

Exploring endless possibilities,
together.



Community Living Parry Sound acknowledges that we are settlers on this land which is the traditional and rightful territory of the Ojibway, Odawa, and Potawatomi people. We also acknowledge that we continue to benefit from colonization and the displacement of the original inhabitants of the ceded land covered by the Robinson-Huron Treaty of 1850.

We honour the people of the Three Fires Confederacy and their sacred relationship with the land and all creation. We are grateful to the generations of Anishinaabek people who are the caretakers of this land, protectors of water, and sustainers of life.

We solemnly remember the innumerable atrocities inflicted upon the Indigenous people of Turtle Island, as well as the tragic legacies of injustice that will continue to cause harm for generations.

We acknowledge the resilience of Indigenous peoples who have been stewards of the land and sharers of truth since time immemorial.

Though we recognize that this statement does not repair the harm inflicted upon Indigenous peoples and lands, we continue to seek the truth and share this acknowledgement in the spirit of ongoing allyship and reconciliation. We invite all to hear this acknowledgement and share in our commitment to relationship building with Indigenous Peoples, knowledge, and ways of being.



All my relations.

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About Community Living Parry Sound

Community Living Parry Sound (CLPS) is a grassroots non-profit agency in Parry Sound, Ontario. Our staff of about 60 supports hundreds of children, youth, adults, and families in the Parry Sound area.



What We Do

We support people who have developmental disabilities, and their families.

We offer programs and services that are directed by each person and their unique interests, needs, goals, and wishes.

We also play a role in educating the public about developmental disabilities and promoting understanding and acceptance within the community.

We advocate for the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities, collaborating with other agencies and partners to bring about positive change.

Ultimately, we are working toward an inclusive community where people are recognized for their contributions, welcomed in community life, and have the power and freedom to lead the lives they choose.

Individualized Services

Our Individualized Services Team supports people to develop personalized budgets and plans that help them get the most out of the individualized funding they receive from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. We coordinate services for people looking to spend their Passport funding, connecting people with services in the community and making sure we are providing *just the right amount of support*. Our planning and facilitation services think big and long-term: helping people to identify goals, aspirations, and the necessary supports to achieve them.

Residential Services

We operate two group homes that are equipped to provide 24/7 support. The people supported by our Residential Team receive personalized assistance, support with daily living activities, and opportunities for community engagement.

Supported Independent Living

We respect everyone's right to live where they choose to – and through the services offered by our Supported Independent Living program, we provide the necessary supports for adults who choose to live independently in their community, outside of congregate settings.

Community Participation

We support people to actively participate and become a part of community life by connecting them with social and recreational activities such as sports, arts and culture, and other community events. A common goal across our services is to facilitate social connections, skill development, and belonging within the community.

Family & Youth Services

Recognizing the importance of family involvement, we offer support and resources to families of people with disabilities. Our Family & Youth Services (FYS) Team provides guidance, information, direct support, and advocacy to ensure families have access to the necessary services, funding, and opportunities for their loved ones. We also offer respite to parents whose children have a developmental disability.

Employment Services

Leading Into New Careers (LINC) supports people to secure and maintain meaningful employment. Services can include job coaching, skills training, and support throughout the entire employment process—from resume building to job retention. In addition to supporting job seekers, we work closely with local businesses to embed diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), and accessibility values in hiring practices and in work environments.

Board of Directors (2024/2025)



Dave Williams, Chair

Dave moved to Parry Sound in September 2015. A lawyer with a background in public service law, he has transitioned to the private sector and worked at Oldham Law Firm since moving to this area. He has been a member of the CLPS Board of Directors since 2017, before being elected Chair in 2019, and is committed to helping the organization work towards its goals.

Julie Thorogood, Vice Chair

Julie is a self-employed bookkeeper. She has been involved in her children's school programs, class trips, curling tournaments and fundraising.

Matt Fisher, Treasurer

Born and raised in Parry Sound, Matt practiced as a lawyer in Toronto with Borden Ladner Gervais LLP before joining the Metrontario Group of Companies as its Chief Legal Officer. He has volunteered with community youth baseball and hockey organizations and served for many years on the Board of the Canadian Council on Africa.

Rose Bailey, Director

Rose was born and has lived in Parry Sound all her life. She and her husband of 40 years have two sons and three grandchildren. Her son James has received support from Community Living for 30 years. Rose retired from full-time employment at the West Parry Sound Health Centre after 27 years and is currently working part-time in a surgeon's office. She has been on the Board of The Friends and is active in her faith community, volunteering in leadership roles and serving at monthly community dinners. Rose hopes to bring a parent perspective to the Board along with her community and healthcare experience.

