80 40%	84 42%
(ix) My family and friends were supportive of my learning goals	12 6%	10 5%	64 32%	113 57%
(x) My overall learning experience was positive	17 8%	25 12%	83 41%	78 38%
(xi) I feel I was given equal or fair (non-discriminatory) opportunities as the other students	20 10%	17 9%	80 40%	82 41%

Respondents were asked to evaluate their learning experience by reporting the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with various statements. Table 11 provides an overview of the average score and distribution of responses to each of the eleven statements. Overall, the results are positive with the majority of respondents reporting either “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” to each statement (i.e. 90% reported that they felt treated with dignity and respect by campus disability staff, 85% felt that disability staff responded effectively to support requests). An exception to this pattern is the response to the statement that looked at the connection between disability and student interaction (“My disability affected socializing and studying with other students”) – there was an equal distribution of agreement and disagreement with this statement.

The survey included a series of questions that asked the participants about the ways in which their learning experiences impacted their life. Participants responded to each question on a scale of one to ten, and Table 12 shows the average score of each question. Overall, respondents who graduated from their program tended to rate their learning experiences as having a more positive life impact than those who withdrew from their program.

Table 12: Average score of impact of learning experiences					
On a scale from one to ten, where one equals poor and ten equals excellent , how would you rate your learning experiences in preparing you to:	Status				Average score-all respondents (n=219)
	Graduated		Withdrew		
	College (n=89)	University (n=64)	College (n=38)	University (n=28)	
(i) Get started on a new career path?	7	7	5	5	6
(ii) Develop or improve your skills for a desired occupation?	8	7	5	6	7
(iii) Develop coping strategies and skills for everyday life?	7	7	5	5	7
(iv) Increase your earning potential?	7	7	5	5	7
(v) Gain confidence in your abilities?	7	8	5	6	7
(vi) Gain confidence in advocating for needed accommodations?	7	7	5	5	6
(vii) Enrich your family or home life?	7	7	5	4	6
(viii) Reduce your financial dependence on others?	7	6	4	4	6
(ix) Actively participate in community and volunteer experiences?	6	6	4	4	5
(x) Improve your overall quality of life?	7	8	5	5	7

Summary

The Nova Scotia Department of Education and the Province's universities and community college have made considerable investments over the past six years to increase the opportunities for adults with disabilities to access post secondary education. The 2008 survey results demonstrate that the overall employment and quality of life outcomes that former students experienced following their studies at university or college are positive. This study continues to offer evidence that Provincial investments provide long term benefits to the economy of Nova Scotia by enabling a large number of working aged adults with disabilities the opportunity to move into the of the labour force.

Summary results of the 2008 survey include:

- Labour force participation of respondents was 87% compared to 90% for all adults in Nova Scotia's labour force (aged 25-54 with post-secondary education).

- An employment rate of 84% was observed for the reference week of June 23 – 29, 2008, while another 5 percent reported having started a job in the four month period during survey data collection.
- Overall 67% of the employed respondents reported working in employment related to their studies. This rate improved to 79% for respondents who had graduated from the institution in the study year.
- Average earnings in full-time, related positions were \$29,650. There is a small gap of 2% in the earnings of university graduates with disabilities compared to overall results from the MPHEC Graduate Survey, while a statistically significant gap of 19% is reflected in the earnings of college graduates with disabilities when compared to the results of the NSCC One Year Graduate Follow-Up Study.
- Of the employed respondents who studied at a Nova Scotia institution, 89% were living and working in Nova Scotia at the time of the survey.

In addition, the survey participants expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their learning experiences at their institutions:

- 75% of respondents would recommend their program
- 84% of respondents would recommend their institution
- 90% of respondents reported being treated with dignity and respect by the disability services staff at their institution.
- 85% of respondents reported that disability services staff at their institution responded quickly and effectively to their requests for supports.

Partnerships

Post-Secondary Disability Services respects and capitalizes on the expertise of advocacy organizations providing services to Nova Scotians with disabilities. Examples of this are service delivery agreements established with the Society of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Nova Scotians, and the Independent Living Resource Centre.

Society of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Nova Scotians (SDHHNS)

Post-Secondary Disability Services has a service contract with the SDHHNS whereby the society assumes responsibility for the provision of American Sign Language Interpreter services to Nova Scotians who are deaf or hard of hearing attending post secondary. In 2008/2009 PSDS provided approximately \$210,000 to the SDHHNS for interpreting services for five deaf students attending post secondary training.

Independent Living Resource Centre (ILRC)

Post-Secondary Disability Services has a similar service contract with the Independent Resource Living Centre (ILRC). The agreement provides funding to the ILRC to implement a student self-managed attendant care program. Students are trained by the ILRC in the recruitment, hiring, training and payroll functions of employing an attendant. Students involved with ILRC manage

their attendant care needs as a business and acquire attendant care management capacities that will support their independence beyond their post secondary experience. In 2008/2009 PSDS provided approximately \$325,000 to the ILRC for 15 post secondary students requiring attendant care.

Post-Secondary Partners

Post-Secondary Disability Services (PSDS) has Memorandums of Understanding with Universities across the province as well as the Nova Scotia Community College. The Memorandums of Understanding detail PSDS's and the post secondary institutional commitments to ensure that disability-related goods and services are readily available, provided professionally and in a manner that responds to the individual student's needs.

Each memorandum has a requirement that the post secondary institutions develop, publish and implement a Three Year Accessibility Plan (TYAP). The TYAP details the efforts they will make to remove physical, systemic or academic barriers a student may experience while attending the institution. As well, it details how the post secondary institution will enhance existing approaches to meet exceptional needs of its students.

PSDS Accomplishments

In 2008/2009 PSDS continued to engage its post secondary partners and the public education system in the following five initiatives intended to support and advance access, equity and inclusion.

Research and evaluation

Program research and evaluation activities for 2008/2009 included:

- PSDS continues to partner with the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) and public post secondary institutions in the development and implementation of the third year of a five year study investigating the employment outcome of students with disabilities one year post graduation or withdrawn from studies. The second year of Longitudinal Study for the class of 2006/2007 was completed in November 2008. This report on second year results can be found on the PSDS web-site - <http://psds.ednet.ns.ca/index.html>
- PSDS conducted a survey of students with disabilities enrolled in post secondary to determine how well services are being provided and where gaps in service may exist. The survey was conducted in March/May 2009
- PSDS continued to work on the implementation of an evaluation of LMAPD in partnership with the Departments of Health and Community Services as well as Human

Resource Development Canada. The evaluation will focus on LMAPD programs offered by each provincial department.

Standards/Policy Development

Building upon PSDS's 2008 environmental scan of disability related services provided at post secondary institutions within the province, a Satisfaction Survey of University and Community College students was completed in 2008/2009. The Satisfaction Survey of 2008/2009 asked students questions on the timeliness and effectiveness of services referenced by post-secondary institutions in their environmental scan. The survey analysis will assist PSDS and its post-secondary partners in refining and improving services to students with articulated standards on timeliness.

Review Program Intake System

Using the Satisfaction Surveys of 2007/2008 and 2008/2009 and gathering additional feedback from partners, PSDS reviewed its established client intake processes. One significant result of the intake review was the creation of a report, which will be provided to PSDS intake partner the Nova Scotia Student Assistance Division of the Department of Education, which will highlight students concerns and suggestions to improve the system.

