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Policy on Sport for Persons With a Disability

June 2006

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Minister's Foreword

I am pleased to present Sport Canada's *Policy on Sport for Persons with a Disability*.

Sport and physical activity help maintain Canadians' health, strengthen our communities, and contribute to our overall quality of life. Canada's new government is committed to developing sport in Canada. We want to encourage all Canadians to become more involved in sport, including persons with a disability.

The *Policy on Sport for Persons with a Disability* provides a framework for engaging partners and stakeholders in initiating changes that aim to reduce and ultimately eliminate sport-specific barriers that prevent persons with a disability from participating in sport. At the same time, the Policy addresses some of the environmental, structural, systemic, social and personal barriers that keep many persons with a disability from being full participants in Canadian society.

The Policy envisions the full and active participation of persons with a disability in Canadian sport at all levels and in all forms, to the extent of their abilities and interests. Canada is a leading player on the international scene for the inclusion of persons with a disability in sport. As Canadians, we recognize how important it is to ensure persons with a disability have the means to reach their potential and participate as full members in our society.

As President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, and Minister for Sport, I look forward to working with my federal colleagues, provinces and territories, sport organizations, and the private sector to continue to make Canada a country where every citizen can benefit from sport.

Michael Chong
President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada,
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
and
Minister for Sport

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

“Sport for persons with a disability” refers to sport activities at all levels and in all forms of participation for persons with a disability. It includes athletes and participants with a disability who pursue competitive or recreational sport. It involves other participants, with or without disabilities, who act as leaders, coaches, officials, administrators and volunteers, or in other capacities. Appendix A provides definitions of key terms employed in this policy document.

The *Policy on Sport for Persons with a Disability* (Policy) is intended to facilitate the full and active participation of persons with a disability in sport, and to contribute to social inclusion through these activities. The Policy builds on the commitments made under the *Canadian Sport Policy* and the *Physical Activity and Sport Act* to foster the participation in sport of under-represented groups. The Policy also builds on stakeholder consultations and on two reports¹ that assessed the state of disability sport.

The Policy will be implemented through an action plan developed in consultation with partners and stakeholders. Programs and initiatives will focus on the three disability sport movements – Paralympics, Special Olympics and Deaflympics – and targeted aspects of their planning and implementation, guided by Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) principles. Appendix B describes a generic LTAD model that illustrates the progression of athletes and sport participants with a disability through successive stages of development supported by essential sport

system components, e.g., coaching, competitions, officials, facilities, etc.

The *Policy on Sport for Persons with a Disability* provides a framework for engaging partners and stakeholders to initiate institutional and behavioural changes leading towards the progressive reduction and, ultimately, elimination of sport-specific barriers that prevent persons with a disability from participating in sport to the extent of their abilities and interests. In doing so, the Policy will also address some of the environmental, structural, systemic, social and personal barriers that prevent many persons with a disability from being full participants in Canadian society.

2.0 SCOPE

The *Policy on Sport for Persons with a Disability* is consistent with the scope of the federal government’s involvement in sport. The Policy’s objectives and strategies apply to Sport Canada programs and initiatives. It respects provincial/territorial jurisdictions and promotes collaboration and partnerships between governments and stakeholders to achieve common objectives.

The Policy will direct the work of Sport Canada with organizations involved in Paralympic, Special Olympic and Deaflympic sports, including National Sport Organizations, Multisport Service Organizations, other national not-for-profit organizations, Canadian Sport Centres and provincial/territorial governments.

¹ *The Present State of Sport for People with a Disability: A Report with Considerations for the Sport Canada Policy on Sport for People with a Disability* – June 2004; *Report of the Minister of State’s (Sport) Work Group on Sport for Persons with a Disability* – July 2004.

