

# INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY FEEDBACK – “HAVE YOUR SAY”

## Compilation - Central Region Community Conversations

### FALL 2007

#### 1. What has been the biggest improvement for individuals you've seen in the past few years?

- Increase in AISH Payments.
- Lacombe Learning Circle – great program
  - Support during the day
  - Minimal funding for large no of people.
- A desire for clients to have a meaningful place in the community.
- Being able to live independently.
- Some individualized improvement in the respect to personal skills. This is due to the commitment of some great staff who have stuck with it.
- CAAN meetings. Cougars Board Retreat – Red Lodge. Rights group plays. Arts Sparks play @ Olds. Learning Circle – history. Living more on my own. Newsletters. LAIRD Golden Group.
- Increased focus on person-based planning and funding.
- Increased focus on meaningful beyond relationships with paid staff.
- People helping others to cope with their disabilities and how to live with them.
- Recognition of importance on connections in community.
- Recognition of need to do things differently.
- Person Centered Planning.
- Dedication to client inclusion within the community. Advocacy for clients rights.
- More groups available to all. Ie. self advocacy groups, Art Sparks, Learning Groups.
- Some good stuff (John T)
- Easier to be a volunteer
- Being with my family
- Holly doing a good job (Wainwright)
- Overall strength of Advocacy (Staff comment)
- People being involved like in schools.
- Plain Language helps.
- Staff coming in to help me has been going good. I help them.
- Appearance; How SA's approach other people.
- More involvement in meetings – there is a lot more attendance.
- AISH: Has increased – Thanks for advocating.
- Meeting other SA groups and people with disabilities.
- PDD seems to care more and listen, there is more contact.
- PDD tries to make our futures brighter
- PDD attends meetings and let's us know what's going on.

- \$ AISH ↑↑.
- Being involved in more organizations eg. CAAN meetings – out of town.
- More choices.
- Coming to meetings to get information.
- PDD and staff at agencies more approachable
- Willing to listen to people, staff.
- More acceptance – more able to make new friends. Less teasing. More able to speak out – being involved in stuff.
- More staff, more pay for staff, Class 4 license. Staff help me.
- Because I am a self-advocate.
- Part of Power Council – masterminds.
- Plain Language documents – trips, shopping.
- Not as many people – before too crowded.
- Get around – go to rec. meetings, dances.
- People love me.
- Staff listen to me.
- Like to live in a home – living in a home is better.
- More family contact
- Power Council
- More money, more choice with how I spend my money – my decision.
- More innovative, more flexible, more friendly staff now in the PDD office. More groups to become involved with.
- PDD Board Members are more approachable.
- Person Centered Planning is better now.
- More volunteering, Art Sparks, doing the Play On the Boards, CAAN Retreats and all in CAAN.
- Being an actor.
- More gardening.
- My community options in community.
- People are more accommodating and places are more accessible. Increased AISH has helped to get individuals out in the community more.
- More businesses are hiring persons with developmental disabilities.
- I am glad getting new money from PDD.
- Friendship or PCP or PDD.
- PCP
- The support and meeting people.
- Supporting Self-Advocacy.
- PCP
- PCP
- More of us are out in the community.
- Rights Learning Theatre Group.
- Art Sparks Program
- CAAN Retreat
- Learning Circle
- CSC visits.
- Better working relations with staff
- More fun and more people involved in activities.

- Having a job that we like
- Volunteering options
- Meeting new people in other communities
- Better understanding of people.
- Meeting more and new friends, Retreat, Consumer Conference, Horizons Centre, CSS, Olds College, High School
- Happier now – working
- Making friends and connecting with Parkdale School – writing letters to the soldiers.
- Meeting people in vocational program at College – Red Deer and Olds.
- Working – keeping my job.
- Moved from an approved home to an apartment
- Get engaged and may be married soon – August
- Happy living in family home.

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- Lack of training of staff. Motivation of staff.
  - Lack of staff – lack of community connections.
  - Staffing
  - Housing
  - Wages (people wanting to work at Michener for better wages and benefits)
  - Costs of accommodations
  - Low wages in service industries.
  - Bus pass
  - Staffing wages/retention!!!
  - Training young staff who have no experience.
  - Money – rent is high; AISH is only \$1000 – If I work I lose AISH.
  - Rent is expensive
  - More holidays (takes \$)
  - Need better employment, services so you can get a job and more money.
  - Other people making fun about their disabilities and laughing sometimes behind their backs.
  - More AISH
  - Inadequate wages for the people who serve the.
  - Isolation.
  - Tenuous housing situations (residences being sold)
  - Support, resources, funding.
  - Persons with disabilities incredible vulnerable.
  - Staffing – non-competitive wages
  - Personal rewards don't pay higher through the years than wages have increased.
  - Non-profit agencies cannot compete with government funded positions – we lose great staff to higher paying gov't jobs within the field.
  - Not enough individual staff to do specific events – more.
  - Getting a job, getting a place (home), getting help at home with money, getting a home on their own,