Improve Knowledge/Information Management

PSDS developed and implemented a new information management system in 2009. The system is partnered with the Nova Scotia Student Assistance Division. The new system allows a more timely advisement to students on what program benefits they are entitled to; a more effective management of statistical data for decision making purposes; as well as a more accurate and timely advisement to PSDS's post-secondary partners delivering disability services as to who is currently enrolled at their campus requiring disability related services.

PSDS in 2009/2010 will continue to development and implement the data management system with the ambition of having internet access for its post-secondary partners. This will enable disability services providers to see on-line real time information on their students that may be of program benefit to these same students.

Marketing and Communications

PSDS completed its first marketing plan to promote programs and advise Nova Scotians with disabilities and the general public of the grants, goods, and services offered by PSDS. The Marketing Plan was provided to all post secondary partners at the Post-Secondary Disability

Services Forum in June 2008. Feedback from the Student Satisfaction Survey of 2008/2009 and analysis of the Provincial Access Grant application completion process will assist in guiding PSDS's communications in reference to grant programs, goods, and services, available to students in multiple messages using a variety of communication mediums. i.e. email, letters, etc.

Department of Health, Mental Health Services

Mental Health Employability programs can be accessed through the Clubhouse and Employment Skill Development and Support Programs located in various areas of the province. Typical participants in mental health employability programs include working age adults with mental disabilities who have the potential for employability, and consumers of mental health programs who have the potential for employability.

The Clubhouse programs operate by a set of international standards and believe the following: that work is a deeply regenerative & reintegrative force in our lives; that employment is a fundamental right of citizenship; and that employment opportunities need to be available to all members regardless of diagnosis or disability.

Clubhouses are located in Truro, New Glasgow, Sydney, Dartmouth and Halifax, Nova Scotia. Clubhouse programs address all five priority areas and provide varying degrees of the following: on site skill development: participation in a “work ordered day”;

- vocational development: supported employment, transitional employment and independent employment; and
- job readiness: resume writing, job search, interviewing, crisis vocational counseling and communication skills with employers and peers.

The Employment Skill Development and Support programs provide the following: assist in the development of vocational skills to obtain employment; provide an opportunity to develop work skills for employment; provide assistance with learning new skills to start own business; and help participants gain confidence in their own ability to seek job opportunities and obtain satisfactory work.

The Employment Skill Development and Support Programs are located in Sydney, and Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. These programs address all five priority areas and provide varying degrees of the following:

- job readiness skill development;
- work skill development;
- vocational training; and
- entrepreneurial skill development.

Program Indicators

Employment is a key determinant of health and steps to develop marketable employability skills in persons with mental health disabilities is a priority of community supports programs. The mental health employability programs are taking action to change the way employers view persons with mental illness. For example, many clubhouse programs offer “transitional” and

“supported” employment opportunities for individual members, and have implemented processes for attaining job placements with employers.

The long term goal for many people in recovery from mental illness is the attainment of employment. However, short term successes such as regular attendance and participation on an individual basis in the clubhouse programs are also recognized as important steps along the way to employment.

For the fiscal year 2008-09, each employability program reported on the total number of individuals who regularly attended, and actively participated in, the clubhouse and employment skill development and support programs. Participation was affected by a number of factors including the individual’s health status, and therefore varied according to the individual. The total number of individuals who regularly attended and participated in the employability programs were the following: 157 for Employment Skill Development and Support, and 799 for Clubhouse Programs.

The structure of the clubhouse programs allowed for activities with both set time periods and ongoing participation in the work ordered day program. Movement from one activity to another depended on an individual’s choice and his/her readiness for more structure. Each employability program reported on the total number of individuals who successfully completed the program when the clubhouse or employment skill development and support program has a start and an end date. Most of the employment skill development and support programs had specified start and end dates and many clubhouse programs did not. The numbers were the following: 103 for Employment Skill Development and Support, and 35 for Clubhouse Programs.

Each employability program reported on the total number of individuals who following completion of an employability program gained employment as a result of this participation. The numbers were the following: 77 for Employment Skill Development and Support, and 243 for Clubhouse Programs.

For some individuals, ongoing assistance of the mental health program to remain employed was required. Each employability program reported on the total number of individuals who once obtaining employment were able to be maintained in that employment with some support from the employability program. The numbers were the following: 49 for Employment Skill Development and Support, and 228 for Clubhouse Programs.

Mental Health Standards

Employment is a key determinant of health and mental health programs view developing marketable employability skills in persons with mental health disabilities as a priority of Community Supports programs. The Community Mental Health Supports for Adults (CMHSA) core program is based on psychosocial rehabilitation and recovery principles and practices, and two models of best practices that adhere to these principles are Supported Employment (SE) and Individual Placement and Support (IPS). Employability programs embracing these models are promoted in the field, and the revised CMHSA standards embracing these principles are available on our web site and will guide future initiatives in Nova Scotia.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/health/downloads/standards.pdf>

Arm and Leg Prostheses

This program was established to ensure Nova Scotians, who require a conventional limb prosthesis as a substitute for a partially or totally absent arm or leg are provided financial coverage to access prosthetic devices and services. Prosthetic devices help address barriers to employability for persons in need of such devices. Prosthetic services include initial fitting and provision of prosthetic devices, replacement and/or repair of the device so as to facilitate employability. In 2008-09, 366 persons received 908 services under the arm and leg prostheses program.

Department of Health Promotion and Protection, Addiction Services

Addiction Services offers a wide range of programs and services in education, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation for individuals, families and communities affected by substance use and gambling-related problems. Addiction Services help clients to prepare for, gain, and keep productive roles in the community. The goal is to reduce the disabling effects of substance use and gambling problems that create barriers to preparing for, attaining, and retaining employment. The target population comprises individuals sixteen years of age or older who are harmfully involved with alcohol, gambling and/or other drugs.

Addiction Services, Department of Health Promotion and Protection (HPP) and the Department of Health (DOH), is responsible for defining core services, developing and reviewing standards for service delivery, developing provincial policy, monitoring and auditing programs, consulting with service providers in the districts, and facilitating the development of provincial programs. A range of treatment and rehabilitation options is delivered by service providers under District Health Authorities throughout the province. Options are based on a client's needs, short and long term goals and ongoing assessment. Addiction Services programs can be accessed through a range of prevention and treatment services located in more than 42 offices throughout the province. Addiction Services Employability Programs are focused on the following areas: (1) education and training; (2) employment participation; (3) connecting employers and persons with disabilities; and (4) building knowledge.

