

Common Vision

for

Real Transformation

July 2005

Part 2 of 2 Parts

We are Four Provincial Organizations that Represent Families and Individuals with Disabilities

Family Alliance Ontario

Supporting the well being of persons with disabilities and their families, and promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities into all aspects of community life.

Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario

Supporting the self-determination of persons with disabilities and for individuals and families to have access to and control over funds allocated for disability supports.

People First of Ontario

Supporting people who have been labelled to speak for themselves, to help each other, and to help make sure that they are heard.

Special Services at Home Provincial Coalition

Supporting a coalition of individuals, families, organizations and agencies dedicated to ensuring that families in Ontario receive the meaningful support they require through SSAH

Transformation is Possible

The Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) and its community partners are currently engaged in a “transformation process.” This second of a two-part newsletter reflects our shared vision across our four organizations in regard to the transformation of developmental services in Ontario.

Transformation means that individuals, families, service providers, and government create a **new story** about how people with disabilities are supported in their quest for self-determination and citizenship. We all agree that the old story has to change, and that by working together we can put an end to segregation, over-protection, and the isolation experienced by many citizens with disabilities.

What Transformation Might Mean for a Community

Real transformation for a community means that:

- ◆ **The new values are widely understood and supported;** self-determination, citizenship, inclusion, and empowerment.
- ◆ **The functions of the current system are separated;** planning and facilitation as well as allocation for individualized funding are clearly separate from direct service provision.
- ◆ **People First and independent family networks are very active** and widely accepted for their important advocacy, education, and monitoring roles.
- ◆ **Individuals, family and networks have more power and participation in decisions about disability supports,** both for their own family member and for the decisions being made about service issues.
- ◆ **There are community conditions and supports that value the full participation and citizenship of people with disabilities,** including partnerships with the wider community, opportunities to develop support circles and networks, and welcoming settings throughout the community.

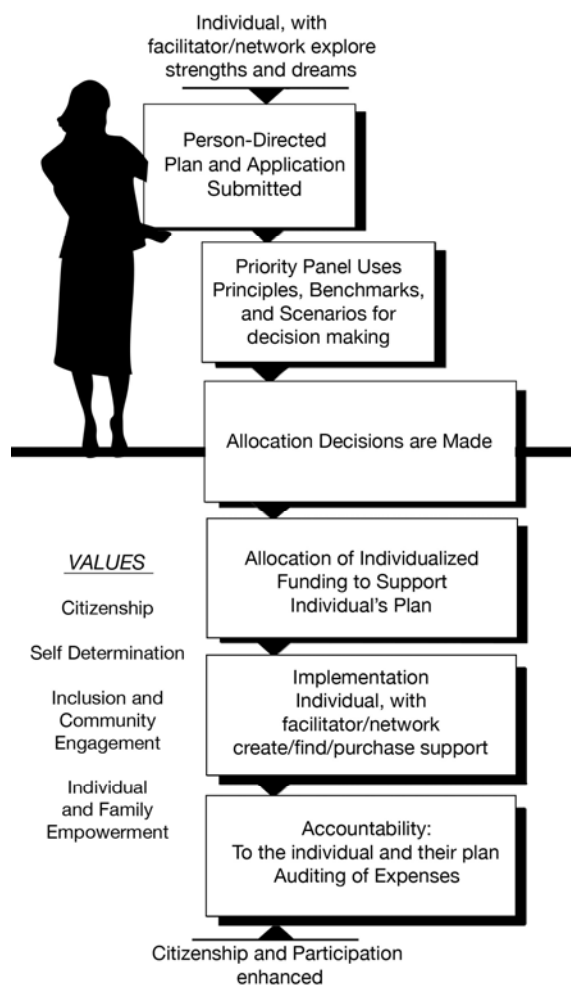
What Transformation Might Mean for Joe

- ◆ Joe meets with and gets to know an independent facilitator.
- ◆ Joe and the facilitator are very aware that this process should be as unintrusive as possible. What can happen naturally is always best.
- ◆ Joe, with the help of the facilitator, invites family members, and some friends, to assist him to plan his future. The facilitator gets to know Joe's community and the people in his life.
- ◆ Everyone who wants a better life for Joe becomes involved in assisting him to make informed choices, increase his relationships, build a support network, increase his opportunities and experiences in community, and build on his dreams.
- ◆ Through the planning process Joe identifies his interest, likes, dislikes, and dreams. Creative ideas and actions evolve from Joe and his network's efforts.
- ◆ Joe, his family and network have help from the facilitator to develop Joe's plan. Joe documents some of it himself. The tools used to do a plan for Joe fit with who he is and his lifestyle. Joe uses his community as a first resort to meet his support needs. He then shops for a service provider who can meet some of his needs (as identified in the plan) and fill the gaps in service.
- ◆ The facilitator stays in a long-term relationship with Joe.

What the Transformed System Might Look Like

Process is central to the new story.

This reflects the need for deep listening as people create their dreams and goals. It reflects the need for flexible funding that responds to person-directed/centred plans. The steps reflect a process of equity that is associated with effective allocation.



