

Supported Employment

A Position Paper

**Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres (SARC)
Supported Employment Working Group
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Supported Employment is an approach to assisting individuals with disabilities to prepare for, obtain and maintain integrated community based, paid employment. A variety of support is tailored to individual requirements. Employment is defined as an employer/employee relationship or self-employment.

SECTION A

1.0 INTRODUCTION

STORY OF NANCY

My name is Nancy Smith. I was in grade eleven at the Swift Current Comprehensive High School in a special program when my parents, the teacher and I met with a supervisor from the Saskatchewan Abilities Council. We talked about how they might be able to help me. My parents and I then went to the Centre so we could see what they were doing and where I might like to get some work experience. I started attending the centre a few afternoons a week until I graduated from high school.

After that I attended the Centre for two years. I worked in the assembly and sewing areas. I learned how to work better and faster and how to act at work. After I had been at the centre for a year and a half, they talked to me about going to the College in Swift Current to take a class. This class showed us how to answer questions for a job interview, how to look for a job and how to be a good worker. This class was every day for four months. The last month we went and worked at three different places in the afternoons. In the morning we would talk about the work. While I was at the College, I was referred to the Supported Employment services.

The supervisor and I filled out several forms so we could make a plan for me. We talked about what I could do well and what I didn't want to do. After my work at the centre and all the training, I felt I was ready to work at a regular job like everyone else. I was still scared but, after I met my job coach and got to know her, I knew I would get the help I needed. I didn't get a job right away after the class. So I worked at the centre part time and the job coach helped me look for work.

She also spent time with a few of us so we wouldn't forget what we had learned at college. She helped to make sure my resume was good. After applying for many jobs, I finally got a job as a dishwasher in a restaurant. The job coach helped me learn the job. She stayed with me until I could do the job the way the boss wanted it done. She also helped me get to know the other people who work there.

After a few weeks she only stayed a little while. We both met with the boss to make sure I was doing a good job. The job coach or the supervisor came to the restaurant to see me sometimes. One day I got mad at work and wanted to quit. So I asked my boss if I could phone the job coach. My job coach came and we talked about what had upset me and then I went back to work. She helped me to understand that it is good to try and keep in a job until I'm ready for a different one.

At first I just worked part time, but now it is almost full time. The other people working there are good to me. The boss gave me a raise after I had been there for six months. I like having my own money.

I feel better about myself now. I don't want to be a dishwasher forever. But if I do a good job here, then maybe I can get a different job some day. If it were not for the Supported Employment help I would not have a job.

Story of Karen

My name is Karen K. and I live in Redvers, Saskatchewan. I went to school in Kipling, Oxbow, Saskatoon and Yorkton.. In 1982, I moved to an approved home in Redvers so that I could go to the Activity Centre. At the Centre I spent most of my day beading moccasins.

In 1989, I moved into a group home and started working at Darby's Restaurant. This was a community work program. In 1991, I took employment readiness training and my work at Darby's changed from a program to a job. My job coach helped me to do the job better. I did dishes, peeled potatoes, cleaned tables and bathrooms.

In 1992, the Activity Centre changed its programs. The Board decided that the Centre should hire someone to help. I applied for and got the Assistant Supervisors job. The job coach and centre staff help me to learn how to help out at the centre, work in a green house, help people to do things and make things. I do some cleaning, make "Karen's perogies" which we sell, and help with the other people who need help. I help people with exercises and go to the relaxation room, make lunch and coffee. I also clean the tables and bathrooms. I go to meetings to learn how to do my job better. Every Monday the staff meet to talk about the week and every day I have a schedule. I like to help the people from McBain Group Home. I am busy at work.

In 1997, I took the "Orientation to Child Day Care" course. It took 40 weeks to finish. I had a tutor. She went to the classes with me and helped me do my homework and tests. We used a tape recorder. I passed the course. Now I can work at the Day Care. When they need help I go and work there. I like working with all the children, but the babies best.

In my PATH (personal program plan), I said I would like a different job. The job coach helps me try to get different jobs. I will keep working at the Activity Centre till I get a new job.

I live in a house with my friend. We have a dog named Barney. I go to Peoples First. My Independent Living Workers help me to live in my own house. I get paid two times a month and I pay all my bills. I had to learn how to take care of my money and I did it. I pay for my health care, dental and I save for when I get old. I am saving for a big trip. This year I took drawing and cooking classes. I want to learn how to read better.

I am very proud of my work. Everyone says I do a good job. If I don't go to work or work at the day care they have to get someone else to take my place. My family says they think I am much happier. I am!

Karen and Nancy's personal stories are testimony to what *can* be done. Funding came from the Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) Opportunities Fund, from the provincial government's long-term initiative support program, and from SARC members.

In these examples, the changing needs and demands of people with disabilities have been met by an agency that has evolved to meet individual needs. Would this success be possible throughout the province?

2.0 THIS PAPER

Supported Employment has been an emerging issue for service providers (hereinafter referred to as SARC Members) for many years. The opportunity for Supported Employment for individuals with disabilities is not consistent throughout Saskatchewan, often because of the location and size of the provider. Funding to provide this service under current funding models is also a major constraint for many SARC Members.

SARC members, committed to planning for services for persons with disabilities, realized that they were all encountering similar issues. All members faced changing needs of persons with disabilities and increasing expectations of government partners and consumers for multiple employment options. Through the co-ordination of the South East SARC members, a well-attended meeting of members was held in June 1999.