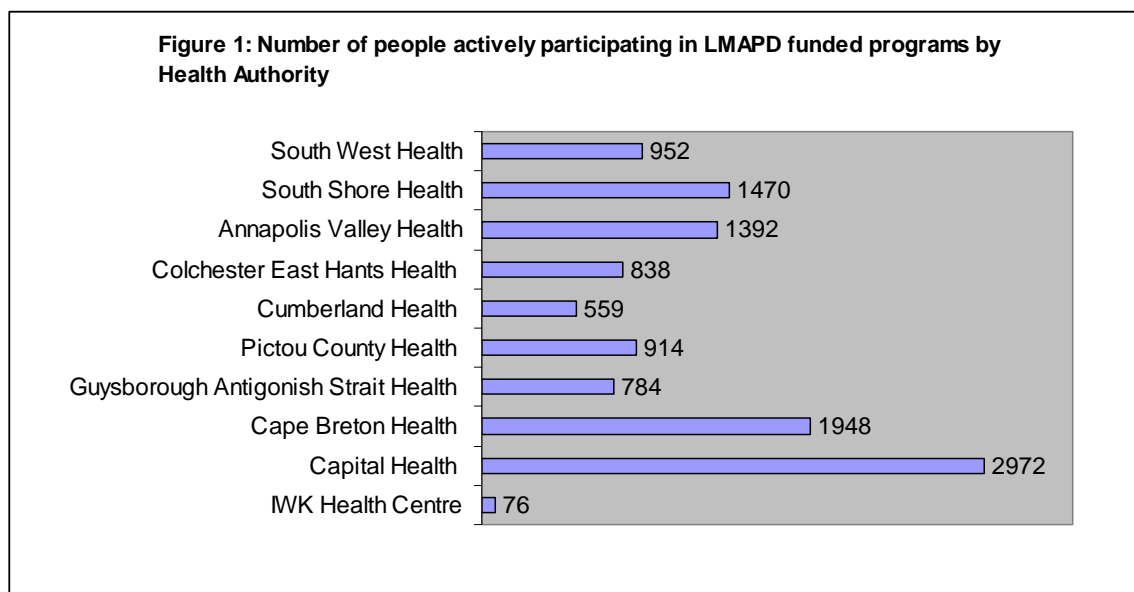
Workplace Outreach	Provision of strong liaison between Addiction Services and local industry to lessen the impact of disability and address vocational crises including employee assistance program policy development, consultations, training, workplace initiated intervention services, employee awareness seminars.
Treatment	Focus is on the impact of the disability on employability, maintenance of motivation to change, improving client independence. Provision of: assessment (employability) and case management; job preparation skills; employment reintegration; stabilizing living arrangement; family, financial, legal and physical health issues; psychosocial needs re life skills, anger management, communication and coping skills; referrals.

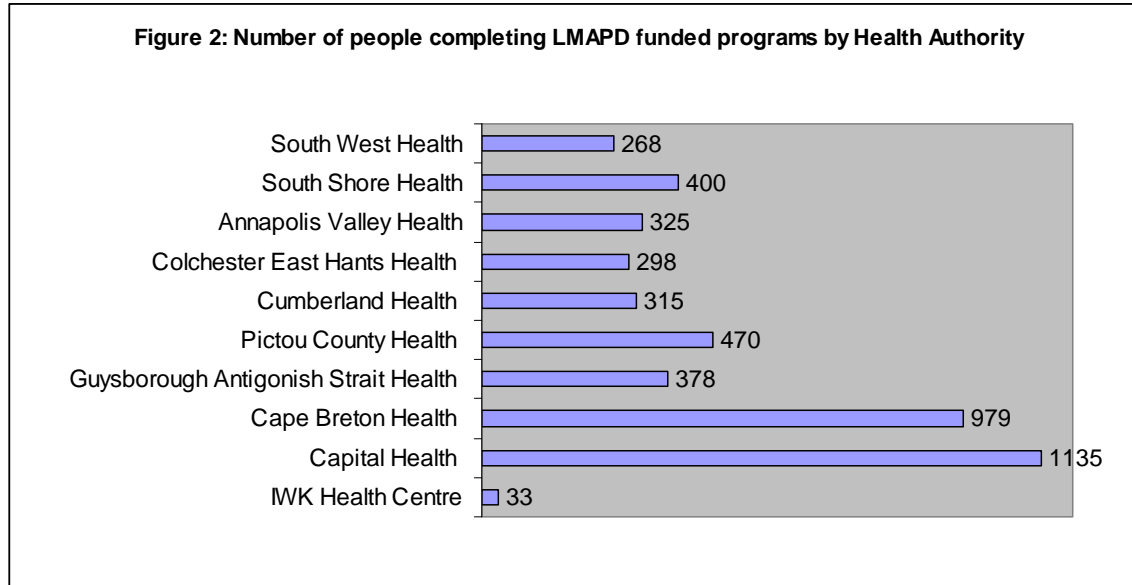
Specific information on services offered throughout the DHAs can be found at <http://www.addictionservices.ns.ca> . Addiction Services recovers funding of \$2.8 million annually to cover its expenditures for providing a range of addiction services under the Canada - Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities. Recovery of funding is provided in recognition of the link between employability, and the treatment and rehabilitation of persons with substance use problems. Individual clients of Addiction Services are considered to have a disability.

Program Indicators

Addiction Services facilitate the improvement of work-related skills (e.g.: personal management skills) through participation in addiction education programs, structured treatment program, and community-based programs. The focus of Addiction Services is on improving client independence and facilitates clients’ connection to employers through ongoing assessment and treatment planning. There is considerable evidence in the literature that completing addiction programs improve clients’ employability. While the motivation for introducing an employability aspect to addictions counseling varies internationally, programs in jurisdictions like the United Kingdom and Spain strongly link addictions programming with the goal of social re-integration and employment.

Number of people actively participating in LMAPD program:	11905
Number of people successfully completing LMAPD program:	4601
Number of people employed as a result of LMAPD program:	N/A
Number of people sustained in employment in the case of vocational crisis:	N/A





Limitations: Indicators number three (3) and four (4) were not available this year due to limited resources for gathering the information. In the past, these measures were collected by manual file audit and staff recollection; such methods are time intensive on clinical and clerical staff alike.

Source: ASsist (Addiction Services Statistical Information System Technology), June 30, 2009

Estimated Cost-shared Expenditures (revised Jan 5, 2010)

2008 – 09	Total Expenditure	Federal Contribution	Provincial Contribution
Community Services, Employment Assistance			
Employment related Assessment, Career Counseling & Program Delivery	2,240,256	781,966	1,458,290
Provision of Disability Related Supports	458,852	168,823	290,029
Special Needs Supports	817,573	285,334	532,239
Program Administration	344,542	137,993	206,549
Sub-total:	3,861,223	1,374,116	2,487,107
Education, Post-Secondary Disability Services			
Program Administration	650,000	325,000	325,000
Grants to Students	1,134,658	567,329	567,329
Research	65,000	32,500	32,500
Attendant Care	324,558	162,279	162,279
Interpreter Services	210,000	105,000	105,000
University Disability Program Support	1,390,630	856,007	534,623
NSCC Disability Program Support	1,170,000	585,000	585,000
Other Projects	100,000	100,000	0
University and NSCC Program Contributions	2,100,363		2,100,363
Sub-total:	7,145,209	2,733,115	4,412,094
Health, Mental Health			
Arm and Leg Prostheses	210,817	70,000	140,817
Clubhouse Programs	2,540,287	1,198,115	1,342,172
Employment Skill & Development Support	377,547	165,000	212,547
Health Promotion and Protection, Addiction Services			
Workplace Outreach	705,016	150,000	555,016
Addiction Services	13,403,670	2,250,850	11,152,820
Administrative Services	3,891,771	349,150	3,542,621
Sub-total:	21,129,108	4,183,115	16,945,993
TOTAL	32,137,425	8,290,346	24,384,832

Societal Indicators

This report contains new information available from the 2007 Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) and the 2006 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) about people living with disabilities in Nova Scotia. The new data was not available in time to be published with the *Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities Annual Report 2009* on December 3, 2009. The societal indicators have been compiled and added to the 2009 report. The full 2009 report will be published in print format in the winter of 2010.

