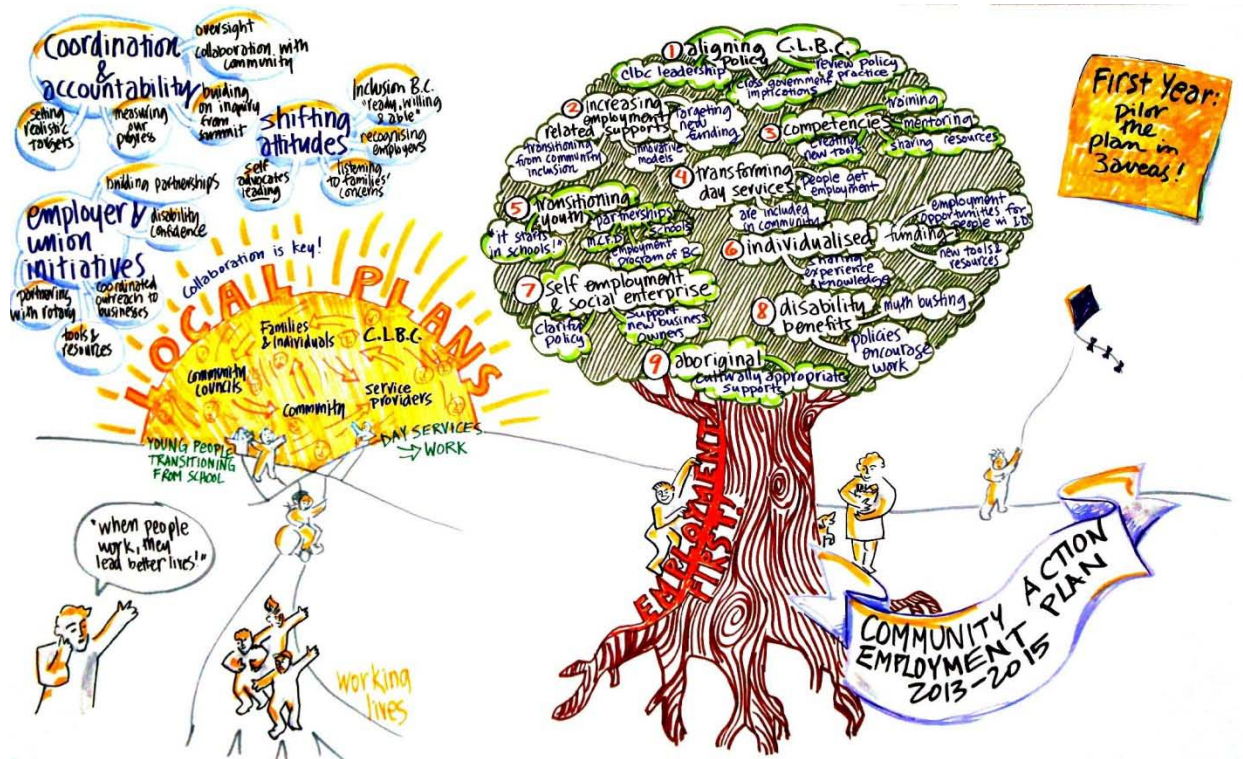


Community Action Employment Plan (CAEP)

“When people work, they lead better lives.”

– CAEP inquiry participant



Community Living BC & Community Partners

March 11, 2013

Community Action Employment Plan

Letter from the Co-chairs of the Core Planning Team

We are pleased to present the Community Action Employment Plan (“the Plan”). The Plan represents the hard work of volunteers, service providers, self advocates, family members, employers, community members, municipal representatives and Community Living BC (CLBC) staff, and is built on the input from across the province. The Plan will guide our work and collaboration over the next three years and will lead to significant progress towards meeting the vision of B.C. having the highest rate of participation in employment among people with developmental disabilities in North America.

The Plan acknowledges and incorporates the work already done on employment in B.C. (see Appendix A), and identifies new ways to move forward more collectively and cohesively.

It is significant for three main reasons:

Inclusion

The Plan represents a firm commitment to a direction begun nearly 30 years ago when parents decided that their children should go to their neighbourhood schools like their peers and the movement for full inclusion began. Naturally, when young people leave school after an integrated education, they have an expectation they will continue to participate in mainstream activities, whether they be post secondary education or work. Though the sector has had some successes in assisting people on this life course, the successes are not broadly based. Only a small percentage of the young people departing school have the opportunity to move into work in an integrated setting like their peers. The Plan represents a commitment to extend the opportunity to participate in integrated work much more uniformly to young people in British Columbia.

Co-creation¹

Making progress on employment for people with developmental disabilities is a “complex challenge”. It involves many organizations and groups of people. It involves attitude shifts and finding new ways to do things. We know many things about solving complex problems but one is absolutely critical: ***the best chance of success comes when the many stakeholders who are connected to the problem are involved in seeking and co-creating the solutions.*** In our planning process, from the design of the inquiry to the organization of the summit, people representing different interests (self advocates, families, CLBC staff, service providers and other community members including employers) have collaborated in finding the way forward. At the Summit, over 160 people co-created the basis for the plan. Our hope is that going forward this collaboration and co-creation continues through all of our work.

¹ Co-creation is a method of working together where an outcome is created through the collaboration of a group of people, usually representing a range of interests.

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Quality of Life

CLBC's *includeMe!* project, which measures the quality of life of people served by CLBC, highlights the importance of work to people's quality of life. Work represents a pathway to participating, contributing, greater financial security, relationships, belonging, self esteem, better mental health, confidence, identity, and even citizenship. The true measure of our success is the possibility that by advancing employment we can advance a shared vision where "employment of people with developmental disabilities in British Columbia is perceived as an ordinary occurrence", and ultimately the quality of life of British Columbians with developmental disabilities is improved.

We welcome all those who want to get involved in the success of this plan. It will require the collaboration of self advocates, employers, family members, service providers, schools, CLBC staff and other government partners, many of whom have not yet been engaged. As John Ralston Saul encourages, we can, and will always be pleased to, open the circle and add one more collaborator.

Finally, we would like to thank the many, many people who have already contributed to our work:

- The members of the Core Planning Team for the Plan
- The community facilitators who lead the inquiry
- The inquiry participants from across B.C.
- The organizers of the October 2012 Summit
- The volunteers who analysed the data from the inquiry
- The Summit participants.

Without your efforts we would not have travelled so far in such a short time.

With appreciation:

Dan Collins,



Executive Director
Langley Association for Community Living
Co-Chair, CAEP Core Planning Team

Jack Styan,



VP Strategic Initiatives
Community Living BC
Co-Chair, CAEP Core Planning Team

Community Action Employment Plan

Executive Summary

Background

Employment is a critical pathway to achieving a good life for many individuals with developmental disabilities. Participation in employment leads to numerous quality of life outcomes, including financial well-being, relationships, belonging, contribution, identity, meaning and health.

In recognition of its significance, the January 2012 Deputy Minister's Working Group report highlighted employment as one of 12 recommendations to improve the responsiveness of services to people with developmental disabilities and their families. CLBC's Strategic Plan for 2012-15 makes a commitment to deliver increased employment for the people served by CLBC.

During the first three quarters of its fiscal year 2012-13, CLBC engaged individuals, families, service providers, CLBC staff, school and government representatives, and employers, in a planning process leading to the development of a three year Community Action Employment Plan. In June 2012, conversations, led by 30 "community facilitators" gathered input on how to further employment for adults with developmental disabilities who want to work. Over 720 people (including 100 employers) participated in community conversations, one-to-one interviews or completed the on-line survey on CLBC's website.

The key themes from the inquiry were reviewed by over 160 attendees at a provincial Employment Summit sponsored by CLBC in Vancouver in late October 2012, and ways to move forward on these themes were identified. Participants came from all regions of the province, and included individuals, families, service providers, representatives from CLBC, Ministry of Social Development and a number of government ministries, schools, employers and communities.

The Inquiry for the Community Action Employment Plan showed work needs to occur in three areas:

- ***Building Confidence*** – Individuals and families recount experiences that have diminished their confidence in their ability to make meaningful contributions in workplaces. The lifetime of focus on their "disabilities" needs to be replaced with a confidence that they have a meaningful and valuable contribution to make.
- ***Changing Attitudes*** – Attitudes of people throughout the service system and community act as a significant hurdle that must be overcome to significantly increase the participation of individuals with developmental disabilities in employment. Shifts in attitudes necessary for success include:
 - Students are leaving school with an understanding that work is part of their future
 - Youth, individuals and families know of the options available to help pursue work
 - Individuals of all ages have the confidence they can work
 - Families are enthusiastic about their family members working
 - Service providers and CLBC staff believe everyone can work
 - Employers believe people with developmental disabilities belong in the workforce and know they can contribute to their business
 - Individuals with developmental disabilities are seen as people with abilities rather than people with disabilities.
- ***Navigating Transitions*** – Successful transitions are built on collaboration, involving individuals and those people around them, on trusting relationships, which result from honest open communication, and on flexible, focused plans, where the objectives are clear and implications understood. Time is often a critical element; successful transitions are seldom rushed.

