

Successful Practices For Home Sharing Services



PREPARED BY:

CREATIVE COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

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***“Working with community living services to
ensure services of high quality.”***

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INTRODUCTION

During each review conducted by the former Provincial Monitoring Group (PMG), information was collected on literally hundreds of aspects of service provision as they relate to the standards set by Community Living British Columbia (CLBC [former *Community Living Branch of the Ministry for Children and Family Development [MCFD]*]). Much of this information, when pooled and used anonymously, can be used to improve services.

Through consultation with former MCFD representatives and its community living partners, PMG developed a database, in order to make better use of information collected during the many reviews conducted during PMG's contractual term, over eight hundred and fifty reviews were completed.

The following document *Successful Practices for Home Sharing Services* was developed in 2002 using data and statistics from over 500 Home Sharing Services reviewed by PMG. The document was updated in October 2006 by Creative Community Solutions, sister company of PMG, to reflect proven successful practice information in recent years.

The term 'Successful Practice' describes a practice that has worked well. In relation to a services provided under the Home Sharing Services contracts - this means you (the service provider) have tried something, it is meeting the needs of the individuals you support, and meeting the expectations established by CLBC.

In PMG's annual report for the period 2000/01 it was noted: *"Family Home services had a wide range of experience related to the community living field and many demonstrated innovative strategies in supporting people through day-to-day experiences ... For the most part, service providers supported individuals to exercise their rights as citizens, and advocated on their behalf as situations arose. Many individuals were seen to 'do as they please', for example, plan vacations, vote, join advocacy groups, work, recreate and volunteer in their community."* Many of the 'innovative strategies' alluded to, and examples of individuals exercising their rights, are included in the 'Successful Practice' and 'Above and Beyond' sections of this document.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The goal of this document is to provide service providers with first-hand knowledge regarding practices, in relation to meeting the standards established by CLBC, which have proven successful. The intent is to share the 'real life' successes gathered from all pockets of British Columbia.

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Many of us find happiness in being content with life, and gaining contentment is usually the result of a life that is of good quality. People living with a developmental disability are often dependent on their service provider to enjoy the key components essential in fostering a rewarding and meaningful lifestyle. In, *Successful Practices for Home Sharing Services*, many quality of life indicators are evident throughout the successful practice data. For example, self-determination, freedom of expression, the right to make informed decisions.

HOW TO USE SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES FOR HOME SHARING SERVICES.

Each service is different and delivered based on the unique needs of the individual(s) supported: what works in one home, will not necessarily work in another. As none of the examples provided in *Successful Practices for Home Sharing Services* is 'carved in stone', we ask that you use the information at your own discretion, based on your knowledge of the individual(s) you support, as well as the unique circumstances at hand.

The information in the document has been arranged for easy access and use. The format clearly identifies:

- **Community Living British Columbia Standard/Guiding Principle.** These standards were developed in the early 1990s and introduced to the community living sector in 1992. They underwent an interim revision in June 2001, and were re-written in October 2006, to reflect changes in the community living sector. Each standard also has a **Rationale** clarifying the intent.
- **Successful Practice.** Each section includes successful practice data relating to how standards can be met. The 'Above and Beyond' information notes areas where service providers have exceeded the standards, demonstrating creativity, innovation and persistence in supporting individuals to explore their potential.

Areas, in relation to standards, used in the document include:

1. **Planning:** Person-Centred Planning, Health Care Planning, Transition Planning
2. **Health, Safety and Advocacy:** Individual Care and Support, Safety and Security, Rights, Home Atmosphere
3. **Service Delivery:** Activities, Family and Friends, Community Involvement

4. **Resources:** Leadership and Coordination of Support, Staffing (where applicable), Training of Assistants, Guidelines and Procedures.

We hope you enjoy *Successful Practices for Home Sharing Services* and that it is a helpful resource to you and those you support. We thank stakeholders for providing helpful information and data, which has been included in this document.

Michael R. Hawkins
Creative Community Solutions
October 31, 2006

1. PLANNING

PERSON-CENTRED PLANNING

For planning, successful practices support individuals to set goals and plans, to promote personal growth, and to help individuals to realize their dreams and wishes. The following provides examples of practices which encourage individuals, and where appropriate their families, to plan for their future by establishing short- and long-term goals.

Standard	Each individual is supported to develop and accomplish long- and short-term goals through a personalized planning process. Service providers implement plans, identify progress and make adjustments to meet changing needs.
Rationale	A collaborative approach to planning ensures a person-centred service that has continuity and is responsive to each individual's growth and ongoing needs.

Successful Practice

Individuals have a plain-language documented plan that is used to direct the service and to help them map out their future. Each individual is involved in the planning process and measures are taken to allow this involvement according to individual wishes, skills and abilities. For example, those with special communication needs are assisted to participate using alternative methods of communication. Those the individuals wish to have involved, are encouraged to assist in the planning process. Goals are meaningful and important to each individual.

Above and Beyond



- Goals established cover vocational, social and recreational areas.
- The individuals direct their own services and determine how each goal will be achieved.
- Individuals inform the service provider of their wishes and what support they require to increase independence.
- The individual and the service provider have developed a scrapbook, filled with photographs, magazine clippings and other items to describe the planning meeting, goals and steps taken toward achieving them.

- Individuals, two family members and the service provider booked a day at a spa to coincide with the planning day to give them an opportunity to focus entirely on the plan and to meet individual goals.
- Individuals invite all those who they wish to be at the planning meeting.

Successful Practice

Each individual is supported to achieve goals outlined in his/her plan. Plans identify measurable, achievable goals and ongoing steps are taken, by the service provider, to support and implement the plan, and to help the individuals to follow up on their goals. Individuals' regular activities are consistent with the goals identified in the plan and the service provider has a system for tracking progress toward goals. Service providers evaluate achievements and/or barriers to success and changes in plans, are made accordingly.

Above and Beyond



- Progress made toward accomplishing the goals is documented in reports submitted to CLBC.
- Portions of the planning meeting and updates regarding progress toward goals are recorded on tape for the individual.
- A calendar, available to the individual, is used to record times and dates when the individual takes part in activities related to her goals.
- The service provider and the individual and the individual's mother meet every three months for coffee (one of the individual's goals) and review the plan and whether revisions are needed.
- Progress toward goals is tracked on a 'thermometer' posted on the wall in the individual's bedroom.

HEALTH CARE PLANNING

For health care planning, successful practices ensure that critical health care needs are identified and appropriate measures are captured in the Health Care Plan, so that timely and suitable decision are made in managing the care of individuals with an acute health care condition(s).

Standard	Service providers ensure that each individual with significant health care issues is supported by planning that identifies critical health care needs.
Rationale	Health care planning helps make sure that appropriate action can be taken and timely decisions are made in supporting the care of each individual with an acute or chronic health care condition(s).