The 2004 baseline report presented societal indicators using data from the 2001 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS), Canada's principal source of detailed statistical information about persons who live with disability issues. PALS is a post-census survey, conducted following the census. Subsequent annual reports use another important Statistics Canada survey, the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID), to present societal indicators for persons who are and are not living with disabilities. The SLID is a longitudinal survey, interviewing the same people (a panel of respondents) from one year to the next for a period of six years. The SLID tracks overlapping panels of individual respondents. The SLID is conducted annually and is a rich source of information about income, employment, education and other issues for the adult Canadian and provincial populations including Nova Scotia.

In 2004, Nova Scotia began reporting on the Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities. Each annual report has included societal indicators for persons living with disabilities in Nova Scotia derived from the PALS and SLID whenever available. The current report includes data derived from the SLID from 1999 thru 2007 for many of the societal indicators. Over this eight-year period, there have been improvements on some of these indicators for persons living with a disability. There has been a steady increase in the educational achievement of people between 1999 and 2007. There has been an increase in employment and a decrease in the proportions of persons with disabilities who do not participate in the labour force. Both the SLID and PALS indicate that as the economy improved in the last decade, more persons with disabilities were able to participate in the labour force. Not surprisingly more participation in the labour force is linked to increases in average annual incomes and more persons with disabilities who had earned income. The most common sources of income for persons with disabilities in recent years have been earned income and the Canada Pension Plan. However, when incomes are adjusted, the constant dollar value of average incomes for persons with disabilities decreased while the constant dollar value of average incomes for persons who do not have a disability increased. These two trends resulted in a decline in the average earnings (constant dollars) of persons with disabilities expressed as a percentage of the average earnings (constant dollars) of persons who do not have a disability.

Labour Force Participation

Figure 1 reports the percentage of persons (aged 16-64) who were employed for the entire year. Between 1999 and 2006, the numbers and percentage of employed disabled persons increased substantially, from 36% in 1999 to 45% in 2007. During the same period the proportions of persons without disabilities who were employed for the entire year also

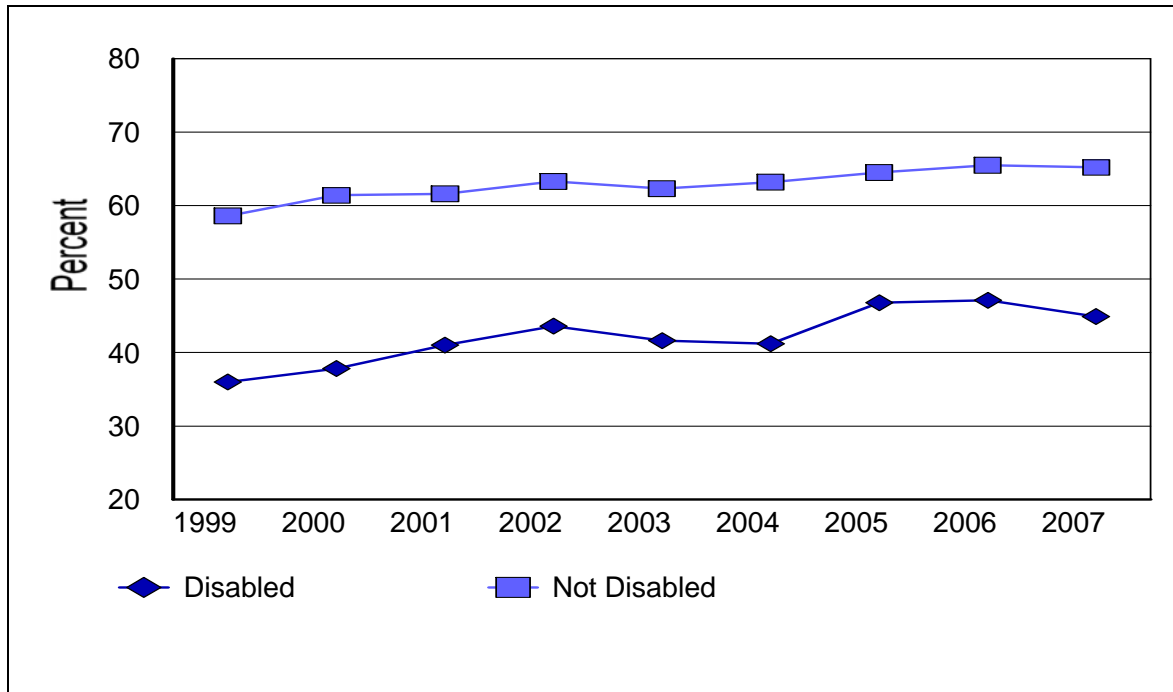


Figure 1: Percentage of Nova Scotians with and without disabilities (aged 16-64) who were employed

increased from 58% to 65%. During the same period, the proportions of persons not participating in the labour force or experiencing periods of unemployment decreased (Figure 2). Between 1999 and 2007, the proportions of disabled persons not in the labour force or unemployed declined from 46% to 33%, while among persons without disabilities the proportions declined from 16% to 11%. People without disabilities are more likely than persons with disabilities to be employed all year and to be participating in the labour market. An expanding economy and increased job opportunities benefited both disabled persons and persons without disabilities. The proportions of persons with disabilities finding employment over this period improved, however at the end of the period it still remained that significantly more persons with disabilities experienced not being employed than did persons without disabilities. The 2006 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey tells a similar story. The results of the 2006 PALS indicate that 57.8% of persons living with a disability in Nova Scotia participate in the labour force, and 50% of working aged persons with disabilities are employed, while 80% of persons who are not disabled participate in the labour force and 73% are employed.