3.0 CONTEXT

3.1 Policy Environment

The focus of public debate on disability issues has increasingly moved away from medical definitions of “disability” to social models of understanding systemic barriers that prevent the full and active participation of persons with a disability in society. This, in turn, has resulted in greater public awareness of disability issues and the need for policy intervention. Today the majority of Canadians believe that persons with a disability can and should have the opportunity to participate in social, economic and cultural life to their fullest potential.²

The *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Human Rights Act*, the *Act to Promote Physical Activity and Sport*, and other legislative frameworks guarantee the exercise and enjoyment of civil, social, economic, political and cultural rights for all Canadians. They require federal government departments and agencies to develop inclusive policies, programs and practices. In 2004, thirty-five departments and agencies carried out 159 programs and initiatives related to the inclusion of persons with a disability.³

The *Canadian Sport Policy* (CSP) works towards creating, by 2012, *a dynamic and leading-edge sport environment that enables all Canadians to experience and enjoy involvement in sport to the extent of their abilities and interests and, for increasing*

numbers, to perform consistently and successfully at the highest competitive levels. The CSP incorporates “the broadest definition of sport, reflecting the collective determination of governments and the sport community to ensure that the Policy covers the widest array of activities.” It challenges “all stakeholders in sport to create and support an integrated athlete/participant centred sport model that ensures the seamless progress of athletes/participants to the full extent of their abilities and interests.”

The *Policy on Sport for Persons with a Disability* will be implemented in a manner consistent with principles and priorities of other Sport Canada policies, strategies or frameworks. For example, Sport Canada’s Excellence Strategy, designed to address a segment of the sport system that is focused primarily on podium results at Olympic and Paralympic Games, does not preclude selective support for non-Olympic or non-Paralympic sports and events. However, this Excellence Strategy is an important consideration when addressing this Policy’s excellence objective.

3.2 Contributions of Sport

According to the Public Policy Forum, sport and physical activity can be used as a tool for promoting the inclusion of excluded and vulnerable groups in mainstream community life.⁴ Whether in school playgrounds, community centres or stadiums, sport activities and events bring different social

² Office for Disability Issues of Social Development Canada. *Advancing the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities 2004: A Government of Canada Report*, 2004.

³ Ibid.

⁴ *Investing in Canada: Fostering an Agenda for Citizens and Community Participation*, 2004. The Public Policy Forum is a non-profit organization with a mandate to organize public forums on social policy issues.

groups together as athletes, coaches, officials, participants, and spectators. This atmosphere fosters increased social awareness and cross-cultural understanding, the creation of social harmony and celebration of diversity.

Sport as a form of physical activity is a great contributor to good health. It reduces the risk of obesity and diseases like stroke, Type II diabetes and cancer, and hence reduces the health care costs to treat such diseases. The report of the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute indicates that physical activity reduces type II diabetes by 26%, colon cancer by 20% and cardiovascular disease by 22%.⁵ The *Romanow Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada* (2002) indicated that a reduction of physical inactivity by 10% would save taxpayers \$150 million a year in direct health care costs.

Health Canada stresses that physical activity brings about physical, social, and personal benefits for persons with a disability. Persons with a disability participating in sport and physical activity also overcome social isolation and become more self-reliant.⁶

3.3 Socio-economic Issues Specific to Persons with a Disability

Statistics Canada's Survey (2001) found that 12.4% or 3.6 million Canadians have disabilities related to activity and functional limitations.⁷ While the number of Canadians

with disabilities had declined in the past decade (compared to 16% in 1991), the challenges that they face have remained the same. A 2004 federal government report on persons with a disability showed that, measured against six key elements of inclusion (disability support, income, health and well-being, skills development and learning, capacity of the disability community, and employment), the status of persons with a disability was rated below those without disabilities. For example, the household income for persons with a disability aged 25 to 54 was 28% lower than that of persons without disabilities. Twenty-five percent of adults with disabilities had poor health, compared to fewer than 5% of adults without disabilities. While the employment rate increased to 53% in 2002 (from 48% in 1999), this was much lower than the employment rate of 76% for persons without a disability.⁸

Statistics Canada also found that 155,000 Canadian children between five and 14 years old or 4% of all children in this age group had some form of disability, and that many of their parents reported having no support for their development. In assessing the state of early childhood education and care in Canada, the report of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (2004) observed that children with a disability faced extreme difficulties in terms of accessing services, as child care staff were not trained to accommodate their needs, and child care facilities were not adapted to their

⁵ *Increasing Physical Activity: assessing trends from 1998-2003*, 2002 Physical Activity Monitor.

⁶ Health Canada Web Site at www.hc-sc.gc.ca.

