



# BC Community Living Action Group (BC-CLAG)

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

## PRESS RELEASE:

### **BC CLAG: Minister's client support team another hastily-conceived stop-gap that won't address serious, systemic community living issues**

*For immediate release: October 21, 2011*

The BC Community Living Action Group has rejected the latest proposed solution to the crisis in BC's community living sector as another hastily-conceived stop-gap that ignores the serious challenges in community living.

Minister Stephanie Cadieux today announced the creation of a client support team, and asked families and individuals to contact CLBC to contact members of the client support team, which has not yet been created. The email address and phone number provided will direct callers to the general CLBC switchboard and mailbox.

"It is disappointing that almost everyone but Premier Christy Clark and Minister Stephanie Cadieux now understand that this is not going away and not going to be resolved without a full transparent and independent review, said Jane Dyson of the BC Coalition of People with Disabilities.

"The dam has finally broken, people are no longer afraid to speak out and more and more concerns are emerging, some of them extremely serious," said Dawn Steele of Moms on the Move.

"There are many good people in the system and we need to restore public confidence so that they can do the good work they do and people can get the support they need and the public can be assured that the province is doing the right thing," said James Cavalluzzo of the BC Government and Service Employees Union.

"BCACL cannot in good conscience support this process until we fully understand what protocols are in place to ensure sound practice," said BCACL Executive Director Faith Bodnar. "This is a troubling response to real, systematic problems that exist within an underfunded organization and shows this government's reluctance to acknowledge the seriousness of the systemic crisis within CLBC."

BC CLAG believes the growing crisis in BC's community living sector requires nothing short of a full independent enquiry – one that is transparent, that is given adequate scope to examine the tough questions emerging and that involves families, self advocates and caregivers (staff/agencies) as full partners.

The decision to create a client support team was not transparent or informed by community input. It is unclear how the issues and needs of families and individuals will be assessed and addressed and who will be on the team, nor does it appear that this initiative will address any of the serious and systemic practice issues that are emerging.

In addition to commissioning an external review of CLBC, the BC-CLAG is calling on the provincial government to:

- Immediately stop cuts to services and supports, including group home closures;
- Immediately approve \$70 million in new funding to stem the province's growing community living crisis;
- Create an independent advocate for adults with developmental disabilities (like the Representative for Children and Youth), with a legislated mandate to provide oversight, monitoring and public reporting;
- 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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Or contact the following BC CLAG representatives:

- Faith Bodnar, BC Association for Community Living, 604 764-2591
- Dawn Steele, Moms on the Move, (604) 874-1416 / 778 848-9932 (Cell)
- James Cavalluzzo, BC Government and Service Employees' Union, 250 507-8462 (Cel)
- Jane Dyson, BC Coalition of People with Disabilities, 778-895-6150

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