

RESPECTING KNOWLEDGE, CULTURE AND TRADITION



A CLBC Discussion Paper on
Supports for Aboriginal Adults

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About Community Living BC (CLBC)

CLBC, a Crown agency reporting to the Minister of Housing and Social Development, funds supports and services for adults with developmental disabilities over the age of 19. CLBC believes that people with developmental disabilities and their families know best when it comes to their needs, goals and planning for the future.

Community councils comprised of self-advocates, family and community members have been established across the province to ensure that there is more meaningful involvement in how services are delivered and outcomes are achieved for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Together with CLBC staff and managers, they enhance the creation of safe environments, improve access to community resources and acknowledge the gifts and contributions of people with disabilities.

CLBC's vision is one of full citizenship in which people with developmental disabilities lead good lives, have rich relationships with friends and family, financial security, choices in how they live their lives and employment opportunities, and are accepted and valued as citizens. This is best described as people leading "good lives in welcoming communities." As a steward of this vision, CLBC is committed to fostering the growth of inclusive, supportive communities.

CLBC's Values

CLBC is committed to upholding the following values:

Respecting the rights of all people

Supporting people to make their own decisions

Supporting people to achieve their dreams for the future

Respecting the important role of family and friends in people's lives

Promoting people's ability for life-long learning, development,
and contribution

Being open, honest and fair in all aspects of its work

Working cooperatively with community partners

Promoting a culture of responsibility, respect and trust

Inspiring creativity and innovation

Being accountable to the people we serve



Introduction

CLBC is working to increase awareness of, and access to, culturally appropriate, safe supports and services for Aboriginal peoples in a way that recognizes the importance of Aboriginal traditions, the knowledge and experience of communities, and the challenges facing people with developmental disabilities.

CLBC's *Aboriginal Initiative* focuses on five key areas:

- 1. Develop** deeper relationships with Aboriginal communities and continue discussions on how CLBC can provide support to address their needs. This includes meeting directly with Aboriginal organizations, groups, individuals and families to learn about the challenges they face, and to communicate CLBC's vision, its role, and the supports it funds in communities.
- 2. Explore** ways to increase accessibility and availability of services through partnerships with government, Aboriginal and community organizations.
- 3. Identify** Aboriginal adults living outside of their community of choice and help to reconnect them to their community by finding ways to support their culture and traditions, while still meeting their disability-related needs.
- 4. Ensure** CLBC has increased cultural competency by developing and implementing a plan to encourage qualified Aboriginal people to apply for staff positions, and to increase cultural awareness with all CLBC staff to work with Aboriginal people.
- 5. Identify** strategies to assist Aboriginal people with developmental disabilities through the work of the Aboriginal Advisory Council and consultation with Aboriginal peoples.

This paper has been developed by CLBC to help the organization meet the objectives outlined above. *Respecting Knowledge, Culture and Tradition: A CLBC Discussion Paper on Supports for Aboriginal Adults* aims to inform service providers, individuals, families and Aboriginal communities about CLBC's goals for services for Aboriginal peoples, the services CLBC provides, and its approach to consultation.



Strength and Perseverance

Iggy is an independent and determined 18-year-old. He lives on Vancouver Island with his mom, Carol, and his father “Big” Iggy. His interests are computers, swimming, kayaking and hockey. He’s an active member of his community, his school, and has a quick and witty sense of humour.

In April, “Little” Iggy will be 19 years old and work is underway on the transition of services. He and his family have been working on his transition to adult services with staff from CLBC, his high school, the Band and service providers.

“Iggy is incredibly active and well-known in his community and in his school,” says his mother. “He has been very involved in making sure the local community is accessible for people with disabilities. It’s important to us that these connections are maintained.”

It hasn’t been easy to plan for this transition. The family is thankful for the vision, support and perseverance of the people involved in the transition planning. They are helping connect Iggy with supports to attend university, find a job, and live independently while still being connected to his community and culture.

A person is seen from behind, sitting in a kayak on a large body of water. The person is holding a paddle. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a clear sky. The water is calm with some ripples.

“We are very proud of him, and of the young man he’s become.”