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Deliverables of the Community Action Employment Plan

The groundwork for implementation of the Plan has been laid. The planning process has increased awareness of employment in the community living sector, strengthened working relationships and generated interest, momentum and expectations. Additionally, the broad community support for the plan will lever efforts and resources from entities beyond the community living sector and to non-traditional partners.

CLBC is implementing the plan during a time of provincial fiscal restraint, and the strategies within the plan have been developed within CLBC's current and anticipated funding envelope. The CLBC Employment Action Plan includes a number of specific elements:

Targets – The Plan includes a commitment to increase employment of individuals served by CLBC by 1,200 people over three years - from the current estimate of 2,200 participating in employment. Reliable mechanisms to measure progress and compare B.C.'s situation to other jurisdictions will be established.

Measurement – An element of the work will be to develop better internal mechanisms to measure the number of individuals served by CLBC who are employed, the rate of employment, as well as the rate of employment among young people accessing CLBC supports.

Collaboration – The partnerships that were developed to prepare the Plan must be maintained and expanded to ensure targets and goals are achieved. Ongoing collaborations with provincial ministries, Employment Program of BC, Minister's Council on Employment and Accessibility, service providers, employers, self-advocates, media and organizations such as Inclusion BC, BCGEU, Family Support Institute, BC Employ Net, BC Centre for Social Enterprise, First Nations, Rotary Clubs and BC Centre for Employment Excellence are proposed.

Employment First Culture – The Plan will promote a shift in attitude among all stakeholders toward a belief that individuals with developmental disabilities have a valuable contribution to make in inclusive employment situations. An Employment First approach will also help remove employment barriers for young people entering the system and encourage people in inclusion programs to consider employment options if they choose.

CLBC Leadership – The Plan includes measures to ensure CLBC walks the walk on an employment first strategy by increasing the number of adults with developmental disabilities that it employs. CLBC will introduce an updated Human Resources strategy that will include collaboration with the BCGEU. Implementing an Employment First strategy more broadly across government is also considered in the Plan.

Local Employment Plans – Advancing an employment agenda will be most successful if action occurs collaboratively with partners within local communities. Solutions must be tailored to the unique characteristics of regions because the types of work opportunities differ across urban and rural areas, opportunities will vary depending on the local economy and attitudes will differ depending on the history of success in a region. CLBC's Employment Action Plan includes an emphasis on building local capacity, promoting employers as leaders and developing collaborations with Community Councils, service providers, regional business organizations and self-advocates.

Transitioning Youth – Approximately 600 youth leave school and become eligible for services with CLBC each year. These youth are a priority for employment services because most expect to make

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contributions in the community as their peers do and most expect their services to support their personal goals instead of determining them. The Deputy Ministers' January 2012 Report included a recommendation to support transitioning youth. The Employment Plan will provide funding to help ensure youth and their families are adequately served and experience a smoother transition from school to work if they choose.

Transforming Community Inclusion Services – Many Community Inclusion services have begun the work of better meeting the personalized aspirations of individuals and their families. Individuals have expressed a desire to work and thus the shift towards employment has led this work. The Plan will provide support for individuals, families and service providers to make the shift as directed in their personal plans. We anticipate that the shift will free up resources that will be re-invested in employment programs.

Individualized Funding – The Deputy Ministers' January 2012 Report included a recommendation to support greater utilization of individualized funding models. While most individuals receiving CLBC services still do so through the provider system, the Employment Action Plan recognizes a growing number are choosing person-directed models of service. As a result, resources from the Plan will be devoted to enhancing the capacity of people using individualized funding to find and maintain work.

Self Employment – Social enterprise and self employment have the potential to provide many adults with developmental disabilities opportunities to pursue meaningful economic and community activities. However, many CLBC service providers may not be aware of resources to assist people in pursuing self employment. An additional barrier is financing where some programs need broader promotion. Among other things, the Employment Action Plan proposes a review of CLBC's self-employment policies and creation of a supported self-employment program at post-secondary institutions.

BC Disability Assistance – BC Disability Assistance represent long-term financial security for a significant number of individuals and their families. For some, the potential loss of these benefits may be a deterrent in the decision to choose to participate in employment. Some who are employed have experienced a reduction in income benefits as a result of exceeding income exemption limits. The Ministry of Social Development has made numerous changes over the last number of years to make employment a more attractive option for people to pursue, including increasing the monthly earnings exemption limits and introducing the option of an annualized earnings exemption. The Plan proposes CLBC and the Ministry work together to review the current rules related to participating in employment and evaluate options that may encourage more individuals to pursue work and/or employees to hire.

Attitudes – A shift in attitude among all stakeholders, which recognizes and supports the belief that individuals with developmental disabilities have a valuable contribution to make in inclusive employment situations.

Employment Program of BC – Better coordination of roles between CLBC, Employment Program of BC and their respective service providers to clarify pathways and assist individuals and their families navigate employment and related supports as they transition out of school. Work will focus on collaboration with the Employment Program of BC service providers to develop mechanisms to coordinate relationships between sector service providers and employers.

Employers and Unions – Development of tools and resources, relationships and business networks to promote employment of individuals.

Community Action Employment Plan

Introduction

CLBC views meaningful employment as a critical pathway towards achieving its vision of “being a recognized leader in supporting adults with developmental disabilities to lead good lives in welcoming communities”. Participation in employment leads to numerous quality of life outcomes, including financial well-being, relationships, belonging, contribution, identity, meaning and health. In the investigation of relationships between quality of life scores and respondent demographic characteristics, paid employment was related to higher quality of life in six out of the eight domains.

In January 2012, the Deputy Minister’s Working Group report highlighted employment as one of 12 recommendations to improve the responsiveness of services to people with developmental disabilities and their families. Recommendation #7 states that government: “Increase employment services planning and supports, as well as alternative day programming options. Government needs to build employment-related training through school supports and increased opportunities through vocational programs”.

Activities promoting people with developmental disabilities as valuable employees began more than twenty years ago. As people stopped being placed in institutions and began to take their place in the community, first segregated schools and then sheltered workshops were developed. A generation later, segregated schools were closed as children began to attend their neighbourhood schools. Youth who had been included in school-life began to want more than a move into sheltered workshops when they graduated. In the early 1990s, changes to Employment Standards Laws in B.C. eliminated the exemptions that had supported the use of Sheltered Workshops.

At the same time, people with developmental disabilities began to assert their authority to direct their own lives. Self advocates began to say: “I want to work and I want my work to be valued like those of other people who work: with pay.” No longer did they want to work in workshops where they were segregated and usually not paid the minimum wage. They wanted to work alongside other citizens and be paid at least the minimum wage for their efforts.

Over the years, people have been supported by their families, service providers, colleges, schools, and employers to work, earn a paycheck, make friends with co-workers and gain the satisfaction being able to contribute like others. While the closure of institutions ensured the movement of people into community, the transition to full inclusion in community life has been challenging to accomplish. Some individuals, service providers and employers have been successful in achieving this transition; however, a great deal of work remains in order for service systems and community to make the shift uniformly across the province so all British Columbians with developmental disabilities can successfully achieve their aspirations for “living good lives in welcoming communities”.

Current Situation

CLBC defines employment as work which pays at least minimum wage, and which meets conditions outlined in B.C.’s Employment Standards Act. Employment can be part-time, full-time or self-employment.

An estimate of the number of CLBC eligible people who are currently in employment can be made by comparing the list of people who are eligible for CLBC services with people who declare employment income on their BC Disability Benefits. Between October 2011 and September 2012 close to 17 per cent

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of the people eligible for CLBC supports declared employment income – approximately 2,200 individuals (See Appendix B: Employment Targets for more details).

CLBC funds service providers across the province to deliver a range of community inclusion programs, which include skill development, home-based community inclusion, community-based community inclusion and employment supports.

Approximately 10,000 people are funded in the full range of community inclusion supports, at a cost of approximately \$210 million/year. Within this funding envelope, CLBC funds nearly 1,400 employment spaces that provide individuals with job coaching, job search, and on-the-job training and support at a cost of \$10.7 million/year.

Recent Investments

BCGEU Scholarship

In October 2012, a two year tentative agreement was reached for over 400 BCGEU employees of CLBC. One of the highlights of the agreement included the establishment of a \$100,000 CLBC Scholarship Fund to support individuals who are eligible for CLBC services to develop their skills and abilities through education.

STEPS Forward

Like other youth, many young adults with developmental disabilities are not ready to proceed directly into employment. They want to continue their education to explore their interests and develop social and employment skills. Many want to continue in an inclusive post secondary setting. STEPS Forward, a family based organization, has pioneered such supports in B.C. by developing partnerships with post-secondary institutions. Since 2001, when STEPS was founded with its first partnership in B.C., over 20 students have accessed higher education in 6 post secondary institutions.