At the June 1999 meeting a number of issues were raised, including the following:

- Availability and/or lack of funding
- Transition from sheltered industries, such as workshops, to Supported Employment
- The need for a common understanding of "Supported Employment"
- The necessity for more partnerships
- The need to share information between members

As a result of this meeting, the SARC Board approved a working group mandated to examine Supported Employment. Each of the four SARC regions appointed a representative to the working group. By consensus, the group expanded the committee to include officials from the Department of Social Services, Supported Employment Network of Saskatchewan (SENS), Post-Secondary and Skills Training, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), and Saskatchewan Association for Community Living (SACL).

The diversity, experience, and positions reflected by members in the working group, and the group's commitment to building consensus, resulted in greater understanding of the support required to serve people with disabilities. It is believed that this paper is an accurate reflection of the essence of the working group's deliberations, and is therefore sound.

This paper is designed to stimulate discussion and action on issues that arise when implementing a Supported Employment model in a community-based organization (CBO). The context is set through personal stories, definitions, key elements, the range of services, and challenges facing full implementation.

3.0 THE WORKING GROUP

The overall purpose of the working group was to assist member agencies become aware of available resources, provide networking opportunities and identify issues/trends on Supported Employment.

Terms of reference and goals included:

- To develop and clarify a “common understanding” of Supported Employment
- To collect, sort and prioritize funding information and criteria in the area of Supported Employment so it is available for members
- To develop a position paper on Supported Employment services that would be available to persons with disabilities
- To consult with major stakeholders
- To present preliminary findings to the SARC Annual General Meeting, 2000 and to major stakeholders.

The working group met ten times over the year. At each meeting representatives were reminded to return to the original principles related to the group's formation.

4.0 BOUNDARIES

Working group members intend this paper be a road map. The paper provides essential elements and critical issues that members want on the record. It intentionally does not go into the *how to's* for Supported Employment. The results and recommendations are only a few of the many critical elements for organizations to use in their search for the best service delivery model in their community.

This paper is the result of much hard work by the Supported Employment working group. The paper, however, is merely the first step. Momentum must continue to be built and energy must be poured into this important work. Support from the membership, the SARC Board and key stakeholders is essential.

Special thanks must be extended to all those who have assisted and have worked on this task. Members of the working group are listed in an Appendix. Please contact any of them for clarification or to discuss related issues.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

This paper is an evolving document that will assist SARC and its stakeholders determine further directions. Some of the next steps will include:

- Feedback and possible adjustments at the Annual Meeting
- Action by the working group on the issue/recommendations contained in the paper
- Direction from the SARC Board on future course
- Distribution of the paper to key government players as well as decision-makers on employment for persons with disabilities
- Follow-up communication to the membership and other key stakeholders on progress and/or challenges related to recommendations

SECTION B

HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

The public attitude towards individuals with intellectual disabilities, and services provided to them, has changed over the years. This section highlights those changes in attitude and public services. Although trends in Saskatchewan are connected to forces and events outside the province, this review focuses on Saskatchewan.

Primary resources ¹ that were reviewed were:

- *Changing Patterns of Care of the Mentally Retarded in Saskatchewan*
- *A Question of Rights*
- *Quality Assurance Program: Providing Safeguards For People Who Are Mentally Retarded*
- *Opportunities for Success: Strategies for Enhancing the Employability of People With Disabilities in Saskatchewan*

18th AND 19th CENTURIES

Before the industrial revolution Canada was a rural society where "responsibility for social services was a family and local concern, and up until 1841 there was no identifiable public service for people who were mentally retarded." ²(QAP, p. 21).

A significant change in how people with intellectual disabilities coped in the community occurred after the industrial revolution and the resulting increased urbanization. Factories created a need for workers with new skills. They needed to know how to tell time and use a calendar. Reading now had more significance and those who had previously dealt in the barter system needed to understand money. Public education began to provide a work force with the skills needed by the factories. This created a barrier for a group of people who had not before been identified, those who became known as mentally retarded. "People who used to do well without school now had the demand of learning to read forced upon them."³ (QAP, p.17). Progress made in science and medicine resulted in people coming to realize that mental disabilities were not the result of demonic spirits.⁴(QAP, p. 17)

¹ See bibliography for details.

² QAP,p.21

³

⁴

EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

Three institutions for those with mental disabilities were founded in Saskatchewan between 1914 and 1945. The first institution opened in 1914 at North Battleford. Those with intellectual disabilities, then referred to as the retarded, were placed in the same premises as those with psychiatric disabilities. Those with psychiatric disabilities were referred to as the mentally ill. ¹(CPOC, p. 29). In 1922, a Mental Hospital opened at Weyburn. It too also included both those with intellectual disabilities and those with psychiatric disabilities.

The provincial government passed a new Mental Health Act in 1936. It defined mental deficiency as a separate condition from mental illness. ² (CPOC, p. 58) The Saskatchewan Training School for individuals with intellectual disabilities opened in Weyburn in 1945. ³ (CPOC, p. 65). It was a separate institution for those who had an intellectual disability, although in temporary wartime buildings.

1950s

The Valley View Saskatchewan Training School opened in Moose Jaw in 1955. "It is ironic that even prior to construction of the first permanent facility for the mentally retarded, Saskatchewan experts were stressing that the community was the best place for the mentally retarded." ⁴(QOR, p. 11) Unfortunately, the mentally retarded could not be placed in the community because there were very few places for them to go. ⁵ (QOR, p. 12).

