



BC Community Living Action Group (BC-CLAG)

A provincial network of service, support, and advocacy organizations, family groups, & other community living stakeholders

PRESS RELEASE:

One-time six million new funding inadequate to stem BC's community living crisis

For immediate release: September 14, 2011

The one-time, \$6 million in new funding announced today for Community Living BC (CLBC) is inadequate to stem the crisis in support and funding faced by the families of adults with developmental disabilities, says the BC Community Living Action Group (BC-CLAG).

The six million dollars will provide support for a total 123 adults with developmental disabilities for one year, based on CLBC's average costs of \$48,800 for providing supports and services per adult per year.

Put another way, \$6 million in additional funding would provide an extra \$429 for one year for each of the 14,000 adults with developmental disabilities served – but not necessarily funded - by CLBC. Meanwhile, BC families continue to pay for and provide the vast majority of the supports that help adults with developmental disabilities live safely and with dignity in their communities. Put into context, the new funding represents \$158 in new funding for a year for each of the estimated 38,000 adult British Columbians with a developmental disability who are eligible for services under CLBC's mandate.

"While we're pleased to see government finally confronting the growing crisis, this is like throwing a cup of tea to douse a kitchen fire," says BC-CLAG partner Dawn Steele of Moms on the Move. "This piecemeal approach to funding simply reinforces the worst characteristics of a broken community living system."

A BC-CLAG analysis of Community Living BC (CLBC) caseload projections shows that at least \$70 million is needed immediately to address the existing backlog of unfunded new clients who urgently require services.

Each year, hundreds of youths with developmental disabilities reach the age of 19 and turn to CLBC as they age out of supports funded by the Ministry for Children and Families. Further annual budget increases of \$35 million are required in 2012/13 and 2013/14 just to meet the needs of BC youths expected to turn 19 and qualify for CLBC supports. These conservative estimates are based on CLBC's average per-person support costs.

In addition to additional funding, the BC-CLAG is calling on the provincial government to:

1. **Immediately stop cuts to services and supports, including group home closures.** CLBC continues to refuse to divulge the number of people waiting for service and supports;
2. **Commission an external review of CLBC's mandate and operations;**
3. **Create an independent advocate for adults with developmental disabilities similar to the Representative for Children and Youth,** with a broad legislated mandate to improve supports and outcomes by providing oversight, monitoring and public reporting;
4. **Introduce provincial legislation** setting out the inclusion rights and support entitlements of adults with developmental disabilities.

About BC-CLAG: The BC Community Living Action Group (BC-CLAG) is a network of self-advocates, families, support staff and agencies who support adults with disabilities. More info: <http://communitylivingaction.org/>

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