⁷ *Participation and Activity Limitation Survey: A profile of disability in Canada*, The Daily, December 3, 2002.

⁸ *Office for Disability Issues of Social Development Canada – Advancing the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities 2004: A Government of Canada Report*, 2004.

unique situations.⁹ Consequently, these children would become socially isolated and deprived of the opportunities of early childhood learning, including the development of motor skills and related physical abilities.

Barriers to the sport participation of persons with a disability are also rooted in the values, structures and “built environments” of society. Building designs, roads, sidewalks, transportation, people’s attitudes, institutional policies, and other systems and behaviours interact with each other to create multiple obstacles that prevent persons with a disability from fully participating in sport. These and other barriers impose lifetime limitations on sport participation.

3.4 Issues in Sport for Persons with a Disability

A recent study revealed that the membership of persons with a disability in national sport organizations was less than 1%.¹⁰ Barriers to sport participation faced by persons with a disability are many-sided and coping with them requires a high level of personal commitment and, more importantly, resources. For example, sport training for persons with a disability is often more expensive than it is for their able-bodied counterparts due to special transportation needs, specialized equipment and requirements for personal care support (e.g., guides, interpreters) and other personnel specific to sport for persons with a disability.

Some environmental conditions are more conducive than others to the participation of

persons with a disability in sport. Difficult or harsh climatic factors may represent even larger obstacles to sport participation for persons with a disability than for able-bodied participants.

Creating an interest in sport participation among persons with a disability is often more difficult due to a lack of adapted awareness and first contact programs. Recruitment is problematic due to difficulties in identifying and reaching large numbers of potential participants. Persons with a congenital disability may never have had the opportunity to learn fundamental movement skills and stay away from sport for that reason, and persons who acquire a disability may have no knowledge of what sports are available to them.

Studies also point out that facilities, equipment and specialized coaches are not easily accessible to athletes with a disability. As a result of these and other systemic barriers, persons with a disability remain under-represented in the Canadian sport system.

3.5 Strengths and Challenges

Over the years, Sport Canada has developed a two-pronged approach to overcome the barriers of sport participation of persons with a disability. First, its Sport Funding Accountability Framework encourages National Sport Organizations (NSOs) to set specific performance targets for the integration of athletes with a disability in their programming, and its Sport Support

⁹ *Early Childhood Education and Care Policy: Canada Country Note*, August 2004.

¹⁰ *The Present State of Sport for People with a Disability: A Report with considerations for the Sport Canada Policy on Sport for People with a Disability*, June 2004.

Program provides funding to NSOs, as well as to Multisport Service Organizations (MSOs) for their programs and initiatives in sport for persons with a disability. The three disability MSOs, the Canadian Paralympic Committee, Special Olympics Canada and the Canadian Deaf Sports Association, promote and defend the rights of persons with a disability to develop to their fullest potential and participate in sport at rates similar to non-disabled participants. These sport movements provide leadership and direction to advance inclusive policies and practices in the Canadian sport community.

Second, the *Federal-Provincial/Territorial Priorities for Collaborative Action* and bilateral agreements continue to provide effective frameworks for supporting inclusive sport service programming and delivery at the provincial and local levels. Appendix C provides a brief historical overview of the federal government's support for sport for athletes with a disability.

In spite of the many challenges they face, Canadian athletes with a disability have achieved outstanding results at the highest levels of international competition. The *Policy on Sport for Persons with a Disability* builds on the strength of these outstanding performances to promote positive outcomes that increase the participation of persons with a disability in sport. For Canada to maintain or improve on its current status in international competitions, systemic changes within the Canadian sport system will have to occur. Specific areas of focus include:

- early childhood sport and physical literacy;
- adequate access to training, coaches and facilities;

- increased opportunities for national competitions;
- application of sport medicine, research and performance evaluations;
- harmonization of federal-provincial/territorial funding; and,
- enhanced interaction between NSOs and P/T disability-based sport organizations.