Brad Keates, Director

Raised in Parry Sound, Brad brings three decades of executive leadership experience to the board, including extensive work in the healthcare sector. He is an experienced team builder and innovator with a proven track record of developing and implementing successful programs. His recent work includes leading privacy and consent initiatives for the NFL and digital identity, privacy, and consent initiatives for Canada Health Infoway, a not-for-profit organization funded by Health Canada.

Christine McKernan, Director

After spending recreational time in the Parry Sound region for over 40 years, Christine made her summer home near Orrville her permanent home in 2021. A 28-year career in healthcare fundraising prepared her for a role as Executive Director of the West Parry Sound Health Centre Foundation with extensive knowledge building in the challenges of providing healthcare and social services in remote and rural communities. Since retiring in December 2023, Christine wishes to dedicate her time and knowledge to ensuring the best possible care for the people supported by Community Living Parry Sound.

Linda Mitchelson, Director

Linda Mitchelson has a Masters of Social Work degree and has worked in the Social Services Sector for more than 38 years most at a senior management level. She has worked in Child Protective Services and Municipal Social Services across the province including a period of time in Parry Sound. That is where she met her husband and they relocated to Peterborough where they lived while raising their family of two boys. Throughout that time however they built their cottage on Lake Manitouwabing and once they were both retired they relocated to live at the cottage full time. As well as her work experience Linda has many years experience on Not for Profit Boards including another Community Living. She looks forward to the opportunity to contribute to Community Living Parry Sound over the coming years.



Report from the Executive Director

Here we are at the end of the year, already. As always, the first group I want to acknowledge is the staff. We have an excellent group of people powering the agency from the frontlines to the back offices. Thank you for your constant hard work, even in the face of constant change.

We also have outstanding volunteers on our Board of Directors. They, too, are no strangers to change. Thank you for the volumes of thought and enthusiasm you put into your duties. We have had many excellent conversations in 2024/2025. I would like to specifically acknowledge the Directors departing this year.

Thank you to Rose Bailey for sharing your spirit with us these past three years.

Dave Williams has been with us for eight years, serving as Board President/Chair for six. We are beyond grateful for his steady leadership. The amount of work Dave put into working with me, developing the Board, and serving on all nearly all committees has been a gift.

We are pleased to see a growing interest in volunteering after the pandemic was so hard on Boards nationwide. A pre-emptive but nonetheless hearty welcome to Board nominee Sarah Ashford and to Brad Keates, who was appointed to the Board in the spring and now stands for election.

Governance

The Board enacted the eighth edition of its Governance Policies & Procedures this June. This work began four years ago in the second wave of our preparations to become ONCA compliant.

The ad hoc Governance Review Committee was struck in September 2024 and worked tirelessly across hundreds of pages of policies, procedures, articles, and by-laws. I want to recognize and thank the committee's chair, Linda Mitchelson, as well as members Christine McKernan and Dave Williams. Recognition is also due to our Executive Assistant, Sarah Cassidy, who wrote the first draft of every policy in the manual to give the committee a starting point to work from.

Governance Policies & Procedures No. 8 is historic in that it is the first policy manual we have published in plain language. We would like to see more people with lived experience join our Board, and complex policy language is a barrier we were only too happy to eliminate.

The Board cemented its stance on the importance of good governance in its decision to enact a standing Governance Committee come the new Board year (September 2025). Broadly speaking, this committee will focus on policies, practices, and strategic planning.

Advocacy

Advocacy is part of our strategic work and a critical component to providing *just the right amount* of support. As I always tell the staff: it is our job to work ourselves out of a job. Advocacy is the vehicle that drives us toward our mission--a community where all people have the power and freedom to determine the life they want.

The predominant advocacy issues we are facing as an agency and sector:

- The 52,000 Ontarians waiting for Developmental Services (see Community Living Ontario's [#WaitingtoBelong](#) campaign)--there are more people waiting than there are receiving services.
- Sustainability of the Developmental Services sector (see our [Shared Services](#) report), including over 30 years of chronic underfunding.
- New model for employment services (see our [Transition to Integrated Employment Services](#) report)
- Labour shortages and labour unrest (see the [Worth Fighting For](#) campaign)

Our partners at Community Living Ontario and the Ontario Agencies Supporting Individuals with Special Needs (OASIS) continue to be invaluable sources of strategy, action, and support. Their summer 2025 [advocacy toolkit](#) details the above advocacy issues.

