



NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNITY LIVING BC RESPONDS TO COMMUNITY REQUESTS FOR NEW & ENHANCED SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE NORTH

Smithers, February 19, 2007 – In response to local concerns regarding services and supports available to individuals with developmental disabilities, Community Living BC (CLBC) will be working directly with families in Smithers, Burns Lake and Hazelton to review, rework and reorganize the required supports to better meet their needs.

After recent discussions with the individuals and families CLBC supports, it has become apparent that many of the current services offered in these northern communities are not responsive to the unique needs of the individuals requiring support. In order to address this issue, CLBC will dedicate a staff person to work together with those affected and existing service providers, to better meet and address the needs of the community.

“We feel this is a real positive step,” says Ernie Harding, a parent of an adult daughter with a developmental disability. “This initiative really gives us an opportunity to have meaningful programs and more involvement. We’re quite optimistic about what can result from this.”

During this initiative, CLBC will ensure approaches are explored that respect the ideas and expertise communicated by the families who currently provide care to their loved ones. Included in this review and reorganization will be a thorough examination of the effectiveness of day programs and residential options available to people in these communities. Together, they will develop a new plan that reflects both enhanced supports and greater citizenship for the individuals with developmental disabilities living in these communities.

“CLBC recognizes the valuable insight family members can provide and is committed to ensuring all flexible and innovative approaches to supports and services for individuals with developmental disabilities are considered,” says CLBC CEO Rick Mowles.

“The current service providers who contract with CLBC have provided wonderful support over the years. They will continue to be involved in this process and add greatly to the quality of life people with developmental disabilities enjoy,” he adds. “However, it is important that both CLBC and all our contracted service providers remain flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the community.”

Community Living BC is the Crown agency responsible for providing support and services to people with developmental disabilities, children with special needs and their families in British Columbia. It has a board of self-advocates, family and community members, as well as staff located throughout the province. It believes that people with developmental disabilities and their families know best when it comes to their needs, goals and planning for the future.

-30-

Media Contact: Sally Greenwood
Director, Communications
604-664-0101