Sport Canada will also ensure that the design of programs and initiatives under its *Policy on Sport for Person with a Disability* are guided by Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) principles, as developed with the input of experts in Paralympic, Special Olympic and Deaflympic sports (see Appendix B). LTAD principles identify key factors in the participation and development of athletes and participants with a disability in sport. Specific disabilities, congenital or acquired, may dramatically change the timing and sequence of childhood and adolescent development and/or the timing for acquiring basic motor skills or sport abilities, hence the need for an approach that takes into consideration both years of training/practice, as well as developmental age of the participants. Such an approach will help ensure that participants have access to quality sport programming that takes into account their needs, as well as the spectrum of disability and/or issues related to a specific sport.

3.6 Guiding Principles

The following principles from the *Canadian Sport Policy* (CSP) will guide the implementation of the *Policy on Sport for Persons with a Disability*. The CSP states that:

- Sport is athlete/participant-centred;

- Sport promotes leadership;
- Sport is based on equity and access;
- Sport is focussed on development;
- Sport champions excellence;
- Sport serves the public interest.

4.0 VISION

The *Policy on Sport for Persons with a Disability* envisions the full and active participation of persons with a disability in Canadian sport at all levels and in all forms, to the extent of their abilities and interests.

To accomplish this vision the sport community will have to initiate institutional and behavioural changes that increase Canadians' awareness of sport for persons with a disability, make it possible to deliver programs in a barrier-free sport system and contribute to socio-cultural environments that foster the participation of persons with a disability in sport and in society.

5.0 OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

The objectives of *The Policy on Sport for Persons with a Disability* and the action plan for their implementation are based on the four goals of the *Canadian Sport Policy*:

- Enhanced Participation
- Enhanced Excellence

- Enhanced Capacity
- Enhanced Interaction

In keeping with these four goals, the Policy supports the following objectives and their strategies:

5.1 *Increasing Participation*

To increase the number of persons with a disability involved in sport activities at all levels and in all forms.

5.1.1 *Raising Awareness*

Provide leadership and resources for engaging stakeholders to promote awareness and understanding of sport for persons with a disability. Specific areas of focus will include (a) early childhood sport and physical literacy; (b) the benefits of sport and physical activity (an especially important message for the health care sector); (c) disability-specific sport participation and development models; (d) the contribution of athletes with a disability to Canadian sport excellence; and (e) access to sport services and programs. This strategy helps introduce systemic, attitudinal and organizational changes to support the sport participation of persons with a disability and encourages Canadians to get involved in sport for persons with a disability as athletes, coaches, officials, administrators, support staff and volunteers.

5.1.2 *Access*

Provide leadership and resources to increase access by persons with a disability to the services and programs of the sport community, and improve access to sport activities based on Long Term Athlete Development principles, including access to specially trained coaches.

5.2 Supporting Excellence

In keeping with Sport Canada's Excellence Strategy, the focus of this objective is to support the achievement of podium results at Paralympic Games and related World Championships. In addition, it is an objective of this Policy to increase and sustain the number of athletes with a disability pursuing excellence at the national and international levels.

5.2.1 Talent Identification and Development

Apply Long Term Athlete Development principles adapted to the specific needs of each of the three disability sport movements to ensure the development of the future generation of world-class athletes with a disability.

Sport Canada will provide leadership to harmonize existing federal-provincial/territorial initiatives that support athlete development for disability sport. Sport Canada will also work with its partners to support their efforts to attract a greater number of persons with a disability to pursue high performance sport, and to identify and properly prepare those with the talent and commitment to excel at the highest level.

5.2.2 Competitive Opportunities

Engage the Canadian sport community and other partners in developing appropriate domestic competitive structures and opportunities at the various stages of development, based on each disability sport movement's Long Term Athlete Development model.

5.2.3 Coaching

Provide leadership and resources to increase access by athletes with a disability to appropriately certified and qualified coaches. Sport Canada will work with other partners to enhance the support systems and incentives for coaches of athletes with a disability.

5.2.4 Sport Science and Medicine

Work with partners and stakeholders to continue to identify and respond to specific sport science and medicine needs.

5.3 Building Capacity

To strengthen the capacity of the Canadian sport system to address the needs of sport for persons with a disability.

5.3.1 Eligibility, Classification and Divisioning

Support the sport community in developing and applying fair and clear systems/procedures of eligibility, classification and divisioning.

