



***Annual Plan  
Prince Edward Island  
2006-2007***

***Multilateral Framework for Labour  
Market Agreement for  
Persons with Disabilities***



Social Services  
and Seniors



## ***Introduction***

Under the multilateral framework, it was agreed that an annual plan would be shared with Social Development Canada at the start of each fiscal year explaining the following:

- Priority Areas to be Addressed;
- Programs and Descriptions; and
- Projected Expenditures.

## ***Objectives***

The goal of the multilateral framework is to improve the employment situation of people with disabilities. The program and services included in this report achieve one or more of the following objectives:

- Enhancing the employment of people with disabilities;
- Increasing the employment opportunities available to people with disabilities; and Building on the existing knowledge base.

## ***Canada-Prince Edward Island Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities***

In April 2004, Prince Edward Island entered into the Canada-Prince Edward Island Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities and recently signed an amended agreement. Under this agreement the federal government agreed to cost share up to 50 per cent of the cost of programs and services, meeting the objective of the agreement, up to a maximum of \$1.3 million per fiscal year.


## ***Programs and Services - Prince Edward Island***

### ***Disability Support Program***

The Health and Social Services System delivers the Disability Support Program. Employment and vocational support is the component of the program that is cost-shared under this agreement, and meets one or more of the objectives of the agreement.

Refer to *Appendix 1* for information regarding the Disability Support Program and the unique way in which the program helps to remove barriers to employment for persons with disabilities. Individuals with physical, intellectual, or neurological disabilities are eligible for the Disability Support Program. Individuals with a mental illness are also eligible for the employment and vocational component of the Disability Support Program.

The employment and vocational component of the Disability Support Program offers supports to improve levels of work related skills for persons with disabilities by providing funding to purchase supports such as training, assessments, technical aids and assistive devices, tutors, note takers, interpreters, etc. These supports assist in improving access to basic and post secondary education.



The Disability Support Program attempts to improve the labour market situation and independence of people with disabilities through employment related activities provided by front-line staff who specialize in the delivery of services which are provided in the four health regions across the province. The services include: management and coordination, supportive casework and counseling, referral, service review and follow-up and preparation of employment plans. Supports and services focus on the following:

- planning – transition from school to work;
- assessment, pre-employment and employment supports;
- assists with volunteer placement opportunities; and
- assists with specialized employment planning.

To enhance awareness of persons with disabilities with the labour market, and to strengthen their knowledge of labour market opportunities, the Disability Support Program also offers supports for: job coaching and job mentoring; and disability supports for self employment and entrepreneurship.

Services are offered under this agreement across Prince Edward Island to assist in building a comprehensive knowledge base through research and reporting best practices. This assists in enhancing the knowledge base, which contributes to continuous improvement of the labour market policies and programs for persons with disabilities. There is ongoing maintenance and enhancement of data collection systems to better assess program effectiveness.

### **Non-Governmental Contracts with Community Based Supports for Persons with Disabilities**

These contracts support services and programs which provide direct pre-vocational and vocational training to persons with disabilities. These are contracted through community based organizations.

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### **Program and Description**

### **Projected Expenditure**

#### **Education and Training**

- Disability Support Program provides supports for training, assessments, technical aids and assistive devices, note takers, interpreters, etc. \$600,000

#### **Employment Participation**

- Disability Support Program provides supports for planning (transition from school to work), assessment, pre-employment and employment supports, assistance with planning and volunteer placement opportunities, specialized employment planning. \$800,000
- Human resources such as front-line staff to deliver Disability Support Program. \$550,000

#### **Connecting Employers and Persons with Disabilities**

- Disability Support Program provides funding for job coaching, mentoring and disability supports for self employment and entrepreneurship. \$150,000
- Non-governmental contracts with community based supports for people with disabilities. \$600,000

#### **Building Knowledge**

- Administration and coordination of the Disability Support Program and non-governmental organization contracts.
- Maintenance and enhancement of data collection systems to better access program and service outcomes.

\$200,000

### **TOTAL**

**\$2, 900,000**



## **Appendix 1**

### **PEI Disability Support Program: Why is the Disability Support Program unique in removing disincentives to employment for people with disabilities?**


Prince Edward Island is the first jurisdiction in Canada to **fully separate** disability supports from income support programming. This separation effectively removed the primary disincentive that has historically prevented many individuals with disabilities from seeking long-term attachment to the labour force. People with disabilities, in particular those with more severe limitations, are often dependent on receiving disability specific financial supports for such needs as supervision or personal care. If these supports are attached to eligibility to social assistance programming, then an individual could lose their needed supports if they earned income and became ineligible for social assistance.

Prior to the Disability Support Program, social assistance was the only option available for Islanders with disabilities over the age of 18. Under income support programs such as social assistance, disability supports were lost when a certain income level was reached, as eligibility was terminated. Under the Disability Support Program, some level of financial supports can be received up to higher levels of income based on a client contribution schedule. This approach removes disincentives for people with disabilities to earn income, as they will not lose their disability supports in their entirety.

The Disability Support Program operates with an income test, not a means test. The income test looks only at adjusted net income, based on information from the most recent Notice of Assessment from Canada Revenue Agency, and does not consider individual or family assets. Under the Disability Support Program, a further \$3,000 deduction is allowed for each dependent under age 18 years. A means test looks at both income and asset levels.

The Disability Support Program is designed to assist Islanders with a qualifying disability to overcome barriers and to attain a satisfactory quality of life. The Disability Support Program is a social program with a financial component. The program offers support planning assistance to help develop a plan of action and to help determine supports that are necessary. The program may also provide referrals to other agencies where services may be obtained.

*Needs versus Entitlement:* The Disability Support Program focuses on the needs of the individual and of the family rather than on entitlement. This allows for more flexible planning with individuals and families. The Disability Support Program endeavours to ensure fairness and accountability in programs which best respond to individual needs.



*Person-Centred Approach:* The person-centred approach to program delivery is based on a philosophy that puts the person at the centre of all interaction directed at enhancing his or her quality of life. A person-centred approach to program delivery combines efficiency, commitment and empathy, with the individual and the family being a prominent partner in the service delivery process.

A person-centred approach means:

- providing customized supports to individuals and families;
- the individual and family define the situation from their viewpoint;
- the individual and family actively participates in the coordination of their support; and individual and family strengths and resources are reviewed.

The Disability Support Program offers enhanced supports that were never available under the previous programs. This includes things such as community access supports (support for volunteer opportunities), vehicle and home modifications, and enhanced employment supports.

There is a significant increase in the number of people who can receive help from the Disability Support Program. Approximately 20 per cent of people in the program are new participants. Many of them are individuals and families with lower income who did not qualify for social assistance, for example, were not eligible for supports before the introductions of the Disability Support Program.

For more information regarding the Disability Support Program, refer to the Web site at [www.gov.pe.ca](http://www.gov.pe.ca)

or contact:

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