

DANEO Newsletter: December 2018

(Note: There are many hyperlinks in this document. You may have to control+click to activate the link or copy / paste the URL into your browser.)

Class Action Status Approved for Lawsuit Related to Passport Funding

Something to watch in 2019 – one family’s case against the Ontario government over loss of individualized funding at age 18 has been granted approval by the Courts to proceed as a Class Action. The case, brought by a family in Timmins, seeks \$110 million dollars in damages.

Ontario Superior Court Justice Belobaba agreed to allow certification of the Class Action on two of three grounds which the family had proposed: negligence and a breach of their daughter’s charter rights. The proposed class includes individuals who aged out of Special Services at Home program on or after July 1, 2011, were assessed by DSO then placed on a waitlist for a very long time in “a totally screwed up system”.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/mentally-disabled-win-class-status-ontario-1.4946483>

Federal Government Tables the Optional Protocol of UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Canada signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2010 which committed our country to promoting, protecting and ensuring the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by persons with disabilities.

The Protocol, if approved by Parliament, would allow the UN to consider complaints against Canada.

This [news article](#) has a brief summary of the history of the Convention and Protocol, plus some links for further reading.

PassportOne – Hopes for Speedier Re-imbusement, But Short Term Frustration for Families

Passport Funding is a critical resource for many individuals and families. It is the best source of individualized and direct funding – and needs to be expanded.

PassportOne is the new way of processing reimbursements to individuals and their families. While March of Dimes (MoD) continues to be the local collection point for invoices, the information will be input into a computer application PassportOne, and processed by an agency in Toronto.

The processing change has been in the works for over a year. But families in the Eastern Region were given two and a half weeks to review the impact of the new system – sign new agreements, get new forms filled out, collect personal information and sample signatures from Support Workers, get Powers of Attorney or Guardianship papers in order so families could act as Persons Managing Funds of behalf of the Passport Recipient.

March of Dimes has some [good information about the changes and processes on their website](#). But the short notice time and December 14th deadline were confusing and frustrating for many families. “Hot-line” response times were indicated as 3 business days.

A spokesperson for MoD indicated it did not feel it necessary to be pro-active about meeting with families to explain the rationale and implications of the new invoicing process. They are confident that their one on one sessions are sufficient. Despite the fact that this change has been in discussion at the bureaucratic level for a year – there has been little to no information shared with individual and family groups who are impacted, especially those going with self-managed arrangements.

If these types of changes could be communicated to families (via Family Networks – we have them in Eastern region!!) in a PRO-ACTIVE rather than RE-ACTIVE manner, this would be a more respectful, client-focused way to include individuals and families in system changes before they happen. This might help buy-in and perhaps diffuse complexity.

DANEO has requested an open information session with March of Dimes for all families to attend and hear the same information about the PassportOne project. We have not heard back from the local office in response to this request.

Ontario Ministry of Housing – Survey on Housing Supply

Many of us have benefited from the work of Martha Beach – DSO Eastern Region Housing Expert. She has brought many interesting speakers and ideas to local families.

The Ontario Government has opened public consultations on needs and challenges of increasing the supply of affordable Housing. There is an [online survey](#) for individual feedback and a [Guide for local discussion around housing](#) which is designed to encourage local discussion and formal submission by groups.

Martha Beach and DANEO are interested in finding local families who wish to get together to discuss the topics in the Guide, and hopefully develop a submission representing our local interests and population.

If you would like to participate in this group, contact Martha Beach - MBeach@dsoser.com or Minda Bojin mindabojin@gmail.com Place and time will be decided once interest is received.

It is Not Just About the House – It is Also about the Supports

This is what we are hearing from families every time we talk about Housing.

In our experience, most individuals who fall under the developmental services umbrella need some support to live independently (defined by this writer as not living with a family member). Families Matter Coop created some [video vignettes](#) about individuals who have worked with their families and community to fashion a life outside home. These stories indicate that success depends in part on the amount and type of support provided. Depending on the needs and aspirations of the individuals, support can range from assistance with personal care and monitoring, to full meal preparation, to weekly budgeting and menu planning.

With a few exceptions, supports are attached to a legislated residential funding model supplied by agencies (group home, supported independent living, Homeshare and intensive support residences). Many families also use personal resources or Passport funding to purchase supports or services for independent living.

Direct funding for individuals would help them plan for independence. Community Living Ontario produced a paper in 2016, called [Building a Full Life Including a Home of One's Own in Community With Direct Funding](#) which made the case. Even the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care has started providing individual/family managed funding for home care supports.

Agencies providing residential options are under pressure as well - Wait Lists are growing and the market is changing. Whatever service delivery options are on the table and in policy, there is increasing evidence that a crisis is looming.

DANEO is developing a questionnaire to survey individuals and their families on individualized/direct funding for residential supports, and whether the availability of this type of resource (similar to Passport, but coming from the Residential side of the MCSS budget) would help individuals make the move.

Caregiver Retreat – Citizen Advocacy & Independent Facilitation

Another Weekend Away organized by Citizen Advocacy and Independent Facilitation program. A poster will be sent out separately, and [registration](#) is ongoing via Citizen Advocacy website. DANEO has been working with the organizing committee for this Caregiver Retreat, as well as other one day information sessions hosted throughout the fall and winter.

The main speakers for this event – **Saturday March 2nd and Sunday March 3rd** – are Al Etmanski and Vicky Cammack from PLAN (Planned Lifetime Advocacy Networks). They have both made significant contributions to thinking and policy around inclusion. Their [Tamarack Institute](#) provides training and awareness of techniques for social innovation, inclusion and advocacy from a collective impact perspective. Well worth getting on their mailing.

Some Interesting Reading for the Holidays

[Partners for Planning Network](#) – a website filled with stories of personal success and ideas for forming a good life. You can get on their mailing list for webinars, or review past presentations. Very well designed and constructed information resource. [Safe and Secure](#), available for purchase on this site, is an excellent resource for life planning for individuals with disabilities and their families. [Inspiring Possibilities Estate Planning Guide](#) is free for download from this site – and offers complimentary information to Safe and Secure, with some updated information on financial and legal issues.

[If Inclusion Means Everyone, Why Not Me?](#) This document reports on research on inclusion in education performed in collaboration between Community Living Ontario, ARCH Disability Law, Inclusion Canada, and two university research departments – Western and Brock. It was released in the spring and is available in both English and French via this link.

On reading it, you might find some parallel challenges for inclusion into formal community settings – such as higher education, job market, volunteering.

[DEOHAEKO](#) Website – At the last Citizen Advocacy information session on **Keys to My Home**, the principal speaker, Janet Klees from the Durham Association for Family Resources and Support, spoke of her involvement with a group of families who have worked cooperatively to build intentional communities and circles. Deohaeko continues to be a grass-roots, family based, supportive collaboration that is a model for other families wishing to take control of the future. The website is still under construction but references to resources that underpin their philosophy are there.

See You in the New Year!!