CLBC has provided STEPS Forward with grant funding by request since 2007. Over the next two years, CLBC and the Ministry of Social Development will fund STEPS Forward to assist approximately 25 young adults in accessing inclusive post-secondary education and obtaining employment that is related to their field of studies. At the same time, CLBC will be evaluating the services to determine the effectiveness of the program in providing an alternative pathway for young people to transition to adulthood.

Adults Employed by CLBC

Currently, CLBC employs 14 individuals with developmental disabilities across the province. The positions they hold include receptionist, office assistant and self advocate project coordinator. CLBC staff and management provide mentoring, training and skill development opportunities to the adults employed by the organization.

In addition, CLBC's *includeMe!* initiative to measure quality of life indicators will result in employment for approximately 20 additional individuals once the project is rolled out across the province.

CLBC is revising its Human Resources Strategy to align with Community Action Employment Plan and ensure CLBC has a clear talent strategy that identifies the best ways to attract, motivate and retain new and existing workforce segments. This talent strategy will include a diversity plan to increase CLBC's capacity to employ people with developmental disabilities and incorporate best practice as a potential working model for other organization's to consider.

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Customized Employment Pilot Project

The Customized Employment Demonstration Project was jointly funded by the Ministry of Social Development and CLBC and ran from July 1, 2008 to May 31, 2012. Customized Employment is where the employment relationship is individualized to meet the needs of both the employee and the employer. It starts with a strength-based individualized determination (discovery process) of the abilities, needs, and interests of the person with a disability, and then seeks to establish a match with an employer that results in optimal conditions for success. An element of the match is meeting the specific needs of the employer.

The Customized Employment Demonstration Project was implemented after the Ministry of Social Development and CLBC conducted consultations which suggested that individuals with developmental disabilities would benefit from a different approach to achieve their employment goals. The total cost of the four-year pilot was \$4.31 million and was shared equally by CLBC and the Ministry of Social Development. Eight service providers, who were the successful proponents of a request for proposal, were selected for the project. Originally, the contracts were for three years; the project was extended an additional year to coincide with the launch of the Employment Program of BC². The goal of the project was to evaluate the customized employment model, develop community capacity to increase employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities and provide employment opportunities for over 300 individuals.

²About 50% of the individuals who were still involved in the Customized Employment Demonstration Project at the completion of the pilot were transferred to the Employment Program of BC; the remainder continue to be supported by CLBC.

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Community Action Employment Planning

In November 2011, as the Customized Employment Demonstration Project was nearing its completion, individuals, families, service providers and CLBC came together to explore next steps to advance the development of more employment opportunities for the people CLBC supports. This planning group became known as the Core Planning Team. Their goal was to create a plan – a Community Action Employment Plan – that would coordinate the efforts of the sector.

In January 2012, the Deputy Minister’s Working Group report highlighted employment as one of 12 recommendations to improve the responsiveness of services to people with developmental disabilities and their families. Recommendation #7 states: “Increase employment services planning and supports, as well as alternative day programming options. Government needs to build employment-related training through school supports and increased opportunities through vocational programs”.

The Core Planning Team decided that they wanted to use the planning process to build on our past successes, to learn from the wealth of knowledge and experience that exists in our communities, and to focus on the positive. Successful practices, like Customized Employment, are based on people’s abilities rather than their disabilities. The Planning Team also wanted to use the planning to build support, relationships and enthusiasm for the plan.

Appreciative inquiry was chosen as the approach for the planning process as it is designed to engage people with diverse perspectives, promote collaboration, build relationships, and result in the co-creation of solutions that might be unique in differing communities. It is an approach to change that has been used successfully in small and large projects world-wide. Appreciative inquiry deliberately asks positive questions to ignite constructive dialogue and inspire action. Innovation Partners International was the successful proponent chosen through the CLBC procurement process to help with the design of the inquiry and planning process.

In April, over 100 people put their names forward to be “community facilitators” to lead the inquiry. Thirty were chosen and came to together for training in Appreciative Inquiry at the end of May. In June, July, August and September they hosted local conversations, interviewed individuals and collected data. At the same time, the questions were posted on the CLBC website.

Employers are critical to successful employment. It was apparent as the process began that there was a need to do something different with the business community. A separate set of questions was developed and over 100 employers were interviewed by a mix of community facilitators and service providers. This information was also boiled down and presented at the Summit.

Over 720 people from across the province participated. A team of volunteers reviewed approximately 200 pages of data and identified key themes. These themes were examined by over 160 self advocates, families, service providers, CLBC and government representatives, education professionals, community members and employers at the October 22 and 23 Summit. Their discussions resulted in 27 actionable goals and ideas on how to move them forward. This document represents the information gathered at the summit. It is the three year Community Employment Action Plan.

Community Action Employment Plan

Themes Emerging from the Inquiry

During the course of the inquiry, a number of themes came up again and again:

- Places that have adopted an “employment first” policy, where work is expected of people with developmental disabilities unless they cannot work or say they don’t want to work, have been much more successful
- Success depends on collaboration among individuals, families, service providers, funders, policy makers, schools and colleges and, most importantly, employers. Everyone has a role
- People with developmental disabilities have demonstrated that they can be valuable employees when they are given the chance
- The benefits of employment are many: financial, personal satisfaction, identity, relationships, health and recognition as valued citizens
- Customized employment is a “game-changer”. It means that service providers must consistently focus on the ideal conditions of employment, what people like to do, what people want to do and, when a match is made with an employer who needs those gifts, everyone can work
- People in day programs often want to work and have shown us they can work. Service providers who want to “transform” their day services have shown us it can be done
- Attitudes and beliefs – sometimes of individuals themselves, sometimes of families, sometimes of service providers or CLBC staff, other professionals, and sometimes of employers – can either hold people back or allow them to fulfill their dreams
- Schools, along with families, play a critical role in preparing young people for work.
- Employers who have hired people with disabilities are, more often than not, happy employers

The key actions that emerged from the inquiry and Summit included:

- Aligning CLBC policies and practices to an employment first approach, optimizing people’s ability to move into work, and developing a CLBC commitment that demonstrates CLBC’s leadership in this work
- Developing a coordinated communications plan with other disability groups targeted to employers that promotes the benefits of hiring someone with a developmental disability and the contributions individuals can make to the workplace
- Aligning the actions of the Community Living Sector with the work of the Minister’s Council-and the focus on working with employers
- Engaging unions to remove barriers to the employment of individuals with developmental disabilities and to using customized employment
- Working both provincially and locally to develop a training component that builds the capacity of service providers to transition people from inclusion programs to employment programs
- Working both provincially and locally with Youth Transition Protocol partners, with an emphasis on schools and school districts, to build capacity of CLBC and employment programs to assist young people transition to employment.

Community Action Employment Plan

Purpose of the Community Action Employment Plan

The Community Action Employment Plan, along with the results of the Inquiry and Summit, will:

- Guide the delivery of CLBC's employment supports
- Establish an updated and achievable three year employment target along with a plan to measure progress
- Align employment supports with the 'one government approach'
- Share the Community Action Employment Plan with the cross-ministry Supports to Adults with Developmental Disabilities committee to help guide the development of the inter-ministry framework of service delivery
- Include measures CLBC intends to take to increase the number of adults with developmental disabilities employed within the organization
- Assist B.C. to become a national leader in increasing employment for adults with developmental disabilities.

2015 Target

The goal of the Community Action Employment Plan is to increase the number of CLBC eligible individuals who are participating in employment or self employment, and to provide individuals who are already employed but want to work more with increased opportunities for employment.

As outlined in Appendix B, CLBC's definition of employment will be reviewed and employment outcomes will be developed. Additionally, we will develop methods for measuring outcomes and milestones.

Our preliminary three year target is to increase the number of people who are participating in employment by 1,200 over and above the approximately 2,200 who are currently employed by the end of 2015. As work on the Plan occurs, however, targets are likely to be refined.

Community Action Employment Plan

The Action Plan

The Action Plan is a working document, intended to guide the implementation of the Community Action Employment Plan, which is outlined above. The Action Plan outlines actions, responsibilities and timelines. As with any action plan, new actions may be identified and actions may be amended as we better understand indicators of success.

A. COORDINATION & ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Oversight and Coordination

Progress in finding and keeping work for many more people with developmental disabilities will require collaboration among many partners. The Community Action Employment Plan has been conceived and developed jointly by CLBC and community (represented by self advocates, families, service providers and other community participants including employers).

Objectives:

- Implementation of the Community Action Employment Plan is coordinated and monitored collaboratively with community
- Implementation is linked and/or coordinated with key community partners
- Maintain and build on the momentum created during the inquiry and summit
- Opportunities to collaborate with key partners who have similar interests are pursued.