We have been active in our advocacy efforts this year and found strength in joining forces with the other Community Living organizations in the Muskoka-Parry Sound constituency.

New Approaches

We are at various stages of change in three major projects:

- It was a pleasure seeing [Individualized Services](#) exceed expectations in its second year since the complete remodel of how we deliver Passport-funded support.
- [LINC Employment Services](#) has admirably weathered the changes of a completely new funding and oversight model.
- And a project that I have personally been steering alongside colleagues from Huntsville and South Muskoka--the proposal to [share select services](#)--has left the hypothetical realm and began taking shape with the support of our Boards, management, and administrative teams.

Building Capacity

In March, we wrapped up a 12-month engagement with LIFT Impact Partners, a project entitled *Empowering Abilities: Fueling Growth*. The initiative brought our Management Team together with expert consultants and similar non-profit learners to strengthen our abilities in delivering measurable impact, securing diverse funding streams, enhancing operational efficiency, and effectively communicating outcomes to stakeholders.

We have greatly enjoyed the engagement and taken a lot away from it. Evidently, the feeling is mutual, as LIFT has extended the engagement. We look forward to our continued work with LIFT and the cohort of learners.

Milestone Year

The ad hoc Fundraising Committee has already begun planning the May 20, 2026 golf tournament, which will be the 25th anniversary of the tournament. The committee has been generous and mindful with its small (and not-so-small) touches that show our golfers how much we appreciate their contribution. Next year will involve some showstoppers in addition to the thoughtful touches that make us stand out.

In Closing

It is also a milestone year for me, as I wrap up my 34th year at CLPS and begin my 35th. I am honoured to have spent my career at such a progressive organization and working among such excellent colleagues both on the Board and on the staff, to say nothing of the fantastic group of people and families we support.

Thank you for reading and being part of our community.

Respectfully,



Brad Horne, Executive Director



Report from the Board Chair

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to the hard-working and impactful team we have at CLPS.

2024-2025 was perhaps the start of a significant transition period as we consider new ways of doing things and hope to be able to better compensate our team. We all agree that our focus will remain on the people we support and opportunities to enhance our services while reaching even more people, which requires a willingness to continually evaluate all aspects of our support network. Any and all feedback is much appreciated, no matter your association with CLPS.

I am very excited that our last official order of business prior to the Annual General Meeting was directing some of our fundraising efforts to the purchase of a new, sorely needed accessible vehicle! We know this direct support will be a great help and thank all our donors once again.



This was my 8th year as a Board member and 6th as Chair, so the time has come for me to move on (*what happened to my 30s?!).* I have full confidence that the organization is in good hands, and I will always be thankful for the opportunity.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dave Williams".

Dave Williams, Board Chair

Report from the Board & Executive Development Committee

New Identity

We have said goodbye to the “Nominating & Membership” name, as it no longer describes the committee’s work.

- The “nominating” piece our former name is a misnomer for activities like succession planning, recruitment, and orientation.
- “Membership” largely takes care of itself: a Director is automatically a Member once they are elected to the Board, and Membership is only open to Directors.

We chose the name “Board & Executive Development Committee” as a more apt description of what we do. We have taken on a few responsibilities previously held by the Executive Committee, as these responsibilities align more closely with our work.

Board Development

- We now coordinate the annual evaluation process and, most importantly, review evaluation results with a mind to improve accessibility, efficiency, effectiveness, and the overall Director experience. By the same token, we also review feedback from Directors’ orientation satisfaction surveys and exit interviews.

Executive Development

- We now oversee the annual Executive Director performance appraisal process.
- As needed, we will lead Executive Director succession. This will include developing a succession plan as well as recruiting, hiring, and orienting a new Executive Director.

Farewell

This year we say farewell to our long-standing Board Chair, Dave Williams. Dave has served the Board with dedication and generosity of his time, talent, and sincerity--among many other virtues. Thank you, Dave.

Nomination

Sarah Ashford

Sarah is proud to call Parry Sound home as she raises her two daughters with her husband in the community where she grew up. She is an elementary school teacher and has valuable experience in the education field. In addition, Sarah has been actively involved in organizing volunteer initiatives as a member of various boards and community organizations. Passionate about inclusion and supporting individuals of all abilities, she looks forward to contributing meaningfully to the important work of Community Living Parry Sound.

