

# The DSP Connection

*A way to connect on what's happening  
on the Disability Support Program (DSP)  
Transformation Project*

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## Progress update highlights...

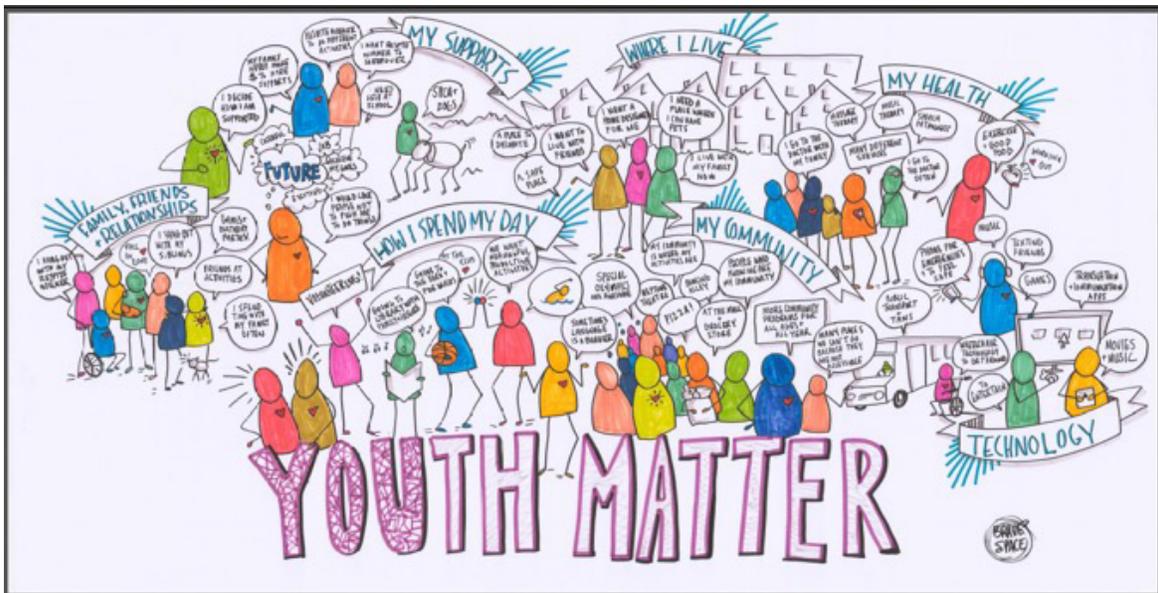
In our last newsletter we provided you with some highlights of the provincial budget. We would like to tell you a little more about how the province is investing \$3 million to help Nova Scotians with disabilities.

- **Supporting the transition of (at least 25) participants from larger facilities to community-based options**

- Two participants have moved to Individual Living Support (ILS) – one is a small option home and the second is a supported apartment
- There is a commitment to move six (6) participants between September and November 2016 – two (2) moving to Alternate Family Support (AFS), one (1) to ILS, and three (3) to community homes
- We are identifying and discussing options with other individuals who would be good candidates to transition from larger facilities to community-based options

- **\$790,000 to increase the capacity of Adult Service Centers**

- Scaling up social enterprise
  - We are working to identify one or more new, high-impact social enterprises that are larger than what any one member could pursue and which may require the coordinated involvement of multiple agencies
  - This will be achieved by using insights from the external and internal reviews to inform a comprehensive “LaunchPad” process, which generates, screens, and selects the best possible enterprise opportunities
- Enhanced employment supports to help agencies grow capacity in areas that have previously been underserved
  - The department has been working with DirectioNS to develop the parameters and reporting requirements for this funding
  - We expect a call for proposals will be sent out soon, with the initial phase beginning in October 2016 and continuing through to Fall 2017



● **Flex Policy**

- The updated Flex policy was approved on July 26, 2016 and DCS staff training is scheduled for early Fall. After staff have been trained, individuals for the new program will be identified and discussions with those candidates will begin
- The Flex program offers individualized funding to people with disabilities who live at home with their family, or in their own home. The updated policy expands the program to eligible individuals to enable them to live independently with support from their family and/or personal support network

