



DISABILITY AND WORK IN CANADA

Moving Forward Together: A Canadian Strategy for Disability and Work Consultations on the Draft Strategy

CRWDP BC Cluster, Tuesday May 21, 2019

Presenters:

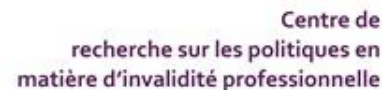
Steve Mantis and Emile Tompa

DWC Steering Committee Team (in alphabetical order):

Alec Farquhar, Maureen Haan, Kathy Hawkins, Steve Mantis, Kathy Padkapayeva, Ron Saunders, Emile Tompa, Monika Winkler



Host Organizations



- DWC has a small steering committee with representatives of the host organizations
- Designed to play a facilitating role



Financial Support



CCRW | CCRT
Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work | Le Conseil Canadien de la Réadaptation et du Travail

Centre de recherche sur les politiques en matière d'invalidité professionnelle



Centre for Research on Work Disability Policy



Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada





Goal of the Disability and Work in Canada Initiative

- **To develop a vision and strategy for increasing the employment of people with disabilities that will inform and guide the efforts of governments, employers and other stakeholders**



Goals of the Consultation

- To obtain feedback on the draft strategy document, which will be revised in light of the consultations
- To engage and consult a broad range of organizations and individuals
- To develop and strengthen key partnerships and relationships in support of implementing the strategy



Elements of the Consultation

- Consultation web page, with key background documents and link to the survey
<http://www.crwdp.ca/en/moving-forward-together-disability-and-work-canada-dwc-initiative>
- Regional and stakeholder meetings, webinars
- To keep informed, sign up for the consultation e-mail list <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/dwc-strategy-notifications-tickets-55242885959>



Who We are Consulting

- People with lived experience
- Disability organizations and advocacy groups
- Community agencies/service providers
- Canadian business
- Labour unions
- Provincial and federal government departments/agencies
- Health professionals
- Disadvantaged groups (intersection of disability with, e.g., Indigenous status, gender, LGBTQ+, racialized minorities)
- Researchers and academics



Timelines

- Survey deadline: May 3, 2019
- Completion of consultations: June 30, 2019
- Analysis of feedback: Summer 2019
- Report on consultations: September 2019
- Revised strategy document: November 2019
- Third National DWC Conference: December 4-5, 2019



Outline of the Draft Strategy



Purpose of the Strategy Document

- To provide a strategic framework for
 - people with disabilities
 - key community stakeholders
 - service providers
 - employers
 - labour
 - all levels of government
 - researchers

that identifies collaborative activities to increase the employment of people with disabilities in Canada.



A “Voluntary” Strategy

- The DWC Steering Committee does not have the power to make the strategy mandatory
- We encourage governments to consider legislation/regulation where needed to help realize the objectives of the strategy
- At the 2019 conference, we will be discussing how best to monitor progress on implementation.



The Case for a New Strategy

- People with disabilities in Canada continue to be underemployed: employment rates range from 31% among adults with very severe disabilities to 76% among those with mild disabilities, compared to 80% of those who do not report a disability (Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017)
- Recent developments in government and civil society indicate a growing collective desire to improve this situation
- Progress has been made in Canada on supports for inclusion of people with disabilities in employment. However, the United Nations committee on the Convention of Rights for Persons with Disabilities observed that Canada does not have a comprehensive policy on employment for people with disabilities.



How the Draft Strategy was Developed

- The draft strategy is the result of extensive discussions at a national conference in 2017, two federal-provincial policy roundtables and related outreach over the past three years.
- The draft strategy was also discussed at a national conference in December 2018.
- It is a first draft. The document will be revised based on discussions that took place at the 2018 conference and the current round of consultations.



Vision Statement

Employment throughout Canada is inclusive; people with and without disabilities have the same opportunities and choices in careers, jobs and work.

Does this statement reflect your vision for the strategy?
If not, what changes would you propose?

An alternative proposed at the conference:

Employment throughout Canada is inclusive. People have the same barrier-free opportunities and choices in careers, jobs and work.



The Four Pillars

1. Disability-confident and inclusive workplaces
2. Comprehensive supports for Canadians with disabilities
3. Effective partnerships
4. Measurement and accountability

Do you propose any wording changes to the pillars?

