

**From:** Minister, MSD MSD:EX [mailto:SD.Minister@gov.bc.ca]  
**Sent:** April 26, 2012 8:44 AM  
**To:** 'communitylivingaction@gmail.com'  
**Subject:** 174870 - Dyson MSD Response

Ref: 174870

BC Community Living Action Group  
[communitylivingaction@gmail.com](mailto:communitylivingaction@gmail.com)

Dear BC Community Living Action Group:

Thank you for your email and attached letter dated March 16, 2012, addressed to the Honourable Christy Clark, Premier, and myself, regarding the reviews of Community Living BC (CLBC) conducted by the Deputy Ministers' Working Group and the Ministry of Finance's Internal Audit and Advisory Services, with your specific comments regarding the recommendations around CLBC funding, employment programs and an expanded mandate for the Representative for Children and Youth.

I appreciate the BC Community Living Action Group's (BC-CLAG) comprehensive response to the reviews.

While these reviews were critical of CLBC and government ministries on specific issues, a number of recommendations were made to improve services. These recommendations offer a significant step forward for CLBC's ability to support people with developmental disabilities and their families.

CLBC is focused on building stronger relationships with individuals and families, and is committed to reviewing and fulfilling the original vision of the families and advocates who were instrumental in creating CLBC. The provincial government is committed to supporting individuals with developmental disabilities and has demonstrated that commitment by providing an additional \$40 million to improve and expand services and to implement recommendations from the reviews.

I share BC-CLAG's interest in ensuring that people with developmental disabilities are able to participate fully in all aspects of community life, including employment when possible. Being employed is one of the key ways we all connect to our communities. CLBC is dedicated to helping persons with disabilities, who want to be employed, find work opportunities and develop increased financial and social independence. CLBC aims to help people find success in their jobs for the long term by matching skills and interests to the needs of the employer, and by making sure options for job growth and opportunities to build relationships are available.

The challenge, as noted in the Deputy Ministers' review, is to "effect a significant change in focus from a service-dependent world to a world focused more on individuals and their families, and on their own abilities to identify and address their own needs with more targeted supports from government."

In your letter, you refer to the need for an independent advocate for adults with developmental disabilities. As you may be aware, British Columbia has an Advocate for Service Quality, Jane Holland, who works on behalf of adults with developmental disabilities and their families to access supports. The advocate does not just respond to people served by CLBC, she can also help people receiving services from the Ministry of Social Development, other ministries, and service agencies in the community. Individuals and families are able to bring their concerns to the Advocate for Service Quality or the Ombudsman at any time if they are not satisfied with CLBC's response to a complaint.

The Advocate for Service Quality is appointed by an Order in Council under the *Public Service Act* and reports to the Minister of Social Development. No other province in Canada has similar legislation for an advocate for adults with developmental disabilities.

Individuals and families with concerns about services provided by CLBC may also turn to the Client Support Team (CST) for assistance. The CST brings together experienced CLBC staff and the ministries of Social Development, Children and Family Development and, when required, Health and Education. Since the review work of the CST began in October 2011, more than 225 individuals and their families have accessed their services and currently, two thirds have achieved a resolution to the concerns they raised.

One element of government's plan to improve supports for adults with developmental disabilities in British Columbia is to establish a permanent appeal mechanism based on the model of the current CST. Until the permanent appeal mechanism is in place, the CST will continue to work with individuals with developmental disabilities and their families who have expressed concerns about current services or feel these services no longer address their needs. Anyone who would like to have a representative of the CST contact them can email [info@communitylivingbc.ca](mailto:info@communitylivingbc.ca) or call, toll free, 1-877-660-2522.

Additionally, a multi-ministry committee has been established to implement the recommendations outlined in the CLBC reviews. I have shared your letter with this committee, which is led by the Ministry of Social Development. The ministry is developing a website that will enable the public to connect with the project and provide feedback on a number of areas. Until the capacity for electronic input is fully operational, you may wish to share your feedback and recommendations with Paula Grant, Executive Project Director for Services to Adults with Developmental Disabilities, by email at [paula.grant@gov.bc.ca](mailto:paula.grant@gov.bc.ca) or by telephone at 250-387-0929.

Government values the input of the community living sector. Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Cadieux  
Minister