Membership Report

Directors with Terms Expiring in 2024/2025

- Rose Bailey, who completed a term from 2022-2025
- Matt Fisher, who completed a term from 2022-2025
- Brad Keates, who completed an appointment from February 2025 to the 63rd Annual General Meeting
- Julie Thorogood, who completed a term from 2024-2025
- Dave Williams, who completed a term from 2024-2025

Persons Standing for Election

- Sarah Ashford, who seeks election for a three-year term
- Matt Fisher, who seeks re-election for a one-year term
- Brad Keates, who seeks election for a one-year term
- Julie Thorogood, who seeks election for a one-year term

Recommendations

The Board & Executive Development Committee recommends that:

- Sarah Ashford be elected to the Board of Directors for a term from 2025-2028
- Matt Fisher be elected to the Board of Directors for a term from 2025-2026
- Brad Keates be elected to the Board of Directors for a term from 2025-2026
- Julie Thorogood be elected to the Board of Directors for a term from 2025-2026
- the 2025/2026 Board of Directors be: Sarah Ashford (term 2025-2028), Matt Fisher (term 2025-2026), Brad Keates (term 2025-2026), Christine McKernan (term 2024-2027), Linda Mitchelson (term 2024-2027), Julie Thorogood (term 2025-2026)

Milestones

Milestones demonstrate the collective efforts and individual sparks that drive us forward. Behind each milestone lies significant moments of growth, collaboration, and accomplishment.

These milestones are a source of inspiration, a reminder of our shared triumphs, and proof of the incredible potential that lies within each and every one of us. **Congratulations!**



Brad Horne 35 years



Jessica Boylan 5 years



Rick Harrington 5 years

Financial Statements

Independent Auditors' Report

**To the Members of the Board,
Community Living Parry Sound**

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Community Living Parry Sound (the "entity"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2025 and the statements of operations, replacement reserve funds, accumulated surplus and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the entity as at March 31, 2025, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with financial reporting standards for Community Living organizations in Ontario.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the entity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution and Use

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to page 23 of the financial statements, which describe the basis of accounting. The financial statements are prepared to assist the entity to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Children Community and Social Services. As a result, the financial statements may not be suitable for another purpose. Our report is intended solely for the entity and the Ministry of Children Community and Social Services and should not be distributed to or used by parties other than the entity or the Ministry of Children Community and Social Services. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the basis of accounting described in the summary of significant accounting policies, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the entity's financial reporting process.

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- * Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- * Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control.
- * Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- * Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditors' report. However, future events or conditions may cause the entity to cease to continue as a going concern.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



Parry Sound, Ontario
July 15, 2025

Chartered Professional Accountants
Licensed Public Accountants

COMMUNITY LIVING PARRY SOUND

Statement of Financial Position

March 31	2025	2024
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Assets

Current

Cash and bank	\$ 620,834	\$ 458,819
Short-term investments (Note 3)	457,240	438,635
Grants receivable (Note 4)	48,603	15,977
Accounts receivable - other	194,814	175,959
HST recoverable	35,374	32,692
Prepaid expenses	54,317	50,593
	1,411,182	1,172,675

Capital assets (Note 5)

-	-
\$ 1,411,182	\$ 1,172,675

Liabilities and Surplus

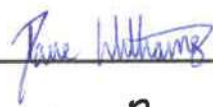
Current

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (Note 7)	\$ 408,724	\$ 308,402
Due to Ministry of Children Community and Social Services (Note 8)	162,882	116,667
Deferred revenue - MCCSS and grants (Note 9)	64,948	36,579
- board	6,400	-
	642,954	461,648

Surplus

Accumulated surplus - Page 7	768,228	711,027
	768,228	711,027
	\$ 1,411,182	\$ 1,172,675

On behalf of the Board:

 _____	Director
 _____	Director

COMMUNITY LIVING PARRY SOUND

Statement of Operations

For the year ended March 31	2025	2024
Revenue		
Ministry of Children Community and Social Services		
Operating	\$ 3,965,184	\$ 4,027,516
One-time funding	60,637	67,041
Other funding	160,110	165,507
Rent	173,808	164,783
Interest	19,643	7,399
Donations	6,307	289,020
Other revenue	541,269	441,691
	4,926,958	5,162,957
Expenses		
Salaries and benefits	3,720,689	3,758,319
Other costs		
Condo operating expenses	11,325	8,045
Family home and respite	171,055	157,213
Food	43,807	48,498
Fundraising expenses	24,184	25,108
General board expenses	11,476	11,092
Insurance	39,965	39,101
Purchased services	163,045	164,384
Purchased support services	128,056	117,437
Repair and maintenance	132,690	156,365
Replacement and new equipment	80,456	88,174
Staff training	31,673	30,143
Staff travel	46,670	40,883
Supplies and general	128,299	92,608
Utilities	75,379	82,648
Vehicle costs	60,988	44,077
	4,869,757	4,864,095
Net variance	\$ 57,201	\$ 298,862
Surplus - programs - Page 7	\$ 57,201	\$ 298,862

Shared Services

In 2024/2025, we started what might become the biggest project in the history of Community Living Parry Sound!