The Impact of Independent Planning and Facilitation

Facilitators in a transformed system are committed to person-centred approaches and play many roles, including assisting people to have accurate information, to have relationships, and to develop detailed person-directed plans. In addition:

- ◆ The person determines the depth of the facilitation support.
- ◆ Facilitators assist with mediation and problem solving as needed.
- ◆ Facilitators are flexible, informal, and free of conflict of interest.

Value-based planning principles need to guide planning and facilitation.

We believe that good planning...

- ◆ Is person-directed. It values the **person's voice first**, with input from family, friends and others. This includes listening to the person regardless of how a person communicates.
- ◆ Is **different for each person**. It is not a meeting. It is not a document. It is a respectful process that recognizes people's changing lives.
- ◆ Is intentional in the building of **relationships and community connections**.
- ◆ Is a process that **leads to desirable outcomes** by having clear goals and giving direction.
- ◆ Creates **opportunities for community and service provider innovation**.

Principles and Directions for a Transformed System

(See Part I of Newsletter for Summary of Principles # 1 & # 2)

Principle and Direction # 3 Individualized funding is available for disability supports and can be applied for by individuals/families/support networks.

What We Want – Directions

- ◆ Funds for disability supports that are invested in people, not programs; all funding is individualized.
- ◆ All funding for disability supports is to be portable.
- ◆ Disability supports are separate from funding for housing.
- ◆ A strength and capacity oriented application form for individualized funding.
- ◆ An approach that enables people to access small amounts of money to initiate a process of planning they choose.
- ◆ Individualized funding that is adequate, portable, and equitable.

Why We Want It – Rationale

- ◆ Individualized funding is an investment in citizenship and participation.
- ◆ Individualized funding allows for maximum flexibility when developing disability supports.
- ◆ Funding designated for a person when combined with independent

planning and facilitation enables people to tailor supports to the needs and capacities of the individual.

- ◆ Research shows that individualized funding is cost neutral and produces better outcomes for people (Tim Stainton review - www.individualizedfunding.ca)

How to Make it Happen – Implementation

- ◆ Develop a simple application form that will reflect a person's support plan; strengths, needs, goals, informal and formal supports, and a support budget. Include a series of questions that will show how a person's support plan builds capacity; citizenship, community connections, relationships, and empowerment, as examples.
- ◆ Do not put arbitrary caps on funding proposals, but base funding on actual needs and support plans.
- ◆ Identify areas that are eligible for individualized funding disability supports, including home support, employment support, attendant services, skill development, respite, supports for learning opportunities, and relationship building.
- ◆ Ensure that people have choices in terms of how they want to implement their individualized funding – self-managed, use of agency as banker, hire own workers - in ways that ensure accountability.

Principles and Directions for a Transformed System

Principle and Direction # 4

Allocation mechanisms ensure that people have access, fairness, and equity.

What We Want – Directions

- ◆ An allocation process for the distribution of disability support funds that is principle-driven, including the principles of fairness and equity.
- ◆ Allocation mechanisms that can respond to changes in people's life situations over time.
- ◆ Independent planning and facilitation that ensures there is equity in the support that people can access for developing their plans for submission.

Why We Want It - Rationale

- ◆ Current allocation system favours agencies over individuals, and does not allow for individualization.
- ◆ An effective allocation approach allows the system to respond "just in time" rather than funding expensive "just in case" approaches, such as expensive group homes.
- ◆ Individualizing allocations based on a support plan is the only way to ensure that individualized support will happen, not just hope it happens.

How to Make it Happen - Implementation

- ◆ Priority setting to determine allocations for disability funding will be based on values and principles, and would involve individuals and families in the decision-making, not service providers. Priority setting would be based on local and provincial equity. The process at all stages would be transparent; applicants will have easy access to the criteria used, the scaling applied to their particular situation, and an explanation in language they understand as to the outcome of their application.
- ◆ Government would have the final allocation decisions based on the recommendations of the priority setting process.
- ◆ An effective, independent appeal mechanism would be established.



Principles and Directions for a Transformed System

Principle and Direction # 5

Accountability mechanisms are simple and understandable, and they create feedback about how plans and funding are fostering citizenship and participation.

What We Want – Directions

- ◆ A system of accountability that is based on values; self-determination, citizenship, inclusion, and empowerment.
- ◆ A system that creates feedback on how well plans and funding foster citizenship and participation.
- ◆ An approach to accountability that is well understood and simple to use for both families and government.

Why We Want It – Rationale

- ◆ The current system is not accountable to individuals, families/networks.
- ◆ The Auditor-General says that the Special Services at Home program has strong financial accountability when families self-direct and manage the funds. There are similar findings from other jurisdictions that have individualized funding.
- ◆ A simple system of accountability will enable the Ministry and its partners to track how funding fosters citizenship and participation.

How to Make it Happen - Implementation

- ◆ Since families in Ontario are very experienced using Special Services at Home, implement financial accountability similar to the SSAH monthly invoicing approach, with clear benchmarks on costs allowable for various supports.
- ◆ Allow individualized funding to be used for human resources supports and accountability mechanisms that assist families and individuals with hiring their own workers, payroll, etc.
- ◆ Implement quality of life accountability for the first 500 people receiving individualized funding, in order to establish key patterns related to citizenship and community participation. This will teach us what is important to people and how we can facilitate its development.