5.3.2 Human Resource Development

Support the work of partner organizations responsible for developing sport leaders, coaches, officials and administrators who have the skills, resources, and ability to respond to the needs of sport for people with a disability.

5.3.3 Research

Acquire and generate research to inform policy development and practices related to sport for persons with a disability, as well as to share the knowledge and experience gained with stakeholders and the public at large. Areas of research could include sport medicine, sport science and emerging social trends.

5.4 Fostering Interaction

To enhance efforts within the Canadian sport community to improve communication, coordination and collaboration to support the sport participation of persons with a disability.

5.4.1 Federal-Provincial/Territorial Partnerships

Capitalize on existing federal-provincial/territorial agreements to support collaborative actions designed to enhance opportunities for persons with a disability to participate in sport.

5.4.2 Networking

Support the creation and maintenance of networks of communication and collaboration among stakeholders in sport for persons with a disability.

5.4.3 International Representation

Support partners in their efforts to advocate sport for persons with a disability on the international stage and position Canada's interests and values with respect to sport for persons with a disability in international organizations and fora.

6.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

Sport Canada will develop and implement an Action Plan for its *Policy on Sport for Persons with a Disability* in consultation with key stakeholders and partners that will outline specific areas of focus.

The achievement of the Policy's objectives can be characterized by the following desired outcomes:

- An increase in the number of persons with a disability participating in competitive and recreational sport;
- An increase in the number of coaches and volunteers supporting sport for persons with a disability;
- An increase in the number of appropriate domestic competitive structures and opportunities for athletes with a disability;
- An increase in the number of sport participation development projects and bilateral agreements with provincial/territorial governments concerning persons with a disability.

In order to measure the progress in achieving these outcomes, baseline data will be established, and monitoring will be conducted regularly and objectively through ongoing performance measurement. Based on its Results-based Management and Accountability Framework, Sport Canada will use its performance management strategy to guide its approach to identifying, collecting and reporting on activities, outcomes and indicators.

Ongoing performance measurement will be complemented by formal policy evaluation. Policy evaluation considerations will include:

- examining linkages and interrelationships across programs and across federal departments, as well as exploration of relationships with programs provided by other jurisdictions, considering areas where synergy is important as well as identifying gaps and overlaps;
- examining the impact of the Policy, taking into account the impact of the overall policy approach, as well as of services provided by Sport Canada directly, by sport system partners, and services provided through agreements with the provinces and territories; and,
- exploring how other Sport Canada programs and policies are affecting persons with a disability.

Systematic reporting on progress will be achieved through a variety of mechanisms, including the Departmental Performance Report. This will permit the Government of Canada, stakeholder organizations, elected officials and the public to track and evaluate the success of the Policy.

7.0 CONCLUSION

Canada has been a leading player in the creation of innovative initiatives for the inclusion of persons with a disability in sport. The *Policy on Sport for Persons with a Disability* is an initiative that advances positive social outcomes that contribute to the federal government's policy of inclusion. The combination of leadership, partnerships and leading-edge initiatives from the Policy will promote a sport system that encourages and enables persons with a disability to participate fully in sport to the extent of their abilities and interests. The Action Plan for the Policy will identify specific initiatives that will be regularly updated and monitored to ensure their alignment with the overall objectives of the Policy.

APPENDIX A

Glossary

The definitions below clarify certain terms and concepts that are employed in the policy document.

Access

Access refers to the freedom and ability of a person with a disability to make use of the sport programming, facilities and services offered at all levels of the Canadian sport system.

Athlete with a disability

Any sport competitor who meets the minimum disability eligibility requirements under the Paralympic Games, Special Olympics World Games, or Deaflympic Games.

Barriers

Barriers, in this Policy, refers to environmental, structural, systemic, social and personal realities that prevent persons with a disability from participating in sport, or make such participation difficult to achieve (e.g., building design, transportation, attitudes, etc.). Barriers may be socio-economic (e.g., poverty, poor health) or may be characteristics of the sport system that prevent or limit the sport participation of persons with a disability (e.g., lack of awareness programs, lack of specialized coaching or adapted equipment, lack of competitions, etc.).

