

DISABILITY STRATEGY PUBLIC CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Background

Summary

In the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth* and the *2012 and 2013 Speech from the Throne*, Government committed to developing a Disability Strategy in consultation with members of the disability community. This will inform and support the goal of making Saskatchewan the best place in Canada to live for people with disabilities. This commitment was reiterated in the *2014 Speech from the Throne*.

Process

- Government appointed a 15-member Citizen Consultation Team (CCT) to design and lead a province-wide consultation process.
- More than 1,600 people had the opportunity to share their ideas and feedback through various methods, including: social media on the Strategy's Facebook page; an online survey; and through written submissions;
- Sessions focusing on Aboriginal perspectives were held in eight locations.
- Focus groups were also conducted with women with disabilities, people living in long-term care facilities, the Deaf community and youth with disabilities.

Consultation Summary

The results of the consultations have been summarized by the CCT titled *Our Experience, Our Voice: The Reality of Today, the Opportunity to Shape Tomorrow*.

This summary *does not provide recommendations* but, instead, summarizes what was heard to provide Saskatchewan residents with a record of the advice provided through the consultation process.

The following global themes were identified that crossed all priority areas:

- **Acceptance:** Public Education & Attitudes
- **Person-Centred Approach:** People Ahead of Systems
- **Ability to Communicate:** A Key to Inclusion

- **Finding Supports and Services:** Navigation & Co-ordination
- **Fair Access and Eligibility:** Challenging Medical Diagnosis & Income Testing
- **Life Span Continuity:** Support Across Life-Cycle Transitions
- **Building for the Future:** Children's Disability Services
- As well, a significant issue that was heard during the consultations is the need to improve access to basic disability supports and services for Aboriginal people.

Consistent concerns were also identified within each of the priority areas:

- **Community Inclusion:** accessibility of buildings and spaces, information and communications; service fragmentation, the need for better coordination as well as support to navigate complex systems;
- **Support for Caregivers:** respite for families caring for children or adults; respite for paid caregivers in particular Approved Private Service Home operators; improved wages or core funding as well as training for care providers;
- **Education:** consistent funding for educational supports; improved transition supports into and out of the K-12 educational system;
- **Supported Accommodation:** expansion of home care programs; more residential care options particularly for groups currently under-served (e.g., ABI, Autism, FASD, significant physical disabilities);
- **Housing:** increased accessible housing and better support for home modifications;
- **Employment:** increased employer awareness of disability; enhanced disability employment supports; and, need for employer champions
- **Transportation:** enhanced paratransit services and accessible taxis; financial support for vehicle modifications.

The public consultation summary is available at www.saskatchewan.ca/disabilitystrategy.