We've also conducted some sessions with our participants. At these sessions, we asked participants a series of questions about their wants and hopes for the future. We also asked about how participants spend their day, what supports they have, their health, etc. Below are a few quotes from these participants:

"It is difficult to visit mom because of her age – if I had supports at her house I could visit her more"  
 – DSP Participant

"The First Voice session at the Meadows ARC was seen as very positive by our residents and the questions asked by DCS staff covered all aspects of their lives"  
 – Joyce d'Entremont CEO and Administrator, Meadows ARC

"I want my own room and I don't want to share"  
 – DSP Participant

"It would be nice to have more resources for recreation. It would get us out more and help to destigmatize the way people see us"

– DSP Participant

"The two ladies that met with us at the Meadows ARC heard me when I spoke to them about the goals I have for the future"

– Patricia Hartland,  
Resident at Meadows ARC

"The day DCS came to the Club was fun! They asked us lots of questions and I liked getting to answer them myself. I liked hearing from others where they would like to live and who they like to hang out with. Someday I want to move out of my parents' place and live with some friends"

– Isai Estey,  
DSP youth

"My ultimate goal is to be on my own – initially with minimal support then eventually no supports"

– DSP Participant

It was a privilege to speak with everyone and we are confident that our work on the service design will help meet the challenges we heard in these sessions.

**Moratorium on permanent placements** – And finally, the moratorium on permanent placements in larger DSP residential facilities (ARC/RRC) was effective July 1st, 2016. This is consistent with the Roadmap and means that over time, and with increased community capacity, larger residential options will close and participants will be transitioned to community options.

## Upcoming events

### DSP COMMUNITY ROADSHOW

We will be holding a DSP Community Roadshow in October that we welcome you all to attend.

This roadshow is open to service providers, advocates, families, and participants. We will be having separate meetings with our staff. The details for the roadshow, including how you can sign up, are below:

#### When and where will the roadshows be held?

- 1. Monday, Oct 17:** Truro, Best Western Glengarry @ 150 Willow St., Truro  
from 6:00pm – 8:00pm
- 2. Tuesday, Oct 18:** New Glasgow, Glasgow Square Theatre @ 155 Glasgow St., New Glasgow  
from @ 6:00pm – 8:00pm
- 3. Wednesday, Oct 19:** Sydney, Grand Lake Road Fire Hall @ 850 Grand Lake Rd., Sydney  
from 6:00pm – 8:00pm
- 4. Thursday, Oct 20:** Port Hawkesbury, Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre (Shannon Room) @ 606 Reeves St. from 6:00pm – 8:00pm
- 5. Monday, Oct 24:** Liverpool, Best Western Plus Liverpool @ 63 Queens Place Dr.  
from 6:00pm – 8:00pm
- 6. Tuesday, Oct 25:** Berwick, King's Mutual Century Centre @ 225 Veteran's Dr.  
from 6:00pm – 8:00pm

**7. Wednesday, Oct 26:** Dartmouth, NSCC Waterfront Campus @ 80 Mawiomi Pl.  
from 6:00pm – 8:00pm

**8. Thursday, Oct 27:** Dartmouth, NSCC Waterfront Campus @ 80 Mawiomi Pl.  
from 6:00pm – 8:00pm

#### How can you register?

Please send an email or call Emily Chisholm at [Emily.Chisholm@novascotia.ca](mailto:Emily.Chisholm@novascotia.ca) or 902-424-3387. Please provide your name and the date and location for which you would like to attend.

Please register by **October 12, 2016**. Space is limited for each session and we want to make sure there is capacity for all those who want to attend.