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
Implementation is coordinated and monitored collaboratively with community	Maintain Core Planning Team Add additional members as required to improve representation	CLBC; Langley Assn of Community Living	On-going	
Implementation is linked and or coordinated with key community partners	Develop clear linkages/roles/responsibilities with key partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BC Centre for Employment Excellence - BC Centre for Social Enterprise - BCEmployNet - BC Employment Development Strategy Network - Employment Program of BC - Community Living Councils - Inclusion BC Ministry of Education 	CLBC	Q2	

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Opportunities to collaborate with key partners who have similar interests are pursued	Identify and collaborate with initiatives who have common goals, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Social Development: Creation of an Employers Forum on Disability - Federal Government projects that support employment for people with disabilities - Vancouver Foundation: Disability Supports for Employment Fund 	CLBC	Q1	
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2. Outcomes and Accountability

To ensure meaningful progress, the Core Planning Team inspired participants at the October Summit to “think big” throughout the planning process by imagining B.C. with the highest rate of employment among people with developmental disabilities in North America. Going forward, we need a target at which to aim and we need to establish reliable mechanisms with which to measure progress against that target.

Our attempts to quantify our planning target, as well as comparing B.C.’s current situation compared to Washington State (See Appendix B for further analysis), highlighted the need to do more than set a target. CLBC needs a clear definition of employment, a reliable way of measuring this number, as well as a way to compare B.C. to other jurisdictions.

Objectives

- The Plan has meaningful, yet realistic, provincial employment targets to work towards and against which to measure progress
- The plan has benchmarks (Key Performance Indicators) against which progress can be measured towards the Plan’s goals
- Reliable mechanisms to measure employment and compare B.C.’s situation and progress to other jurisdictions have been established
- Definitions and reporting expectations in employment contracts (both DD and PSI) are clear
- Reporting on employment results happens regularly
- Incentives for accomplishing benchmarks are identified and implemented

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
The plan has meaningful, yet realistic, provincial employment targets to work towards and against which to measure progress	Proposed targets: Increase the number of individuals participating in employment/self employment (beyond the current 2,200) by 1,200	Leads: CLBC; Langley Assn of Community Living	Q1	

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The plan has benchmarks (Key Performance Indicators) for both CLBC and community against which progress can be measured towards the Plan's goals	Work plans will have benchmarks, including methods of measurement, by which progress can be quantified. In collaboration with service providers, establish Performance Indicators and contract deliverables	Leads: CLBC; Langley Assn of Community Living	Q1	
Reliable mechanisms to measure employment and compare B.C.'s situation and progress to other jurisdictions have been established	Evaluate options and adopt reliable means to measure/compare B.C.'s current situation and progress to other jurisdictions in Canada and North America: 1. Review of the measures 2. Identification of the processes to collect data 3. Implementation of reporting mechanisms	CLBC	Q4	
Definitions and reporting expectations in employment contracts (both DD and PSI) are clear	See #3 Aligning CLBC Policy and Practice			
Reporting on employment results happens regularly	Internal/external mechanisms established	CLBC	On-going	On-going
Incentives for accomplishing benchmarks are identified and implemented	Outcomes and accountability group explore options	CLBC; Langley Assn of Community Living	Q4	

Community Action Employment Plan

B. SHIFTING TO EMPLOYMENT FIRST

The most dramatic increases in the rates of employment for people with developmental disabilities have been greater in jurisdictions which have adopted an “*Employment First*” framework³. While the precise meaning of Employment First varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction⁴, the result of a shift to an Employment First framework would be that Community Living BC, individuals, families, service providers, schools, funders and policy makers share a vision of people with developmental disabilities being employed: a vision of “*Employment First*”.

The Inquiry suggested that B.C. was ready for an Employment First agenda, provided it continues to respect individual and family preference in personal planning.

The Inquiry also indicated that implementing an Employment First framework in B.C. would include the following shifts:

- CLBC “walking the walk” as a leader in hiring people with developmental disabilities
- Reviewing, shifting and aligning policy and practice so that employment is a priority
- Increasing our investment in the support of people who want to pursue employment
- Supporting service providers to increase their ability to support people seeking and maintaining employment
- Examining hurdles, real and perceived, that individuals and families identify as problematic
- Better preparing young people and their families for employment, and
- Fully incorporating employment into the planning support that the sector provides.

3. Aligning CLBC Policy and Practice

Objectives

- CLBC policies and practices are consistent with an Employment First approach
- Achieving a consistent Employment First approach to people with developmental disabilities across government
- CLBC “Walks the Walk”: CLBC is a model employer in hiring and supporting people with developmental disabilities
- Policy and practices support the successful transition of youth into employment
- Policy and practice support successful transition of individuals from inclusion services to employment.

³ Achieving Social and Economic Inclusion: from Segregation to ‘Employment First’, Canadian Association for Community Living, June 2011.

⁴ Employment First, as defined by the Employment Action Plan for Persons with a Disability in New Brunswick 2012-17, “...policy that:

- Reflects that every working aged New Brunswicker with a disability is presumed to be employable
- Provides that the first objective of government policies and programs will be to support persons with a disability to work to their fullest potential
- Acknowledges that persons with disabilities have opportunities to plan careers and enjoy employment opportunities beyond entry level types of occupations
- Acknowledges that persons with a disability may still need access to disability-related supports for goals and activities that fall outside of employment (p. 19)”.

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Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
CLBC policies and practices are consistent with an Employment First approach	<p>CLBC Leadership Program Team will:</p> <p>1. Undertake a review of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employment First definition - Access to service – CLBC and EPBC - Guide to support allocation/priority ranking tools - Positioning of employment in planning - Procuring and contract language, including: service descriptions and deliverables - Funding guidelines including funding levels, expenses, infrastructure to provide services, job classification, training in more specialized matters - Individualized Funding rules to examine the need for change to allow purchase of employment services (from host agency) for their employment specialists - Monitoring and evaluation - Communications with the following primary targets: Employers, individuals and families leaving school, individuals and families in day services, day service providers <p>2. Make recommendations for changes</p>	Lead: CLBC	Q2	
Develop new policies, practices and resources to incorporate Employment First efforts into individualized funding options	<p>Evaluate the success of current person-directed models in achieving employment outcomes and identify success stories</p> <p>Incorporate Employment First policy into policy and practice associated with individualized funding</p> <p>Identify, evaluate and promote practices and models that optimize outcomes for people using individualized funding</p> <p>Provide incentives to individuals using individualized funding to promote staff development</p>			Q1 2014

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Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
Achieving a consistent Employment First approach to people with developmental disabilities across government	<p>Exploration of an Employment First policy being implemented more broadly across government</p> <p>Discussions with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the cross-ministry steering group (STADD) - the Transition Steering Group - Ministry of Education - Ministry of Advance Education - Ministry of Social Development - Ministry for Children and Families <p>Identify the options for supporting youth who graduate from school at 18 and don't qualify for CLBC services until 19</p>	Lead: CLBC	Q4	
CLBC "Walks the Walk": CLBC is a model employer in hiring and supporting people with developmental disabilities	<p>Revise CLBC's Human Resources Strategy to ensure that CLBC has a clear talent strategy that identifies the best ways to attract, motivate and retain new and existing workforce segments</p> <p>This Talent Strategy will include a diversity plan to increase CLBC's capacity to employ people with developmental disabilities and incorporate best practice as a potential working model for other organization's to consider</p> <p>For discussion: Facilitators and analysts have "employment understanding" competency in their job descriptions</p> <p>CLBC evaluates and documents successes for use in promoting employment</p>	<p>Lead: CLBC</p> <p>CLBC</p>	Q2	<p>2014 Q1</p> <p>2014 Q1</p>
Policy and practice supports the successful transition of youth into employment	Evaluate work in Goal #7, Transitioning Youth for policy and practice implications	Lead: CLBC		2014 Q1

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Policy and practice supports successful transition of individuals and funding from inclusion services to employment	Evaluate work in Goal #6, Transitioning Inclusion Services for policy and practice implications	Lead: CLBC		2014 Q1
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4. Employment Supports

Many factors influence success in supporting people to achieve their employment goals but key factors include the availability of employment and employment-related services (e.g. skill development, community inclusion) that support people to find and keep work.

The inquiry suggested that the relationship between the family and the service provider(s) will be a key element of success in advancing our employment objectives. Families and individuals often view the pursuit of employment as a risk. Change, increased inclusive activities, increased independence, dependence on natural supports, the loss of the security of community inclusion programs, and financial security have all been identified as fears that stand in the way of people pursuing employment. The trusting relationship with service providers is a key element in reducing these perceived fears, especially for those individuals who have historically participated in community inclusion programs. By definition, families see these relationships as ongoing.

