

# There's a dragon in the room

*Revised version of a position paper presented at the Partnership Table in February 2010*

Professor Jordan Peterson of the University of Toronto cleverly used a children's book "*There's No Such Thing as a Dragon*" to show us that we must recognize and acknowledge serious problems rather than pretend that they don't exist. The consequence of ignoring problems allows the dragon to thrive and grow, and leads to misunderstanding, lack of trust, and a breakdown in communication. The solution is to acknowledge that there is something seriously wrong, to confront it, and to attempt to resolve it.

The dragon that we have in the room now, is the fact that we have been working on the transformation of developmental services for 5\_ years, but while changes in processes are being addressed, the status quo for the largest sector, residential services and supports, is being maintained. Direct funding will be a legislated way for disability services and supports to be delivered, but there is no assurance that access to supports comparable to those available through agency programs will be realized. The fundamental principles of fairness, citizenship and self-determination for people with disabilities appear to be compromised.

In 2004, the Honourable Minister Sandra Pupatello launched an ambitious plan to transform supports for people who have a developmental disability in order to create an "*accessible, fair and sustainable system of community-based supports*". She said, "*Our society has changed, families' expectations have changed and we have to change, too. We need a comprehensive plan for the future – one that will lead us for the next 25 years and beyond*". The Ministry then created the Partnership Table to involve stakeholders (self-advocates, families, and service providers) in the development of the plan for the transformation.

We fully agree with the need for a real transformation. Let's review the actual changes that took place since 2004.

***1. The Opportunities and Action document, which is the Ministry's blueprint for the transformation published in May 2006, depicted a future with choices based on individualized funding. In 2010, under the proposed new regulation, we have no more opportunity to access individualized funding than we did 20 years ago.***

First, let's look at what's been happening to Special Services at Home (SSAH). SSAH was the first individualized funding program (1982) and is the program that always pointed the way to a better future. Its status amongst developmental service programs is a bellwether for signs of real transformation.

In 2004, the SSAH program was 6% of the developmental services budget. In 2009, it is still 6%. Twenty years ago, the average SSAH contract per family was \$2300. In 2009, the average is \$3457. When adjusted for the consumer price index, the average contract in 2009 is 2% lower than in 1989. In these respects, SSAH has not changed much over the last 20 years. There is no evidence of any significant shift toward direct funding.

*Note: there are many individuals on waiting lists. The above averages only include those who have contracts. The real but unknown averages are significantly lower as they should include everyone who is eligible but who has been awarded zero dollars.*

In the last two years, no new money has been injected into the SSAH program or to the smaller Passport Program that also allows direct funding. During this time the Ministry added \$105 million to the base funding of service agencies. Since 2004, it has added \$458 million to the developmental services budget, an increase from \$1.174 billion to \$1.632 billion. More than 90% of this is for agency services and agency administration. Direct funding is not on the map.

## ***2. The Ministry has ignored the issue of sustainability of supports based on direct funding.***

From 2007 to 2010, the Ministry will have added \$ 181 million to agency budgets for wage-gap funding and for inflation. During this time there has been no wage-gap funding available for self-advocates and families who hire support staff directly. The Ministry has ignored requests for a correction of this injustice. There is no sign of a transformation here.

Let us be very clear. We are not against funding of agencies. We respect the choices that people make and recognize that some people prefer agency services. But we strongly oppose Ministry policies that stand in the way of choice. People who choose not to become clients of agencies have as much right to access support funding as those who do. We expect the Ministry to allow people to choose the kind of supports that best fit their personal life plans. We are against funding policies that force people to use agency services in order to be supported.

## ***3. The proposed regulation discriminates against people who choose direct funding. These individuals will not have access to the \$1 billion/year allocated to “residential services and supports”***

Since the establishment of the Partnership Table, family representatives have always been clear about their expectation that direct funding be available for

alternatives to any agency services, including alternatives to traditional models of residential support such as group homes.

