

## A Fact Sheet on Individual Planning

### What is The **Living with a Disability Act**?

On October 4, 1996, a law came into force in Manitoba called *The Persons Living with a Disability Act*.

The Act was developed to promote and protect the rights of adults living with an intellectual disability who need assistance to meet their basic needs. The legislation recognizes these Manitobans as “adults living with an intellectual disability.”

The Act is based on the belief that adults should have the opportunity to make their own decisions and direct their own lives, with support if necessary.

### What is individual planning?

This is a dynamic process that helps the individual identify and move towards a desired future. The individual, members of that person's support network, and the substitute decision maker or committee (if any) work with a community service worker to identify the person's strengths, needs and dreams for the future. The planning process then assists the individual in identifying the services and supports required to meet his or her needs and goals. Services may include those provided through The Department of Families, as well as those available in the larger community. This process results in a written document, called an individual plan.

### Are individual plans a requirement?

Yes. The Act states that an individual plan must be developed for every individual who receives support services through The Department of Families.

### What are the steps in the planning process?

Before planning begins, a community service worker invites the adult living with an intellectual disability and his or her support network, if desired, to make some decisions about the planning process. These decisions include:

- Which individual planning method will be used?
- Who will facilitate or lead the planning process?
- What is the scope of the planning process?
- Who will be invited to participate in the planning process?

Once these decisions are made, the individual and those involved in this process work with the community service worker to develop the plan. The Department of Families requires that the following components be addressed in planning for support services provided through the department:

- **Knowing the Individual and His/Her Vision** - Planning team members start by gathering a personal history of the individual and identifying who the individual is and where the current situation is. The team discusses the person's dreams, hopes and interests for the present and future. The dream or visioning piece is important because it gives the team something to aim for - even though the dream may not be attained.
- **Goal Planning** - Goals are important because they encourage team members to be clear about wants and needs. Once they are identified, the team can prioritize and begin to act on them. Opportunities, resources and barriers to attaining an improved quality of life should also be considered.

- **Action Planning** - At this stage the team identifies the activities through which goals are to be realized, and assigns responsibility to specific persons or agencies, along with time lines for completion.
- **Planning for Accountability** - Here the team determines who is responsible for following up on specific actions identified during planning.

During this process, the adult living with an intellectual disability may wish to visit several potential service providers in order to choose the one that is most suitable. If a service provider is able to accommodate the needs of the adults living with an intellectual disability, the community service worker will request funding for the desired support services.

Once support services are in place, planning team members and the community service worker will keep in touch with the adult living with an intellectual disability to monitor the situation and ensure that services remain relevant.

At least once a year, the community service worker will contact the adult living with an intellectual disability to assess the person's level of satisfaction with the planning process and its outcomes. If the adult living with an intellectual disability wants to engage in further planning, the worker will take steps to start the process again.

### **How often must an individual plan be developed?**

The Act states that there must be an individual plan for each adult living with an intellectual disability receiving support services through The Department of Families. Once a plan is in place, an adult living with an intellectual disability may decide that there is no need to engage in further planning efforts. However, some adults living with an intellectual disability may, because of their particular circumstance, be involved in planning on an ongoing basis.

### **Who initiates the individual planning process?**

The process may be initiated by the adult living with an intellectual disability, substitute decision maker or committee, or the community service worker.

### **Other fact sheets in this series:**

- Supported Decision Making and Support Networks
- Support Services
- Protection
- Substitute Decision Making

### **Additional information:**

For more information about *The Adults Living with an Intellectual Disability Act*, contact your nearest regional office of The Department of Families or the Office of the Commissioner for Adults Living with an Intellectual Disability:

#### **Northern**

Thompson	(204) 677-6570
Flin Flon	(204) 687-1700
The Pas	(204) 627-8311

#### **Parkland**

Dauphin	(204) 622-2035
Swan River	(204) 734-3491

#### **Eastman**

Beausejour	(204) 268-6226
Steinbach	(204) 346-6390

**Interlake** (204) 785-5106

**Westman** (204) 726-6336

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#### **Central**

Portage La Prairie	(204) 239-3092
Morden	(204) 822-2870

**Winnipeg** (204) 945-1335

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