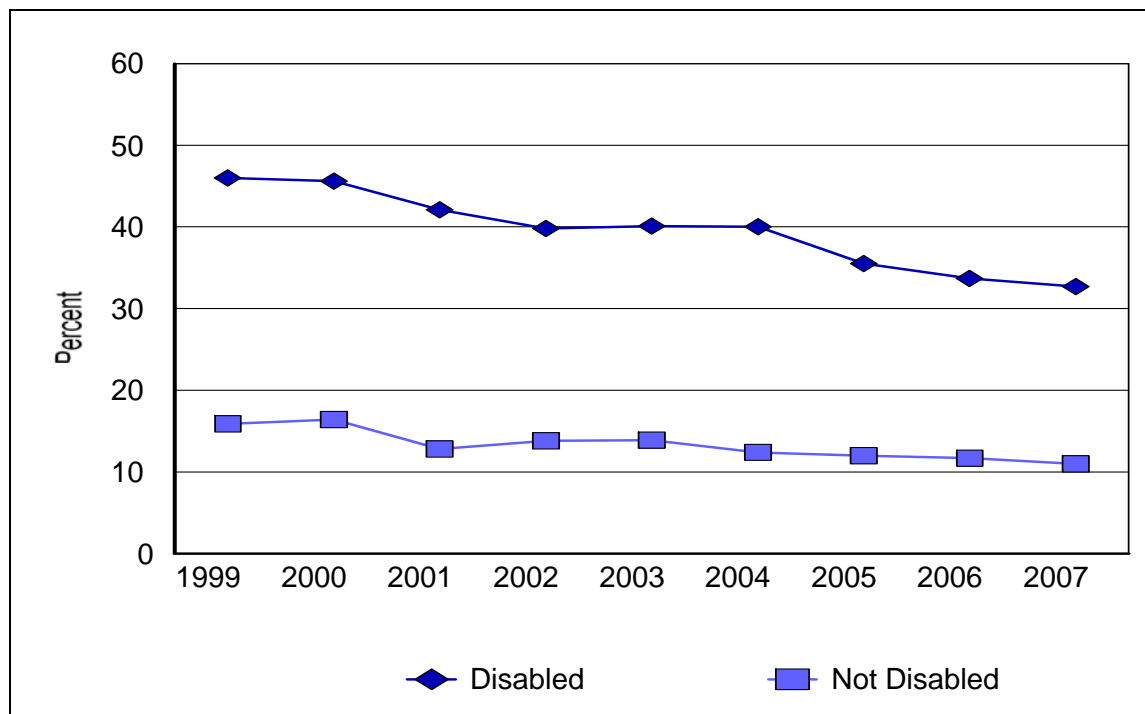


Figure 2: Percentage of Nova Scotians with and without disabilities (aged 16-64) not in the labour force

Income

Increased participation in the labour force has resulted in increases in the proportions of persons with earned income (Figure 3) and increases in average annual income (Figure 4). Figure 3 shows the proportions of disabled persons and persons without disabilities who have earned income. This figure captures people who were employed only part of the year as well as those employed for the whole year. Over the eight-year period, the percentage of persons with disabilities who had earned income increased from 55% in 1999 to 67% in 2007. The percentage of persons without disabilities who had earned income increased from 82% to 86% over the same period.

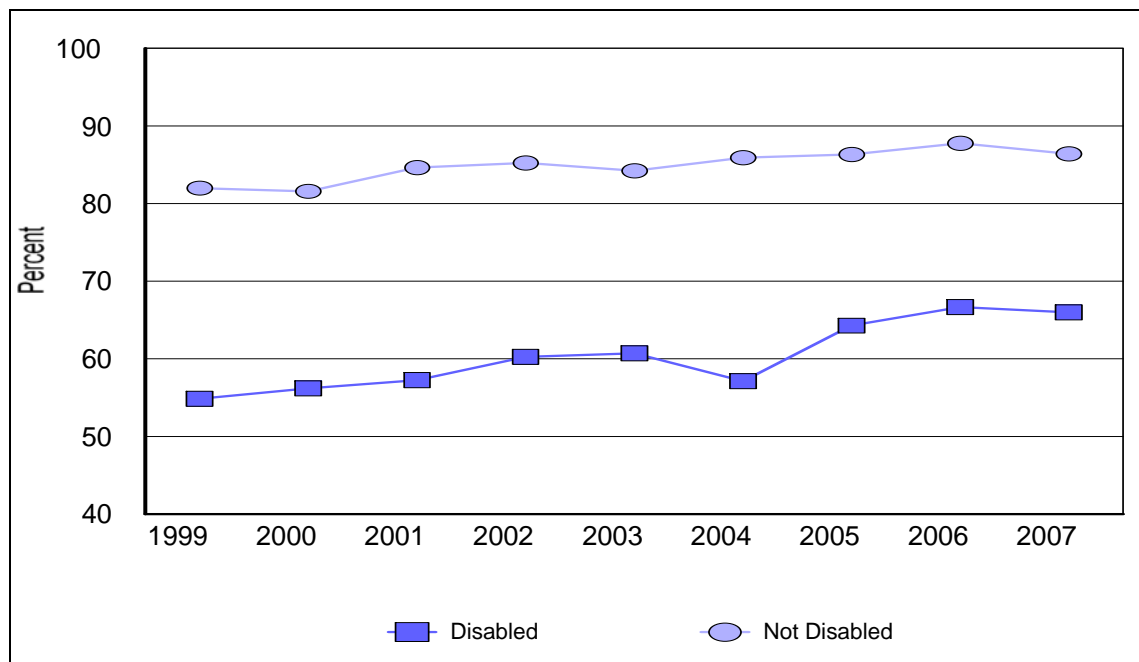


Figure 3: Percentage of Nova Scotians with and without disabilities (aged 16-64) with earnings

Average incomes increased between 2001 and 2007 (Figure 4) for persons without disabilities. The average earned income among persons with disabilities decreased 4.3% when measured in constant dollars¹³ from \$27,800 in 2001 to \$26,600 in 2007 (Figure 4) while the average earned incomes among persons without disabilities increased 10% from \$32,100 to \$35,300 over the same period. The PALS results are similar. The average salary (in constant dollar values) for persons with disabilities in 2006 was \$24,487 compared to \$26,816 in 2001, an 8.7% decline. The increased employment experienced by persons with disabilities did not result in an increase in average earned incomes, as measured in constant dollar values. A plausible explanation for this phenomenon is that new earners enter the work force at lower rates of pay than experienced earners thus depressing the average. It may also be the case that more earners with disabilities work fewer hours than do earners who do not have a disability.

Figure 5 provides average earned incomes without making any adjustments for inflation as a reference point for reported earnings in any given year over the period 1999 to 2007. Average earned incomes unadjusted for inflation or deflation demonstrate different trends over the period for the two groups of earners. As a group, there is more variability in average earned income (in

¹³ The term 'constant dollars' refers to a metric for valuing the price of something over time, without that metric changing due to inflation or deflation. The term specifically refers to dollars whose present value is linked to a specific year. Constant dollars are used to compare the "real value" of an income or price to put the "nominal value" in perspective. The relative position of a 'constant dollar' in any given year remains the same no matter what year is used as a baseline for the value of money over time as long as the same baseline is used for the comparison of all years in a series. In this series, 2007 is the reference year.

constant as well as nominal dollars) for persons with disabilities than for persons who do not have a disability.