“My advice to other families is to start this process early. The resources are there, but you need to be proactive, take action, and be consistent and clear about the needs,” says Carol.

In the meantime, Iggy is working on being able to walk across the stage to accept his diploma in April when he graduates. Iggy uses his manual or electric wheelchair for most of his mobility needs, however he is determined

to walk with the support of his walker on his graduation day. His mother has no doubt that he will succeed.

“We are very proud of him, and of the young man he’s become,” says Carol. “We’ve learned so much from him. He grounds us, and brings us back to the reality that it is the simple things in life that are most important.”

Aboriginal Individuals, Families, and Communities in BC

British Columbia is home to the second largest Aboriginal population (this includes First Nations, Métis and Inuit) in Canada accounting for five percent of the total population in the province. The Métis population is the fourth largest in Canada. The Inuit population grew by seven percent between 1996 and 2006.

Aboriginal people are culturally, geographically, economically and socially diverse; however, they share a common need to access resources and support for people with developmental disabilities.

FIRST NATIONS

128,395 individuals*
Representing 66% of the
Aboriginal population



MÉTIS

59,445 individuals*
Representing 30% of the
Aboriginal population



INUIT

745 individuals*
Representing 0.4% of the
Aboriginal population



* Statistics Canada 2006 Census – Aboriginal Population Profile

First Nations people accounted for the majority (66%) of the Aboriginal population in BC, followed by Métis (30%) and Inuit (0.4%). The remaining either identified with more than one Aboriginal group, or were Registered Indians or members of an Indian band or First Nation who did not identify as Aboriginal.



“I try to help and encourage others to be the best they can be...”

Walking the Talk

Dorothy is an Okanagan Elder from the Penticton Indian Band, who worked as a social worker for close to 35 years. Her experience as a social worker has given her deep knowledge about the challenges faced by Aboriginal people with developmental disabilities.

In her retirement, Dorothy has become the Elder for the CLBC Aboriginal Advisory Council. Her role with CLBC is to provide traditional guidance and support, which in the Okanagan Nation oral tradition reinforces the value of an Elder. Elders are held in high regard, and are respected for the life experience that they have to draw upon to provide spiritual, mental, emotional and physical support to their families and community.

Dorothy recognizes the importance of using her life experience, education, and cultural knowledge to guide her. She believes there are avenues for change; a sustainable,

culturally appropriate way of supporting people with developmental disabilities.

“I try to help and encourage others to be the best they can be [and] I recognize the importance of ‘walking the talk.’ If I encourage someone to heal it means I’ve done it myself. I’ve done a lot in the cultural way and in the mainstream way, and I believe we can use both to eventually get back to who we are as First Nations people. I’ve recognized too that helping people doesn’t have to be elaborate. For example, if someone feels bad I encourage them to go and wash in water. I believe we need to pick up what we can to become a better person.”

CLBC is honoured to have Dorothy as the Elder for the CLBC Aboriginal Advisory Council. She will draw on her social work experience to assist CLBC achieve their goal to deliver a culturally appropriate service delivery model to the Aboriginal community.

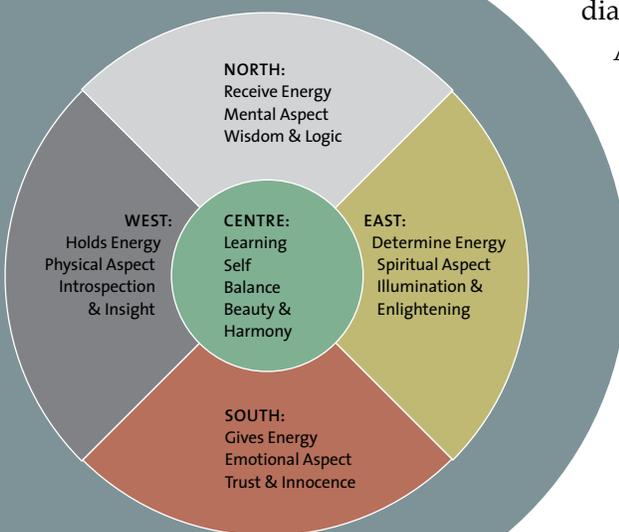
Delivering Culturally Appropriate Supports

The *Aboriginal Initiative* will help CLBC develop services and supports that respect the traditions, knowledge and experience of the Aboriginal community, while meeting the needs of the adults with developmental disabilities. CLBC believes that the vision statement of “good lives in welcoming communities” for Aboriginal people with developmental disabilities must be looked at from the context of family, community and culture.