Barrier-free

In the context of this Policy, a barrier-free sport system refers to an ideal end goal where the sport system has identified barriers to the sport participation of persons with a disability

and has implemented the necessary strategies and resources to remove these obstacles to their participation. In a barrier-free sport system, persons with a disability have equitable opportunities to experience and enjoy involvement in sport to the extent of their abilities and interests.

Classification

The application of diagnostic criteria in Paralympic sports intended to classify athletes with a disability in different categories of ability.

Competitive sport

Sport activities for teams or individuals to prepare for and take part in competitions.

Divisioning

A process of designing competitive structures for athletes with an intellectual disability so that they are able to compete with other athletes of similar ability.

Eligibility

The process used by each of the three disability sport movements to determine who may compete in their specific sport events.

Equity

Equity refers to an environment that accepts the principles and practices of fair and appropriate allocation of resources and opportunities for all people in Canada. Equity takes into account different needs and circumstances. It means providing opportunity for all people to succeed. Equity can be achieved by ensuring full access to information, programs and services.

High performance sport

Competitive sport practised at the highest national and international levels by elite athletes that requires high degrees of physical, mental, technical and tactical preparedness, as well as experience.

Mainstream sport

All organized sport activities that fall under “able-bodied” sport.

Participant with a disability

Persons with a disability practising sport, usually at a recreational or lower competitive level, and/or participating in sport in another capacity, such as coach, official, administrator, volunteer, etc.

Partners

Governments, non-governmental organizations, public and private sectors and communities participating in the delivery of federal government sport programs and initiatives.

Recreational sport

Sport activities pursued as a pastime or leisure activity.

Sport for persons with a disability

All aspects of sport performed or practised by people who have a physical (locomotor), sensory (visual impairment, hearing impairment), and/or intellectual/mental disability. It includes training, development, competition, safety, education and other technical requirements, as well as instructors, coaches, guides, officials, administrators, sport scientists, doctors, physiotherapists, and volunteers.

APPENDIX B

Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) for Athletes and Participants with a Disability

LTAD principles identify key factors influencing the development of athletes and participants with a disability in sport and advances a programming approach tailored to their needs. The following generic LTAD model¹¹ illustrates a progression of stages for the development of athletes and sport participants as follows:

- Awareness – awareness of availability and accessibility of sport activities;
- First contact – introduction to sport skills and technical requirements;
- FUNdamentals – learning all the fundamentals of sport (skills, technical performance, physiological and psychological preparedness, etc.);
- Learning to train – acquiring and expanding the range of capabilities in all the fundamentals of sport;