Parents, as an organized group, began to take an active role in the development of services for their children who had intellectual disabilities. ⁶ (QAP, p. 28). It was at this time that the Saskatchewan Association for the Mentally Retarded (SAMR), now known as Saskatchewan Association for Community Living (SACL), arose as the major organization of parents with children who have an intellectual disability. These parents were primarily concerned with the educational needs of their children.

In 1952, the first small federally-delivered provincial rehabilitation program was established in Saskatchewan. ⁷ (VRDPM, p.1)

1960s

The Saskatchewan Training School opened in 1961 in Prince Albert ⁸ (CPOC, p. 89) and the Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons' (VRDP) Act was passed. This Act provided that if the province could demonstrate that programs were rehabilitative then fifty cents of every dollar could be recovered from the Federal Government. Furthermore, adults who had disabilities received financial assistance to obtain skills that would allow them to be competitively employed. ⁹ (VRDPM, p.1).

"The 1960s was a decade in which parents established their rights to be involved, and the community's responsibility to provide support for people who were mentally retarded in ways other than institutionalization was questioned." ¹⁰ (QAP, p. 31)

The parent movement of the '60s was not trying to do away with institutions. Rather, what parents wanted was to obtain options for their children. ¹¹(QAP, p. 32) As children progressed through school, parents turned their attention to the future. This led to the development of sheltered workshops, activity centres, group homes and developmental centres. ¹² (QOR, p. 23)

SARC was formed in 1968 by eight community agencies that were operating vocational workshops for individuals with mental disabilities. Since then SARC has significantly expanded its membership, its services, the supports offered, and employment opportunities.

1970s

The 1970s were a decade of growth with a immense expansion of services. As one writer put it, "... during the 70s, services for people who were mentally retarded changed both in quantity and quality." ¹³ (QAP, p. 31) Two events played a major part in shaping this improvement in services for individuals who had intellectual disabilities:

- 1) the publication of Wolfensberger's book on Normalization
- 2) the signing of a Federal-Provincial cost sharing agreement (that actually happened in the previous decade) ¹⁴ (QAP, p.32)

During this decade Core Services was developed in Saskatchewan. This department was responsible for co-ordinating services provided by the Departments of Health, Social Services, and Education. ¹⁵ (CPOC, p. 85) A primary goal of Core Services was "... to improve and expand programming for the retarded, emphasizing community based services as an alternative to those which are institutionally based." ¹⁶ (CPOC, p. 92) This change represented a fundamental shift in philosophy and control, transferring the responsibility for those with intellectual disabilities from Health to Social Services.

Many service programs at the community level were established in the early 1970s. Parents who wanted to see an alternative for their sons and daughters, away from an institutional setting, initiated many of these programs. Backed by government funding and local fund-raising, communities constructed facilities to house sheltered workshops, activity centres and group homes.

It is noteworthy that Section 122 was added to the School Act in 1971. It "...established the right of all handicapped children to an appropriate public education." ¹⁷ (SEAC, p.61) This mandate was further expanded in 1978 to include support to children who had multiple disabilities. This allowed for funding for developmental centres and for special programming for three to five year-old severely disabled children. ¹⁸ (SEAC, p. 61)

It was also during the 1970s that Training on the Job for Those with Special Needs (TOJ), was started." ¹⁹ (QOR, p. 58) This program provided people with disabilities with the opportunity to obtain training on the job with the promise of permanent regular

employment. Seven voluntary agencies originally participated in the program. SAMR was the only one representing individuals with intellectual disabilities.

1980s

In the 1980s people, programs and communities stopped to catch their breath from the fast growth of the 1970s. The de-institutional movement was in full swing across North America. Thousands of people who were once considered lifetime residents in institutions began moving out into communities. Service providers began to focus on the potential of individuals and individualized community program options for people with disabilities.

Section 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* was proclaimed in 1985. It had a huge impact on disability rights. "For the first time in Canadian history, people considered to be mentally retarded are recognized by the law as full citizens with the right to equal benefit and protection of the law." ²⁰ (QAP, p. 35)

One of the most significant events in Saskatchewan during the 1980s was the creation of SARCAN, the recycling division of The Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres (SARC). The province contracted SARC to operate a province-wide beverage container recycling program. The exclusive contract was to collect and recycle non-refillable ready-to-serve beverage containers and to maximize employment of persons with disabilities. From humble beginnings, through the hard work of SARC members, SARCAN has gained a reputation for recycling, leadership and quality employment opportunities.

1990s

Throughout this decade people sought more mainstream programs and services.

In the early 1990s, several community-based organizations (CBO) initiated Supported Employment programs and services. Some were driven by several organizations in a community establishing a network to administer the programs. Others slowly shifted emphasis and resources to establish a variety of Supported Employment models. From 1990 to 1995, for example, there was a 300% increase in the level of services in just one organization.

A provincial Supported Employment Conference held in October 1994 accelerated the movement towards community employment. One program grew from a few clients to 50 clients in less than ten years. By the late 1990s large urban areas had caseloads of 100-150 persons receiving assistance in Supported Employment services.

In this decade, several studies on issues for persons with disabilities were published.

The first study, in 1991, *Opportunities for Success: Strategies for Enhancing the Employability of People with Disabilities in Saskatchewan*, identified three challenges (barriers), and proposed several solutions. All three challenges described remain today.

The first challenge for employment of individuals with disabilities is negative attitudes.²¹ (OFS, p.2) The suggested solution is education of employers, education of people with disabilities, and education of important stakeholders.