As the use of services provided by the Employment Program of BC by individuals who are eligible for CLBC services grows, we anticipate the need to explore collaborative approaches which provide or assure:

- “Wrap-around” supports that provide the security for individuals and families to pursue employment
- On-going supports that provide employers with the confidence that they will be supported through issues and changes subsequent to hiring
- Supports to assist individuals to pursue more or different employment periodically.

While additional funding would enable us to move more quickly and meet higher targets, the plan presented is within the current and projected funding envelope over the next three years.

CLBC currently allocates close to \$210 million on over 10,130 Community Inclusion⁵ spaces (Table 1. CLBC Community Inclusion Programs, 2011/12). Within this funding envelope, approximately \$10.5 million or about 5% is currently spent on employment programming.

⁵ This data is approximate as CLBC has neither completed negotiations with service providers regarding the exact number of spaces funded nor has a reporting framework for employment been implemented. Additionally, data is only for developmental disability contracted services, so excludes PSI and individualized funding arrangements.

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Table 1. CLBC Community Inclusion Programs (2011/12)			
Service Category	Spaces	Expenditures (\$ millions)	%
Skill Development	705	11.786	5.6%
Employment	1,391	10.551	5.0%
Community Based Community Inclusion	6,553	149.711	70.7%
Home Based Community Inclusion	1,483	39.686	18.7%
	10,132	211.734	100.0%

Objectives

CLBC will make targeted investments over three years to advance the Plan, including:

- An allocation of anticipated new funding, which is designated for people entering the CLBC service system each year, in three Quality Service areas in year one then in all quality service areas in the two remaining years of the strategy
- Making the best use of funding across government to ensure adequate investment in employment programming and supports
- Exploration of new models of supporting individuals in employment, which include an element of community inclusion support, especially for those people who do not participate full time in employment.

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
An allocation of anticipated new funding for people entering the CLBC service system in three Quality Service areas in year one then in all quality service areas in the two remaining years of the strategy	Refine and obtain approval of the overall financial plan	CLBC	2012 Q4	
	Develop plan for allocating new funding toward employment in 3 micro regions Develop framework for allocation of funding provincially	CLBC	Q4	

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Making the best use of funding across government to ensure adequate investment in employment programming and supports	Local planning - develop a change management plan to address the implications of shifting Community Based Inclusion Program funding toward employment	CLBC	Q1	
Exploration of new models of support	Evaluate “hybrid” models and other promising practices that employment or community inclusion providers have begun to implement	CLBC	Q4	

5. Increasing Competencies

The Customized Employment Demonstration Project showed the potential of customized employment as a tool to assist people with a broad range of abilities to successfully secure and maintain employment. It also showed that there is a need to invest in the professional development of service providers and families, especially those administering Individualized Funding, to increase and maintain the sectors capacity to provide employment services.

Objectives

- Invest in training to increase the sector’s capacity, including the Employment Program of BC
- Create a technical assistance network to provide mentoring and sharing knowledge
- Ensure that CLBC staff have adequate knowledge and tools to implement an Employment First agenda
- Create new tools and resources to enhance the capacity of service providers, including the Employment Program of BC, and families to support people in finding work.

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
Invest in training to increase the sector’s capacity, including EPBC	Develop a provincial plan guiding investment in capability development of service providers, including individualized funding, families, and home-share providers which supports needs as identified in local plans	Leads: CLBC; BC Employment Development Strategy Network (BCEDN)	Q1	
Create a technical assistance network to provide mentoring and sharing	Explore technical assistance, mentoring models and present options to the Core Planning Team Work with the sector to establish a formal	Leads: CLBC; BCEmployNet; BCEDN	Q3	

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Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
knowledge	service provider/family network for sharing knowledge and provide mentoring. Ensure that work includes families utilizing IF and their staff		Q4	
Ensure CLBC staff have adequate knowledge and tools to implement an Employment First agenda	Review discovery goal based planning for Employment First content and revise accordingly Develop required training tools Develop resources for staff to use when planning with individuals and families	Leads: CLBC	Q4	
Create new tools and resources to enhance the capacity of service providers, including EPBC, home-share providers and families to support people in finding work	Evaluate sector needs and existing resources Develop new tools and resources to fill the gaps (For example “toolkits for change”, a multi-purpose template/toolbox to build and maintain employment) Ensure that the work includes families utilizing IF and their staff	Leads: CLBC CLBC; Community Partners		2014 Q1 2014 Q3

6. Transforming Inclusion Programs

CLBC currently serves approximately 10,000 individuals in Community Based Inclusion Services (See Table 1). Our broad goal is to nurture a shift towards employment.

The people served in Community Based Inclusion Services cross a diverse range of age, abilities and interests. Some are former participants of sheltered workshops. Others have only been involved in social, recreational and life-skill building programs since leaving school. Some have been served in programs for many years – some more than forty years, others for only a few years. Some people have clearly indicated that they would like to work. Others have been more tentative, and still others have been definitive that they are not interested.

Similarly, service providers range in ability, experience and interest in transitioning services and/or individuals into employment. Finally, communities may or may not have well developed employment service provider networks.

The plan is to provide opportunities to individuals who express an interest in Employment. As people enjoy success, we anticipate that those who are more tentative will become more willing to seek employment. This approach assumes that the rate will begin slowly and individuals and families will be

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encouraged to try work as the number of success stories increase. As a result, the work of transitioning individuals, funding and service provider staff is complex, with implications for numerous parties and dependent on many factors, including:

- Working with individuals and families
- Working with staff and unions
- Ensuring supports are in place to support employment
- Planning supports for individuals who are not working full time
- Development of financial and transition plans
- Potentially working with other employment providers in the community.

Some providers have successfully navigated the transition, and their knowledge and experience will be invaluable to those undertaking the work for the first time. The bulk of the work involved in exploring interest and developing transition plans will be best coordinated locally by CLBC Quality Service and Community Planning and Development teams through the “local” plans outlined in *Section E.s*.

Objectives

- Provide employment opportunities for people who currently receive services in community based inclusion programs
- Increase the capacity of community based inclusion programs to support people who want to pursue employment
- Creation of local three year plans for transitioning inclusion services and managing change.

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
Provide employment opportunities for people who currently receive services in community based inclusion programs	Develop resources and strategies a) for individuals and their families: - to encourage exploring employment - address concerns and/or hurdles to choosing employment as an option - gather and share what is necessary for successful transitions b) for services providers: - to outline a transition process to ensure successful transitions Develop a peer-to-peer mentoring network works to support transitioning service providers ⁶	Leads: CLBC; FSI; BCEDSN	Q4	

⁶ From #2

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Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
Increase the capacity of community based inclusion programs to support people who want to pursue employment	Development of strategies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assist service providers in managing change as individuals move into employment supports - capacity development and mentoring of agencies to support individuals and their families to consider employment to transition to employment - manage the reform of inclusion services to support people to choose employment 	Lead: CLBC	Q1	
Creation of local three year plans for transitioning inclusion services and managing change	See E. Local Plans for implementation			

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7. Transitioning Youth

Approximately 600 youth leave school and become eligible for services with CLBC each year and they are a priority for employment services for a number of reasons. First, a significant number expect to participate and make contributions in the community just as most of their peers do. Increasingly, they expect their services to support rather than determine their personal goals. They represent a group of motivated employment seekers who are primed for employment. Second, this group is a priority for services and every year services are developed around them. This represents a pool of resources that can be used to support youth and bolster employment services capacity. Third, there are several tracks youth can take that can lead to employment, including: CLBC funded employment services, Employment Program of BC, advanced education opportunities through specialized programs at colleges and universities, and inclusive opportunities at universities and colleges through STEPS Forward. As a result, there is a significant role for CLBC facilitators in introducing, exploring and planning supports for individuals and their families.

When young people and their families approach the transition to adulthood with employment as a goal, with some exploration of interests and skills, and some prior work experience, they are far more successful. There are, however, still a significant number of young people transitioning to adulthood who have not considered employment as a life option nor have they explored their interests and skills. For this reason, work needs to continue with the education system and MCFD children's services to ensure youth are prepared for an adulthood which includes work. This work can occur both provincially, with provincial entities such as the Ministry of Education, BC Council of Administrators of Special Education, Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), and the Federation of Community Social Services of BC, and other and locally, with individuals, families, schools, MCFD, service providers and other stakeholders.

The inquiry also indicated the way employment is introduced to individuals and families as they begin to plan for the transition to adulthood can be improved. CLBC services need to be better coordinated with those offered by the Employment Program of BC.

This work needs to occur at both provincial and local levels. Provincial actions follow. Local actions can be found in Section E. Local Plans.

Objectives

- Youth and their families are prepared for a future which includes work
- Youth who want to pursue employment experience a seamless transition from school to employment
- Youth and their families are secure in choosing work as an option through the transition to adulthood
- Youth and their families are aware of options for skills training and employment supports
- Solutions exist for youth of age 18-19 for who are not in school and who want to work
- CLBC Facilitators have the tools and knowledge to support individuals and families in planning for employment.