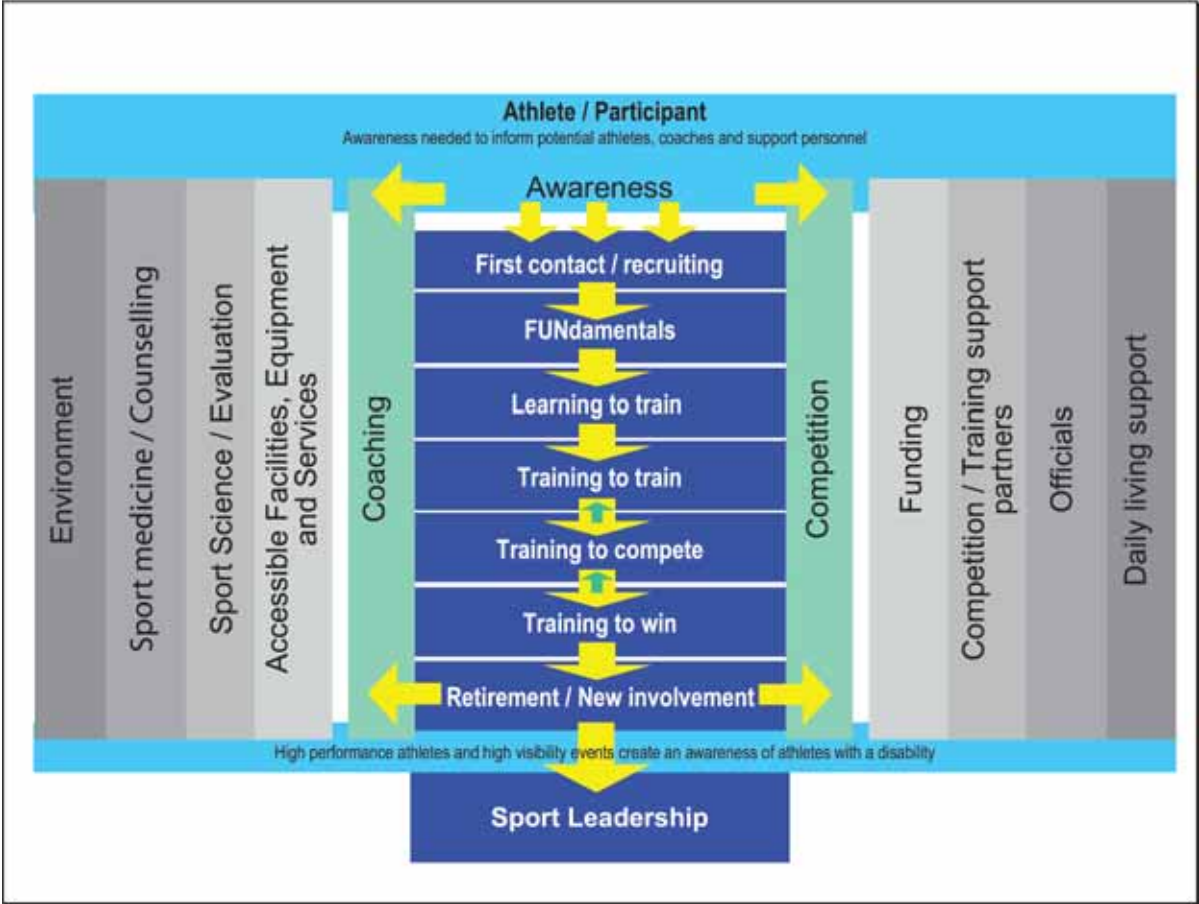
- Training to train – increasing intensity of training, specialization, talent identification and introduction to competitions;
- Training to compete – advanced performance and strengthening of capacity (technical, physical and psychological);
- Training to win – peak performance, expert performance and performance evaluation of highest standard;
- Retirement/retention – revitalization of retirees’ skills to strengthen support systems (e.g., mentoring and role models).

A reference document entitled *No Accidental Champions – Long-Term Athlete Development for Athletes with a Disability*, published by the Canadian Sport Centres, was released in Spring 2006.

Further information on LTAD is available at www.ltad.ca.

¹¹ This generic LTAD model was presented in the *Report of the Minister of State’s (Sport) Work Group on Sport for Persons with a Disability* – July 2004.

Generic Long Term Athlete Development Model for Athletes and Sport Participants with a Disability



APPENDIX C

Federal Government Support for Sport For Athletes with a Disability

The Canadian government's support of amateur sport organizations dates back to the early 1960s with the introduction of the Fitness and Amateur Sport Act, and the establishment of the Fitness and Amateur Sport Branch of Health and Welfare Canada. At that time, funding for mainstream National Sport Organizations (NSOs) was provided by the sport unit of the Branch, while disability-based sport organizations began receiving funding from the recreation unit in 1976. Two parallel sport and funding systems were established, one for mainstream sport organizations, the other for NSOs organized around disability that serviced athletes with a disability.

Integration of sport for athletes with a disability emerged as a long-term strategic direction in the late 1980s, based on input from stakeholder groups primarily involved in Paralympic sport. In 1991, the federal government launched the National Strategy for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities, a five-year interdepartmental federal government program aimed at reducing the barriers to full

participation in Canadian society for persons with a disability. While a relatively small proportion of the \$157.8 million budget was used for sport, these funds acted as a catalyst for the integration of national team programs/National Sport Organizations. An increasing number of NSOs are now including programs and services for persons with a disability, closing the gap between mainstream sport and sport for athletes with a disability.

Since 1993, Sport Canada has supported both mainstream and disability-based sport organizations through its Sport Support Program. These organizations have been supported both as National Sport Organizations, via the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework; and as Multisport Service Organizations in the case of the Canadian Deaf Sports Association, the Canadian Paralympic Committee, and Special Olympics Canada, including for activities relating to major games. With the advent of the *Canadian Sport Policy*, federal funding is also available for participation projects.





