



Coasters Association Inc.

Services to the Intellectually and Physically Challenged on the Lower North Shore

Phase II – Planning a Group Facility

Overview

In 2001, the Coasters Association carried out a needs assessment for the physically challenged and the lack of residence facilities was identified as an important need. It was recommended that a facility be established on the Lower North Shore to provide services in this regard. In 2005, the Coasters Association partnered a project with the Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN) to examine the possibilities of social economy projects in the areas of health and social services. At a meeting of the Lower North Coalition for Health (LNSCH) the need for facilities for the physically and intellectually challenged was once again identified as an important need and having potential as a social economy project.

Through the generosity of the Council of Mayors, Phase 1 of the project ***Services to the Physically Challenged on the LNS*** was completed from February 6 to May 12, 2006. The goal of Phase 1 was to assess the services offered on the LNS to the physically and intellectually challenged population. Through questionnaires and research it was determined that a facility for the challenged population was needed. Lack of programs and services, job opportunities, accessibility and the limited availability of English speaking facilities in the region proved this to be the predominant situation regarding the physically and intellectually challenged residents of the LNS.

Phase 2 – ***Planning a Group Facility*** was funded by Canadian Heritage and began on September 5th, 2006 to March 30th, 2007. The desired outcome is to set the ground work for a group facility detailing the provision of services within the region for the intellectually and physically challenged population. A successful start of phase II began with the creation of an Advisory Committee. Sixteen (16) engaged individuals representing the five (5) municipalities and organizations along the Lower North Shore volunteered to be members. Along with the committee members, eight (8) supporting resource persons came on board to offer their expertise and assistance throughout the project. While the creation of the Advisory Committee was successful and the members and resource persons have continued to offer their support, to date there has not been a meeting. The Advisory Committee has been informed and updated throughout the entire process; however, it was felt that there was not yet enough information to bring the group together to meet.

Framework for a Group Facility

Potential Clientele

Through various discussions with the partners, the project evolved to include seniors. Information supported the concept of combined group facilities or recreational facilities

that accommodated the elderly, the physically and the intellectually challenged and proposed that these would be more realistic in terms of finances, resources and overall benefits to the population. The CSSSBCN and the CLD of the Lower North Shore, with funding from the Council of Mayors, will evaluate the needs of the territory in terms of lodging resources for persons with a loss of autonomy as well as persons experiencing physical and intellectual challenges. This assessment will compliment the information already collected by the Coasters Association and when completed, will help to determine the best possible facet to meet the needs of the population (type of facility, location etc.) The aim of combined group facilities would be to provide a home or recreational space for physically and intellectually challenged individuals and seniors. By having this group facility, independent living and community integration will be encouraged. The facility would provide on-going care in the areas of; physical and mental health, supervision of medications, social and spiritual well-being, daily living skills development, independence, encouragement and support. The group facility would be licensed to provide service for residents in a caring, learning environment and staffed twenty-four hours a day.

Revenue and Funding

A great deal of work has been done in Phase II to identify potential sources of funding. Sources at both the Provincial and Federal levels have been identified and specific programs that could apply to the group facility have been highlighted. While potential funding has been acknowledged, there have been no steps taken to pursue or request additional funding. More details need to be finalized before requesting financial assistance from potential funders.

Operational Structure and Business Plan

In terms of the operational structure that will be used for the group facility numerous options have been explored. A facility operated by the regional health board or the municipality are both options, each with prospective benefits and funding opportunities. A non-profit corporation with membership or a cooperative with shares are also endorsable alternatives. The benefits and obstacles of each will be described in the final report but until such time that the additional information including the data on seniors is assessed, the operational structure remains undetermined. A functional business plan also remains incomplete until a decision is made about the possibilities for an operational structure.

Partners

Since the beginning of the project, there has been a tremendous engagement from local and regional agencies and there has been continued support for the goals of the project. The partners, listed here, have worked continually with the Coasters and their encouragement and advice are strongly appreciated. Some of the partners sit on the Advisory Committee and others provide information and resources. An important step for Phase II was to meet with the Council of Mayors to make decisions in several key areas but unfortunately, while several attempts were made, due to scheduling conflicts this meeting has not yet transpired. Thank you to the Centre de Santé et de Services Sociaux de la Basse Côte Nord (CSSSBCN), the Offices des Personnes Handicapées Québec (OPHQ), the Commission Scolaire du Littoral (CSL), Quebec Labrador Foundation (QLF), Council of Mayors (CM) and the Centre Local de Développement (CLD) for their

ongoing collaboration to ensure the realization of a facility for the physically and intellectually challenged and seniors.

Social Economy Project Guide

'How to Guide'

Another result of phase II will be the creation of a 'how to' guide for the establishment of a social economy project in the Health and Social Services sector. This guide will depict the steps taken in this project and describe the successes and obstacles to be overcome throughout the process. The intention of this guide is to inform and educate other organizations about what is involved in such a comprehensive project. This guide will be disseminated to other organizations that will benefit from the learning experienced by the Coasters in this project to establish a group facility on the Lower North Shore for the physically and intellectually challenged and seniors. The guide is not yet complete but the information that has been recorded diligently throughout the project will serve as the body of this text complimented by the narrative descriptions and experiences of the key players involved.

Next Steps

Application for start-up

The conclusion of Phase II will offer a final report that will illustrate the framework of such a facility, including operational parameters and structure possibilities, potential revenue and funding. This report will outline the creation of a self-sustaining social economy project as a basis for further health and social service programs, an outlet for the employment of locally trained workers and the additional possibility for skilled personnel in the field of health and social services. While this report will be complete in its recommendations it is strongly advocated that before an application for start-up, operational and additional project funding is prepared, that the additional information to be collected through the CSSSBCN, the CLD and the Council of Mayors be assessed and incorporated into the next steps. This information will be crucial in defining further details such as required certificates and licenses and determining other potential sources for funding.

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