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Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
	See E. Local Plans for implementation			
Youth and their families are prepared for a future which includes work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and disseminate best practices used in school and post-secondary education in supporting youth for future work success - Explore with Services Providers, Employment Program of BC, Ministries of Education, Children and Families, Social Development, and Advanced Education, their roles in supporting youth and their families in preparing for successful participation in work - Explore and evaluate promising practices (e.g. STEPS Forward) in preparing youth for work 	Leads: CLBC; Community Partners	Q1	
Youth who want to pursue employment experience a seamless transition from school to employment	<p>Youth and their families are aware of the pathways and options through which they can pursue employment, including CLBC and EPBC funded services</p> <p>Roles and relationships among schools, MCFD, EPBD and CLBC are clear so that the transition to adulthood is smooth and user friendly</p>	Lead: CLBC	Q2	
Youth and their families feel secure in choosing work as an option through the transition to adulthood	Identify solutions to the barriers that prevent youth from choosing employment as they transition to adulthood	Lead: CLBC	Q2	
Solutions exist for youth of age 18-19 for who are not in school and who want to work	See #3 Aligning CLBC Policy and Practice			

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Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
CLBC Facilitators have the tools and knowledge to support individuals and families in planning for employment	See #5. Increase Competencies of Service Providers and CLBC Staff			

8. Individualized Funding and Family-Governed Support Models

The Deputy Ministers’ Review of Community Living British Columbia recommendation #8 “Support greater utilization of individualized funding” recognized that individualized funding provides more control over services to individuals and families and increases the likelihood people experiencing quality of life outcomes. CLBC has made a commitment to personalized planning and services, a key element of which is a commitment to individualized funding, which includes person-directed services in the forms of person centered societies, direct funding, host agencies and family-governance models of support.

While the majority of individuals receiving CLBC services still do so through the provider system, a growing number of individuals are choosing person-directed models of services that are highly individualized. As more individuals choose individualized funding and as new forms of individualized funding are developed (i.e. family-governance models), employment goals and supports must be incorporated into planning, implementation and evaluation of these support models.

Objectives

- Increase employment opportunities for people who use individualized funding
- Develop new policies, practices and resources to incorporate employment first efforts in individualized funding
- Create new tools and resources to enhance the capacity of individuals, families, person centered societies and family governed groups to support people in finding and maintaining work
- Include support workers and staff of those using individualized funding in training directed at providers and create training specific to person-directed support models
- Enhance the ability of individuals and families using individualized funding to share resources, knowledge, and provide mentorship to each other.

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Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
Increase employment opportunities for people who use individualized funding	Evaluate policies and practices to ensure that an employment first approach is included in individualized funding options (See #3 Aligning CLBC Policy and Practice) Development of strategies to: - assist individuals and their families in exploring and assessing how employment would add to individuals' quality of life - addressing concerns and/or hurdles to choosing employment as an option	See #3		2015Q1
Create resources to enhance the capacity those individuals using individualized funding options to support people in finding and maintaining work	Ensure that any toolkits or other resources directed to building the capacity of providers be appropriate for individuals using individualized funding and develop resources specific to person-directed models of service delivery Develop guidance to individuals using individualized funding, regarding Employment Program of BC, CLBC employment services, and other resources. See #5. Increasing Competencies	See #5		
Include staff of those using individualized funding in training activities	See #5. Increasing Competencies	See #5		
Enhance the ability of people using individualized funding options to share resources, knowledge, and provide mentorship to each other	Support service providers and successful individuals using individualized funding to act as supports and mentors for those who are developing capacity to act as employment providers or who are transitioning people from inclusion programs to employment	Lead: CLBC		2014 Q1

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9. Self Employment and Social Enterprise

Self employment and micro enterprises provide opportunities for many people who are interested in pursuing meaningful economic activities that include community participation. Many people, including service providers, may not be aware of this option or resources to assist people in pursuing self employment. It is clear that this option needs to be brought to people’s attention, and that existing resources be identified and made widely available to individuals, families, and service providers. An additional barrier in some instances is financing – there are some programs (e.g. VanCity’s Micro Enterprise program) that need broader promotion, and additional research is needed into exploring additional options.

Social enterprise ventures for adults with developmental disabilities provide employment opportunities and increase the pool of revenues available to support individuals in employment. However, the sector has a diverse array of perspectives about serving people in segregated settings. There is a fear that while segregated settings continue to exist, the broader community will not respond inclusively and develop employment opportunities. Another concern is that social enterprise should not rely on CLBC funding but needs to be financially viable on their own and ensure people earn minimum wage.

While CLBC’s role in personal choice should be minor, the organization must wrestle with this complex question in determining how to best assist individuals with their personal planning, ensuring that people have meaningful choices and how to make funding decisions. The vigorous discussion that occurs around these issues suggests that CLBC needs to review its policies and ensure that they are well communicated.

Objectives

- Clarify CLBC’s policies with respect to self employment and social enterprise
- Individuals and families are supported to create their own enterprise or be self-employed

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
Clarify CLBC’s policies with respect to self employment and social enterprise	<p>Review CLBC’s policies relating to self employment, social enterprise and funding, including individualized funding including leveraging EPBC service offerings associated with self-employment</p> <p>Clarify policy and practices among individuals, families, service providers and CLBC staff</p> <p>See Goal # 3 Aligning CLBC Policy and Practice</p>	Leads: CLBC		2014 Q1

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<p>Individuals and families are supported to create their own enterprise or be self-employed</p>	<p>Education and Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore and evaluate options for providing supports to individuals and families in pursuing self employment - Create a supported self-employment program at post secondary institutions Social Finance - Identify innovative sources of capital assets to support entrepreneurship on a small capital investment basis - Increase awareness of VanCity loan program 	<p>Lead: Langley Assn of Community Living; CLBC</p> <p>BC Centre for Social Enterprise</p>		<p>Q1 2014</p>
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10. Disability Assistance

Disability Assistance represents long-term financial security for a significant number of individuals. Many individuals have told stories about the challenging process they need to follow in order to qualify for benefits. For some people, the potential loss of these benefits may act as a deterrent in the decision to choose to participate in employment. Additionally, some people who are employed have experienced a reduction in income benefits as a result of exceeding employment income exemption limits. Combined with low financial literacy levels, at times this has resulted in financial hardship. This has led to a pervasive culture that sees Disability Assistance as difficult to obtain and easy to lose.

The Ministry of Social Development has made numerous changes over the last number of years to make employment a more attractive option for people to pursue, including increasing the monthly earnings exemption limits and introducing the option of an annualized earnings exemption. The Plan proposes CLBC and the Ministry work together to review the current rules related to participating in employment and evaluate options that may encourage more individuals to pursue work and/or employers to hire. However, it appears that more is required to ensure persons in receipt of Disability Assistance are supported to pursue employment as they are able.

Objectives

- Develop communications regarding Disability Assistance and employment
- Work with the Ministry of Social Development to ensure BC Disabilities Benefits supports individuals who wish to pursue employment or maximize their employment potential.

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Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
BC Disabilities Benefits supports individuals who wish to pursue employment or maximize their employment potential	<p><u>Communications</u></p> <p>Collaboratively develop a communications strategy that to “de-mystify” rules around employment and BC Disability Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - targets: individuals, families, service providers and CLBC and MSD staff - breaking down the ‘myths’ - dealing with the dis-incentive of the limit on earnings - developing a more trusting relationship between MSD, individuals and families⁷ - development and dissemination of tools as part of the strategy: for example MSD myth brochures at all offices <p><u>Policy Framework</u></p> <p>Collaboration with MSD and community to explore options that would provide greater incentives for individuals to pursue work</p>	Leads: CLBC; Inclusion BC		2014 Q1

11. Aboriginal People

Aboriginal people with disabilities are a specialized population that face multiple barriers to participating in employment that can include historic stereotypes and living in rural settings. CLBC recognizes the need to deepen its understanding of these barriers, requirements to adapt policies, practices and strategies, and identify partnerships to help more aboriginal people with developmental disabilities be successful in finding and keeping employment.

Objectives

- Aboriginal individuals who want to work have access to effective and culturally appropriate supports to participate in employment.

⁷ From Action #26

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Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
Aboriginal individuals who want to work have access to effective and culturally appropriate supports to participate in employment	Deepen our understanding of the barriers faced by Aboriginal individuals in being supported and/or seeking employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop local and provincial partners with similar objectives - engage individuals, families and service providers - develop of solutions to overcome barriers 	CLBC		2014Q4

C. SHIFTING ATTITUDES

From the beginning of the Community Employment Action Plan inquiry, people spoke about attitudes as a barrier to people’s employment aspirations. While there is a sense that attitudes are shifting, there is broad consensus that many families, service providers, schools, employers and even individuals still have yet to make this shift.