Successful Practice

Each individual has a current Health Care Plan that directs the provision of health care services. Service provider, the individual and qualified health professional(s) are involved in the development of the Health Care Plan. The plan is approved in writing by the health professional(s), and service provider and staff receive training as necessary. Health care is provided according to the protocols outlined in the Health Care Plan. The Health Care Plan is monitored for its effectiveness in directing health care and changes are made to the plan as needed.

Above and Beyond



- A Health Care Plan review is held every three months with the individual, the service provider and the HSCL nurse
- Effectiveness of the protocols is tracked by reviewing information recorded with medical professionals and making changes in consultation with CLBC.
- The service provider has set a professional goal to participate in training related to meeting the individual's health needs at least twice a year.
- Service provider arranges for training to be provided to assistants by consulting community professionals.
- The service provider and the individual joined Weight Watchers together to address weight management issues.

TRANSITION PLANNING

For transition planning, successful practices support individuals to make the transition to a new home with as much ease as possible and to ensure that the individual's needs and wishes are met.

Standard	When an individual moves into his or her new home, there is careful preparation to provide continuity for the individual and to ensure the service providers and assistants are aware of each individual's needs.
Rationale	Making a change to a living situation may create significant stress. This transition can be successful if each person is prepared before the change, and if efforts are made to provide as much continuity as possible in the experiences of the individuals.

Successful Practice

The Individuals are well prepared for their new home. The person is involved in planning for the transition, and others involved with the service and the person are informed of and, where appropriate, help with planning the transition. There are ongoing opportunities for the individual and his/her family to get to know the service provider.

Above and Beyond



- The individual went for dinner to the service provider's home on several occasions before the move.
- The service provider and the individual worked together on decorating the bedroom and sitting area that would belong to the individual once she moved in.
- The individual and his family went on a camping holiday at the same campsite as the potential service provider before the move was discussed, to allow the individual and service provider to meet in neutral circumstances.

Successful Practice

Measures are taken by CLBC to ensure the service provider and assistants are prepared for transition of individuals. Service provider and assistants are familiar with the individual's specific needs so they can provide the care required. Service provider and all assistants are made aware of support strategies and professional supports already in place. Training needs are addressed prior to transition.

Above and Beyond



- Service provider meets with professional supports and initiates training before the individual moves to the home.
- A pre-planning meeting/party is held at the home before the individual moves in.

Successful Practice

Once the individual has made the transition to the new home, the new living environment and the care provided is reviewed to ensure that all activities pertaining to service are meeting the individual's needs and wishes. Follow up ensures the success of the transition and encourages improvement. Service provider tracks progress and identifies current and potential challenges, soon after the transition, to establish successful practices and engage in problem solving as soon as possible.

Above and Beyond



- Service provider and the individual keep journals which they exchange after the first two weeks of transition to ensure good communication and problem solving are established early in the service.
- Individuals are solicited for input regarding their level of comfort and requests for changes are addressed promptly.

2. HEALTH, SAFETY AND ADVOCACY

INDIVIDUAL CARE AND SUPPORT

For individual care, successful practices support physical and mental health, including good hygiene and personal care, involvement of health professionals as indicated, adherence to protocols/directives and recording of health care information. The following also provides examples of practices which encourage the individual to be involved with and independent in her or his health care, and demonstrate great sensitivity in the provision of physical or mental support, and where service providers have sought training or additional information on specific health issues.

Standard	The home provides an environment that encourages the physical and emotional health and well being of each individual. Medical and dental needs are attended to for each individual and special care needs are met for individuals with physical disabilities.
Rationale	Service providers are responsible for providing individuals with the basic requirements of daily living and ensuring that health care and special needs are met with an attitude of respect for the dignity and self-image of each individual.

Successful Practice

Individuals live in a healthy home environment. The individual's meals are nutritious, appetizing and meet special dietary requirements. The individual is supported to maintain good personal and oral hygiene, and to care for health aids such as glasses and dentures. A healthy balance of physical activity and rest is evident. Clothing suits the weather and the activity in which the person is engaged. Support is provided respectfully and self-reliance is encouraged in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Above and Beyond



- Individuals participate in a community exercise program such as an aerobics or aqua fit class.
- The service provider supports the individual to take vitamins to augment good health.
- The service provider only helps the individual when she or he has completed the hygiene tasks that she or he can do independently and when she or he requests assistance.
- Canada Food Guidelines are in the kitchen for the individuals' reference. These guidelines include pictures of items from different food groups.
- The service provider prepares food that is easy for the individual to eat independently, for example, finger foods.
- The individual has pictures to prompt the completion of dressing and personal hygiene. The pictures are posted in the bathroom or bedroom used by the individual.

One service provider decided to go 'gung ho' on exercise!! She supported two individuals to sign up and participate in a community centre exercise program where they trekked across Canada. For each unit of exercise participants in the program did, they collectively crossed Canada by kilometers. Information about each region reached was posted and videos such as "Wings across Canada" for that area were made available. This was both educational and rewarding for the individuals, not to mention the added exercise! And it made them feel part of the community with non-disabled people. So do you want to sign up?

Successful Practice

Illness and other health concerns are remedied promptly. The individual has a physician, dentist, and required specialists, such as a physiotherapist or neurologist, and sees them regularly. Symptoms of illness, significant changes in ongoing conditions, such as diabetes or weight loss/gain, are monitored and medical attention is sought promptly when indicated. The service provider, assistants and individual have necessary knowledge of health conditions, whether temporary or ongoing. Related directives, such as physiotherapy, are approved by medical professionals and practiced by those providing support. Pertinent aspects of medical and dental appointments, and health care information are recorded and accessible to those involved.

Above and Beyond



- The service provider has ensured other supports, such as day service staff, are kept informed of changing or ongoing health care needs.
- The service provider documents all medical appointments including comments regarding purpose of visit and recommendations made.
- The individual is supported to floss regularly and maintain gum care.

Successful Practice

Special and physical care needs are met. Written seizure protocols have been developed in consultation with health professionals and are followed. Those providing support are aware of techniques for support such as lifting, transferring and feeding, and are sensitive to the individual's needs and rights when performing these tasks. Devices such as wheelchairs are in good repair and used properly.

Above and Beyond



- Visual aids, such as photographs with written descriptions, have been developed and are used to provide concrete instruction to assistants who provide lifts, transfers or physiotherapy routines.
- The service provider supporting an individual with high health needs updates training so she can train assistants with tasks such as transfers, mobility, eating.
- One assistant is delegated responsibility for monitoring the wheelchairs on a monthly basis and recording any adjustments or repairs that may be needed.
- The community health nurse is regularly consulted to ensure all directives are being followed correctly.