David Schwartz points out that the astute grounds keepers of university campuses know that if you want to put sidewalks between new buildings in the right place you should wait and see where people wear paths in the grass. In [Who Cares: Re-Discovering Community \(1997\)](#)

Principles and Directions for a Transformed System

Principle and Direction # 6

Innovation is encouraged, supported and funded.

What We Want – Directions

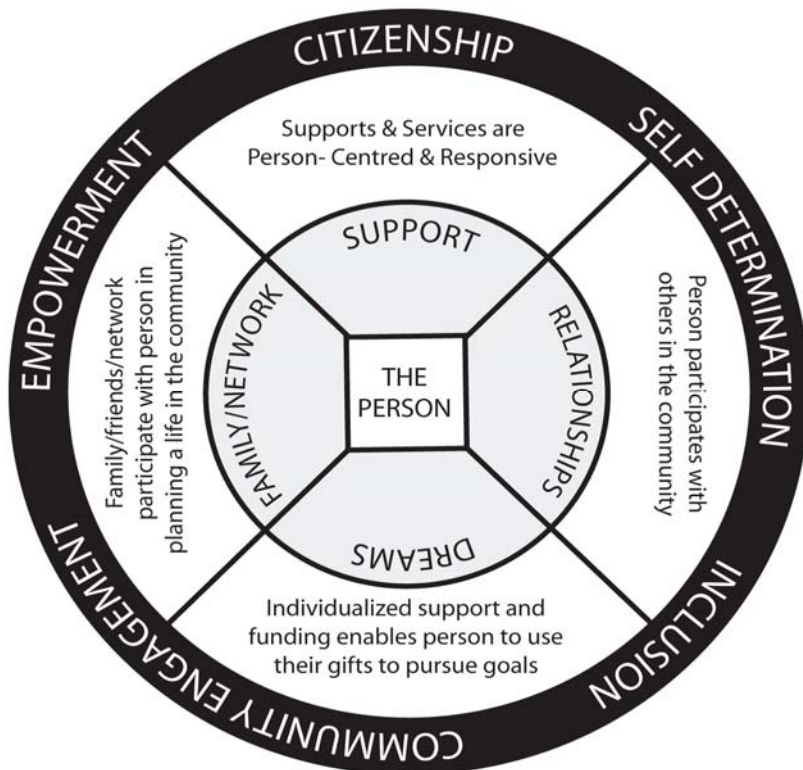
- ◆ A system that embraces and encourages innovation.
- ◆ A system that provides incentives for service providers, individuals, and families to be innovative.

Why We Want It – Rationale

- ◆ Service systems, like any system, need regular renewal mechanisms.
- ◆ Inclusion and building the capacity of communities requires new thinking and action.
- ◆ A new generation of Ontarions have high expectations for citizenship and inclusion of people with disabilities.
- ◆ The funding of innovation has been shown to produce very positive impacts on systems
 - ◆ Innovation is happening elsewhere and we need to become aware of what works in bringing about change.

How to Make it Happen - Implementation

- ◆ Develop an innovation office that will provide best practice information, funds for innovative projects, and other tools for change.
- ◆ Develop criteria for innovation that are consistent with the values; self-determination, citizenship, social inclusion, and empowerment.
- ◆ Make the results of innovative projects widely known, including the stories of people engaged in community life as a result of planning/facilitation and individualized funding.



Principles and Directions for a Transformed System

Principle and Direction # 7

Strong People First groups and autonomous family networks and are supported and they have an important advocacy role to play in the transformed system.

What We Want – Directions

- ◆ Recognition and support for strong, autonomous family networks and People First groups.
- ◆ Increasing involvement of such groups in system planning and advocacy, as distinct from service provider involvement.

Why We Want It – Rationale

- ◆ Family and individual voices need to be separate and distinct from service provision in order for transformation to fully occur.
- ◆ A transformed system will regularly invite individuals from People First and families from family networks to

participate in system planning, community priority setting, evaluation and quality assurance. These autonomous groups will provide the representatives for this work.

- ◆ Research in community mental health shows that when such groups are supported and funded, they contribute immensely to the well being of their members (See www.ontario.cmha.ca/cmhei)

How to Make it Happen - Implementation

- ◆ Figure out how to nurture and support People First groups throughout Ontario. Individuals with developmental disabilities need space and support to dream, connect, and express their voices about issues of importance to them.
- ◆ Honour the family voice and family networks in all processes that are established for decision-making about people with developmental disabilities.

For further information, see our web-sites:

Family Alliance Ontario <http://family-alliance.com>

Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario www.individualizedfunding.ca

People First of Ontario www.peoplefirstontario.com

Special Services at Home Provincial Coalition www.ssahcoalition.ca

In the spring of 2006, the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services will release its blueprint for transformation of developmental services. We urge the government to develop policies that are consistent with the values and principles of this COMMON VISION.

Updated March 2006