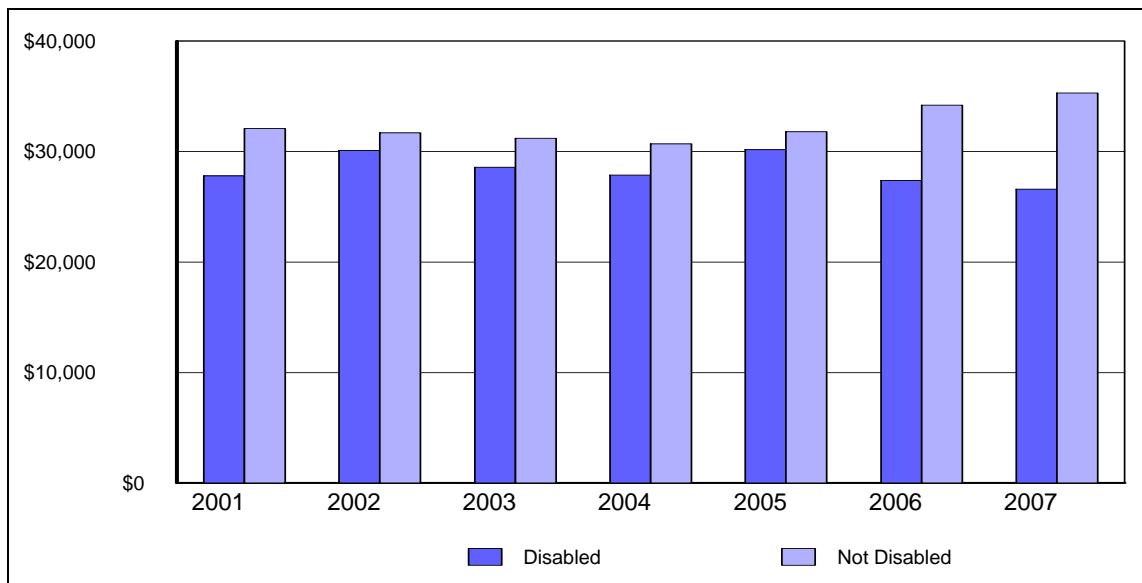


Figure 4: Average individual (aged 16-64) earnings 2001 - 2007 in constant \$ among Nova Scotians

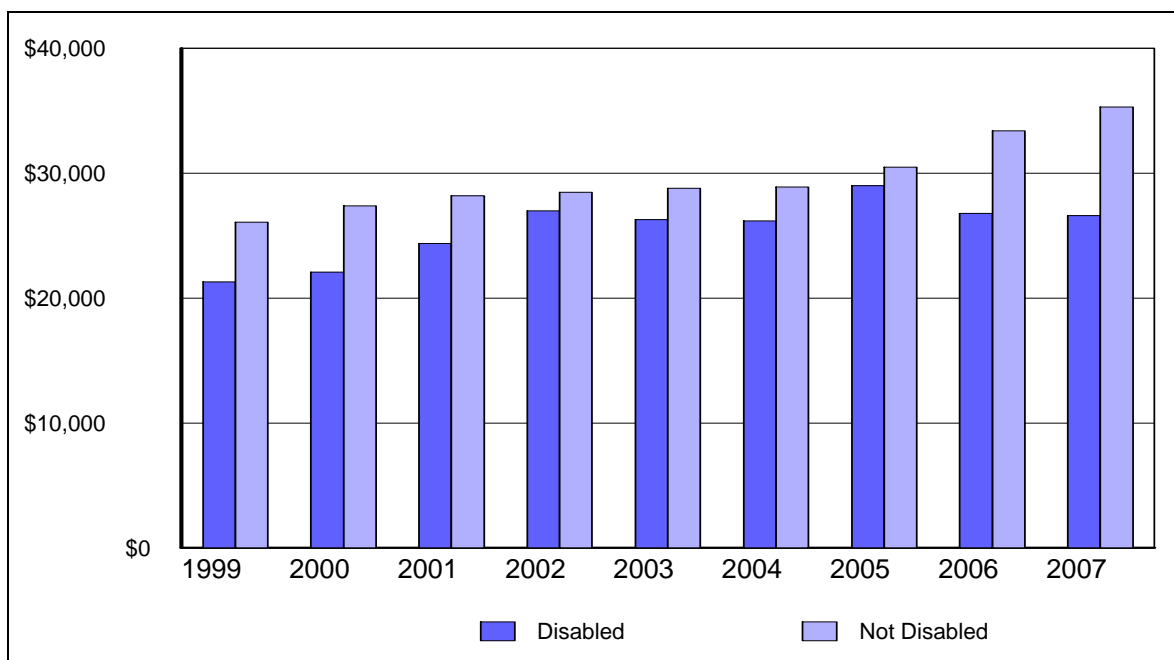


Figure 5: Average individual (aged 16-64) earnings 1999 - 2007 among Nova Scotians

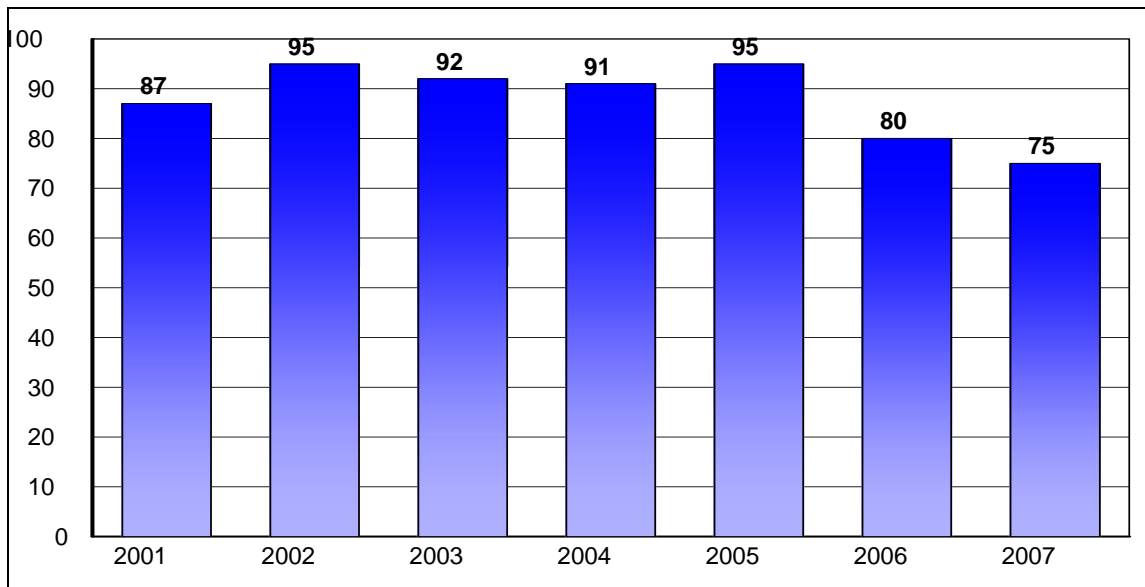


Figure 6: Average earnings in constant \$ of persons with disabilities as a percentage of average earnings in constant dollars of persons who do not have a disability in Nova Scotia

Figure 6 shows the average earnings in constant dollars of persons who have a disability as a percentage of the average earnings (again in constant dollars) of persons who do not have a disability. It shows the combined impact of decreasing average earnings of persons with disabilities over time and increasing average earnings of persons without disabilities. In constant dollar terms, the average earnings of persons with disabilities have declined since 2005 to below 2001 values relative to persons without disabilities. In 2001, the average earning (in constant dollars) for persons with disabilities were 87% of the average earned income for persons without disabilities. In 2007, the average earnings of persons with disabilities had dropped to 75% of the average earnings for persons who do not have a disability. Figure 6 very graphically demonstrates the real impact of income trends for these two groups. Although persons with disabilities have experienced more employment over the period, as a group, this increase in employment has not kept pace with the earnings of persons without disabilities and there is a growing gap between the earnings of persons with and without disabilities.