The physiotherapist demonstrated the individual's physiotherapy routine on videotape. This tape is used to train and guide staff to support the individual with exercises, such as range of motion.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Successful practices for safety imply prevention, precautions, supervision, restricted access, adaptive equipment and training where necessary. The following also provides suggestions from services reviewed where service providers take extra steps to enhance safety and involve the individuals in promoting their own safety.

Standard	The home guidelines and procedures are designed for the safety and security of all individuals, with particular attention to the special needs of individuals who are physically disabled or unaware of danger.
Rationale	Because individuals may not be aware of personal danger, the home environment must ensure their safety and security. The standards for fire safety and storage of household poisons and medications cannot be compromised. Service providers and assistants must have training in First Aid and safety procedures to deal with emergencies at any time.

Successful Practice

Fire safety and emergency preparation measures are in place. The individual is supported to learn and practice what to do in the event of a fire. Those supporting the individual are aware of how to respond to an emergency situation, including ways to support the person to evacuate the home, depending on the location of the fire. The evacuation plan establishes a meeting place outside the home, for example, a neighbour's home, or significant landmark in the immediate neighbourhood. Fire extinguishers are conveniently accessible in the home and smoke detectors are installed. This equipment is tested regularly, and serviced as needed.

Above and Beyond



- The service provider and the individual practice evacuations several times a year and any challenges with the evacuation are noted. This information identifies where the individual needs support, and is shared with respite assistants.
- Individuals can describe all steps to be taken when a smoke alarm sounds.
- The individual participates in checking that smoke detectors function, and notes the date for fire extinguishers to be inspected on her or his personal calendar.
- The fire marshal or members of the local fire department visit the home occasionally to provide advice about fire prevention. The individual has personal relationships with fire department personnel, which heightens his awareness of fire regulations.
- The local fire department has been made aware that people living in the home may need specific assistance in case of a fire or emergency. The home's alarm system is linked to the fire hall.
- Individuals are taught when and how to use a fire extinguisher safely.

“Over the last few years, I have supported the guys to participate in periodic practice evacuations. This process has really helped them to understand what they need to do, how they can help each other, and most of all, it's boosted their self-confidence. It also provides me with first-hand knowledge about their current abilities in this area.”

Service Provider,
Vancouver, BC

Successful Practice

Medications and hazardous household products are stored and used safely. Where individuals require supervision near hazardous products, materials such as cleaning agents, gasoline and matches are stored out of their reach or in a locked area. As appropriate, individuals are supervised when using these products.

The proper storage and use of medications is understood and practiced by the service provider, and information about medications is kept on hand. Medications are not physically handled by anyone not taking them, rather medication cups are provided to prevent contamination and promote safety.

Above and Beyond



- Individuals are taught to recognize codes for dangerous products.
- Medications are separated into doses in bubble packs from the pharmacy.
- The individual is supported to administer her own medication through the use of a medication dosette.
- The service provider and individual talk about what the medication does for the individual and what the side effects are.

Successful Practice

Environmental hazards are minimized for individuals who have physical disabilities, allergies, visual or hearing impairments, epilepsy. Furnishings are arranged to allow for easy access by an individual with a visual impairment. Changes to the environment are minimized and the individual is supported to become familiar with new arrangements. Specialized systems, such as lights, are used for alarms and doorbells for a person with hearing impairment.

If an individual has mobility challenges, handgrips and railings are in place. Allergies are noted in a prominent place among the individual's support information and on identification the individual carries in the community.

Supervision is provided for a person with a seizure disorder while she or he is involved in activities that put her or his safety at risk, for example, bathing or using steep stairs.

Above and Beyond



- The service provider seeks out information, training and adaptive devices from organizations such as the Canadian National Institute for the Blind and the Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
- Tactile cues are used to correspond to sounds and/or sights, to enhance recognition and response. For example, jewellery or other items worn by the service provider help individuals who are deaf and blind to recognize their supporter.
- Individuals learn about their allergies and challenges to encourage them to manage difficulties on their own as much as possible. Some individuals have learned enough about their food allergies, for instance, to be aware of what to avoid ordering in restaurants.

Successful Practice

Precautions are taken to ensure individuals' safety. First-aid supplies are kept on hand at the home and in vehicles. Outdoor areas are fenced in and free of hazards. Vehicles are well maintained. Wheelchairs and other equipment are kept in good condition and are approved by an occupational therapist or other consulting professionals. Techniques used to lift and transfer the individual are approved for the safety of the person and assistants.

Individuals receiving service carry identification while away from home. They are taught about how to be safe as a pedestrian, being aware of traffic, using crosswalks, etc. Also, they are helped to know how to be assertive and learn about precautions for dealing with strangers.

When involved in high-risk activities, such as boating or hunting, individuals are taught and supported to use safety precautions, all regulations are followed and appropriate people (i.e. family members, CLBC staff) are informed. Adults providing support and/or living in the home have completed a criminal record search and a copy is kept at the home or the local CLBC office.

Above and Beyond

- Individuals take assertiveness, self-defence and street safety courses.
- Individuals are taught safe routines related to being home alone, such as whether and how to answer the telephone, the door, and so on.
- The individual is shown how to use the peephole in the front door.
- Family, friends and neighbours provide 'back up' support, making themselves available as contacts, and being mindful of the individual's well being. Individuals can be safer, for example, going for walks in their neighbourhood if neighbours know them.
- Service provider and staff have completed Food Safe training or worked in the food preparation industry, and share information on safe handling and storage of food with others providing support. Reference material on the subject is available at the home.
- Service provider is aware that the individual is not steady on his feet and ensures those providing support to him are made aware of this.
- The individual is taught how to get appropriate temperature for her bath/shower by starting with cold and adding hot water.
- Vehicles carry a survival kit in the event of a natural disaster.



"I made up photo ID cards for each client for their wallets, and I carry a copy in my wallet too. It has all their pertinent information, emergency contacts, name, address, telephone number, medication information, etc., but it's on a small, laminated card."

Service Provider
Langley, BC

Successful Practice

Service provider and assistants are trained to respond to medical emergencies. Those responsible for supporting individuals, including respite assistants and volunteers, have current first aid certification and CPR training, and training related to additional conditions such as severe seizures, respiratory ailments, allergies, etc.

Above and Beyond



- Service providers renew CPR training annually, as recommended by the Heart and Stroke Foundation.
- Individuals attend first aid or related training for responding to emergencies.
- Individuals are taught how to call 9-1-1 appropriately, as well as other emergency responses.
- Individuals are taught to clean cuts and to apply a band-aid.
- Posted emergency numbers include pictures of relevant services such as the fire department, neighbours, etc.
- Service provider has prepared hospital admission information in the event of such a crisis.

RIGHTS

Successful practices for rights result in individuals being treated with respect and dignity at all times. Individuals are supported to learn about their own and others' basic human rights and responsibilities. For example, individuals have the freedom to choose who their friends are, how to spend their money or which leisure activities to engage in. Service provider and assistants advocate for the individual's human rights.

