

Landmark agreement marks the beginning of change for people with disabilities

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Inclusion NS, as part of the Disability Rights Coalition (DRC), has been fighting to make the right to live in community a reality in NS. Today marks a significant step forward as the Government of NS and the Disability Rights Coalition announced an interim consent agreement on a Human Rights Remedy and released the independent expert report that provides the foundation for the agreement. Inclusion NS interim Director Barb Horner welcomed the announcement: "We have been waiting for this moment for a long time. Inclusion NS has been part of this process since day one. We made sure the voice of people with intellectual disabilities and families was heard in the development of the expert report and we will make sure they are part of the changes moving forward."

Inclusion NS Board President, Stephanie Carver said, "today's landmark agreement marks the beginning of real change for people with disabilities in Nova Scotia. As the parent of a youth with intellectual disability, our choices for him up to now have been severely limited by the options available in our province. This agreement will allow my family to be limitless in dreaming of and in helping him to create a life in which he has the support he needs to be fully included in all aspects of his community. A life where he belongs and is valued. A life like his peers and siblings. It seems so simple but it is so profound."

With this announcement, the Province of NS is on the brink of ending the discriminatory treatment of people with disabilities and building a meaningful supports and services system that will enable people with disabilities who are eligible for social assistance to realize their right to live in community. This historical moment is a clear rejection of segregation and congregation.

Carver added: "For individuals and families who have consistently been marginalized, change of this scale can seem scary, which means we need a new way of working. The Remedy cannot mean more money for more of the same. It needs to be about creating possibilities to do something completely different. As president of Inclusion NS, I'm honoured to be part of an organization that that will help drive this new approach."

Horner added: "For change to take root and grow, significant investments will be needed in capacity building and building a true vision for inclusion. Change can't be incremental, and it can't be done in a silo. Comprehensive change is going to require collaboration. Inclusion NS calls on the provincial government to commit to enhanced funding support to expand our reach and build our capacity to help individuals and families make inclusion a reality."

To access the report and a plain language version of the Executive Summary click [here](#). All media inquiries should reach out to Stephanie Carver at 782-414-7750.