Brief Situational Analysis

Like others in the developmental services sector, we are feeling the pinch of limited resources.

- Base budget increases have been negligible for over 30 years.
- Expenses have increased drastically.
- Housing shortages are a barrier to attracting skilled employees to the area
- Organizations like ours are flattening their organizational charts, opting for more frontline staff members to deliver services. This leaves fewer specialists in administrative and leadership roles.
- Most organizations are un(der)prepared when it comes to executive succession and do not have plans in place to identify, hire, and mentor executives.

Opportunities

We have been building and leveraging our congenial relationships with Community Living Huntsville (CLH) and Community Living South Muskoka (CLSM) for many years. Collectively, we have found that where one agency lacks expertise, one of the others has it in spades.

This lead to an idea...

Proposing a Shared Services Organization

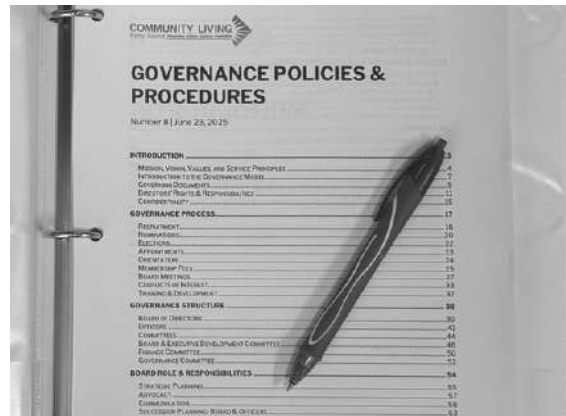
CLPS, CLH, and CLSM are in talks to create a new organization that delivers administrative services--domains like human resources, finance, information technology--and strategic senior leadership.

We are referring to the hypothetical business as a “shared service organization,” and often refer to it as the “SSO” project.

It is important to note that creating an SSO is not a done deal. We are envisioning and designing, but if we find reasons that this project should not continue, it may not.

Maintaining Our Identity

The SSO project does not propose a merger--that is, the three partnering organizations would continue to exist autonomously and provide services to their own communities. Rather, a fourth organization that deals only in administration and senior leadership would be formed to serve three (initial) clients: CLPS, CLH, CLSM.



Why Shared Services?

Phase 1 of the SSO project ran from November 2024 to July 2025; it was about feasibility: whether it makes good business sense for us to co-create an SSO. Board and staff members alike put much time, consideration, and input into this phase.

There are many detailed reasons why it makes sense for us to continue envisioning an SSO, but here are some of the headlines:

- **Efficiency.** Each organization does admin in slightly different ways. By working together, we can choose the best practices, products, tech, and workflows of the bunch.
- **Specialized skills.** We regularly turn to the experts at CLH and CLSM who have professional designations on their staff (a Certified Human Resources Professional and Chartered Accountant, respectively). An SSO would introduce these highly skilled leaders to our team while bypassing recruitment hurdles (and costs).
- **Succession.** Two of the three partnering organizations expect substantial changeover in their senior leadership within the next five years. Combining the leadership teams creates a larger talent pool of skilled successors.
- **Cost savings.** There is a cost savings to increasing efficiency and decreasing redundancy. For example, there would be one Executive Director, not three (or four).

How Does this Impact Support Services?

You might notice that the people we support have not yet been mentioned in our description of the SSO project. The people we serve are Community Livings' raison d'être, after all!

We told you earlier about the pinch of limited resources. We are no good to anyone if the external threats we face force us to cut back on support services, or worse, shut our doors.

We want to invest in direct support staff, and to do that we have to get leaner elsewhere in the organization. Sharing administrative and senior leadership services are the actions we are proposing to get lean, become resilient, stay in business, and keep providing excellent support to persons with disabilities.

Where We Are Now

Phase 1--feasibility--has wrapped up, and we are now in phase 2: design. Our staffs and Boards are collaborating with consultants, funders, legal professionals, and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) to propose the best possible design for a shared services organization.