Standard	Service providers and assistants respect each individual's rights and act as an advocate for these rights.
Rationale	Adults with developmental disabilities have the same human rights as any adult citizen. These include the right to dignity, self-respect and privacy. They also include the freedom of choice in such areas as association with friends, use of money and use of free time. Service providers and assistants will respect each individual's full range of rights at all times. They will assist each individual in asserting his/her rights and in learning that his/her rights are balanced by responsibilities.

Successful Practice

Service provider and assistants respect and protect individuals' rights. Information and knowledge about the rights and responsibilities of adult citizens, is available to all those working or living with the individuals and this knowledge is applied in the daily support and day-to-day activities in the home and community.

Above and Beyond



- Individuals were supported to be knowledgeable about the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the BC Human Rights Council, British Columbia Association for Community Living and the British Columbia Coalition for People with Disabilities
- Individuals are supported to learn how they can access information on rights from the Internet.
- Individuals participate in the interview process for new assistants and have input into who is to be hired to work with them.

- Individuals are supported to take part in writing ‘guiding principles’ as they relate to the philosophy of the service and include guidelines on how they wish to be supported.
- The individuals experience the dignity of ‘risk’ and ‘mistakes’ typical of any member of the community. They sign their own cheques and choose to have only same sex staff for personal care support.
- The individual has a pet of his choice.
- Prior to their employment, assistants are made aware of the need for confidentiality. A written job description informs assistants of the individual’s specific needs and the individual has input into that description.
- Assistants are briefed regarding strategies to use when assisting with personal care, for example bathing or assisting with meals, in a way that respects and maintains the dignity of the individuals.
- Individuals are encouraged to inform assistants of any preferences regarding how they are supported.
- Individuals are encouraged to be assertive and stand up for themselves as citizens. For example, they are supported to write letters when services are not available, such as letters to BC Transit during a bus strike, or letters to community businesses about the need for increased wheelchair accessibility.
- Individuals have their own bank account and are supported to be involved in banking and other financial transactions.
- The individual has a copy of a ‘plain language’ charter of rights framed and hanging on his bedroom wall.
- The individual is supported to belong to a self-advocates group

Successful Practice

Individuals are encouraged and supported to exercise their rights on a day-to-day basis. For example, individuals are supported to learn about his/her rights and responsibilities. Service provider and assistants support the individual to make informed choices and otherwise exercise his/her rights, and advocates on the individual’s behalf, if necessary.

Above and Beyond



- Individual is supported to learn about elections and to vote.
- The individual attended several church services before deciding upon one church to attend regularly.
- All support strategies related to the individual are read and signed by the individual. The individual is invited to attend all meetings related to service provided.
- The individual has attended self-advocates conferences and participates on the board of a local community centre.

HOME ATMOSPHERE

Individuals receiving service need to feel that the home is 'their home'. Successful practices, as they relate to home atmosphere, imply that service providers encourage the individuals to feel at ease in the home, and that a comfortable environment is nurtured. It also places the onus on service providers to never use the term "not in my house!"

Standard	Service providers provide a home-like environment that allows individuals to live a personally rewarding life.
Rationale	As the home is each individual's place of residence, it should feel like home to him/her.

Successful Practice

Service provider ensures the house and yard are safe and promote family style living for those being served. The accommodation complements the needs and wishes of individuals, and they are allowed free access to household items, for example, help themselves to drinks and snacks. Individuals may have privacy, for example, use of the telephone, retire to their room if they choose, and this privacy is respected.

Individual are supported to achieve his/her goals related to their home. Each person is encouraged to develop a sense of ownership and belonging within the home. A comfortable and clean home environment is maintained and individuals are reminded that the home is 'their home'; they are encouraged to have family and friends over and, on special occasions, supported to entertain. Each individual has the opportunity to personalize his or her room including pictures and mementoes of his or her history and culture. The individual is supported to make choices about aspects of his/her home.

The location of the home fosters community living and reflects the individual's needs.

Above and Beyond



- The individual's family photographs are displayed with other photographs in the home.
- The individual has a favourite chair and has been allotted time to watch his favourite television show on the 'big screen' television, in the living room, as are others in the household.
- The individual helped to paint the recreation room in the home.
- Individuals are consulted about changes to the home; for example, they assist with choosing new carpet and paint colours for their room. Personal pictures, artefacts and items belonging to the individual are displayed.
- Mutual friends of the individuals often come over to visit and have tea. On, occasion, family and other out of town guests stay overnight in the guest room.
- The completion of paperwork is done at a small desk in the living room and is said to not interfere with the individuals' activities.
- The household is a part of neighbourhood Block Watch and interactions with neighbours are encouraged.

Successful Practice

The physical layout of the home and yard meets the individual's specific needs, such as wheelchair access to all areas of the home for individuals who depend on a wheelchair. Service provider and CLBC have made specialized provisions to the house and yard to accommodate each individual's use of mobility aids. Areas of the home have been adapted to accommodate individuals' use of these mobility aids. Outdoor areas are accessible by individuals using mobility aids and individuals have easy access to patios and gardens, etc. Considerations are made for easy access and transfer for individuals to manoeuvre in and out of vehicles.

Above and Beyond



- Doorways in the kitchen and to the individual's bedroom were widened to accommodate his needs.
- The individual has the largest bedroom in the home to allow him to keep his walker nearby while still having room for puzzles, arts and crafts and other personal hobbies.
- Common areas are kept free of clutter to assist with mobility and orientation" for those with visual impairment.
- Home has been adapted with specialized accommodations for those with a hearing impairment.

3. SERVICE DELIVERY

ACTIVITIES

Successful practices in relation to activities support the person receiving service to participate in activities that are meaningful to her or him, and promote inclusion in day-to-day living that most citizens are able and expect to enjoy. Services going beyond the standard excel in fostering the person's involvement in activities and the community.

Standard	Each individual has the opportunity to take an active part in daily activities and programs and to participate with as few restrictions as possible in typical home living. Individuals have the opportunity and means to communicate their wishes and feelings, to develop satisfying social relationships and, where possible, to develop skills that will support future independence.
Rationale	A variety of daily living experiences assist individuals with developmental disabilities to attain lifestyles, appearances and behaviour that are valued by society as well as by the individual. To achieve this, there must be opportunities for growth and development in the lives of all individuals.

Successful Practice

Individuals' skill development is encouraged and supported. The person is supported to join in conversations and communicate her or his choices through speech or other methods of communication, including sign and picture symbols. Decision-making in areas such as recreation, planning meals, household chores and caring for clothing is encouraged.