CLBC believes that a community driven process will recognize regional and community differences and help strengthen services. The organization is dedicated to ensuring ongoing collaboration with the Aboriginal community by coordinating opportunities for discussion with community members, individuals and families. This dialogue will ensure that CLBC hears directly from Aboriginal communities, and will help to create the foundation for culturally appropriate service delivery and services that integrate core Aboriginal values and practices.

To help meet this goal, CLBC created an Aboriginal Advisory Council that has representatives from across the province. The Council acts to ensure Aboriginal communities are involved in how CLBC services are designed, delivered and evaluated for Aboriginal communities, individuals with developmental disabilities and their families through discussion, outreach and dialogue. CLBC supports the CLBC Aboriginal Advisory Council and responds to their input in achieving a culturally appropriate and safe administrative and practice model.

Traditional Medicine Wheel



CLBC's Aboriginal Advisor's role is to raise awareness in the Aboriginal community about supports and services available for Aboriginal people with developmental disabilities. The position also helps to raise awareness and build capacity with CLBC staff and service providers about delivering culturally appropriate supports, and strategically connects with the Aboriginal Advisory Council.

CLBC's Human Resources Department is developing a strategy to help recruit qualified Aboriginal staff to work at CLBC. In addition, CLBC staff will receive training to enhance awareness of tradition, culture and experience when working with Aboriginal individuals, families and communities. Discussions with Aboriginal communities will be used in the development of this strategy.

CLBC Supports and Services

CLBC is committed to funding services and supports for people with developmental disabilities. Services and supports funded by CLBC are delivered to eligible individuals and their families through service providers, often non-profits, in communities across the province.

Community Inclusion

Assists adults with developmental disabilities to build social and life skills and gain employment. Services include:

- Community Based Services
- Individual Services
- Employment Services

Family Support

Supports or funding to families to purchase supports, to help them care for their family member. Supports include:

- Respite
- Homemaker Service
- Direct Family Support

Residential Services

Provides living situations, preferably in the home community, that encourage independence while meeting specific needs. Options include:

- Home Sharing
- Supported Living
- Staffed Residential

Professional Support Services

Provides or helps identify services in the community that support individuals, their families or their caregivers.

- Services include:
- Direct Support Services
- Consultation Services
- Assessment Services

Making a Difference



Mannie is of Thompson ancestry and belongs to the Lower Nicola Indian Band. As a young man, Mannie was reunited with his brother, Tony and his wife, Joanne, in Kamloops. During this time, Mannie was placed at Tranquille, an institution for the developmentally disabled, and then was moved into a private care arrangement. Tony and Joanne maintained continual contact with Mannie, and formed a very strong bond with him until Tony's death in 1984.

The loss of his brother was very hard for Mannie to comprehend and accept. He experienced difficulties for awhile, but through support of family and friends was able to re-establish his connection with his community. Joanne became Mannie's home share support, and Mannie lives in her home in a situation that Joanne says is "fulfilling for the family."

"One of Mannie's great qualities is his role as an uncle. His deep commitment to that role resonates with the traditional Aboriginal value for children within the Thompson culture."



Mannie takes his role as “uncle” very seriously and enjoys spending time with nieces, great nieces and nephews. In his younger years, Mannie would shoot hoops, play street hockey, and go fishing with his nephews, but more recently he dominates on the “Wii field”. There is a strong bond of love and respect between Mannie and his nieces and nephews that is demonstrated through acceptance and the time they share with one another.

“His deep commitment to that role resonates with the traditional Aboriginal value for children within the Thompson culture.”

Mannie is well-known and liked in his community. He is actively involved in traditional and community activities. His outgoing personality and willingness to share his life experience and knowledge provided him with the opportunity to be part of the CLBC Aboriginal Advisory Council.