Over the next six months, we hope to create a detailed implementation plan. Change management will also be a critical part of the upcoming work; we need to carefully communicate the changes to everyone who may be impacted and make sure people have what they need to thrive in a new environment.



Acknowledgements

We could not have gotten this far without the enthusiastic and dedicated work of our Executive Director Brad Horne, the Board of Directors, our administrative employees, and our partners at CLH and CLSM; the Ontario Trillium Foundation for its financial contribution to the first phase of the project; Invictus High Performance for facilitating this project; and the support of the provincial government--MCCSS and MPP Graydon Smith.

Transition to Integrated Employment Services

Integrated Employment Services in Ontario

The Ontario government rolled out, in phases, a new province-wide model for employment service delivery; this Integrated Employment Services (IES) initiative combined social assistance employment services previously under the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) with other government employment services. The new service delivery model falls under the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development and involves Service System Managers overseeing the delivery of employment services in specific catchment areas.

Before the Transition

Leading into New Careers (LINC) Employment Services had a strong performance in 2023/2024; as a result, MCCSS advised us to amend the 2023/2024 contract from a blended contract--which provides operational and performance-based funding--to a strictly performance-based contract. As a result, we received more than enough funding to cover our operational expenses for the 2023/2024 contract year and were able to contribute LINC's excess revenue to the global CLPS budget.

At the conclusion of the 2023/2024 contract year, we started a two-month extension to our MCCSS contract that provided the same monthly revenue we had received in the 2023/2024 contract, which allowed us to continue contributing to the agency's revenue.

Beginning the Transition

We began our IES transformation in April 2024. This involved preparations like learning the new case management software and developing service delivery guidelines.

It also involved a nine-month contract from our new Service System Manager, College Boreal. The contract covered June 2024 to February 2025 and served as a transitional period in the phased introduction of IES. During the nine-month transition contract, the monthly funding amount remained the same and the agency's budget continued to benefit.

Challenges of the New Model

March 1, 2025 was the go-live date for the new case management software, the new funding model and contract, and the associated service delivery model. It could be said that, at that time, everything changed for the worse.

The biggest challenges we are experiencing in the IES transition are our contract and the funding model itself.

The 2025/2026 contract we received from College Boreal comes with with insufficient operational funds, leaving LINC in a deficit position for the 13 months of the contract and leaves our other programs without the revenue LINC previously contributed to the budget.

The challenges we face are not unique to LINC. The Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN) outlines its concerns in the article: [Still Tangled in Red Tape](#). This article articulates the negative experience that former Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) employment service providers have had with IES, and it mirrors the experience we have had here at LINC. We encourage readers to check out the article.

We are not alone in our stance that the new IES model for disability employment supports is not sustainable. Service providers are speaking out and associations are advocating for needed changes to the model. The changes may not come soon enough for all service providers.

LINC continues to learn, to adapt, and to speak out when needed.

Putting Our Best Foot Forward

Of course, hope is not lost. We continue our work to stay resilient in changing tides. Though we are finding a greatly increased administrative workload with new software, guidelines, meetings, reporting requirements, and accounting functions, we have done our best to serve the people we support to reach their employment goals with a reasonable amount of success.

Successes

LINC has performed well from an intake and client volume perspective, as we have completed 43 intakes/common assessments between March and July of 2025. We have 10 more intakes to complete by March 31, 2026, which we are easily on track to achieve.

We have supported 20 people to get and/or keep work from March through July, and hope to do the same for many other people we support, though the time we have to do our important frontline work is greatly diminished as is the level of service we are able to provide.

Team Capacity

LINC has had its share of personnel fluctuations over the years, and we often made due as a team of one. We are happy to report that we have had excellent retention of the two positions now on the LINC team: the Supervisor of Employment Services and Employment Services Coordinator. Typically, we add to the LINC team just to cover the busy summer season. Having a dedicated, long-term team has helped us build capacity and retain knowledge.



Public Facing

In partnership with Corporate Services and with the support of our Board of Directors, we developed a new brand identity for LINC Employment Services this year. One might be surprised at the marketing impact a refreshed logo and colour palette can have. We have circulated hundreds--nearing the thousands--of information and business cards that attract job seekers to us. We also replaced our streetside sign (which was long overdue).



We have opened a LINC workstation, which is free to everyone using LINC services. There are any number of uses for the workstation, including job searches, drafting resumes, and participating in remote orientation programs.