Above and Beyond



- The service demonstrates creativity in supporting the individual to communicate. For example, one individual communicates using a 'light writer' to convey his thoughts and feelings. The individual is able to use his light writer to describe his views on the service he receives.
- The individual uses few words, but is always responded to when speaking. The service provider encourages the individual to express him or herself in social situations.
- Over time, the individuals became more demonstrative and initiated conversations with family and friends, because they received ongoing praise and encouragement from the service provider.
- The service provider converses with the individual in ways that are respectful of her or his adult status and that promote her or his independence and ability.
- The individual is provided with pictures, gestures and/or signs for various activities, foods, chores, etc. to facilitate communication, and thus, encourage choice making.
- The service provider offers the individual training in nutrition and Canada's Food Guide so that food choices can be discussed.
- The service provider encourages the person to plan meals regularly, along with others in the household.
- For people who have difficulty appropriately choosing their clothing independently, the service provider provides a choice of 2 or 3 appropriate outfits to wear for the day.
- The service provider breaks down tasks into small components to assist the individual with accomplishments.
- The service provider ensures the individual is present when she is completing chores, for example, folding laundry, chopping vegetables.

"The women use the bank and stores and some restaurants in town on their own. They rely on one another and there are 'natural safety precautions' because the neighbours and people working at these services know them and 'look out for them'. At home, we all review safety tips for the community once a month. The women can be home alone, but there are extra safety precautions for this. For example, neighbours watch the window for the 'Help' sign the women know to put up if they do not feel safe. The women know how to use the telephone, and they know emergency numbers."

Service Provider
Richmond, BC

Successful Practices

Each individual participates in preferred, interesting and challenging activities. A range of activities, at home and in the community, is offered to the person, and she or he is supported to participate.

Above and Beyond



- The service provider supports the individual to participate in festive neighbourhood celebrations, for example, Halloween, Christmas carolling.
- The individual is supported to contribute to her or his community through volunteer work, home recycling, or assisting neighbours. For example, an individual might collect food or help out at the food bank, visit animals at the SPCA or shovel snow for a neighbour.
- Individuals are supported to explore peer-training opportunities, such as working at a local support home, teaching skills to others.
- Individual 'at home' outdoor interests are supported and fostered, for example, he or she is assigned a gardening project, is involved in composting, or hosts lawn games for friends.
- Individual 'community' interests are supported and fostered, such as rambling club, mall walking, train spotting.

"Two of the individuals we support have their own computers. It's been an exciting learning curve for us all. One person has learned how to use e-mail and to obtain her own hotmail account. I now receive e-mail with suggestions for birthdays and Christmas, as well as more interesting ones like, "I just wanted to let you know I have plugged the toilet." and "Can we have burgers for dinner tonight?" I hope that one day, both individuals can also access their bank accounts on-line and that this will assist them in budgeting and gaining more independence. This one area has taught me a valuable lesson that we should continue to explore new frontiers."

Service Provider
Victoria, BC

Successful Practice

Individuals are encouraged to participate in home living. The service provider emphasizes 'doing with, not for' the individual, encouraging her or him to participate in activities with as little supervision as is necessary. The person has responsibilities for meal preparation and clean-up, and takes a role in planning for social events at the home, making decisions about the home, and caring for pets.

Consultation with physiotherapy (PT) and occupational therapy (OT) is arranged and adaptive equipment is used to increase involvement and independence at home.

Above and Beyond

- An individual to whom predictability and planning are important schedules chores in advance, using a calendar or daybook that has plain language and/or pictures.
- Where an individual experiences anxiety about responsibilities if activities are planned too far in advance, the service provider ensures activities often occur spontaneously.
- The service provider and individual use plain language recipes, made up of pictures and simple words.
- The individual is supported to prepare specific meals a few times a week/month according to interest and skill.
- The individual receives training in safe handling and storage of food.
- The service provider encourages the involvement of a person less able to physically participate by placing the cookbook or utensils on her or his wheelchair, and discussing each step in meal preparation.
- An individual, who eats privately and/or uses a g-tube, is included at the table with others during or after the meal.
- Individuals who need to have their meals pureed, are involved in their meal preparation by pressing the buttons to blend their food.
- Blended foods are pureed separately, for example, fish separate from vegetables.
- The service provider supports the individual who enjoys gardening, by placing gardening tools on his wheelchair tray, so he can work in a raised garden bed built specifically for him.
- When birthdays, Christmas, and other occasions are planned, the individual has a list of people with whom to exchange gifts, and/or to invite to his or her home.

"I hold a meeting at the end of each week where we discuss the next month and any holidays that are in it. We discuss the craft project for that holiday. We talk about healthy food choices and special meal requests for the next month using food flash cards. This is also a great time for everyone to have their say about whatever is on their mind. We also discuss any pertinent topics where concerns or interest may have recently arisen."

"I have a white board to show the current months calendar with activities listed so we can refer to this calendar regarding upcoming events and activities and keep everyone aware and involved with what's coming up."

Service Provider
Langley, BC



Successful Practice

Each individual is supported to learn skills to support future independence. Individuals are supported to manage their own medications, use public transit, manage their money and use the telephone.

Above and Beyond

- The individual answers the telephone and has his or her own-recorded message on the answering machine.
- A telephone with big buttons is used to encourage independence with dialling.
- Medications are 'blister packed' from the pharmacy to assist the individual in taking his or her medications correctly.
- Individuals are supported to notify the service provider or telephone their doctor or pharmacist when medications need to be refilled.
- Individuals who use wheelchairs are provided with the opportunity to use public transit.
- Individuals are supported to identify goals related to money management and a plan is put in place to assist each person to reach his or her goals, for example, saving for a vacation. Increases in savings might be represented through pictures or graphs.
- Individuals go to the bank, and are supported to fill out deposit/withdrawal slips and interact with staff at the bank.
- The service provider has prepared a 'mock' deposit slip to enable the individual to copy by example.
- The service provider is involving individuals in handling their money by giving their money to them to hand to a cashier and/or encouraging them to take their change from the cashier.



One service provider programmed the telephone to 'speed dial' the individual's family and friends telephone numbers. In addition, photographs of all contacts were placed by the corresponding speed dial key, so the individual could distinguish how to call whoever he wished. This practice helped the individual use the telephone independently.

Service Provider
Vancouver, BC

Successful Practice

Individuals who have chronic emotional/behavioural difficulties receive treatment and support. To foster mental and psychiatric health, appropriate treatment and support is provided to individuals with chronic emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. Diagnostic and/or other professional support is obtained as necessary. Treatment/support plans, such as prescribed medication and specific behavioural approaches are followed and monitored appropriately.

Above and Beyond



- With the individual's permission, the service provider meets with the individual's psychiatrist separately following the individual's appointment, to share observations and to receive information from the psychiatrist regarding changes in treatment and support.
- The service provider accesses other community-based resources, such as Alcoholics/Narcotics Anonymous.
- The individual and staff seek out appropriate mental health support groups and/or obtain membership in relevant associations, such as Vancouver Mental Health.
- The service provider provides assistants with regular updates on the individual's progress and/or personal difficulties.
- Assistants are given written reference material pertaining to the individual's diagnosis, for example, Schizophrenia.
- Assistants are provided with information on anti-psychotic medications and their side effects.

