

Saskatchewan Disability Strategy

“The goal of the Strategy is to make Saskatchewan the best place to live in Canada for persons with disabilities.”

Overview

Government is committed to making Saskatchewan the best place in Canada for persons with disabilities to live. Together with the disability community and all Saskatchewan citizens, the Province is developing a comprehensive disability strategy to make this goal a reality.

The Strategy will be inclusive and will consider the support and service needs of children and adults with physical, sensory, psychiatric, cognitive, and intellectual disabilities. The Strategy will also recognize the role of family and caregivers in supporting persons with disabilities.

The Strategy also seeks to broaden current understanding of disability by suggesting level of impact rather than diagnosis as a key factor in determining eligibility for programs, services and other opportunities.

Identified changes and suggested supports will be organized according to the priority areas identified in the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*: housing, transportation, employment, education, support for caregivers, and community inclusion. The Strategy may also include other priorities identified through the consultation process.

The Disability Strategy is a government priority. Seven ministries are leading its development: Social Service, Health, Education, Advanced Education, Economy, Government Relations and Justice. The Strategy is also connected with a number of other government initiatives including the Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan, Student First, and the Child Welfare Transformation.

Public Consultation Plan

In the fall of 2013, the Citizen Consultation Team (CCT) was created to lead the public consultation process. The CCT is a 15-member team made up of individuals with disabilities, caregivers, service providers and volunteers appointed by the Minister of Social Services.



Members of the Citizen Consultation Team (pictured) play a key role in the development of the Disability Strategy, including leading the public consultation process.

The CCT has developed an inclusive consultation process that will provide an opportunity for Saskatchewan people to provide their input into the development of the Strategy. The primary goal of the public consultation is to identify potential solutions to issues that are impacting the lives of people experiencing disability related to each of the priority areas. Public input is also being requested on a draft definition of disability and draft vision, values and principles.

Extensive public participation will help ensure the Disability Strategy is informed by, and reflects the needs and solutions of, all who ‘experience’ disability.

Saskatchewan Disability Strategy

The public is invited to participate in the Strategy's development through:

Public Forums

The CCT will lead 15 open public forums in 12 communities across the province. Public forums provide the opportunity to participate in a small group discussion about some of the issues and possible solutions in the Strategy's priority areas.

To encourage everyone's participation, special attention is being given to groups that are traditionally less likely to participate in open public forums. For example:

Additional forums specifically for Aboriginal people have been added to the consultation plan. This is based on advice from First Nations and Métis representatives.

Social media, video submissions and connections with students through the education system are being used to encourage Saskatchewan youth to participate in the Strategy's development.

Online Survey

An online survey that is consistent with the information requested during the public forums will be available on the government website: www.saskatchewan.ca/disabilitystrategy.

Social Media

For people who prefer to provide their ideas in the form of short 'posts' or videos a *Facebook* page is available and a Video Showcase is being launched. Feedback received through social media will be considered along with all other information collected in the development of the Disability Strategy.

Written Submissions

Individuals or groups have the option to provide written input to the Strategy in their own format. Written submissions can be mailed, faxed or e-mailed to the address below:

Office of Disability Issues
12th Floor, 1920 Broad Street
Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 3V6
e-mail: disabilitystrategy@gov.sk.ca | fax: 306-798-4450
phone toll free: 1-877-915-7468 | TTY: 1-306-787-7283

Stakeholder Meetings

Organizations and key stakeholders may also have opportunities to share their views through one-on-one or small group meetings with senior government officials. These meetings provide opportunities to inform stakeholders about the Strategy, receive input into the Strategy, encourage participation in public forums and discuss the role stakeholders can play in solutions that may be proposed through the Strategy.

Next Steps

Using all information collected through the Strategy's development process, the CCT will work with government and key stakeholders to develop recommendations that will form the basis of the provincial Disability Strategy. The final Strategy will be released to the public in late 2014 or early 2015.

Get involved and share your ideas to make Saskatchewan a more welcoming, responsive, innovative, accessible and inclusive province!