As a member of the Council, Mannie attends meetings four times a year with nine other Aboriginal members that include self-advocates, family members, organizations, service providers, former CLBC staff and the Elder representative. The primary role of the Council is to provide support and recommendations to CLBC on culturally appropriate methods for supporting and serving Aboriginal adults with a developmental disability and their families.



Jamie dreams of working with animals, participating in community and engaging in cultural events.

Setting the Path

Jamie has one brother and two sisters, and is the son of Lynn and Rick. He lives in Revelstoke and has just recently transitioned to CLBC adult services. Jamie enjoys camping with his family, and sports (hockey, skiing, biking). His interests are cars, music and drawing.

While participating in the transitioning process for Jamie, Lynn had the opportunity to attend a number of planning workshops, and recognized the importance of developing a plan for Jaime's short and long term needs. Lynn arranged a meeting with CLBC, family members, friends and community services to have them participate in the development of a plan for Jamie.

At this meeting, Jamie had the opportunity to share his dreams of working with animals, participating in community and engaging in Aboriginal cultural community events.

CLBC assisted Lynn in applying for Individualized Funding, enabling her to hire a support person to ensure Jamie had the opportunity to attend and participate in cultural events and activities. Jamie attends camp, goes to pow-wows and attends various celebrations in the community. Jamie also recognizes the importance of financial independence and employment. He is working at Tim Hortons and Home Hardware, and is saving for a travel trailer, with a long-term goal of buying a truck and obtaining his driver's license.

Responding to Individual Need

CLBC helps adults with developmental disabilities and their families achieve goals and live the life they want. CLBC staff throughout the province help individuals and families create support plans to meet their needs, make sure health and safety standards are met when individuals live away from their family, help people get connected to their community, and put paid supports in place when needed.

A planning process that focuses on the person (called person-centered planning) assists individuals and families to identify hopes, dreams, and needs that provide a pathway for everyone to follow.

Personal goals are established in plans to help individuals meet their needs and life goals. The first step in this process is for an individual or family to contact their local CLBC office (see CLBC Community Contacts page) to talk to a facilitator. CLBC staff explore options when planning with individuals and their families, which can include accessing community resources, finding employment, seeking support from family and friends, or arranging for services and supports funded by CLBC or by other organizations and government agencies. With an individual support plan, services are tailored to each person's unique needs.

Eligibility for CLBC Supports and Services

There are two ways that individuals can be found eligible for services:

1) DSM-IV Eligibility

CLBC relies on qualified practitioners (registered psychologists, registered psychological associates or certified school psychologists) to provide a diagnosis of developmental disability to establish eligibility. Qualifying practitioners apply the internationally recognized criteria outlined in the DSM-IV to arrive at a diagnosis; this includes measurement of intellectual functioning (IQ), adaptive functioning and age of onset.

2) Personalized Supports Initiative

The Personalized Supports Initiative (PSI) is separate from the DSM-IV eligibility criteria, and focuses on adults who have both significant challenges with adaptive functioning and a diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder or Pervasive Developmental Disorder.

PSI assesses issues such as an individual's ability to function in areas such as self-care and independence at home or in the community.

Families may apply for PSI through local CLBC offices.

Note: Please contact CLBC to discuss other eligibility requirements that may apply.

More information can be found at
www.communitylivingbc.ca



Sharing Friendship and Laughter

Nadine, a member of the Little Shuswap Band, runs her own business. Her beautiful smile and her love of life has a positive impact on her clients' lives.

For example, her first client, Michelle, struggles with health and mobility issues while raising her teenage daughter. Michelle says Nadine is funny, creative and very loving. "It's her happy and chatty personality that has been such a positive influence in my life," says Michelle.

Nadine runs House Cleaning with Care in Salmon Arm and her business is slowly growing. Before she had her business, Nadine had tried her hand at two dishwashing jobs until layoffs took place. That's when the business idea became a reality.