Figure 7 shows income distributions among persons with disabilities, and Figure 8 shows income distributions for persons who do not have a disability. Both groups are doing better in terms of more people earning higher incomes in 2007 than in 1999. More persons without disabilities are earning higher incomes in more recent years than is the case for persons with disabilities. Between 1999 and 2007 the percentage of top earners among persons with disabilities increased by 5% while the percentage of top earners among persons who do not have a disability increased 12% in the same period. In 2007, 21% of earners who have a disability and 34% of earners who do not have a disability had earned incomes in excess of \$40,000.

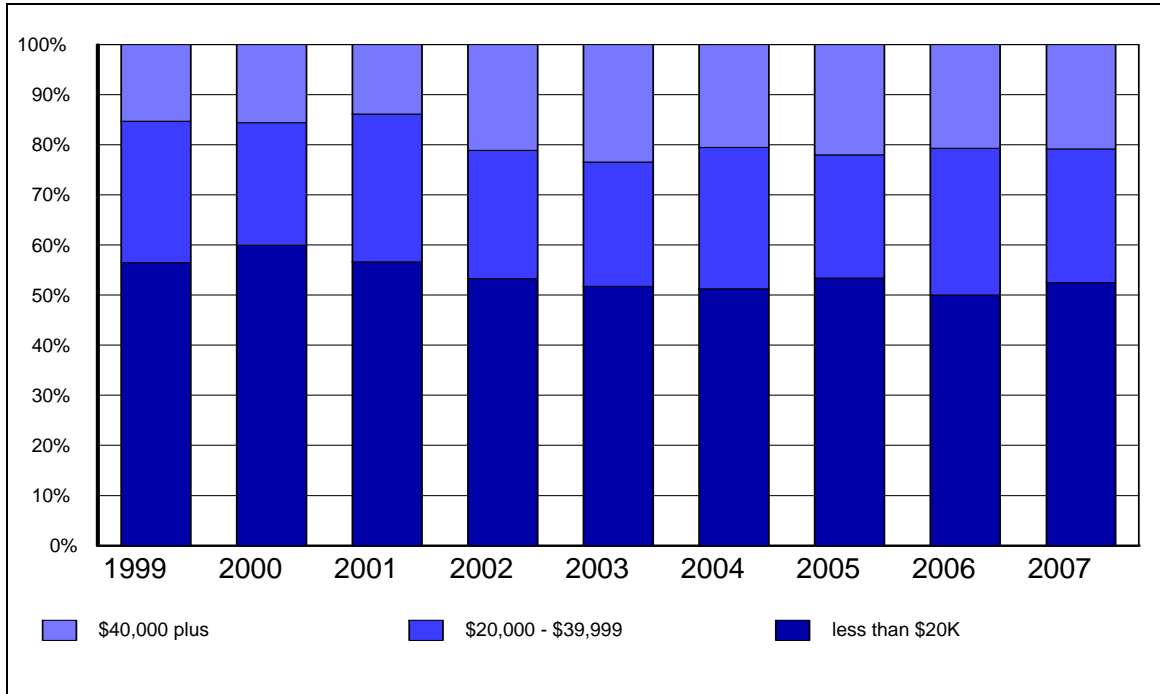


Figure 7: Distribution of income among Nova Scotians (aged 16-64) who have a disability

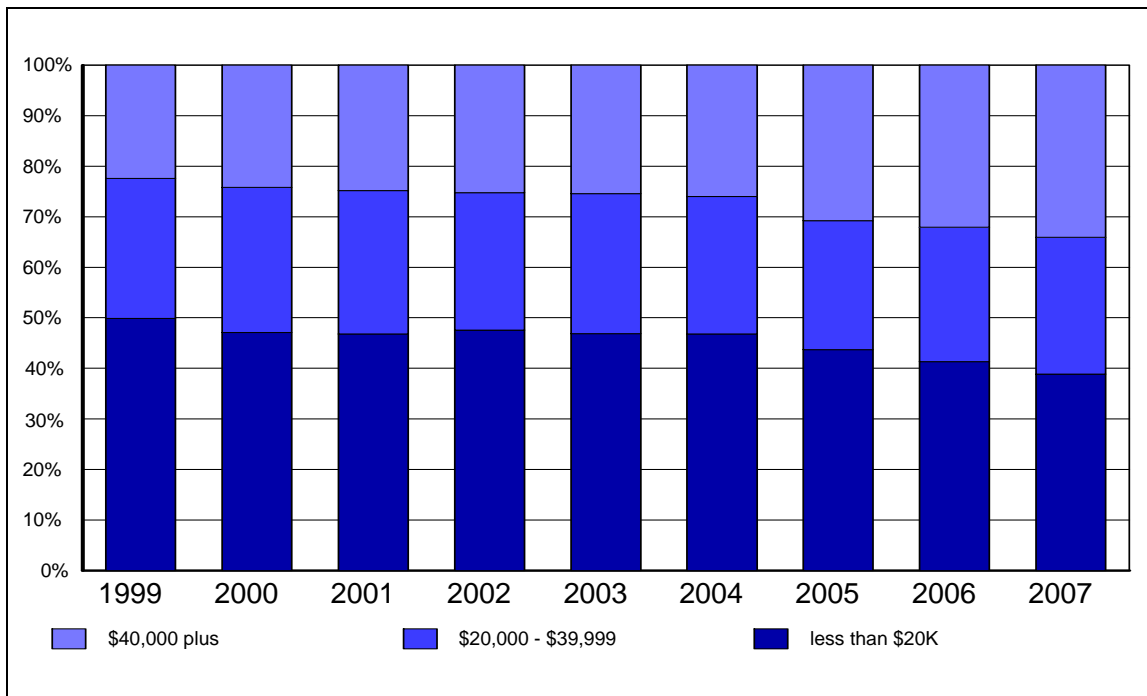


Figure 8: Distribution of income among Nova Scotians (aged 16-64) who do not have a disability