One service provider worked hard to expand his knowledge related to mental health concerns. As the individual supported was experiencing mental health problems, the service provider supported his participation in related programs with others who are dually-diagnosed. In addition, the service provider volunteers with the local Mental Health Team as a means of expanding his knowledge, and to learn about the need for sensitivity during times of trouble. This was considered a constructive way of gaining cost-effective training. Check out your local mental health team for news and information.

Service Provider
Richmond, BC

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Successful practices in relation to supporting personal networks include encouraging contact with others and the development of social skills. Examples of extra steps service providers have taken to facilitate friendships and family involvement, and to teach relationship building are also included.

Standard	Service providers and assistants welcome the involvement of family and friends in the lives of each individual.
Rationale	Activities and contact with family and friends can add greatly to the quality of a person's life. Family, friends and/or support persons can ensure that each individual's needs and best interests are incorporated into the service he/she receives.

Successful Practice

Individuals are supported to develop/maintain positive relationships with family members, friends, and acquaintances. Each person is supported and encouraged to have access to, and respectful relationships with, his or her family and friends. Opportunities to socialize with family and friends are offered to the individual. Developing skills for fostering and maintaining relationships is supported; professionals are involved where necessary. Contact and other information about significant people in the individual's life is documented.

Above and Beyond

- The service provider employs assistants in the same age group as the individual, to provide an opportunity for the individual to develop interests with her peers.
- The individual is supported to host guests and social occasions, for example, birthday parties, video nights.
- The service provider helps the individual locate family members with whom he has lost contact.
- The individual has a telephone and/or address book with large print and/or pictures.
- The service provider uses various methods to teach the individual the differences between 'strangers', 'friends' and 'acquaintances', including role-playing and teaching 'games'.
- Individuals are supported to have 'planning' meetings to discuss the social events for the coming months.



- The individual is offered courses on sexuality, relationship building, dating, etc.
- The individual has opportunities to have friends or family for 'sleepovers', and in turn is supported to travel for overnight visits with friends.
- The service provider supports the individual to organize a craft or garage sale at the home, and donates old books for a neighbourhood book sale.
- The service provider supports the individual to participate in dog walking or 'pet sitting' for neighbours.
- The service provider and individual organize a block party/barbecue.
- The service provider supports the individual to go 'carolling' in the neighbourhood at Christmas time.
- Individuals are supported to maintain a calendar/book to document community events and access to free newspapers and local community literature is supported.
- Staff support individuals to update 'friends and family' information when required and remind them of special occasions, for example, a friend's birthday or an arranged activity.

One service provider went the 'extra mile' in teaching the individual appropriate social interaction. She 'role-played' telephone and in-person conversations with the individual. This effectively taught the individual to inviting friends to the home, arranging to go out to a movie or for dinner, resolving difficulties with friends, and so on. Since then she has expanded her circle of friends, is more active socially and is able to maintain regular contact with her family.

Service Provider
Vancouver, BC

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Successful practices in relation to community participation help and encourage individuals to become involved in neighbourhood activities, and to be contributing members of the community. The service provider fosters a sense of belonging.

Standard	Service providers make full and effective use of community resources. Service providers and assistants initiate community contacts that promote community inclusion for all individuals.
Rationale	Individuals can develop a sense of belonging in their neighbourhood. If an individual contributes to the community and becomes involved in community activities, he/she will be recognized for his/her contributions.

Successful Practice

If they choose to do so, individuals are supported to use community-based services. Service provider and assistants support the individual to use a variety of services that are used by other members of the community. The individual's specific needs related to community involvement are met. The service provider advocates for accessibility and inclusion by informing community services of individual's needs related to mobility, orientation and communication.

Individuals are encouraged to be contributing members of their community and, as they choose, are supported to take part in community events. Service provider and assistants support the individual to 'get involved' in the community based on the individuals' goals and wishes. This includes having opportunities to develop natural supports, to get to know neighbours and to form relationships with other members of the local community.

Above and Beyond



- The individual volunteers at the folk music festival on the 'disabilities committee.'
- The service provider and the individual are on the local advisory committee for improving accessibility to building and community events.
- The individual uses and helps clean up the weight room and fitness room at the local community centre.
- The individual participated in the neighbourhood garage sale.

- The individual has contributed to a column in the community newspaper and helped to organize a 'cut your hair for cancer' campaign with a high school she attended.

Successful Practice

The service provider and assistants seek and use information and support from community sources. Service provider is aware of resources in the community such as schools, community centre's, recycling depot, as well as resources for individuals with special needs, and makes use of those resources. Service provider and assistances participate in training available through the community and support individuals to access these resources as well.

Above and Beyond



- Service provider and individual take emergency response training through their community.
- Service provider and the individual access information through the local library, using community access Internet to communicate with other people with disabilities around the world.
- Service provider and individuals participate in community forums and neighbourhood planning meetings that affect their immediate community, for example, transit, roads, amenities.

4. RESOURCES

LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION OF SUPPORT

Successful practices in relation to leadership and coordination of support promote excellence in service delivery. This ensures that the service provider and assistants are qualified to provide the service to individuals according to their specific needs. It also implies that both service provider and assistants have regular in-person contact with individuals and others who are part of the individual's life.

Standard	The service providers are qualified and experienced, and have regular, direct contact with each individual receiving service, assistants, and others involved in each individual's life.
Rationale	Effective coordination of support can create a well-functioning team which maintains the spirit, dignity and individuality of the individuals receiving service.

Successful Practice

The service provider has experience, training and mentoring abilities to provide support, direction and feedback to assistants and volunteers. The service provider and assistants are qualified and demonstrate an ability to successfully support the individual.

The service provider has a positive relationship with the individual, including mutual respect, trust and ethical conduct when dealing with the individual. The service provider is also readily available to the individual, other staff, members of the home, and others involved with the individual. The service provider requests and works collaboratively with professional supports when necessary.

Above and Beyond



- The service provider has and maintains qualifications to train assistants in First Aid and CPR.
- The service provider belongs to a network of family home service providers to obtain and share information and support.
- The service provider attends training each year and pays for an assistant and respite assistant to attend two training sessions or conferences each year, to improve their skills and maintain positive morale.
- The service provider attended a self-advocates' all day meeting with the individual.

STAFFING (WHERE APPLICABLE)

In a Home Sharing Services, 'staffing levels' may refer to the service provider (alone), assistants, and volunteers (such as spouses or other family members) who assist the service provider. Success in this area requires that sufficient support and supervision be available to the individual to ensure her or his safety and participation in home and community living. Above the standard practices include fostering positive relationships between the individual and assistants or respite assistants beyond regular shifts.