In *Opportunities and Action* (May 2006) the Ministry expressed a position that resonated with our values and said:

*“The ministry is developing a strategy to help families use their own resources through a Home Partnership Strategy that could combine individuals’ wishes for flexible, person-centred residential options with government-funded services and supports.”*

We persuaded the Ministry to work with us and assembled a small task force to get things moving in early 2007. By July 2007, the Ministry inaugurated the *Innovative Residential Model Initiative: Creating individually tailored options for adult developmental residential services*. This was a tiny step but a reassuring one. It gave the opportunity for a small number of people to obtain individualized funding for alternatives to living in residences operated by service agencies. It gave many others hope that the transformation was moving in the right direction.

Here’s what the Ministry said:

*“In 2006, we held many meetings across the province to ask adults with a developmental disability, their families, and the groups and organizations who support them what kind of services they want and need. You also showed us examples of creative living arrangements that are working well, as well as innovative residential models that we should consider...that is why we are introducing a new initiative. Called the Innovative Residential Model Initiative, it will give adults with a developmental disability and their families the opportunity to propose individually tailored residential services concerning where and how they live. Working together, individuals, their families and service providers can develop proposals for housing options that are best suited to their personal needs, wants and dreams.”*

Not much funding was made available for this initiative, but it was in the right spirit.

The first Regulation (LGIC) excludes individuals with direct funding agreements from accessing residential services and supports as defined in the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008. The regulation fails to include another prescribed class for home living services and supports comparable to those available in residential services. The new system would

discriminate unfairly against those who choose direct funding and who want their own innovative, cost effective approach to a home of their choice, instead of a residential service Direct funding could remain limited to a funding base for supports and services currently provided by small programs like Special Services at Home and Passport, which taken together amount to only 7.7% of the developmental services budget.

Over 200 family members responded to the call from the Ministry for comments on the proposed regulation in August 2009. About 100 people also wrote to the Ontario Cabinet in Dec. 2009 and Jan. 2010 calling for the regulation to be redrafted. (See excerpts in Attachment 3). They expressed their hopelessness that the comprehensive support, necessary to enable a home of one's own choice, could not be possible for their family member

***4. The Ministry has failed to honour its repeated commitments (since 2004) to a transformation that will make the developmental service system accessible and fair. In 2010, the system is extremely unfair and inaccessible to those who want to choose supports based on direct funding.***

Family Alliance Ontario focused on the extreme lack of fairness with the story of George and Alice (Attachment 1).

The Ministry attempted to dismiss our concerns by telling us allocations in the classes of "Activities of daily living" and "Community participation services and supports" could be used for supporting someone to live in a home of their choosing (Attachment 2). Historically direct funding contracts for SSAH and Passport have been very low, averaging less than \$10,000 annually. This suggestion is an insult not a comfort. Currently, the average allocation for those who choose agency-operated residential services is about \$65,000 per person per year. The amount varies according to individual situations. Some get more, and some get less. The Ministry has said that it doesn't want to "destabilize the system". It appears that there is fear that a 1.5-billion-dollar-a-year service sector will collapse if a small proportion of people choose direct funding.

***The key issue*** will be if and how an individual, once their application and assessment is completed, and they are considered eligible and prioritized, will be able to access an individual budget for services and supports, which reflects real costs. This raises a number of questions: Does the Ministry believe that the service sector will not survive unless people are forced into using it? Does it believe that many people would rather have alternatives to agency services if they had a free choice? If that were the case, on what

grounds would the Ministry want to maintain and protect the service sector by forcing people in this way?

The government of Ontario has to be accountable to the people of Ontario. It must spend their tax dollars wisely and fairly. When it comes to dollars for disability supports, it must strive to fund the supports that offer the best personal outcomes for individuals. It must be fair in funding those who want alternatives to agency services as well as those who prefer to use agency services. We insist that it be true to the principle that people with disabilities are citizens first, and not necessarily clients. It must respect that people with disabilities have the right to decide what they want to do with their lives, including how they want to make their home.

Family Alliance Ontario expects the Ministry to honour the principles of fairness as outlined in the document *Fair Access for Everyone* submitted to the Partnership Table in March 2009. The Ministry ignored this paper when it drafted the LGIC Regulation for the new Act, and appears to be ignoring the voices of people and families for revisions. The fragile working relationship between the Ministry and families is strained.