#### What will we be talking about at the roadshows?

- The vision for DSP participants
- A review of key themes identified through multiple consultation sessions and discussions with service providers and participants
- A review of recommendations for the proposed future of the Disability Support Program
- Next steps and a question and answer period

## DSP Strategist supporting our work

Dr. John Agosta, Vice President at the Human Services Research Institute, has been working with the DSP Program since April 2016. His primary role is providing subject matter expertise, advisement, and analysis support to the project working group. John has supported the department in a variety of ways:

- Provided the Adult Service Array working group with recommendations for changes to existing DSP programs and potential additions of new programs that will help provide supports to participants with a broad array of support needs.
- Educated the team on best practices in assessment, funding approaches, and planning methodologies which ensure participants can access supports in an equitable, flexible, and person-directed manner.
- Advised the department on approaches for ensuring that persons with disabilities live an integrated life in the community of their choice, allowing DSP supports to compliment and enhance the natural supports available through family, friends, and the broader community.



### About Dr. John Agosta

Dr. Agosta has worked with people with disabilities for over 30 years. He completed his doctorate in Rehabilitation Research at the University of Oregon, specializing in research methods and community supports for people with disabilities. Additionally, he has extensive experience with community supports, having worked in direct services and administrative positions within agencies offering early intervention, residential, vocational, or family support services. His work in Canada has included advisement with British Columbia, Alberta, and most recently, Manitoba.

### The vision for the Disability Support Program

“All people and their families have the right to live, love, work, play and pursue their life aspirations in their community. Community is where a person feels safe, valued for their contribution and able to pursue the life they choose.”

## Good news story in our community...

As part of these newsletters, we want to acknowledge the amazing things happening in our community. Today's story is a letter from a 'grateful mom' to the Disability Support Program:

*Most likely we have not met and yet you support my son and my family regularly. My son has a disability that impacts each of us in our immediate household, as well as grandparents, extended family, friends and community members.*

*In June, I attended a meeting about the Transformation Project. I attended reluctantly because to me Transformation means "big changes" and often "big changes" in my house can result in major anxiety for everyone, especially my son. I feared change would mean less. This was not the case. Deputy Minister Lynn Hartwell and several members of her team spoke to a group of parents about the changes to the Disability Support Program. She shared with us the Premier's commitment to help our families and the additional funding he has allocated to her department to assist with the necessary changes that will result in an improved quality of life for many Nova Scotia families supporting loved ones living with a disability. At the end of the evening, I left with hope and I can't begin to tell you what an incredible feeling that is to have.*

*Two months later...more information is being shared between DSP and families. Transformation is happening and it feels safe and inspiring for my*

*family. Yes, it may be that this transformation process is not happening as fast as some families with youth and adults with disabilities would like. I also suspect there is a lot of work going on behind the scenes for you at Disability Support Program. Perhaps if more families knew about these changes and the steps of the transformation process, they too would feel hope.*

*I look forward to hearing about your upcoming presentations around our province to address this need. Please know that many families truly appreciate all that you are doing. As parents, we want to work with you to make sure this Transformation Project is the best we can make it! Please know that even at times in this process, when I become overwhelmed and frustrated because changes are not happening fast enough to meet the needs of my family, I do understand that everyone is doing the best that they can, given the size of the system, current funding levels, knowledge of staff and existing resources.*

*Please be patient with me. Know I often operate out of fear and love for my family. Remind me that we are in this together. Please keep the discussions going, continue to ask us for input, as we are a very committed group of parents, family members and members of your community. My sincere thank you as we work together on this Transformation Project.*

— Marni Adams, A Grateful Mom

## We want to hear from you

Similar to the last newsletter, if you would like to share your thoughts on how this transformation is impacting your life, your community, or the people around you, please send it to us by using the contact information below – we would love to hear from you.

Please feel free to send in any questions or comments about anything in this newsletter. Thank you for reading and we hope you will join us at our upcoming roadshow in the fall.

Department of Community Services  
Disability Support Program  
Email: **DSP@novascotia.ca**

Find your local office at **[novascotia.ca/coms/department/contact/index.html](http://novascotia.ca/coms/department/contact/index.html)**

The DSP Connection is also available online at **[novascotia.ca/coms/transformation](http://novascotia.ca/coms/transformation)**

Connect with us on Twitter **@NS\_DCS**