Standard The home is staffed so as to meet each individual's needs with an attitude of respect for each individual and an underlying commitment to providing a good quality of life.

Rationale Sufficient levels of qualified assistants provide for personalized service. In addition, the attitudes of assistants towards individuals demonstrate respect for and honour the dignity of each individual.

Successful Practice

Service provider schedules appropriate levels of support to ensure individuals' needs are met. The number and availability of qualified people to provide support is sufficient to meet the individual's needs and service goals.

Above and Beyond



- The individual has a network of friends and family available, such as non-paid, natural supports.
- Where the individual is able to be without a support assistant for short periods of time, she is able to contact someone should the need arise.
- Qualified respite assistants are used on a regular basis to prevent 'burn-out'.
- The (male) individual's personal care is conducted by the male service provider. The female service provider offers a foundation of emotional support and daily guidance.

One service provider used creativity to establish an individualized 'day service' for a person who was not successful with typical day service supports. As it was known the individual enjoyed working on a farm, funding was established with the CLBC to allow the individual to be supported to do farm work. The person now works daily and has taken on numerous responsibilities such as, feeding the chickens and collecting the eggs, etc.

Service Provider
Courtenay, BC

Successful Practices

Service provider/assistants develop positive relationships with the individual. Those responsible for providing direct support are familiar with the individual's goals, needs and preferences, are positive and respectful in their interactions and support of the person. They are available to communicate with, teach and help the individual.

Above and Beyond



- Assistants and volunteers have attended and contributed to the individual's planning meeting.
- Written information about the individual's needs and preferences is available to those providing direct support.
- The individual has had input into choosing the assistants who work with her.
- The individual is considered 'part of the family' and is integrated into the service provider's family and activities to the extent the individual chooses.
- The service provider and assistants focus on role modeling appropriate interactions in social settings to support the individual's development of social skills.
- The service provider and assistants interact with individuals in a manner that minimizes the gap between 'staff and client'. For example, the individual speaks of himself as a housemate or part of the household, rather than a client.

In one home there was a strong emphasis to support the person to be involved in the operation of her service. The individual is involved in training new people who will be working with her, which includes her independently providing a brief history of 'who she is' and the type of support she expects and requires. .

Service Provider
Vancouver, BC

Successful Practice

Respite is provided in a responsible manner. Respite assistants have relevant experience and preparation, safety qualifications and essential information to provide adequate support to the person. The service provider ensures respite assistants maintain valid first aid and CPR certification and provides them with a 'respite package' containing need to know emergency information. Respite assistants provide completed criminal record searches prior to working with the individual.

Above and Beyond

- All those providing respite have had hands-on experience in the community living field.



- The respite assistants also work with the individual through the day service. She is thus provided with support that is familiar and comfortable in the (respite assistant's) home environment.
- Respite assistants have completed a certificate or diploma related to providing support to people with disabilities in the community.
- Respite assistants have and make use of opportunities to supplement their education or attend in-service training sessions related to the support needs of the individual.
- Non-essential support information, such as favourite activities, foods and people, is provided to respite assistants in writing.

TRAINING OF ASSISTANTS

Successful practices in relation to training of assistants encourage thorough preparation and learning for all persons providing service. Assistants receive adequate training to support individuals with all of their needs and goals. Sufficient staff and support must be available to the individual at all times.

Standard	Service providers ensure assistants are familiar with their responsibilities and receive necessary training. Assistants demonstrate suitability for providing good quality service to the individuals.
Rationale	Training and expertise must be appropriate to individual needs and enhance consistency and quality of support.

Successful Practice

The service provider hires assistants whose abilities and attitudes are compatible with the needs and goals of the individual. Assistants are provided with training and supported to provide individuals with good quality service. All assistants understand their role and develop a positive relationship with the individual that reflects mutual respect, trust and ethical conduct. If necessary, assistants are supported to develop skills and knowledge through training to meet the individual's specific health and support needs.

Above and Beyond



- The service provider has a documented job description, including required qualifications, for assistants.
- The service provider collects and shares information about training opportunities in the area and has arranged for assistants to attend training with agencies in the province.
- Assistants invite the individuals to birthday parties and family events. Assistants identify community events, concerts, movies and sales at local stores that might interest the individual, and make the service provider aware of these.
- Assistants share personal interests with the individual, such as supporting local sports teams.

Successful Practice

New assistants are oriented to all aspects of the home, service needs and goals to support the individuals. As necessary, assistants receive training to become familiar with the individuals' ongoing support needs. Assistants are knowledgeable about and provide support according to the individuals' goals and needs.

Above and Beyond



- Assistants have an opportunity to meet the individual in comfortable circumstances, such as when the individual's family and friends are present, to support the assistant and the individual getting to know one another.
- The service provider has an orientation package, developed with the individual, including photographs of the individual involved in various activities, to share with new assistants.

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Successful practices in guidelines and procedures require that measures for safety, consistency and accountability be in place. (Home Sharing Services with no paid assistants may not require all policies and procedures to be documented). Where individuals have high support needs, more documentation may be necessary. The following also provides suggestions from services where service providers ensure support issues are covered in detail; organize the material to make it accessible and available to those with a need or right to know.

Standard	The home has guidelines and procedures that meet all requirements of health and safety, fiscal responsibility, individual documentation and record keeping.
Rationale	Guidelines provide for consistent service and procedures in the home. A system for recording of each individual's care requirements guides service provider and assistants in providing quality care.

Successful Practice

Service provider has guidelines/procedures. Information related to the service is current, organized, easy to locate and arranged in a user-friendly format for the service provider and others providing support. The service provider has a copy of CLBC guidelines for responding to critical incidents, suspected abuse and challenging behaviour. Emergency information to be used if, for example, a person is missing, is readily available at the home and in vehicles. This information lists relevant facts such as physical description, medications, critical support needs, and emergency contacts, and includes a current photograph.

Procedures for administering and managing medication, conducting a search, responding to a fire and other emergencies are clear. Procedures for providing personal care are also defined. Where assistants are employed or several people provide support, these procedures, along with others such as daily routines and schedules, are documented. There is a policy regarding smoking in the home and the community that is respectful of non-smokers' and smokers' rights. Where respite assistants are employed, the service provider has prepared emergency information, which is available to the respite assistant(s).

Above and Beyond



- The service provider maintains a binder with sections for different areas – the contract, guidelines, and daily routines.
- Written policies and procedures are in place even where there are no paid assistants to ensure consistency if the service provider is unavailable for any reason.
- Appropriate policies and procedures have been discussed with the individual, family members and CLBC and have been approved where necessary. As a consequence, individuals and family members are fully aware of the service provider's responsibilities and practices regarding personal care, reporting incidents of a critical nature, responding to emergencies, and so on.
- Emergency information is shared with the day service and CLBC to ensure consistency and to facilitate quick response.
- Specific consideration has been given to the needs of the individual with respect to search procedures. A list of contacts and places the individual frequently visits, etc. is kept on hand in the event a search is necessary. In many homes where individuals use the community independently, service providers and individuals agree the individual must call home if he is going to be late, and have established a time period before a search is necessary.
- Emergency information, other documentation and photographs (on emergency sheets) are updated regularly.
- The service provider has a written statement of principles or 'mission'. Some service providers, for instance, outline their commitment to promote the individual's health, safety and participation in the community according to her or his choice. The statement is provided to the respite assistant(s).