Shifting attitudes will take time – and long term, intentional and coherent communications planning that integrates the activities of CLBC, service providers and other organizations and promotes the following attitudes and values is needed:

- Individuals with developmental disabilities are seen as people with abilities rather than people with disabilities
- Students are leaving school with an understanding work is part of their future
- Individuals of all ages have the confidence they can work
- Families believe it is possible and are enthusiastic about their family members working
- Employers believe people with developmental disabilities belong in the workforce and know they can contribute to their business
- Service providers and CLBC staff believe everyone can work

Objectives

- A coordinated communications strategy to shift attitudes
- Awareness campaign targeting the business community that recognizes the good work of employers already engaged in inclusive hiring practices
- An awareness campaign targeting families to recognized the valued roles individuals can play as employees
- Self advocates play a leadership role in changing public attitudes

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Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
A coordinated communications strategy to shift attitudes	Establish a coordinating group to: - create and implement a communication strategy which coordinates efforts among community living partners, including Community Councils, to leverage resources and impact	Leads: CLBC; Inclusion BC	Q1	
An awareness campaign targeting the business community to recognize the good work of employers and the capabilities of individuals	Inclusion BC, along with member organizations, will develop and implement a campaign, <i>Ready, Willing and Able</i> , that: - builds support among businesses - works with existing business structures, such as rotary, chambers of commerce, Boards of Trade, municipal governments, and others - finds a business and government Champion - may include a provincial awards programs that recognizes and promotes employers for providing work experiences, adopting positives HR policies and hiring	Leads: Inclusion BC Supported by: member ACLs and CLBC	Q1 and ongoing	
	CLBC will develop a communications plan that will include actions that promote individuals as valuable employees and recognize businesses who hire individuals, such as: - Utilizing the great success stories from the "Wow Awards" - Putting articles in print media such as BC Business and community newspapers	CLBC	Q4	

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<p>An awareness campaign targeting families to recognize the valued roles that individuals can play as employees</p>	<p>Create a mechanism / forum allowing self-advocate, families, service providers to share stories, resources and ideas</p> <p>Include stories about self employment and social enterprise in CLBC communications</p> <p>Utilize transition fairs to promote employment and self-employment opportunities</p>	<p>CLBC; Family Support Institute</p>	<p>Q3</p>	
<p>Self advocates play a leadership role in changing public attitudes</p>	<p>Self advocates lead and deliver a presentation/campaign of why employment is important to them to government, unions, businesses, employers and families</p> <p>Establish a “pool” of self-advocates in each region or micro-regional area to act as consultants for the businesses/ organizations to “what is inclusive employment” and how to support diversity in the workplace</p> <p>Self advocates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work with CLBC employment leads - present stories to high school teachers, students and families, early to middle school - remain connected to the provincial communications strategy 	<p>CLBC</p>	<p>Q3</p>	

D. EMPLOYER AND UNION INITIATIVES

“When seeing individuals with developmental disabilities working becomes an ordinary occurrence” was one vision for success that emerged from the Summit.

Businesses, including corporations (small, medium and larger), not-for-profit organizations, and government entities, have a critical role to play as employers. The appreciative inquiry highlighted several factors which result in a successful employee – employer relationship.

The “business case” – Employers need to be able to make a business case in hiring any employee, whether the individual has a disability or not. Service providers need to understand that sustainable employment is developed when the businesses needs are well met.

An optimal match – Employers indicated they needed employees with the right skills, positive attitude and work ethic as well as an optimal match between the job and the individual in order to achieve longer term success.

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Values – Many employers indicated values played a role in deciding to hire a person with a developmental disability. In some instances, employers said diversity is a company value. They believe staff must reflect the community in which the business is located. “This is just how we do business” is the mantra of many of these employers.

“Can do” attitudes – Many employers also described their approach to business as one of optimism. They focus on the question, “How do we make this work?” rather than on the question, “What is likely to go wrong?”

Relationships – Trust, understanding and reciprocity are important factors in convincing businesses to become employers of people with developmental disabilities. They are achieved through relationships, whether with a service provider, an individual or a family.

Benefits – Many employers described multiple (and sometimes unexpected) benefits of hiring people with developmental disabilities. Many employers described pride in making a difference in people’s lives and seeing personal growth in their employees. Often customers voiced appreciation for their inclusive hiring practices.

Job Coaching – The support provided by service providers is a critical element of supporting employers. Beyond assuring they get an able, dependable employee that meets the needs of their business, job coaches provide essential training, support and problem solving for both the employee and employer. This support is often the difference maker until a business develops internal capacity – “disability confidence”. Knowing the job coach was always just a phone call away was critical.

The inquiry both highlighted concerns that collective agreements were barriers to employment, and also highlighted stories of success in unionized workplaces. There was broad consensus that outreach is needed to build relationships and create alliance with unions so they can act as resources when barriers, perceived or otherwise, arise.

12. Employer Initiatives

Objectives

- Build greater “disability confidence” among employers
- Develop a partnership with Rotary to promote employment for people with developmental disabilities
- Businesses and Governments play a leadership role in shifting attitudes and promoting employment
- Better organization of the service sector to outreach to the business community
- Create incentives to encourage businesses to hire people with developmental disabilities
- Develop strategies for long term impact

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Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
Build greater “disability confidence” among employers	<p>Review resources that have been used to successfully measure and increase disability confidence</p> <p>Develop resources that can be used by service providers to promote disability confidence</p> <p>Make resources available through mechanisms in goal #5 Increasing Competencies</p> <p>Promote businesses that demonstrate disability confidence (e.g.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a best practice “brand” for business hiring - Identify 10 top business employers and document their stories to establish examples of good practice 	Leads: BACI, BCEDSN	Q4	
Develop a partnership with Rotary to promote employment for people with developmental disabilities	<p>Rotary Initiative</p> <p>Identify interested Rotarians (Champions) on a regional basis and work with them to develop a local and or provincial program to promote employment for people with developmental disabilities⁸</p>	Leads: Inclusion BC; Langley Assn of Community Living; Milleu; CLBC	Q4	
Businesses and Governments play a leadership role in shifting attitudes and promoting employment	<p>Employer Engagement</p> <p>Collaborate with groups that are already working with employers to explore how to best support business leadership in promoting employment of people with disabilities</p>	<p>Leads: CLBC; BACI</p> <p>Partners: MSD; Open Door Group; Centre for Employment Excellence; Neil Squire Foundation</p>		Q1

⁸ Based on successful partnership developed in Alberta with Rotary and replicated in some parts of Ontario

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Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
Better organization of the service sector to outreach to the business community	<p>Explore models of connecting service providers with employers</p> <p>Pilot, test and implement a framework with which service providers can organize their connections with businesses</p>	Leads: CLBC; BACI; Open Door Group; Centre for Employment Excellence; Neil Squire Foundation		Q2
Create incentives to encourage businesses to hire people with developmental disabilities	<p>Tax Incentives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase awareness of existing grants, programs, incentives for employers to hire diverse abilities - Explore the potential to provide incentives for business <p>Purchasing Power</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore options for adding value through purchasing power <p>Public Sector Incentives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore incentives/policy that will provide an incentive for public sector (government funded) employers to become employers 	Leads: TIER; BACI; CLBC	Q4	
Develop strategies for long term impact	<p>Influencing HR Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce inclusive employment strategies to future employers through post-secondary education (Business people degrees, HR, educators, job coaches) 	TBD		Q4 2015

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13. Union Initiatives

Objectives

- Reduce barriers, real and perceived, that result in employment opportunities in unionized environments

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
Reduce barriers, real and perceived, that result in employment opportunities in unionized environments	<p>Establish collaborative working relationships with unions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start with CLBC’s union representatives at BCGEU, regarding CLBC as a role model and making connections with other unions <p>Use networks to establish relationships with a range of unions and host a roundtable to explore barriers and solutions to employment which result from collective agreements</p> <p>Explore the appetite for establishing a table that will provide a venue for identifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - success stories in unionized environments - champions/role models - conditions/indicators of successful employment placements in union environments - solutions to barriers that individuals, families, service providers and employers identify and that result from collective agreements 	Leads: CLBC; Community Living Victoria	Q1	Q1
Develop resources to increase the capacity of service providers to place individuals in union settings	<p>Create a “tool kit” for service providers to use in unionized environments, with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - success stories and role models/champions - language templates, job descriptions 	CLBC		2014Q1

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E. LOCAL PLANS

The Community Action Employment Plan is a three year strategic plan to guide provincial activities. The Inquiry and Summit, however, highlighted that much of the work needs to happen locally. The added advantage of working locally is that solutions can be tailored to the unique characteristics of a region or community. For example, the types of work opportunities differ in urban and rural areas; opportunities will vary depending on the economic climate of the region; and attitudes will differ depending on the history of success in a region.