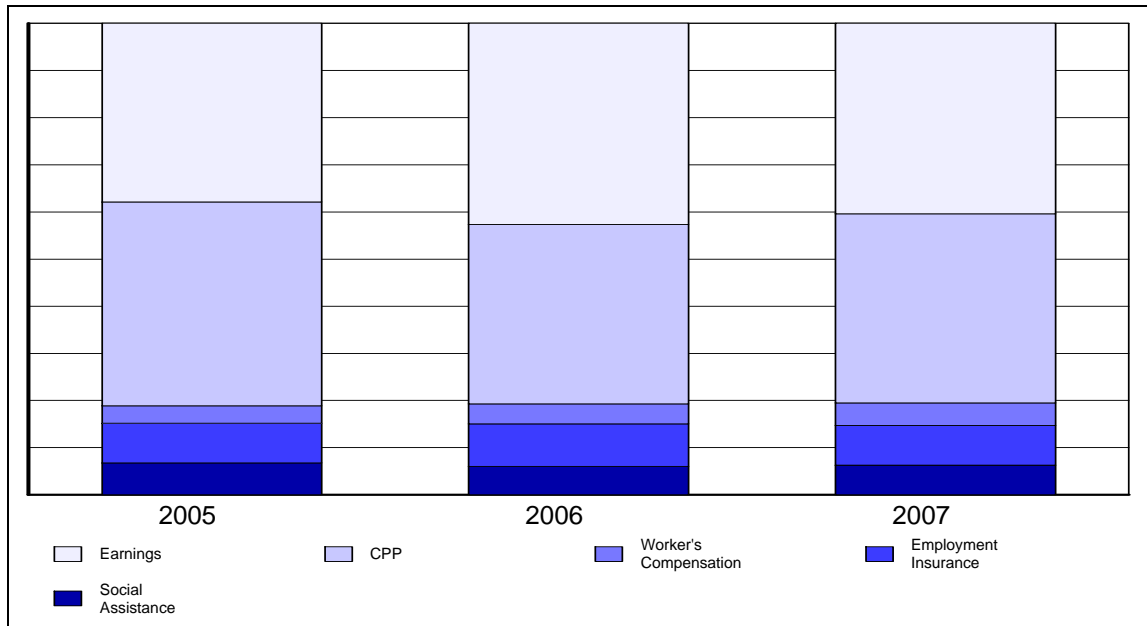


Figure 9: Sources of income for Nova Scotians living with a disability

Information about the source of income for persons living with a disability is available for 2005, 2006 and 2007 from the most recent Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics. The most common sources of income for persons living with a disability are employment and Canada Pension Plan (CPP).

Educational Achievement

Figure 10 shows the educational achievement of persons who live with disabilities and Figure 11 shows educational achievement of persons who do not have a disability. In both groups, an increasing proportion of persons with higher levels of education is discernible between 1999 and 2007. Although the proportions of disabled persons who have post-secondary education have been increasing and the proportions with only high school or less have been declining, significant differences in the educational achievements between the two groups remain essentially the same. Persons who do not have disabilities are more likely to have completed post-secondary education.

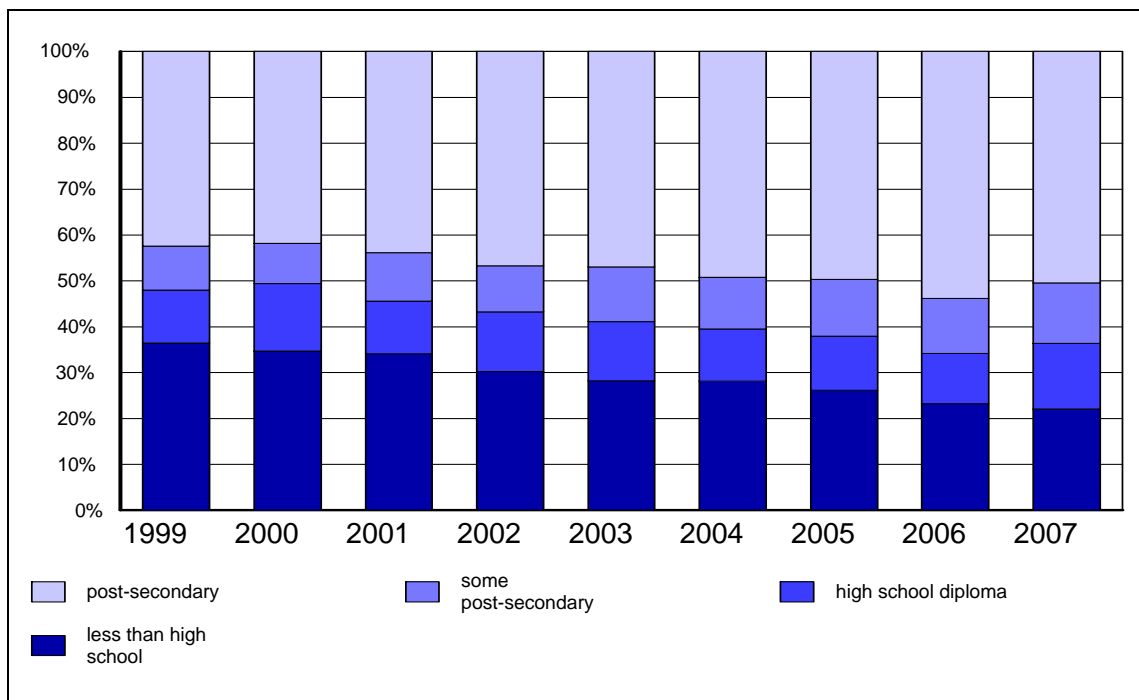


Figure 10: Educational achievement among Nova Scotians who have a disability (aged 16-64)

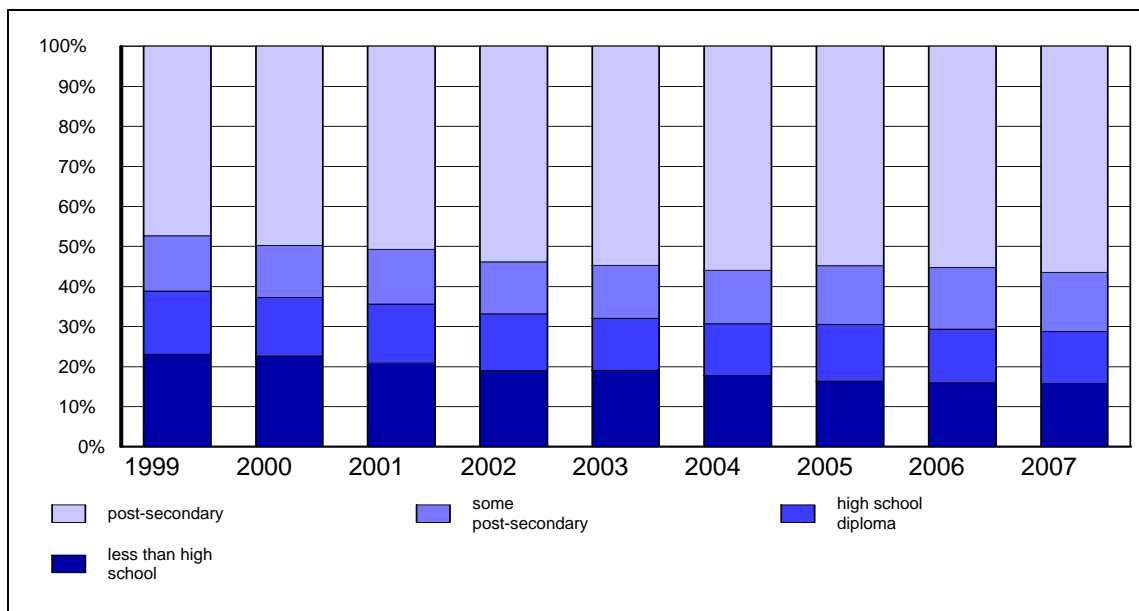


Figure 11: Educational achievement among Nova Scotians who do not have a disability (aged 16-64)

Looking Ahead

The Canada- Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreements for Persons with Disabilities provides an opportunity to maintain and strengthen Nova Scotia's labour market programs and services for persons with disabilities. The current agreement was scheduled to end March 31, 2006. It has been extended through mutual agreement of Nova Scotia and Canada to March 31, 2011.

Nova Scotia remains committed to public reporting and will continue to release annual Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities reports to Nova Scotians. The government of Nova Scotia welcomes the opportunity to work with the Government of Canada to maintain and develop effective ways to provide meaningful supports for persons with disabilities in order that they may partake fully in all aspects of society.