The second challenge is unqualified workers.²² (OFS, p. 6) The suggested solutions are empowering individuals with disabilities to help themselves, working with employers to help them be more involved with training programs, providing accommodations, etc., and providing effective school-to-work transition programs.²³ (OFS, p. 8) Other solutions are working with labour to be more supportive, leadership from government, and providing quality employment services.²⁴ (OFS, p.9)

The third challenge identified is a lack of co-operation between important stakeholders.²⁵ (OFS, p.11). The suggested solution is working to create effective partnerships in order to initiate positive change.

The Task Force on Disability Issues (known as the Scott Task Force) released a paper in 1996 entitled *Equal Citizenship for Canadians with Disabilities: The Will to Act*.

In 1998 the *In Unison* paper was released. It sets out a blueprint for promoting the integration of persons with disabilities.²⁶ (In Unison, p. 5) This paper states a need to continue to work at removing barriers to systemic discrimination²⁷ (In Unison, p. 5) and "equal access to education, training, and support programs will increase their potential for employment and a better economic future."²⁸ (In Unison, p. 6).

Of significance also in the 1990s was a change in the thirty-year old federal-provincial cost sharing agreement. The recent agreement focuses on employment.

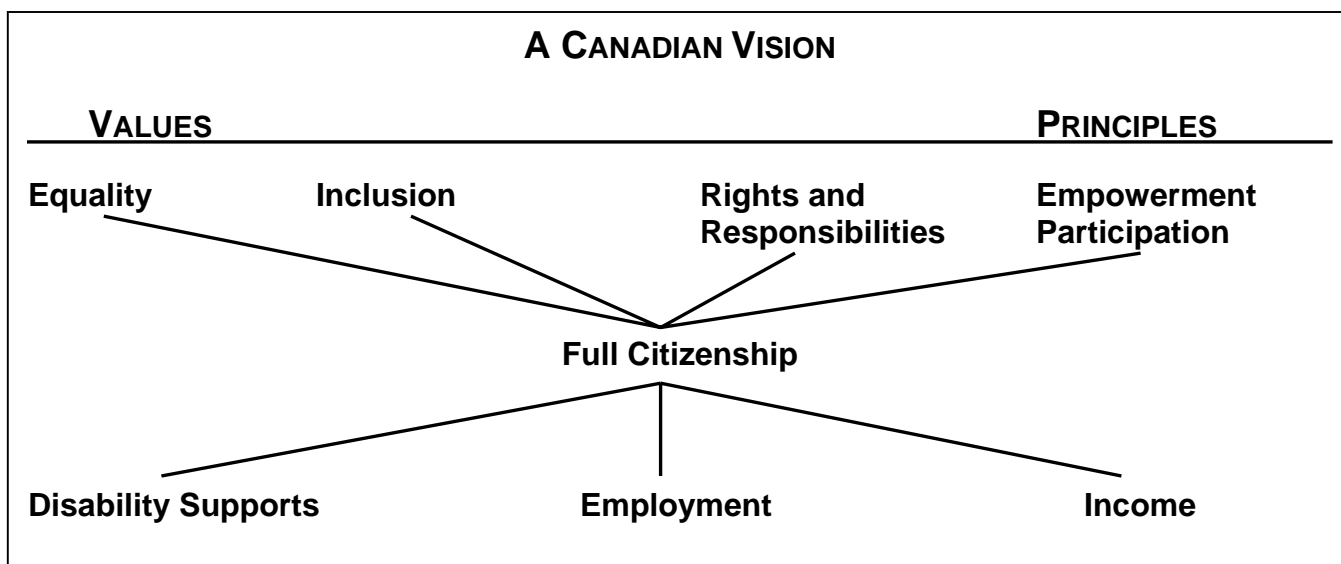
During the 1990s there was a movement towards providing more mainstream opportunities for individuals with disabilities. A few of many initiatives are the development of Vocational Lifeskills programs, Saskatchewan Abilities Council, Regina; SIAST Palliser, Moose Jaw; Way to Work, Saskatoon; Way to Work, Humboldt; several Supported Employment Programs, many growing business ventures employing individuals with disabilities, and small business operations.

SECTION C

1.0 THE VALUES, PRINCIPLES & FEATURES OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT: COMPARISON/PARALLELS TO IN UNISON

In 1995, the Scott Task Force travelled across Canada to consult Canadians about services for people with disabilities. One of the results of that Task Force was the development of a vision for full citizenship and full participation in all aspects of society. IN UNISON: A Canadian Approach To Disability Issues is the publication that sets out that vision.

IN UNISON defines the vision this way. "Persons with disabilities participate as full citizens in all aspects of Canadian society. The full participation of persons with disabilities requires the commitment of all segments of society. The realization of the vision will allow persons with disabilities to maximize their independence and enhance their well-being through access to required supports and the elimination of barriers that prevent their full participation."



In the chart above (In Unison, p.14) three "interrelated building blocks" to full citizenship are shown as disability supports, employment and income. The values and principles that are the cornerstones of full citizenship are equality, inclusion, acceptance of rights and responsibilities, and empowerment to participate.

This vision of full citizenship mirrors Supported Employment in its values and principles. Supported Employment is based on the principles of inclusion and empowerment. Its values are competitive employment, consumer control, commensurate wages and benefits, capabilities, relationships, supports, systemic change and community. Supported Employment requires integration. With individualized support, persons with disabilities secure and maintain employment as well as income.