Advancing an employment agenda will be most successful if certain actions occur collaboratively with partners within local communities or micro regions (areas managed by the CLBC offices). In particular, the creation of local plans will:

- Ensure consistency across the province, while encouraging local solutions
- Promote collaboration of partners to optimize outcomes (employment results and experiences of individuals, families and employers)

Objectives

Development of Local Plans with central coordination and support, which accomplish the following objectives:

Oversight and Coordination

- Promote collaboration among CLBC, Community Living Councils, individuals, families, service providers, Employment Program of BC providers, schools, employers and other stakeholders

Establishing Local Targets

- Set local employment targets consistent with provincial targets, including targets for youth and individuals moving from day services

Shifting from Inclusion Services

- Transition individuals to employment from day services
- Shift funding from day services to employment services

Transitioning Youth

- Allocate new funding (procurement; identification of providers; etc.) and ensure youth who may be accessing funding are adequately served
 - Provides coordination between CLBC and EPBC services
- Ensure individuals and families experience a smooth, supported transition from school to work (whether delivered by CLBC funded providers or the Employment Program of BC)
- Ensure youth are being prepared for employment as a part of their future
- Ensure individuals and families have the confidence to pursue employment

Building Service Provider, CLBC and Family Capability

- Increase service provider, family, CLBC and employer knowledge and capacity

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Employer Initiatives

- Promote local employers as leaders
- Share stories of success

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion by:	
			2013	2014/15
Development of local plans, which accomplish the objectives outlined above	- Creation of a template for the development and implementation of a Local Plan	CLBC; Langley Assn of Community Living; Inclusion BC; BACI	Q4	
	- Implement Local Plans in 3 micro regions, preferably one urban, one rural and one with a medium sized centre		Q4	
	- Implement Local Plans in remaining micro regions			2014Q4

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Appendix A. Planning Process

The interest in employment began with people with developmental disabilities themselves, who said: “I want to work”. I want to work and I want my work to be valued like those of other people who work: with pay. “Real work for real pay!” was the rallying call of self advocates who rejected sheltered workshops where they were segregated and usually not paid the minimum wage. They wanted to work alongside other citizens and be paid at least the minimum wage for their efforts.

Over the years people have been supported by their families, by service providers, by colleges and schools, and by employers to work, to earn a paycheck, make friends with co-workers and gain the satisfaction of contributing.

The reoccurring themes that have emerged through the work done over the past five years include:

- Places that have adopted an “employment first” policy, where work is expected of people with developmental disabilities have been much more successful.
- Success is dependent on collaboration among self advocates, families, service providers, funders, policy makers, schools and colleges and, most importantly, employers. Everyone has a role.
- People with developmental disabilities have demonstrated they can be valuable employees when they are given the chance.
- The benefits of employment are many: financial, personal satisfaction, identity, relationships, health, and recognition as valued citizens.
- Customized employment is a “game-changer”. It means service providers must consistently focus on what people can do, like to do, want to do; in other words, on their gifts. When a good match is made with an employer, everyone can work.
- People in day programs often want to work and have shown us they can work. Service providers who want to “transform” their day services have shown us it can be done.
- Attitudes and beliefs – individuals, families, service providers, teachers or other professionals, employers – can either hold people back or allow them to fulfill their dreams.
- Schools, along with families, play a critical role in preparing young people for work.
- Employers who have hired people with disabilities are more often than not, happy employers.

The Foundation

The following is a high-level overview of the initiatives, research and reviews undertaken by CLBC and its partners over the last five years, which have laid the foundation for the current work:

2007

- Queenswood Consulting Group reviewed CLBC’s supported work programs and made a series of recommendations.

2008

- CLBC establishes a provincial employment advisor position to develop CLBC’s employment strategies, policies and partnerships
- CLBC launched its “Employment Initiative” to increase work opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

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- CLBC and the Ministry of Social Development partnered to fund and launch the three year Customized Employment Demonstration Project. Eight projects were funded for three years to build capacity and evaluate the value of customized employment. The project was extended to four years.
- BC EmployNet, a network was established to promote leadership among employment practitioners

2009

- Service providers, CLBC and government representatives gathered for a provincial forum called “Re-inventing Day Supports”.
- Service providers, with support from CLBC, hosted six one day events across the province focused on promoting real employment.

2010

- CLBC’s “Employment Policy” became effective after much consultation and discussion. In CLBC’s policy, employment is defined as *“paid work that takes place in an integrated community setting, along-side people without disabilities; and where wages, benefits and working conditions comply with industry standards and relevant laws. Employment does not include work experience or volunteering. It may include self-employment.”*
- BC Employment Development Strategy Network, a small group of service providers, developed curricula and began training staff, in collaboration with Douglas College, to increase their competency in supporting people to find and keep work.

2011

- CLBC’s Employment Policy was reviewed and a series of recommendations were made.
- Discussions begin to take place about next steps for increasing employment opportunities and partnerships.
- Youth Employment Forum co-hosted by the Ministries of Children and Family Development, Social Development, Education and Advanced Education, and CLBC brought together representatives from all ministries on the Youth Transition Protocol.
- A steering group was formed to look at next steps for CLBC’s employment initiative.

2012

- The Employment Program of British Columbia was launched by the Ministry of Social Development.
- Minister (of Social Development) Council on Employment and Accessibility initiated
- The Customized Employment Demonstration Project was completed. Final evaluation and review of the results takes place.
- Self advocates, families, service providers and CLBC staff agreed it was time to build on the work already done and co-create a three year “Community Action Employment Plan” to clarify needed actions and coordinate efforts.
- CLBC launches its inquiry process across the province to develop the Community Employment Action Plan.
- The Community Action Plan Summit is held in October in Vancouver.

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Appendix B. Employment Targets

The Core Planning Team established the following vision statement at the beginning of the planning process:

“British Columbia has the highest rate of employment among people with developmental disabilities in North America”.

As planning progressed, questions emerged about the accuracy of the measurement of this number and the ability to find comparable numbers from other jurisdictions (below). Additionally, as the plan developed, it became clear that achieving this ambitious target would require a significant investment in employment supports and budgets provincially are allocated on a year by year basis.

The intent behind the Committee’s target was to make significant progress. Because of the complexity of measurement and comparison, it is proposed that the plan maintain the vision above but set a three year target of:

“Increasing participation in the workforce by 1,200 people”.

This is nearly double the current estimate of the number of people who are CLBC eligible that are currently employed in British Columbia.

B.C. Versus Washington State: Comparing Apples and Oranges

British Columbia’s population was estimated at 4,573,321 as of July 1st, 2011.⁹ Currently, CLBC has established eligibility for approximately 13,105 working-aged adults (19-59) with developmental disabilities¹⁰. This translates to an incidence of approximately 0.287%.

Washington State is most frequently cited as having the highest rate of employment among people with developmental disabilities in the United States. In fiscal year 2010, Washington State had 8,271 individuals in receipt of day or employment services from state intellectual and developmental disabilities agencies. Of those, 7,348 individuals (89%) were served in integrated employment. An additional 728 (9%) were in facility based work. 5,319 were listed as being in paid employment.¹¹ In context, Washington State’s population for 2010 is listed at 6,724,540.¹² Using an incidence of 0.287%, this would result in a CLBC equivalent population of 19,269. 5,319 employed out of 19,269 would be an employment participation rate of 27.6%.

The population of British Columbia is projected to be 4,834,800 by 2015.¹³ Using an incidence of 0.287%, CLBC’s working age eligible population would be 13,854 in 2015. In September 2011, a comparison of

⁹ BC Stats, 2011 Sub-Provincial Population Estimates. January 2012.

¹⁰ CLBC data

¹¹ Jane Winsor. Data Note: State Intellectual and Developmental Disability Agencies’ Trends and State Data: The National Report on Employment Services and Outcomes. 2011. P 351

¹² United States Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce.
<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/53000.html>

¹³ BC Stats. <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Demography/PopulationProjections.aspx>

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people being served by CLBC with those who reported employment income with B.C. Disability Benefits program, shows that 2,090¹⁴ individuals participated in employment:

- 10 had completely left the program for work
- 823 were in receipt of medical only
- 1,257 reported income

This represents a 16% participation rate.

If the community living sector in B.C. wished to have the highest rate of employment among people with developmental disabilities in North America (approximately 30%), the total number of people with developmental disabilities participating in employment would need to be 4,194. Achieving this number would require an additional 2,104 people participating in employment over three years.

An alternative population growth projection can be calculated using the approximate number of youth entering the CLBC system each year: 600 per year times three years equals 1,800.¹⁵ Using this method, the corrected working aged CLBC eligible population would be approximately 14,905. Using the same participation in employment target of 30%, this would amount to a target of 4,472 people participating in employment. Achieving this target would require an additional 2,382 people participating in employment.

¹⁴ CLBC/MSD Data Match, October 2010 – September 2011 (Sum of those reporting: Income, Left for a Job and Medical Only)

¹⁵ Ignoring the number of older people entering the CLBC system and the number of people leaving the CLBC system