**2. What in your community, now, most stands in the way of individuals having a better quality of life?**

Independent (staff + individual)

- Some staff need training to understand what to do in plain language.
- Lots of turnover (staff comment)
- Transportation OK if you walk – taxies in rural areas like Wainwright.
- Hard for people in wheelchairs to get across the road in Wetaskiwin.
- Difficulty finding jobs
- Housing affordable – utilities
- Transportation – cost of gas
- Food costs are too high.
- More staff to support individual services
- Lack of support for medical issues
- No Choice where to live.
- More money needed
- Housing is expense – even food.
- Hard to find housing when you have pets
- Having a disease.
- Finding a good paying job you want to do.
- Employers want a job done too fast at first.
- Employees think you can't learn.
- No "fun" money.
- Transportation money hard to afford – one lady couldn't attend Horizons due to cost of transportation.
- How to find out information about issues such as a place for help with buying a house.
- More staff needed to meet the needs.
- Vacancies mean less individualized services eg looking after two people instead of one.
- Struggle with words
- No OT work
- Hard to go on sidewalks & roads with wheelchairs
- Not treated with respect
- Staff don't listen
- People are cranky sometimes – how to handle this
- Being away from family
- More money for staff
- Not enough jobs
- Knowing what's appropriate.
- Sometimes rules are made without my input – people don't listen
- Sometimes people don't see how smart I am.
- Community of Red Deer needs to be welcoming
- More access to clubs, ?, camps
- More community access hours
- Transportation – no bus in Ponoka  
– NO HANDI-VAN
- When I volunteer with DTHR I don't get feedback. I think because I have a disability. I would like to do more and they need to understand more about

people with disabilities (Education of public to increase volunteer opportunities)

- Getting round if you have a walker
- Getting across roads people don't stop or give me a way to cross.
- Homeless people ask me for money, and cigarettes and drugs.
- Most places have wheelchair access, and some bathrooms have improved. The need to have a person in a wheelchair test it before it's finished.
- In order to keep front line staff there needs to be an increase in benefits, if not more pay.
- My family did die is having quality of life.
- Go to Michener dance on Friday makes me feel good.
- People not listen to you.
- Vandalism – shortage of staff at store.
- People's attitudes.
- Money, cost of bus passes
- Houses that are or rent lower cost.
- People to listen to
- The people in the community need to get used to us being here too. We are all the same only our needs are sometimes different. They need to learn just like us.
- Bus pass cost.
- Affordable housing – rent costs.
- Staffing is getting worse – higher wages.
- New bus routes are confusing and they keep changing.
- Need more bus shelters & benches, more buildings and sidewalks – need to be more accessible.
- Michener bus needs to be accessible – needs bus stop.
- Need more shared accommodations.
- Not enough staff hours
- Costs prohibit from learning
- Buss passes, transportation costs, support staff accompanying them
- The rent cost/cost of living going up.
- Transportation barriers
- Confusion for bus routes
- Staff not listening tour needs in shared accommodation.
- Family who don't want anything to do with you.
- Transportation – no Handivan after 5:00 pm. Would need to take a Taxi – very expensive – (Wetaskiwin)
- In Red Deer bus schedule is terrible on Sunday
- Bus passes are expensive
- PDD says to get people out in the community but little or no funds for transportation.

- LIMITED OPTIONS due to transportation.
- Staff always new staff who don't know me.

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- Funding for wages - \$12.00/hr not enough to live on.
  - Increasing the value of work for people in the rehab field.
  - Community inclusion & acceptance of people with disabilities.
  - Changes to mental attitudes in society. This is a longer than three year challenge.
  - Perhaps staff trained longer than 6 month course.
  - Help people find places to live that they can afford.
  - Increase AISH (\$1000 doesn't pay much)
  - Want to live in a senior's complex (quieter, nicer apt)
  - More affordable.
  - Finding ways to change funding models and levels in order to better recruit, train and retain quality staff in PDD sector.
  - Pushing municipal and provincial governments for improved accessibility/ mobility infrastructure and resources.
  - Getting the money and professional people who know how to handle people who have more difficult problems that need to be worked out.
  - More students in the workplace.
  - Creating flexibility in funding to explore creative programming options instead of clawing back dollars.
  - Continue openness to creative, innovative thinking.
  - PDD regional boards Advocate to Ministry to standardize & index wage funding across the province.
  - Coordinate agencies for more specialized one on one help. ie. one staff for sports, one for shopping, more specific to client's needs, swimming staff.
  - More staff
  - See her PDD worker more often
  - People need to understand more about self advocacy, including families.
  - Helping rural families know more about PDD. Many know nothing about available supports; first steps – (staff comments) - plain language for them – wages for staff.
  - No problems
  - Sometimes short staff; working long hours (individual's comments)
  - Hard for one staff to work with all the clients at one time to learn (an individuals comment about WDACS)
  - Not just wages – benefits too are important (staff