2.0 SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT VALUES

Provision of Supported Employment is grounded in the belief that individuals with disabilities are valued members of society. From this belief, certain values flow. The values, accompanied by a brief explanation follow.

VALUES	VALUE CLARIFICATION
Presumption of Employment	A conviction that all persons, regardless of the level or the type of disability, have the right to pursue employment.
Competitive Employment	A conviction that employment occurs within the local labour market.
Control	A conviction that people with disabilities should choose and regulate their own employment supports and services.
Commensurate Wages & Benefits	A conviction that people with disabilities should earn wages and benefits equal to that of co-workers performing the same or similar jobs.
Focus on Capacity & Capabilities	A conviction that people with disabilities should be viewed in terms of their abilities, strengths, and interests, rather than their disabilities.
Importance of Relationships	A conviction that community relationships, both at and away from work, lead to mutual respect and acceptance.
Power of Supports	A conviction that people with disabilities need to determine their personal goals and receive assistance in assembling the supports necessary to achieve their ambitions.
Systems Change	A conviction that traditional systems must be changed to ensure customer control which is vital to the integrity of Supported Employment.
Importance of Community	A conviction that people need to be connected to the formal and informal networks of a community for acceptance, growth, and development.

This chart is adapted from *Supported Employment Handbook: A Customer-Driven Approach for Persons with Significant Disabilities*, p.

3.0 FEATURES OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

What *services* does Supported Employment include?

Supported Employment services include **employment** with all the regular outcomes of having a job. Wages, working conditions, and job security – no more and no less than any other person working in that industry/workplace. The focus is on providing the **on-going support** required to get and keep a job rather than on getting a person ready for a job sometime in the future. Emphasis is on creating **opportunities to work** rather than just providing services to develop skills. There is opportunity for **full participation**. The assumption is that all persons, regardless of the degree of their disability, have the capacity to undertake Supported Employment, if appropriate on-going support services can be provided. Contact and relationships with people without disabilities, who are not paid caregivers, are emphasized. **Social integration** can occur with co-workers, supervisors, and others at work, near work, during lunchtimes and breaks, or during nonwork hours as a result of wages earned. Supported Employment does not lock services into one or two options. It is **flexible** because of the wide range of jobs in the community and the many ways of providing support to individuals in those jobs. **On-going support** is given.

4.0 ELEMENTS OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DELIVERY

Supported Employment Service Delivery implies the same elements as any employment opportunity. The key elements are:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Consumer Choice | 6. Community & Business Support |
| 2. Consumer Control | 7. Best Practices |
| 3. Career Focus | 8. Assistive Technology |
| 4. Full Inclusion | 9. Person-Centred Planning |
| 5. Long-term Supports | 10. Accountability |

Chart adapted from *Supported Employment Handbook: A Customer-Driven Approach for Persons with Significant Disabilities*, p.

SECTION D:

A range of Supported Employment Services and explanations was agreed to by the working group.

Career Exploration...provides a participant with an opportunity to observe and learn different jobs (e.g. job shadowing, career fairs).

Employment Training...enhances work skills, and may include a variety of training (e.g. one-to-one training or formal employability skills training at a college).

Individualized Support...includes but is not limited to requiring or choosing all the supports, varying the order of support, provision of support by different personnel in different organizations, potential for long term and/or indefinite support.

Intake Assessment...acquisition of a work history and determination of personal aptitudes and interests.

Job Coaching...provides on-job training to assist the individual to learn the required job skills, includes the development of natural supports at the worksite and may include job/task analysis and job accommodations.

Job Development...is an ongoing component of the Supported Employment program to promote integrated employment to employers, and develop and secure job opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Job Search...the individual is assisted to look for the jobs for which they may wish to apply.

On-Going Support...provides a variety of long-term or short term or intermittent support to the employee and the employer, as required, to support job retention.

Personal Career Plans...assist the individual to develop, implement and evaluate an action plan of steps to be taken to attain employment goals.

Resume and Interview Preparation...the individual is assisted with preparation of the resume and for the interview.

Specialized Support...refers to the extensive range of both on-site and off-site accommodations which may be required by individuals to successfully prepare for, access and maintain employment. In addition to job coaching, these may include attendant care, interpreter services, adaptive technologies, worksite modifications, and wage subsidies. There are many others that can be provided.

Vocational Evaluation...is a formal process to determine specific aptitudes and potential job matches, and may include worksite and situational assessments, preparation and evaluations.

Work Experience...may be paid or unpaid, time-limited placement at a worksite to assist the individual to determine aptitude, interest, knowledge, ability and personal suitability.

SECTION E

COST/BENEFIT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS¹

Supported Employment has emerged as an effective approach to assisting people with disabilities gain access to regular employment. Some analysis and evaluation of its cost effectiveness has been done.

In the mid-1990s two analyses were undertaken. The studies involved Supported Employment services offered by the Saskatchewan Abilities Council, and social assistance savings from the *Long Term Employment Initiative* program co-ordinated by the Department of Social Services.

The Saskatchewan Abilities Council conducted a study of fifty-seven randomly selected participants who had received Supported Employment services from the Council during the period of 1990 to 1994. Some of the findings were astonishing. For example, there was a 300% increase in demand for Supported Employment services over the four years. The study revealed that all survey participants had problematic employment histories. Close to 90% were receiving some form of financial assistance at the time of the Supported Employment referral.