Successful Practice

Procedures are in place to account for individuals' monies and belongings. Where individuals require assistance to manage their funds, an accounting system is in place for the individuals' income, expenditures and bank balance. Social assistance, wages, clothing allowances, GST rebates, and other sources of income are included.

A current list of the individuals' major and significant belongings is available should there be a fire, theft or other need to account for them. A copy is kept in the individual's file and at another location.

Above and Beyond



- Receipts are retained, accounts are balanced monthly, and records such as GST rebates and income tax returns are kept with these documents.
- Individuals are encouraged to obtain and keep receipts when making purchases.
- The individual is supported to prepare an inventory of her belongings in writing, with photographs or a video camera.
- The inventory is updated at Individual Planning meetings.

Successful Practice

Individuals' programs and supports are documented. Plans, such as individual service plans, or annual plans include personal and health information, names and numbers for family and friends, and other material, which is current, organized and accessible to the individual, service provider and others providing support. Progress reports are sent to the CLBC as requested, typically on a quarterly basis. Measures are in place to ensure confidentiality of all written material.

Above and Beyond



- A personal binder is maintained containing only information related to the individual's support.
- Additional information such as the individual's preferences, interests, and favourite activities are recorded.
- The service provider has developed a comprehensive personal care plan for the individual. It describes needs, likes and dislikes, behaviour management, and the method of supporting the individual with specific tasks, for example dressing, personal hygiene, and morning routine. Those providing respite are familiar with the personal care plan.
- The individual is involved in directing his service in various ways, such as providing ideas to be included in support material, giving permission for the inclusion of non-essential (but helpful) information about him.

In one review the service provider was instrumental in establishing Citizens on Patrol (COP) in her community. In the event one of the individuals being supported went missing, she would solicit support from COP to assist her with search procedures and/or distributing flyers. This process proved to be successful.

Service Provider
Nanaimo, BC

COMMUNICATION AND PROBLEM RESOLUTION

Successful practices pertaining to problem solving are clear and promote respect and empathy. Consistent methods of communication are used by all stakeholders, such as individuals, CLBC and families. Also noted are examples of service providers taking extra steps to facilitate the individual's independence in problem solving, and to share information, collaborate and prevent problems among the support team.

Standard	The home is founded on building meaningful relationships that promote mutual respect, independence and quality of life for persons served. Communication channels are clear and effective ways of preventing problems and resolving individual differences are implemented.
Rationale	When a number of individuals live and work together, there are always potential problems. Difficulties can be prevented or resolved through clear, open communication among service providers, assistants, persons served and families. Achieving and maintaining a harmonious atmosphere is crucial to the quality of life of the individuals.

Successful Practice

Service provider and assistants are effective in helping individuals resolve problems. Methods used to support the person are positive, and are understood and used consistently by the service provider and assistants. Those providing support encourage the individual to solve problems for her or himself, and to develop relaxation and assertiveness skills. Where an individual demonstrates behaviour that negatively affects, in a major way, this individual's or another's quality of life, approaches are developed collaboratively with other stakeholders, such as professional consulting specialist, and are documented and used consistently by the service provider and assistants. Restrictions are minimized, and are only used as a last resort and when approved according to CLBC policy.

Above and Beyond



- The service provider and individual have regular 'mini' meetings to discuss problems and the strategies to resolve them.
- The service provider and the individual 'role play' appropriate/alternative ways of expressing frustration or anger.
- The service provider creates opportunities for assistants to discuss approaches to ensure consistency. Suggestions from assistants are solicited and invited on a regular basis.
- The individual has private 'space' or a room to which to retreat when personal difficulties arise.
- Specific approaches are developed and documented to address difficulties, such as threatening or inappropriate behaviour. This promotes effective and consistent responses.
- The service provider identifies key types of behaviour, for example, language or nail biting, as indications of anxiety, and develops positive, preventive measures to address these situations.
- Proactive steps to encourage positive problem solving are taken before challenging behaviour develops.
- To reduce stress the individual is supported to take yoga classes and practices yoga and deep breathing at home with the service provider.
- The individual is supported to take classes in assertiveness and anger management.
- Relaxation techniques are used, for example, soft music before sleeping or resting, aromatherapy, eye pillow, and neck massage.

Successful Practice

Clear, open communication is fostered between the service provider, assistants, CLBC representatives, and individuals. Others with a need to know are identified, such as the individual, ministry staff, family members, day service staff and professional supports, and service provider keeps them informed of significant events. The service provider and ministry staff regularly communicate with one another and other stakeholders about progress, concerns, and other issues. Positive relationships among all members of the support team are fostered; for example, a problem resolution process is in place, and roles and responsibilities are understood by all. An effort is made to create a positive atmosphere in the home, and supportive relationships between those living in the home are fostered.

Above and Beyond



- Daily contact between the service provider and assistant offers opportunities to debrief and discuss alternative approaches if necessary.
- The service provider has surveyed family members to ensure the type and frequency of communication is meeting their needs.
- Periodic team meetings consisting of the ministry representative, the individual, family members, service provider and consulting professional supports take place to discuss progress, concerns, and goals relating to the individual. Minutes are taken and made available to all.
- To promote teamwork, the service provider makes copies of written behavioural approaches available to family members, ministry staff, and professional supports (with the individual's consent).
- The service provider invites the individual's parent over for dinner several times a week, and includes the parent in activities and occasionally includes the parent in holidays.
- The service provider maintains a positive relationship with the day service and ensures staff at the day service are kept informed of the individual's support needs. Once a year the service provider meets with day service staff to update them regarding the individual's needs and how to support the individual effectively. Where necessary, demonstrations of how to provide care are given and the service provider also provides supplies.
- The service provider and day service representative communicate using a daily 'log' book.
- The service provider and day service representative have monthly meetings to discuss progress and other significant topics affecting the individual.

On closing, we wanted to include a comment from a service provider who spoke about the importance of the individuals' home being promoted as "their home". Good food for thought.

"Many of our folks never really get over mom and dad's house as not being their home, so we always promote this house as "our" [their] home and the parents' home as "mom and dad's" home, we use the word 'our' to signify inclusion and ownership. It is critical for individuals living in Family Model Homes to really understand that it is their home ... if this transformation does not occur, people never really settle in. It also places the onus on service providers to never use the term "not in my house!"

Roberta Scott, Victoria, BC