

REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This report marks the completion of the second year of a three year strategic plan and the commencement of the third and final year. As we work to further the strategic directions as set out in the current plan we will also begin the development of a new strategic plan. This year we are very excited to be working with Janeen Halliwell and Jennifer Keilty-Friesen of the consulting firm *People Minded Business*. We will be conducting stakeholder consultations beginning November 10, 2016. Please mark this date on your calendars and further information will be made available in the very near future.

COMMUNITY FIRST

This is the philosophy that we have committed to as the cornerstone of all our work and decision making. This has been embedded within our new strategic plan and is articulated as the first and primary strategic imperative.

It is critical that this philosophy is fully embraced by Community Living Parry Sound (CLPS) so that we can realize our Mission: *To promote and facilitate the full participation, inclusion and citizenship of people who have a developmental disability.*

I am very excited about our commitment to a Community First approach to delivering supports and services but what does this truly mean? For me it simply means the end of all segregated services which congregate people based on their disability leading to a life of limitations and isolation. It means focusing instead on people's abilities and developing a person directed approach to delivering individualized supports which connect people to community and foster natural relationships. Finally, it means the continuation of a human rights struggle that people have been fighting so hard for over 60 years to achieve.....the right to belong and be included.

So how will we accomplish this? The people who participated in our strategic planning sessions gave us some direction:

- Increase awareness, collaboration and teamwork with our community partners and agencies.
- Ensure that services provided by Community Living Parry Sound are described clearly and succinctly and can be easily communicated to others.
- Identify community-developed services and assist people to access them rather than developing specialized services.
- Continue to promote activities that include the people we support and that facilitates the development of natural relationships, making friends and reducing isolation and loneliness.

- Assist the people we support to speak up and advocate for themselves, both individually and collectively
- Continue to advance the existing momentum within Leading Into New Careers (LINC) Employment Services.

Employment continues to be the gold standard for social inclusion as it is:

1. One person at a time
2. Abilities focused – strength based
3. Promotes the development of rich social networks
4. Creates socially valued roles
5. Increases the person's economic status and sense of self-worth
6. Financially people are better able to achieve personal goals
7. Provides opportunities for continuous learning

LINC has experienced their most successful year to date and as a result we needed to add three more full time workers to our summer staff. The Hospitality & Tourism course, which is a joint venture with Canadore College, assisted in preparing people for employment and building their resume. The After 5 Networking event that we co-sponsored with the Chamber of Commerce was a great success at which we launched the new video regarding youth employment. This year LINC was nominated for two awards; the Chamber of Commerce Customer Service award and the Innovation Award with the Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN) Centre for Excellence on Employment.

This year with the announcement by the Honourable Helena Jaczek, Minister of Community and Social Services, regarding the closure of sheltered workshops, I had the privilege of sharing the Parry Sound story at four Ministry of Community and Social Services provincial information sessions. Brad Horne and I were also asked to present at the ODEN conference as well as speak to agencies who are embarking on this transformation.

CLPS continued to work with its community partners through such projects as the Community Gardens and My Home My Choice. The increased use of social media and videos help create a greater awareness of the work we do. We were absolutely thrilled this year to be the recipients of the Community Living Ontario's Provincial Social Media Award.

The Transportation Ad Hoc Committee's work reflects the Community First philosophy as we look to a solution for accessible transportation for the community as a whole and not just for people with developmental disabilities.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

The second strategic direction is Family Engagement, which is an area that we are working to develop more fully. This year's speaker at Breakfast with the Mayor was Kimberley Gavan, Director of Community Development with Community Living Ontario, who shared her Nairobi story, which led to an amazing opportunity to partner with Community Living Ontario on a provincial Family Engagement project. This project will engage families in conversations that will be personal and focused among families who have a loved one with a developmental disability. They will be encouraged to rewrite the narrative they have about their family member, and refocus on the contributions, gifts and talents that all people bring to community. Families will be encouraged to think "Community First", not programs and services and things that keep us from being together in natural, typical and normative ways in community. Families will imagine what's possible for their family member – craft a new vision – and identify interests to explore and pursue. The conversation will move from the micro world of families who manage the supports and interests of a person with a developmental disability into the macro world of the community where these families live as we continue the conversation with the broader community.

We have seen a significant amount of positive changes leading to increased quality of services. This will continue as we transform into more of a fee-for-service business. To assist with this transformation our administration has undergone a reorganization introducing a new schedule-to-payroll human resources software and the addition of a centralized Scheduling & Human Resources Coordinator. We are also in the process of implementing a new software called AIMS, which will enable us to better determine the effectiveness of our services through increased outcome measurements.

I would like to thank the Management Team for their willingness to embrace change and for all their commitment and hard work that has made this possible. A huge thank you goes out to all staff and particularly those that have had a direct impact of these changes. Lastly a sincere thank you to the Board of Directors for their hard work and ongoing support. It really has been a great year.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jo-Anne Demick, Executive Director*