At least 92% of the participants obtained regular paying jobs during their involvement with the Council's Supported Employment programs. Fifty-one percent of the participants were employed for 30 or more hours per week. Based on the information collected, it was concluded that the Council's Supported Employment services were cost effective. In the study, the average cost per participant for 54 weeks of Supported Employment was \$3100. A conservative, estimated benefit in terms of continued financial assistance and taxes gained for this same time period is \$5500 per participant. This yielded a cost-to-benefit ratio of 1 to 1.79.

In December 1994, Community Living Division (CLD) analyzed the *Long Term Employment Initiative*. This flexible and innovative use of transferred Social Assistance Plan (SAP) funds has proven to be highly successful. The program provides supports such as job coaching and training on the job. It has consistently provided a significant reduction in SAP as well as permanent jobs, with little ongoing financial support. Since the inception of this short-term job creation program, by far the majority the jobs have come from the private sector.

In one section of the 1994 analysis CLD examined how the funds helped 47 people. \$81,000 was targeted to assist those individuals with their on-the-job-training. A saving of \$159,000 in SAP was found. This saving is largely because the people received a pay cheque and paid taxes. The Department estimated that if those individuals continued to work, there would be an average savings of \$2700 to SAP per person per year.

¹ Figures in this section have been rounded.

CLD noted that disadvantaged employees and their employers require commitment to a support network over a longer term than the mandate of the program. Although supports are not always monetary, they must exist for continued participant success.

These two studies suggest that there is cost effectiveness to Supported Employment. It is and can be more than a break-even proposition for taxpayers. Even more significant but less measurable is the enhancement of personal dignity and quality of life of the people involved.

Transitions

Transition from high school to life after school is an intense and often scary process for most students. This transition is even more intense and scary for students who have disabilities. Not only do these students find the transition difficult, the students' families find it stressful and challenging. A coordinated plan that helps students with disabilities prepare for the future after school is needed.

The focus of services for persons with disabilities has evolved, and continues to do so. A co-ordinated, proactive approach to transitions from the school is of prime importance. Included in the list of transitions are:

- School to post-secondary education
- School to fully integrated work
- School to various entrepreneurial options
- School to supported employment

To assist students with intellectual disabilities assume full citizenship, every effort must be made to assist each individual learn the most appropriate and practical skills.

In the view of the working group transitions is an important issue to identify. Without an effective transition process, the future of Supported Employment will be negatively impacted. SARC members are urged to include the transition process while implementing Supported Employment.

SECTION F

CRITICAL ISSUES:

Four broad issues are identified and require action. They are essential to providing an effective, province-wide Supported Employment service model.

1. FUNDING

Need for long-term core funding for a continuum of services that is consistent with Supported Employment.

2. EDUCATION

Need for sufficient staff training in Supported Employment techniques and application.

3. AWARENESS

Need for ongoing awareness and education of the general public (e.g. employers, community, and government).

4. PARTNERSHIPS

Need for further partnership development and enhancement to achieve accessibility in the labour market.

SECTION G:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. FUNDING. Long-term core funding for a continuum of services that are consistent with Supported Employment is essential.

Issue 1: Funding for Supported Employment services in Saskatchewan must be consistent and simple to access.

Strategy:

- Encourage funding agencies to consider long term fixed cost (core) funding for Supported Employment services so that the In Unison vision paper can become a reality.

Action:

- Establish a working group to include all funding partners and some shareholders to develop a long-term funding strategy.

Time Line:

- Establish a committee as soon as possible.
- Develop a strategy by 2001.
- Initiate the strategy by 2002.

Issue 2: The transition from vocational programs to a Supported Employment model requires planning and funding.

Strategy:

- Enlist partners to assist agencies with transition planning.
- Develop guidelines to assist agencies with transition planning.
- Encourage funding agencies to provide time-limited transitional funding.

Action:

- Ask the SARC Board of Directors to establish the working group.

Time Line:

- Establish committee as soon as possible.
- Develop guidelines and funding by 2001.

Issue 3: Agencies need help to access funding for Supported Employment.

Strategy:

- Compile necessary information to advise agencies of all funding options.

- Encourage agencies to establish a working relationship with funding agency personnel in their respective regions.

Action:

- Ask each funding agency to provide relevant information.
- Distribute information to member agencies as soon as possible so they may access funds for 2000/2001.

2. EDUCATION. Staff training in Supported Employment techniques and application is needed.

Background:

The current lack of accredited training means there is no identifiable profession. Consequently, wages are lower and there is high staff turnover. Accredited training and professional identity will increase credibility in the eyes of funders. Accredited training and professionalism will lead to higher wages and improved service delivery. People with disabilities will realize increased and more effective benefits from Supported Employment services.

Issue 1: Industry-specific training is required to meet the needs of Supported Employment staff and to reinforce their professional identity.

Strategy:

- Develop accessible and accredited Supported Employment training initiatives.

Action:

- Work collaboratively with all appropriate agencies and accredited institutions to develop and deliver Supported Employment training curriculums.

Time Line:

- Underway.
- Some training options may be available in the 2000/2001 academic year.

Issue 2: Service providers must seek accreditation for their staff.

Strategy:

- Encourage boards and their administrators to develop, monitor and maintain standards for delivery of Supported Employment services.

Action:

- Research standard practices for the provision of Supported Employment services and ensure that training in standard practices is accessible and accredited.

Time Line:

- Establish and maintain an education and training strategy by September 1, 2000.

Issue 3: Supported Employment education and training concerns must be addressed on a co-ordinated basis.