Which of the pillars are most important?

Would you propose any additional pillars?



Key Proposed Initiatives

- The following slides outline key proposed initiatives under each pillar of the draft strategy.
- For the proposed initiatives listed under each pillar, we will be asking:
 - What is the priority level of each proposed initiative?
(critical, important, neutral, low)
 - Do you propose any additional initiatives for this pillar?



Key Proposed Initiatives: Disability-Confident and Inclusive Workplaces

Provide supports to employers (tailored to their context—size, sector) for hiring and retention such as:

- Evidence-based financial incentives
- Guide for senior managers on incorporating inclusion into performance management and accountability for supervisors
- Tools for supervisors to help them identify, respond to and communicate about needs for accommodation
- Tools for co-workers to help them understand and support the needs and contributions of people with disabilities
- Tools for employers to elaborate and measure the business case for hiring and retaining people with disabilities



Key Proposed Initiatives:

Disability-Confident and Inclusive Workplaces (2)

- Create a centre of expertise on the built environment to foster inclusive design
- Communicate how everyone benefits from universal inclusive design
- Promote understanding that disability is based on the social/attitudinal and built environments, not on the person
- Develop case studies of exemplary employers
- Identify champions who can help develop and promote best practices and the win-win of inclusive workplaces



Key Proposed Initiatives: Comprehensive Supports

- Reform the array of support programs so system is client-friendly, coherent, easy to navigate, inclusive
- Improve supports for young people with disabilities (including supports related to education, employment preparation)
- Unbundle income, benefits and employment supports
 - Provide a portable “passport” of employment supports
 - Provide supports that can be tailored to the employment context and adjusted over time to changing circumstances of the individual



Key Proposed Initiatives: Comprehensive Supports (2)

- Ensure income support is sufficient to keep people out of poverty.
 - Develop an income supplement strategy that protects benefits for people when they can and want to work
 - Avoid high effective marginal tax rates on people who become employed
- Provide tools for people with disabilities to help them communicate with their employer (while respecting the right not to disclose diagnosis) so that their needs can be met
- Address the stigma associated with disability and the mindset of some program officials that they need to guard against being overly generous to avoid growth in caseload



Key Proposed Initiatives: Effective Partnerships

- Federal, provincial and municipal governments working together, in consultation with all stakeholders, to reform the array of supports so the system is client-friendly, coherent, easy to navigate, flexible and inclusive, and to develop tools for employers
- Employer associations, leading employers and unions working together to promote a culture of inclusion in workplaces
- Educational institutions working with employers, community organizations and governments to better support the employability of people with disabilities over their life course



Key Proposed Initiatives: Effective Partnerships (2)

- Researchers working collaboratively with representatives of all stakeholders to identify and address evidence gaps, document case studies of success, assist in evaluation of new/changed programs, and communicate in plain language research findings that are relevant to the employment of people with disabilities
- People with disabilities involved in all key activities, including these partnerships, to ensure that development and implementation of these changes is informed by their lived experience



Key Proposed Initiatives: Measurement and Accountability

- Develop an outcomes framework and an outcomes-based tracking system
- Identify key indicators of progress towards the desired outcomes. Possible measures include:
 - % of PWD of working age who are employed
 - Job satisfaction
 - Duration of work
 - % of PWD above the poverty line
 - Marginal effective tax rates
 - Perceptions of PWD about adequacy of income and employment supports
 - Measures of educational attainment and school-to-work transitions



Key Proposed Initiatives: Measurement and Accountability (2)

- Collect data in a way that facilitates research, including baseline data on the indicators
- Identify and address data gaps
- Create a repository of initiatives that have worked well under headings such as recruitment, accommodation, workplace design and technology
- Create a guide for the evaluation of initiatives at the program level and the workplace level
- Tell stories of success linked to the idea for case studies under the first pillar



General Questions on the Draft Strategy

- How clear is the language in the draft document?
- Do you feel the Draft Strategy will encourage meaningful action?
- Is the draft relevant to you/your organization? Will it be useful to you?
 - Do you have any suggestions to improve clarity, action-orientation, relevance?
- Is anything important missing from the Draft Strategy?



Recap of Timelines

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Thank you for participating!