All Abilities

Another change, and a big one in CLPS history, is that we now serve people of all abilities. This was an important and necessary decision when we were designing a sustainable future for LINC. Broadening eligibility means there is a larger pool of people for us to serve. We hope, too, that bringing LINC into the conversation in spaces we may not have advertised before builds the community's awareness of our services and the unique advantages we bring in employment services. The decision to serve people of all abilities was also part of a larger strategic initiative in the agency to diversify revenue.

Individualized Services' Strategic Alignment

Overview

In alignment with Community Living Parry Sound's strategic goals, the 2024/2025 fiscal year marked a transformational period in the way the agency delivered Passport services to recipients of this funding. CLPS orchestrated a remarkable operational pivot to relieve pressure on base-funded programs by hiring a flexible team of part-time employees trained to be adaptable and person-directed in the way they approach supporting people who come to CLPS with individualized Passport funding.

We strive to provide *just the right amount* of support, and our approach to Individualized Services does just that. While the dedicated Individualized Services team focuses on achieving goals and fulfilling dreams, we can continue to rely on specialized full-time staff to support people with complex needs; this is key to continuity of care, safety, and providing the appropriate level of support to all.

Year-end results confirm that the new operational model is a financially viable solution for the agency, and the approach continues to demonstrate excellence, innovation, and measurable impact when seen through the lens of people's support stories.

Excellence in Community Experiences

Our fledgling Passport team was built on the values of choice, creativity, and diversity, ensuring that each experience is meaningful and unique to the person supported. By delivering individualized, flexible support, we have helped people explore their interests, build confidence, and actively participate in their communities.

The Passport team has carefully ventured into creating and coordinating purposeful program delivery. Monthly curated events were introduced to the Passport service menu, serving as steppingstones to engagement with events in community--building natural relationships and community support being key tenets of the Journey to Belonging framework.

The addition of dedicated Passport team members increases our capacity to deliver services; and, the long-standing goal of providing more person-directed planning, a Passport-eligible service, has started to take off. Our in-house neutral planning and facilitation training enhanced our team's ability to support Passport recipients to identify, pursue, and achieve their self-identified goals. That knowledge has been transferred to new staff efficiently and cost effectively.

Purposeful Use of Technology

We leaned into technology not only to streamline our internal processes but also to empower the people we support. From AI-based emotional regulation tools to speech-to-text software, purposeful technology use is reshaping the way we support independence and growth.

Examples

Passport funding supports technology-based solutions tailored to individuals' goals:

- We supported a person who has vision loss to use the *Seeing AI* app to read, count money, and navigate independently—regaining confidence and autonomy.
- A young adult we support purchased a laptop and enrolled in online driver's education; they now proudly hold a license and own a vehicle.
- Another person began reading and writing later in life using a Leap Pad device, after years of unsuccessful attempts with traditional methods.

Within our team, we adopted an exchange platform to collaborate, share information, and swap ideas. This user-friendly tool ensures continuity and easy onboarding for new planners.

Consistent Staffing & Healthy Workplace Culture

To deliver on our values and maintain quality support, we invested in our team and improved communication:

- Our small team received specialized training in neutral planning and facilitation.
- Individualized Services team members are empowered with the tools and autonomy to deliver individualized support rooted in relationships, consistency, and creativity.
- Through regular knowledge-sharing and recognition of impact collaboration among staff members, morale is positive.
- Increased and regular communication between supervision staff has alleviated miscommunication and concerns caused by siloed programs and competing priorities.

Robust Network of Community Connections

Our monthly events include collaborating with community partners such as Georgian Bay Biosphere and YAYcations to lay the groundwork for people to experience stronger inclusion and connectedness to the Parry Sound community. These types of gatherings allow people to explore local resources, meet new friends, and feel a sense of belonging—essential elements of a vibrant life.

Agency of Choice

Pivoting the delivery system for individualized Passport funding has resulted in tangible outcomes that reinforce our reputation as an agency of choice for people, families, community partners, and our funders.

- At the time of writing, we support 118 people in managing their Passport funding.
- 70 of 118 people we support have no Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services funding aside from Passport funding, underscoring the reach and accessibility of the Ministry's Passport program.
- We have an 83% utilization rate—the third highest in Northern Ontario. CLPS is proud of this metric of efficiency and impact.
- Individualized planning services ensure no two budgets are alike, a testament to the level of customization and care in our approach.

Financial Viability

A business plan with metrics and targets was developed by senior leaders as part of the new operational approach, focusing on long-term sustainability and also providing the team a “steering wheel” by which to course correct service delivery in a timely and effective manner.

Agency financial reports confirm that the “Passport pivot” has strengthened the agency's financial position.