Nadine's Aboriginal heritage is an important piece of who she is today, and it's evident in

"It's her personality and what she brings to our relationship and it's why she's still in my life."

her business card logo: a fan shaped array of feathers attached to a medicine wheel. Lauren, another client, helped Nadine by developing her business cards in exchange for housecleaning. Four years later, Nadine is still cleaning her house.

Lauren says Nadine's heritage brought understanding to her own life and "a new perspective on the Aboriginal community and indigenous people of the Little Shuswap."

"It's her personality and what she brings to our relationship and it's why she's still in my life."

What do You Think?

Thank you for taking the time to read this paper. There are different ways you can join this discussion about services and supports for Aboriginal people with developmental disabilities.

We encourage you to ask questions and actively participate in talking and planning about ways to strengthen supports. Comments about this discussion paper are welcome.

You may want to send a written response to CLBC at the address below, or contact CLBC's Aboriginal Advisor to share your thoughts about CLBC's Aboriginal Initiative.

How to Contact Us

Community Living British Columbia
Aboriginal Advisor
7th Floor, Airport Square
1200 West 73rd Ave
Vancouver BC V6P 6G5

Phone: 604 664-0101
Toll-free: 1-877-660-2522

E-mail: info@communitylivingbc.ca



CLBC Community Contacts

The list below provides the addresses and phone numbers for the main CLBC offices across the province. These offices are the first point of contact for families.

Abbotsford	#201 - 2777 Gladwin Road	604 870-5900
Castlegar	620 17th Street	250 365-8558
Courtenay	#107 - 555 Fourth Street	250 334-1370
Cranbrook	#202 - 100 Cranbrook Street North	250 426-1282
Dawson Creek	10105 13th Street	250 784-2366
Kamloops	#100 - 275 Lansdowne Street	250 377-4444
Kelowna	#107 - 1664 Richter Street	250 712-3609
Nanaimo	3090 Barons Road	250 729-2500
North Vancouver	#210 - 1200 Lynn Valley Road	604 981-0321
Port Moody	#400 - 205 Newport Drive	604 933-2000
Prince George	#207 - 1600 15th Avenue	250 565-6890
Richmond	#230-5611 Cooney Road	604 660-2100
Surrey	#110 - 7525 King George Hwy	604 501-8310
Terrace	4741 Park Avenue	250 638-3600
Vancouver	4th Flr - 210 W. Broadway	604 660-3323
Vernon	#201 2802 30th Street	250 549-5490
Victoria	#220 - 174 Wilson Street	250 952-4203



Glossary of Terms

Aboriginal

The term “Aboriginal” is appropriate when referring to matters that affect First Nations (Indian), Inuit and Métis peoples.

Band

As defined by the Indian Act, a Band is a body of Indians for whose common use and benefit lands have been set aside or monies held by the Government of Canada or declared by the Governor in Council to be a Band. Many Bands prefer to be known as First Nations.

Community Inclusion Services

Activities funded by CLBC that an individual can participate in within their home community, such as employment services, individualized supports and community based programs.

Cultural Awareness

Developing sensitivity and understanding of another ethnic group, usually through internal changes in terms of attitudes and values.

Cultural Competency

Behaviours, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals that enables each group to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

Culturally Appropriate

Culturally appropriate service integrates core Aboriginal values, beliefs, and healing practices into program delivery.

Culturally Sensitive

Culturally sensitive service advances awareness of issues in the Aboriginal community in the context of involvement with an ethnic minority.

Developmental Disability

Presence of a developmental disability is determined through an assessment provided by a registered or certified psychologist.

Direct Family Support

Services provided by private or non-profit contractors that may include counselling, support, networking and referrals. Advocacy, educational workshops and partnership building are also important components of this work.

Direct Funding

A fixed amount of funding provided directly to an individual or family so they may purchase a specified service.

Elder(s)

Aboriginal people who are respected and consulted due to their experience, wisdom, knowledge, background and insight. Elder does not necessarily equate with age.

First Nations

First Nations doesn't include Inuit or Métis. The term First Nations people generally applies to both Status and Non-Status people.

Generic Services

Supports, medical treatment or lifestyle choices that are available to the general public. Examples are public transportation systems, community recreation programs and hospitals.

