

The DSP Connection

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

Provincial budget highlights

We are pleased to highlight that, as part of Budget 2016-2017, the province is investing \$3 million for new initiatives in the Disability Support Program. We will be working with clients, families, and service providers to plan and implement these investments in the following ways:

- Supporting the transition of (at least 25) people from larger facilities to community based options; and
- \$790,000 to increase the capacity of Adult Service Centres. These funds will be focused on increasing employment supports and increasing social enterprise capacity.

In addition, DSP is also getting base funding of \$9.9M to address existing cost pressures of delivering its programs.



Upcoming events

**Optimal Individual
Service Design –
Deep Quality Leadership
Course led by
Dr. Michael Kendrick**

Representatives from the residential service sector and government will have an opportunity to attend the 10-day intense training program in June. The course is designed by Dr. Michael Kendrick and is for future leaders including service providers, families, advocates, staff, funders, and service organizations to build a solid foundation upon which intentional lifestyles and personalized services can be developed.

This training was brought to the Department (and is being organized and facilitated) by the residential service sector as a good way to build on the existing knowledge of the sector. Everyone is very excited about this opportunity. Registration for this event was by invitation only.

About Dr. Michael Kendrick

Dr. Kendrick is an independent international consultant in human services and community work, who has focused on the disability, mental health and aged care fields for close to thirty years. His interests have included leadership, service quality, and the creation of safeguards for vulnerable persons, social integration, and change.

"This course will provide an excellent opportunity to ensure that current and future leaders in our sector are infused with the philosophical underpinning of Social Role Valorization and are challenged to critically examine our values with a view to inform better practice in our support of Nova Scotians with disabilities. The experiential nature of the house affords participants a means to apply their learnings by engaging directly with individuals to create future life plans. As the province embarks on the Transformation of Services for persons with disabilities, the sector is invigorated by the support received from the Department of Community Services to make this training possible with a view to enhancing the quality of our services now and in the years to come."

*- Carol Ann Brennan, Executive Director,
Regional Residential Services*

A word from our Minister

DSP Transformation is part of a larger transformation happening within the Department of Community Services. We are working towards a system that gives people the help they need, when they need it, but is also a launching pad giving clients the skills they need to change the direction of their lives. What we want is better outcomes, services that are easy for clients to access and easy for us to deliver, and sustainability.

*- The Honorable Joanne Bernard, Minister,
Department of Community Services*

Good news story in our community

There are a lot of amazing things happening in our community and we want to celebrate and acknowledge as many as we can. To do this, we would like to include a success story from our service providers and/or our clients/families in each newsletter.

Today's story shows what can be accomplished for our community when we partner together as a community.



Funding supports client in the workforce

Head down, paying attention to every minute detail. That is how you will likely find Corey Patterson. Corey recently started a position with Summer Street Works, Trophies and Awards division located at its gently worn clothing boutique store, New Beginnings, in New Glasgow.

The job requires someone who is detail-oriented, which Corey is. "When the opportunity became available, I immediately thought of Corey," says Kim MacKinnon, director of social enterprises, Summer Street Works. "We were looking for someone who pays attention to detail, is very meticulous in their approach to things and Corey is naturally nitpicky," she jokes.

Julie Dignan, manager of employment services, Summer Street Works, notes the partnership with the Neil Squire Society, which helped provide funding for training for Patterson. "The candidate learns new skills and the employer gets support," says Dignan.

Corey works part time and enjoys what he is doing. "It's a relatively quiet, friendly work environment and it's detailed work so it's different every day," he says. "Corey answers the phones, deals with customers and places orders. Corey is the face of our customer service for trophies and awards. Most times, he's the first person the customer meets".

Customer service is new for Corey, who mostly enjoys the hands-on work including the engraving of things like trophies or wine glasses, personalized items and gifts as well as the awards and other items available. "I have Asperger's Syndrome which is kind of like Autism light," he explains. "My brain functions in a different way than other people's so there's a slight disconnect with the world. I often observe other things people don't and sometimes things

people find obvious go right over my head. It's like a top of the line computer with dial-up Internet." Corey says it has not been easy learning to deal with customers, especially people he doesn't know. "Just being able to initiate a conversation with someone I never met before is an uphill struggle."

MacKinnon adds, "we can see the work he's doing and it is helping his skill sets and he is already suggesting more productive ways for our best practices. He's very helpful."

Corey says his confidence is growing in his new job and his experience with the Neil Squire Society was great. "It was a lot easier than I thought it would be. I have a lot of experiences where because of my disability... I end up having to jump through hoops and would just walk away from it."

Summer Street Works is a service provider partner with the Department of Community Services that creates opportunities for people with intellectual disability. For more information on Summer Street Works visit www.summerstreet.ca.

*Portions of article and photo by Debbie Harvie,
The Advocate, used with permission.*

FAQs on DSP Transformation

Q *What specific projects is the Department working on now?*

A There are three main pieces of work on the go right now:

- Service Delivery – we want to deliver services in ways that are simple to navigate and easy to administer while enhancing client and service provider relationships.
- DSP Policies and Programs – we are focused on making changes to our policies and programs to give us better client results.
- Capacity and Implementation Planning – supporting clients in the community by increasing the availability of community based supports, investments, and a phased plan.

Q *When will actual changes happen?*

A Changes are already underway with our staff - we just implemented new technology that will allow us to do things better and decrease the administrative burden for our staff. For our clients and families, we are still working on the design and timeline for when changes will happen.

Q *Are you planning on closing larger residential facilities?*

A The Roadmap document called for closure of larger facilities over time. Planning for this is underway with our service providers.



A message from the Executive Director of the Disability Support Program

We hope you enjoyed our first issue of the DSP Connection. Our main goal is simple – to keep you connected, informed and engaged on the work underway with the DSP Program.

Our work involves moving towards a program with supports and services that are more person centered, responsive, community based and sustainable. Our work is built on the DSP Roadmap, a document created in 2013 and guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Roadmap was created by a joint panel, endorsed by government and is guiding our work (link to Roadmap here: http://novascotia.ca/coms/transformation/docs/Choice_Equality_and_Good_Lives_in_Inclusive_Communities.pdf).

We want to hear from you

We know that change is not happening as quickly as many want, but we are committed to implementing the roadmap.

We hope that you find the DSP Connection informative and useful. We also hope that you will give us your feedback and suggestions, as we are always open to new ideas and ways to improve communication with you.

We are excited about sharing our work with you and will do our best to keep you informed.

- *Joe Rudderham, Executive Director DSP*

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Find your local office at **novascotia.ca/coms/department/contact/index.html**

The DSP Connection is also available online at **novascotia.ca/coms/transformation**

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