Individualized services align with person-directed values and operational goals—a dual success that supports growth, adaptability, and the future of funding transformation under Journey to Belonging.

Looking Ahead

As we continue to expand and refine our services, we remain committed to:

- Amplifying the voices of people with lived experience through listening and empowering them to achieve their goals
- Fostering new community partnerships and strengthening existing community relationships.
- Leveraging technology within the agency and for Passport recipients.

The “Passport pivot” is not only a service redesign, it is a bold move driven by Community Living Parry Sound’s values, and it demonstrates how we live our mission and how we lead with purpose.

Family & Youth Services' Strategic Alignment

Robust Network of Community Connections

Community Living Parry Sound is part of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) for the Near North District School Board.

The Family & Youth Services (FYS) team is working with the Children's Community Network (CCN) to offer respite support services to families in urgent need of consistent and quality respite care.

Continued collaboration with HANDS and other service agencies in the community provides wrap-around services for families in need.

Agency of Choice

CLPS continues to have families request staff support to provide one-on-one respite care for their child.

FYS has onboarded additional families through the management of their Special Services at Home Funding, which can be used in a flexible manner to support children and their families at home and in the community.

Building these connections with families early in a child's life will help strengthen the supportive relationships as people grow, transition, and make choices for their lives.

Proudly Honouring our Vision

Parry Sound Pride was founded in June 2024. It is the first group of its kind in Parry Sound. Its mission is to “empower and celebrate queer folk (2SLGBTQIA+) by creating opportunities for visibility, nurturing friendships, and building community in Parry Sound. Its vision is “Parry Sound being a safe space for queer youth, adults, allies, marginalized persons, and people from all walks of life to thrive and live in harmony with the community.”

We are closely aligned with this mission and vision. In fact, Parry Sound Pride’s mission and vision reflect some of our core strategic priorities--in particular the aspects of community building and relationship development. We appreciate Pride’s inclusion of “marginalized persons, and people from all walks of life;” indeed, people with disabilities are just as likely to belong to the 2SLGBTQIA+ community as people without a disability, and we recognize the intersectionality of belonging to two groups that have historically been oppressed (and worse).



At CLPS, our vision is “a community where ***all people*** have the power and freedom to determine the life they want” (emphasis added). We certainly have queer folk in mind and include them in our definition of “all people.”

Our appreciation of Parry Sound Pride and its ethos is not just lip service. This year, we have strategically and joyously partnered with them, showing support in the modest ways we can.

From February to April, Pride’s monthly meetups were hosted at the Joseph Street office. Like us, Parry Sound Pride prioritizes accessibility; all of their events are free, open to all, and hosted at accessible facilities. We were only too happy to offer our space to this new community partner so they could, in turn, deliver inclusive, community-based, and community-building programming that is accessible to all.

When the weather is even remotely conducive of being outside, Parry Sound Pride coordinates meetups at one of Parry Sound’s free, local parks. We support them by loaning equipment like our speaker/PA system.

We are grateful to have a new community partner, particularly one that is focused on community building and inclusion. It has been a pleasure supporting Parry Sound Pride this year, and we expect a long, fruitful relationship.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the many people who helped this report come to be, and to everyone who did the work all year long.

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We wish to acknowledge Parry Sound Pride as co-editors of [Proudly Honouring our Vision](#).

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Pictures by page number (and partnership) | **4.** Liz Desmasdon, Kayla Colizza, Tim Vancoughnett, Bob Bellehumeur **6.** Marion David, Tricia Bain, Brad Horne, Jo-Anne Demick, Mayor Jamie McGarvey, Dave Williams, Linda Mitchelson, Julie Thorogood **7.** Linda Mitchelson, Christine McKernan **10.** Matt Fisher, Brad Keates, Maria Loukidelis, Brad Horne, Brad Horne **11.** Dave Williams, Felicia Akbar ([Royal Bank of Canada](#)), Brad Horne **14.** As labelled **20.** Lindsay Miller, Victoria Murray **21.** Lorraine Morin ([Community Living Huntsville](#)), Dave Williams, MPP Graydon Smith, Suzanne Willett ([Community Living Huntsville](#)), Brad Horne, Krista Haiduk-Collier ([Community Living South Muskoka](#)), Larry Saunders ([Ontario Trillium Foundation](#)), Gord Haugh ([Community Living South Muskoka](#)) **30.** Angel Boucher, Sarah Cassidy, Maria Voinovski-Boucher ([Lake Country Community Legal Clinic](#)), Selena Martens ([Parry Sound Public Library](#))

thanks for reading!