**3. What could be done over the next three years that would be most successful in achieving better outcomes in individual's quality of life?**

comment)

- Need a forum for Board with front line staff (staff comment)
- People to be there for you.
- Talk to AISH people about raising AISH supports.
- Resource library – or some access to information about what services are available.
- Increase PDD staff in all communities.
- Need a PDD help line or website to get information and help.
- Making community staff more accessible.
- To establish an emergency fund a person could draw from when in a bind.
- Talk about rights for people with disabilities and seniors eg. costs of rent.
- Talk to AISH re increasing AISH supports.
- Resource library re information about services.
- Toll-free help line to find out information. A person to direct them to the right person.
- Somehow help people with disabilities be more included in the community.
- Help self advocate meetings stay,
- Paid more money for plain language
- Help find jobs for people with disabilities.
- Keep Cheers, keep canteen
- More learning on how to handle ourselves.
- More help for staff
- Let us make choices
- Help self-advocates go to the retreat
- Look at how staff and clients can work together better.
- Red Deer be more welcoming.
- Everyone pitch in and listen
- Get people to help each other.
- Bus should be cheap and around our homes.
- Will help look for jobs.
- More self-advocacy groups in smaller towns.
- Get more staff that are good at a hobby or sport to specialize so that individuals can go to that person and have more choices.
- Have agency do a workshop and invite other agencies on something that b successful in their agency.
- More meetings or gatherings for self advocates to get all together.
- Help with rent and housing.
- To make sure the aids or bridgers are doing what is in our son's person centered planning.
- Or that the persons who promised to do something will actually do it.
- More accessibility ei downtown handicapped in inaccessible often in winter because the snow is

piled in the way of wheelchairs to negotiate – and they should definitely be handicapped accessible.

- If you gave us more money so we can have good outcomes.
- Bus passes cheaper
- Ask government for higher wages for staff.
- Need more police
- Need hospital bus routes
- Fix roads, potholes and sidewalks
- More shared accommodations
- Change buses to bio diesel
- More jobs and proper wages
- More one on one English as a second language
- More learning about things
- Education about laws.
- Anti-bullying
- More education opportunities
- Sign-language
- Affordable housing
- More money for AISH
- Cost of living to go down – more financial supports
- More staff for transportation
- Living somewhere you want to live
- More education so that people can learn to live on their own.
- Bus passes are cheaper
- Approach the city about making free bus passes for support staff.
- More volunteering
- ESL – one on one
- Community to be more accessible.
- Lower bus passes in Red Deer
- Provide more access to transportation – pay staff
- Group homes get out more at night – have the choice to decide.
- Need enough staff to help people do things at night
- Can't rely on parents to have time to take me where I want to go
- Evening options.

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- Support Circle of Friends concept.
  - When you give money for employment and services make sure you help people how live on their own.
  - I never go no help on employment plan program I would like to get help.
  - Help more people with better accommodation. A getter place and with not much staff after.
  - Self advocates are doing a good job of getting involved in the community and influencing service providers.

- Making a deadline as to when the cheque would be in the mail to close out the budget for conference.
- Keep an open mind as you have with our individuals in mind.
- Staffing is approaching a near crisis state and it need to be addressed.
- They do a good job - I would like a new job – do good deeds
- I want a self advocate on the board not as an intern just as a board member.
- You want to speak for the board
- Want to see more people on the board with disabilities.
- Make self advocates board
- Board could do “good deeds”.
- Want to know more about what PDD does
- I would like PDD to see the Rights Learning a& Theatre Group and show “You Gotta Go”.
- I need to know that there will still be funding for my son – even if he doesn’t have a job to go to school. For special equipment he may need.
- Transportation is an issue, because we need a wheelchair van, our son is older and heavier, and his equipment is bulkier and heavier and it’s harder to transport him – since our health is deteriorating. Also he seizures so much even during transporting.
- Have good goals – have good times.
- Need to know plain language.
- Making my own decisions.
- Have someone who has a disabled person show is married and has a kid or a family for programs or services.
- Help us take care of our needs if you can’t find someone who can.
- We need more money in the programs
- Higher wages
- Be more understanding on front line staff
- More non-smoking signs
- AISH should be higher – cost of living is too high.
- The board is doing a good job
- Being able to live on your own
- Living on our own with one friend – with no staff
- More affordable housing
- More accessible housing
- Connections
- More lights in the city
- Advocating the public
- More self-advocacy groups
- Public speaking.

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**4. Is there anything else you would**

**like the Board to know as it plans  
for the future?**

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