Strategy:

- Provide opportunities for interested parties to work together towards common goals.

Action:

- Provide liaison between service providers and training institutions to ensure that current and future training needs of business are being met.

Time Line:

- As soon as possible; on-going.

3. AWARENESS. Promote awareness and education about Supported Employment amongst the general public, employers and government.

Issue 1: Major service providers such as SACL, SARC and Sask. Abilities need to work in a coordinated way to raise public awareness of Supported Employment.

Strategy:

- Encourage major service providers and provincial associations to develop and implement a plan to raise awareness of Supported Employment.

Action:

- SARC will initiate discussion with Sask. Abilities, SACL and potential funding partners to develop a joint plan to raise awareness of Supported Employment.

Time Line:

- Establish a dialogue with major Supported Employment partners by October, 2000.
- Develop a joint strategy by spring, 2001.
- Initiate the strategy by fall, 2001.

Issue 2: The benefits of Supported Employment and employment diversity must be promoted to the general public.

Strategy:

- Develop an information package on Supported Employment and its benefits; present this to key leaders in the Public Service Commission.

Action:

- Meet with key Public Service Commission members to raise awareness of Supported Employment and the value it brings through increasing employment of persons with disabilities in diverse occupations.

Time Line:

- Establish dialogue with the ADM forum, Post Secondary Education, the Department of Labour and the Public Service Commission by fall, 2000

Issue 3: A co-ordinated and consistent message on Supported Employment and the value of increasing the diversity of particular workforces must be presented to unions, major corporations and Crown Corporations.

Strategy:

- Enlist our Supported Employment partners and public sector players to develop an awareness plan to increase knowledge about the value of Supported Employment to major corporate, Crown and union interests.

Action:

- SARC, together with the Supported Employment service providers, will begin to work collaboratively on increasing awareness. This will be by either striking a new committee or by working within existing committee structures.

Time Line:

- Establish a dialogue by fall, 2000.
- Develop a joint strategy with Supported Employment service providers by spring, 2001.
- Initiate the strategy by fall, 2001.

4. PARTNERSHIPS. Partnership development and enhancement are essential to achieving greater access to the labour market.

General:

A partnership legally "...is a relationship that subsists between two or more persons carrying on business in common with a view to profit.²" This narrow definition of a partnership excludes all not-for-profit-organizations. If taken literally, the definition is perhaps too rigid for our purposes. It fits, however, in a more abstract sense. If we want to have business as one of our major partners, then we need to use business terminology and thinking. If CBOs use the *profit* concept in their work they will relate better to business.

CBOs must explain how hiring people with disabilities can lead to a positive public image, a higher community profile, and thus may lead to more customers.

For government funders, more financially self-sufficient individuals means a larger tax base, more money going into the economy and less money going into social assistance. Both the community and government *profit*. When SARCAN employs 365 people, for example, there is an annual mean saving of \$1 million to social services. \$5 million goes into the government treasury and the pension fund will save millions in the future. Salaries add to the economy through taxes and economic multipliers of consumption.

Profit for CBOs will be that the people we are working with and for will have a greater quality of life. This is the *profit* we seek most!

It is useful to look at the components of legal partnerships because they may offer guidance for promoting partnerships. A successful partnership should have profit for all, mutual trust, mutual confidence, active contribution of capital and management, and the ability of others to participate in the planning and management of new initiatives. CBOs may have to work on these components.

Issue 1: Partnerships must be struck between CBOs and business. Few committees, programs and organizations that work to promote employment of persons with disabilities include representatives of the business community. CBOs have traditionally identified a solution and then gone about selling the solution to potential partners. It may be more beneficial to engage potential partners in developing solutions.

Strategy:

- Encourage, initiate and support a mind set and process that will see CBOs and the business community discuss labour issues, trends and future needs, and together plan, develop and implement solutions. This will impact on all other issues related to Supported Employment.

² The Partnerships Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P-5, s.2

Action:

- Establish a provincial business advisory group, and promote similar groups at the local level.

Time Line:

- As soon as possible; on-going.

Issue 2: A responsibility of unions is to protect and strengthen their membership; this includes equal opportunities for people with disabilities.

Strategy:

- Develop a rapport and working relationship/partnership with unions.

Action:

- Develop a Union Relations Committee.

Time Line:

- As soon as possible; on-going.

Issue 3: Government services and programs should be harmonized.

Strategy:

- Work through various avenues such as the Office of Disability Issues (ODI).

Action:

- Write letter of support for ODI and interdepartmental efforts.

CONCLUSION

The past twelve months have seen a intensive review of supported employment in Saskatchewan. SARC's Supported Employment Working Group believes this endeavour provides a common understanding of supported employment. The Working Group supports key recommendations for development, and encourages discussion and growth.

The paper and its recommendations are just a few of the many critical elements for organizations to use in their search for the best service delivery models in their community.

The brief history of services in Saskatchewan illustrates the evolution of supported decision making, supported residential living models and supported employment. The independent living model, now being implemented, is the next step toward full integration of persons with intellectual disabilities into Canadian society.

The working group recognizes that there are many issues that need to be reviewed in order to succeed in the area of supported employment. Four global issues and recommendations are identified. Funding, education, awareness and partnerships require support, leadership, and action from not only from SARC Member Agencies, but also from all current and potential stakeholders.

Not all agencies provide, nor are they expected to provide, the full range of vocational services. SARC Members are encouraged to take time to examine and evaluate where they feel they fit into the broad spectrum of services. Indeed, some Members may feel that this paper is unrelated to the clientele they currently serve or may serve in the future.

