

ADAPT Access to Employment Pilot Project Summary

In May 2014, the New Brunswick Association of Supported Services and Employment (NBASSE) in partnership with the New Brunswick Association for Community Living (NBACL) began a three year pilot project aimed at supporting ADAPT Program agencies to facilitate employment in the community (for minimum wage or better) for agency participants. The project team will work with six ADAPT agencies to develop person-centred and individualized services that seek to enhance the inclusion of all agency participants in their communities. This project is about strengthening the ability of ADAPT agencies to support people to work and participate in the community. It recognizes that agencies provide a range of services and that people who are not working will still require assistance to learn and to have meaningful lives in our communities.

This project is funded by the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour.

Project Partners

The New Brunswick Association for Supported Services and Employment (NBASSE) is a formal network of ADAPT agencies (38 in total) that has over 40 years of experience in providing services to people with disabilities. NBASSE provides provincial representation for ADAPT agencies by way of advocacy, training, information and support. Through its member agencies, NBASSE promotes a diverse range of services that support individual choices and facilitate quality lifestyles for person with a disability.

The New Brunswick Association for Community Living (NBACL) has supported individuals with an intellectual disability and their families since 1957. NBACL strives to ensure that people with an intellectual disability have opportunities to be included in the economic and social lives of their communities on an equal basis with others.

Project Background

People who have an intellectual disability remain largely excluded from the labour market. Nationally, the rate of employment for working age people with a 'developmental' disability is 27.8% (Statistics Canada, 2008). People identified as having a developmental disability have the lowest labour force participation rate of all disability types in Canada. The labour force participation rate for people without disabilities is 80%.

Research strongly suggests that people with an intellectual disability want to work and enjoy the benefits that stem from participating in the labour market. For example, U.S. research has shown that 86% of young adults with an intellectual disability stated a strong expectation of work for pay after they finished high school (see www.nlts2.org). Also, a 2006-2007 study indicated that 63% of individuals attending "sheltered workshops" stated a preference for work in the community and another 11% stated that they may be interested in paid employment in the community (Migliore et. al., 2007).

A survey from a 2009 NBASSE report noted that 31 of 37 ADAPT agencies were interested and willing to change their services to adopt more community based options for people who attend ADAPT programs (A. Holland, Who are We? An Examination of Adult Developmental Activities, Programs and Training Agencies in New Brunswick, June 2009).

New Brunswick's Employment Action Plan for Persons with a Disability (2102-2017) included a recommendation to support the ability of ADAPT agencies to help the people they serve to work in the community to their fullest potential. The Employment Action Plan also acknowledged the need to continue to support people who may not be employed in the short or long term.

Project Participants

The main target group for the project will be working age adults with an intellectual or developmental disability. Over the three year project time frame a minimum of **30 participants** will be involved in employment activities. Other people with disabilities or who have barriers to employment may also be beneficiaries of the project.

Project Communities

This project will operate in **six communities** over the course of the three year time frame. These communities will be selected by the Project Steering Committee from a list of agencies who indicate they wish to participate in this pilot project. The project will involve rural and urban communities and the initial three project communities are Oromocto, Grand Falls and Memramcook. In 2015, three additional communities will be selected.

Project Goals and Objectives

The stated goal of the project is to **develop, test and evaluate a change process and a service delivery model for ADAPT agencies. As a key component, it will include features that will lead to greater community employment outcomes for real wages for adults served by agencies, including adults with an intellectual disability.**

Short term objectives include:

- Identifying the barriers to facilitating employment for persons with disabilities who attend ADAPT agencies;
- Identifying strategies for assisting ADAPT agencies to adopt and implement a service delivery model that supports greater community employment for people being served;
- Creating and testing a new service model for ADAPT agencies that will assist more people to work in the community (while recognizing that those who are not working will continue to require support for community engagement and socially valued day-time activities);
- Identifying human resource and training requirements for ADAPT agencies to provide employment counselling supports and employment services for people with an intellectual disability;
- Testing the ability of government programs (such as Training and Employment Support Services (TESS), the Disability Support Program (DSP) and Work Ability) to provide employment supports and wage subsidies to persons with an intellectual disability who attend ADAPT agencies; and
- Creating community employment for real wages for project participants with an intellectual disability served by project ADAPT agencies.

Long term objectives include:

- The provincial ADAPT program and local agencies have adopted a new service model that reflects an 'employment first' approach to services for persons with an intellectual disability and that assists a greater number of people to find and keep jobs for wages in the community;
- Adults with an intellectual disability throughout New Brunswick have access to employment services that support their employment goals and needs;
- Working age adults with an intellectual disability have an employment rate at least equal to the rate of persons with disabilities generally.

Project Management

Project decisions will be made by the Project Steering Committee. Representation includes the Department of Social Development (Committee chair), NBASSE, NBACL, the Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons, and the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour. Marc Belliveau, a project manager, has been hired to work directly with ADAPT agencies to implement project activities.

*Funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of New Brunswick through the
Canada-New Brunswick Labour Market Agreements.*

The logo for Canada, featuring the word "Canada" in a serif font with a small Canadian flag icon above the letter "a".The logo for New Brunswick, featuring the word "New Brunswick" in a serif font with "Nouveau" in a smaller font above "Brunswick". A stylized red and white sailboat icon is positioned above the word "Brunswick".