

Persons with Developmental Disabilities Program: An Administrative Review

Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) is a Government of Alberta program that funds supports for adult Albertans with developmental disabilities. The program provides services to help individuals with developmental disabilities remain as independent as possible. The level of services provided is based on assessments of individual need.

Relationship and community engagement are the main principles of the PDD Program. PDD is dependent upon community involvement, and people with developmental disabilities receive support to fulfil their goals and to have access to meaningful opportunities for community participation. In 2010-2011, the PDD Program provided support to approximately 9,300 individuals, at a total cost of \$597 million.

On June 16, 2010, Minister of Seniors and Community Supports, Mary Anne Jablonski, announced that a review was to be conducted of the administration functions and related costs of the PDD program. The purpose of the review was to identify and hopefully redirect money from non-essential administrative functions to front-line PDD services.

The review provided the Minister with several recommendations regarding PDD:

- Dissolve the six community boards and create one organization under the direct authority of the government.
- Establish an Advisory Council to provide for community governance
- Adopt a new organizational model, which would include replacing chief executive officers with a regional director
- Improve the efficiency of the service provider network
- Provide additional resources to support and enhance the use of the family managed option
- Adopt a case management system that would give the PDD program and service providers one view of an individual

The Government of Alberta accepted 4 of the 6 recommendations. Most notable, the government rejected the recommendation to dissolve the six PDD Community Boards and establish an Advisory Council in their place.

“My number one priority throughout this administrative review has been to achieve the best possible outcomes for the individuals who rely on this important program,” said Mary Anne Jablonski, Minister of Seniors and Community Supports. “It would not be prudent to dismantle the six Community Boards, and I don’t think such a drastic and potentially disruptive step is necessary to move the PDD program to a one-program approach that will be more consistent and efficient.”

Work to implement the recommendations will begin immediately. ACCD is pleased to learn that this work will include improvements to Family Managed Services supports. “Improvements to the Family Managed Service program and supporting families are important steps to making the PDD program more responsive to the needs of persons with developmental disabilities,” said ACCD president, Dave Storey. “We are pleased that the government has reaffirmed its commitment to helping people with developmental disabilities and their families.”

The administrative review found that the Family Managed Services option, which allows families to hire their own staff or contract their own services, is efficient and delivered at a relatively low cost. Other actions will focus on common processes, a single website for the PDD program, and the development of a new technology system to ensure the PDD program is delivered consistently across the province.

Six consultations will be held in June, 2011, across the province to discuss implementing a new contracting process for service providers. If you are interested in attending a consultation meeting, please contact Ms. Shirley Edwards toll free by calling 310-0000 then 780-643-1156 or by e-mail at pddfocustgroups@gov.ab.ca.

ACCD to present at Human Rights Conference

On June 13-15 in Calgary, ACCD will be presenting to conference-goers at *New Realities, New Directions*, an event organized by the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA). CASHRA Conference sessions will focus on new realities related to human rights, diversity, and inclusion in Canada and on new directions in building discrimination-free communities and workplaces that are welcoming and inclusive.

ACCD will be contributing a disability perspective to the human rights theme of this conference by presenting the findings from our recently concluded project, *Barrier-Free Health and Medical Services in Alberta*.



We will also be participating in a youth panel discussion, lending a disability perspective to the topic of inclusion, as well as presenting our project that was completed in 2009, *Safe Haven: Enhancing Accessibility in Alberta's Women's Shelters*.

ACCD Board of Directors: 2011-2012

The last weekend in May marked another successful annual general meeting for ACCD. It also marked the end of Maryetta Thielen's second 6-year term on our board of directors. Maryetta's insights have been greatly valued over the years. We wish her well and extend our sincerest thanks for all she has done for ACCD. But as old friends leave, we welcome new ones aboard: Art Erickson, Susann Grodsky, and Harold Crittenden are welcome additions to our board of directors. Keep

watch for profiles of our new board members in the coming months.

Our 2011-2012 Board of Directors:

President: Dave Storey - Grande Prairie
Vice President: Weslyn Mather - Edmonton
Secretary: Ray Royer - Edmonton
Treasurer: Earle Snider - Edmonton
Nominating: Earle Snider - Edmonton
Awards: Donald Erickson - Lethbridge
Director: Doreen Gyorkos - Lethbridge
Director: Art Erickson - Wabamun
Director: Susann Grodsky - Calgary
Director: Harold Crittenden - Calgary

Fast-Approaching Deadline for the Education for Life Bursary

In honour of our 25th anniversary in 1998, the Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities created the Education for Life Bursary, an award that helps students with disabilities achieve full participation in society. Each year, the Education for Life Bursary helps first-time post-secondary students overcome the financial barriers of new educational challenges. Since 1998, ACCD has awarded bursaries to 84 students with disabilities totalling over \$39,000.

June 30, 2011, is the application deadline for ACCD's 2011-2012 Education for Life Bursary. Individuals with disabilities seeking to continue their education as post-secondary students are eligible to receive bursaries ranging from \$300 to \$800. Preference is given to students entering their first year. Details and an application form can be found on our web site at www.accd.net, or you can contact the ACCD office at 780-488-9088 or toll free at 1-800-387-2514.



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