The working group, however, encourages all SARC Members to challenge their thinking about current service delivery in their communities. There is opportunity to make use of the growing number of options for employment supports, job coaching, and project funding under the Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities program.

It is believed that funding, enhancements and initiatives will come in the area of employment-related programs. Agency mandates and those they serve must evolve to maintain current funding, and SARC Member Agencies avail themselves of new funding opportunities. In this way, SARC services will not only be maintained, but also enhanced.

Now the real work begins. The next steps are critical. We encourage every SARC Member to contact one of the working group to offer input. The success of the next steps will depend upon our efforts to develop supported employment as an option that can and should be offered in every community in Saskatchewan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SARC (Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres) is a provincial association of independent and autonomous community organizations that provide services to persons with disabilities in Saskatchewan. Its mission is to offer vision, leadership, and support to members in the pursuit of excellence in community services for individuals with disabilities.

In 1999 the SARC Board established a working group mandated to examine Supported Employment. Four SARC representatives formed the core, and agreed to expand to include officials from the Department of Social Services, Supported Employment Network of Saskatchewan (SENS), Post-Secondary and Skills Training, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living (SACL).

The working group met through 1999 and 2000. By telephone, fax, email and in-person meetings, the Working Group achieved consensus on the issues identified in the terms of reference, including:

- Developing a common understanding of Supported Employment
- Developing a position paper on the range of Supported Employment services that should be available to persons with disabilities
- Developing consultation forum with consumers on Supported Employment
- Presenting the findings to the SARC Annual General Meeting, 2000 and to other stakeholders

A brief history of the public attitude towards individuals with intellectual disabilities and the services provided to them is included, with a focus on the province of Saskatchewan. The *Medical Model* in which intellectual disability is seen to be a medical condition requiring "looking after," assumes that the person is incapable of making decisions. In this model, as in the *Welfare Model*, decision-making is not in the hands of the individual, rather, it is in the hands of the medical profession or government administrators. There is the stigma of being on welfare in the latter model, and little personalization. In the jargon of the time, *spaces* are funded rather than *people*. The *Welfare Model* evolved into the *Advocacy Model*. Although in this model individuals with disabilities are seen to have rights, it is assumed that they need an advocate to speak on their behalf. The new model, the *Independent Living Model*, recognizes the right and desire of individuals with disabilities to be in control of their own lives, to express their wishes and make choices, to assume full citizenship as Canadians, and to have access to whatever supports they need. Supported Employment is a key component of the *Independent Living Model*.

Thirteen elements that comprise the range of Supported Employment services are identified, including individualized and specialized support, job coaching, job search, on-going support, and personal career planning.

Two brief sections speak to the cost/benefit of Supported Employment programs and the importance of the transition from the school situation to the wider education and/or employment sector.

Finally, this paper focuses on four issues critical to offering a province-wide Supported Employment service model.

Recommendations rising from the four issues are:

1. Funding...long-term core funding for a continuum of services that are consistent with Supported Employment
 - Must be consistent and simple to access
 - Transition to Supported Employment requires planning and funding
 - Agencies need help to access funding for Supported Employment
2. Education...staff need training in Supported Employment techniques and application
 - Industry-specific training is required to meet needs and reinforce professional identity
 - Accreditation to be sought for staff
 - Education and training concerns to be addressed in co-ordinated basis
3. Awareness...promote and educate public, employers and government about Supported Employment
 - Major service providers to co-ordinate plan to raise awareness
 - Promote the benefits of Supported Employment and employment diversity
 - Develop a co-ordinated and consistent message on Supported Employment and the value of workplace diversity. Present to unions, major corporations and Crown Corporations
4. Partnerships...essential to achieve greater access to the labour market
 - Strike partnerships between CBOs and business
 - Work with unions to obtain more job opportunities for people with disabilities
 - Harmonize government services and programs

This SARC Position Paper is unanimously endorsed by the working group ***and by the Board of SARC (tent).***

APPENDIX A

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADM	Assistant Deputy Minister
CACL	Canadian Association of Community Living
CBO	Community Based Organization
CLD	Community Living Division
HRDC	Human Resources Development Canada
ODI	Office of Disability Issues
SACL	Saskatchewan Association for Community Living
SAP	Social Assistance Plan
SARC	Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres
SENS	Supported Employment Network of Saskatchewan
SAMR	Saskatchewan Association for the Mentally Retarded
VRDPA	Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act
SEAC	Special Education Across Canada

¹ CPOC, p.29

² CPOC, p.58

³ CPOC, p.65

⁴ QOR, p.11

⁵ QOR, p.12

⁶ QAP, p.28

⁷ VRDPM, p.1

⁸ CPOC, p.89

⁹ VRDPM, p.1

¹⁰ QAP, p.31

¹¹ QAP, p.32

¹² QOR, p.23

¹³ QAP, p.31

¹⁴ QAP, p.32

¹⁵ CPOC, p.85

¹⁶ CPOC, p.92

¹⁷ SEAC, p.61

¹⁸ SEAC, p.61

¹⁹ QOR, p.58

²⁰ QAP, p.35

²¹ OFS, p.2

²² OFS, p.6

²³ OFS, p.8

²⁴ OFS, p.9

²⁵ OFS, p.11

²⁶ In Unison, p.5

²⁷ In Unison, p.5

²⁸ In Unison, p.6