Home Sharing

A living situation where an adult eligible for CLBC supports shares a home with a person contracted to provide support and assistance.

Individual Support Plan

A plan that adult individuals can develop on their own, or with the assistance of a CLBC facilitator, personal network members, friends or other trusted advisors that identifies how the person's disability-related needs will be met, and what their goals are for living in the community.

Individualized Funding

Money allocated by CLBC to an individual or family member to enable them to pay for supports and/or services to meet their disability related needs that have been identified in a support plan. The amount of funding is based on the person's identified disability-related needs.

Informal Community Supports

Support provided by family, friends, neighbours and community members that can include friendship as well as practical, emotional, psychological and material support.

Inuit

Aboriginal people in northern Canada, who live above the tree line in the Northwest Territories, and in Northern Quebec and Labrador. The word means "people" in the Inuit language - Inuktitut. The singular of Inuit is Inuk.

Métis

Refers to Aboriginal people of mixed First Nation and European ancestry who identify themselves as Métis people, as distinct from First Nations people, Inuit or non-Aboriginal people. The Métis have a unique culture that draws on their diverse ancestral origins, such as Scottish, French, Ojibway and Cree.

Person-Centred Planning

A process that is owned and controlled by the person and their family. The support plan is totally individual and creates a comprehensive portrait of the person and what they want to do with their life. It brings together all of the people who are important to the person including family, friends, neighbours, support workers and other professionals involved in their life.

Personalized Supports Initiative (PSI)

Provides an individualized and personalized approach to meeting the needs of eligible adults by coordinating existing community supports to help people to maintain or increase their independence. PSI augments, rather than replaces, existing support. Where necessary, PSI will provide funding for supports such as supported living, respite, employment support, skill development, homemaker support, and development of support networks.

Self-Advocate

A person who speaks out for him or herself.

Service Provider

A community organization that provides supports and services to people with developmental disabilities.

Resources & Additional Supports

BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society (BCANDS)

BCANDS is a society that is funded by INAC and Health Canada to advocate for First Nations people who have disabilities. The society is situated on southern Vancouver Island but services the BC community. BCANDS publishes a Newsletter, has a toll free advocacy service and runs a library of health and wellness information.

www.bcands.bc.ca

British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres

Friendship Centres provide a number of quality services to the Aboriginal communities located in an urban setting. While each Centre is as unique as the community it serves, all are united in their effort to improve the quality of life of Canada's Aboriginal people and to protect and preserve Aboriginal culture for the benefit of all Canadians. Friendship Centres are reflective of the communities they serve, controlled at the local level and, above all else, responsible to and responsive to, the people they serve.

www.bcaafc.com

First Nations, Inuit & Aboriginal Health

Health Canada is working with First Nations people and Inuit to improve their health. Together with First Nations and Inuit organizations and communities, Health Canada carries out many activities aimed at helping people stay healthy, and prevent chronic and contagious diseases.

www.hc-sc.gc.ca

First Nations Social Development Society

A non-profit society that represents the Band Social Development Workers of BC. The Band Social Development Workers (BSDW) administers Income Assistance On-reserve for BC First Nation Communities. They provide BSDW training, policy clarification and essential services as they relate to Social Development and Income Assistance.

www.fnsds.org

Income Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities

INAC BC Region provides income assistance for person with disabilities to individual or families living on –reserve. Eligibility criteria for and rate of INAC disability assistance mirror that of the Province. Currently, youth with disability may submit their application up to four months prior to their 18th birthday.

www.ainc-inac.gc.ca

(click on the Benefits link)

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's vision is a future in which First Nations, Inuit, Métis and northern communities are healthy, safe, self-sufficient and prosperous.

www.ainc-inac.gc.ca

Métis Nation British Columbia

Métis Nation British Columbia develops and enhances opportunities for Métis communities by implementing culturally relevant social and economic programs and services.

www.mpcbc.bc.ca



Acknowledgements

Morrisette, V., McKenzie, B., & Morrisette, L. (1993). Towards an Aboriginal model of social work practice: Cultural knowledge and traditional practices. *Canadian Social Work Review*, 10 (1), 91-108.

CLBC Aboriginal Advisory Council

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