At this time, we respectfully put forward the following recommendations:

Family Alliance Ontario, in collaboration with Special Services at Home Provincial Coalition, proposed revision options to the Developmental Services Policy Branch on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, to address the inequity in the Regulation as drafted;

We also ask the Partnership Table to revisit the values and principles articulated in *Common Vision for Real Transformation, Parts One and Two* 2005. Together, through open and constructive dialogue, we must make sure that the details of implementation, including application entities, unencumbered facilitation with planning, and proposed individual funding allocations are in accordance with those principles and direction. We believe that this is the way to respectfully move forward.

## References:

1. Jordan Peterson's lecture Maps of Meaning - Intro: There's no such thing as a dragon

[video.google.com/videoplay?docid=13598019128231960](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13598019128231960)

2. About the Partnership Table

[www.family-alliance.com/partnership-table](http://www.family-alliance.com/partnership-table)

3. MCSS - Opportunities and Actions - May 2006

[www.family-alliance.com/pdfdocs/OpportunitiesAndAction2006.pdf](http://www.family-alliance.com/pdfdocs/OpportunitiesAndAction2006.pdf)

4. Common Vision for Real Transformation

<http://www.family-alliance.com/common-vision>

5. Information about the Special Services at Home program

[www.ssahcoalition.ca](http://www.ssahcoalition.ca)

6. About the transformation of developmental services

[www.family-alliance.com/transformation](http://www.family-alliance.com/transformation)

7. Family Alliance Ontario paper "Fair access for everyone"

<http://www.family-alliance.com/fair-access>

## Attachment 1 - The Story of George and Alice

( from <http://www.family-alliance.com/alert1> )

Dec. 10, 2009

### Ontario Cabinet soon to vote on a new regulation for developmental services

Last summer, the Ministry of Community and Social Services proposed a new regulation that would govern developmental services for adults in Ontario.

Consider the following scenario based on the consequences of this regulation becoming law:

George and Alice, two adults with developmental disabilities each need a place to live and disability supports. Their needs are identical and their families are in crisis. They are both at the very top of the priorities list for residential supports when the government of Ontario designates some new funding earmarked for “residential” services.

George wants a group home and the Ministry allocates \$80,000 per year to the agency that will operate his group home. George is successful in obtaining the supports that he sought.

Alice, with the help of her family and close friends, wants direct funding to plan and direct her supports. Alice's parents are highly committed. They are prepared to help her find an apartment or to contribute a down payment on a house for her. It turns out that Alice is not eligible for a penny of the new funding. Alice gets zero because the regulation clearly excludes directly funded supports from the “residential” funding silo.

Here is what the Ministry promised-

1. "With the new Act, we can build a system of services and supports that is fair, so that everyone gets treated the same way". (Ref. 3 - see below)
2. The new legislation will ensure "supports are equitable and people with similar situations receive similar supports across the province". (Ref. 4)
3. Ontario's system of developmental services will be transformed "to create a more accessible, fair and sustainable system of community-based supports" and "to give families more choice and flexibility in how they care for their family members". (Ref. 5)

4. One of the "key features of the [new] legislation" is "direct funding options that would enable people with a developmental disability and their families to buy their own supports." (Ref. 6)

(for the list of references, go to [www.family-alliance.com/alert1](http://www.family-alliance.com/alert1) )

## Attachment 2 - The Ministry's answer to the "Why" question

(from Spotlight on Transformation, Issue 16, Dec. 2009 )

**Q Why can't I purchase residential services and supports or specialized services and supports through a direct funding agreement?**

**A** The purpose of direct funding is to help people with a developmental disability and their families develop and manage the services and supports they need to live as independently as possible.

Under the draft regulation, the services and supports that are eligible for direct funding include:

- activities of daily living services and supports;
- community participation services and supports;
- caregiver respite services and supports; and
- person-directed planning services and supports.

Although residential services and supports are not eligible for direct funding under the draft regulation, people are allowed to use direct funding to create individualized living and support arrangements. The two main types of services and supports that can be purchased with direct funding to create these individualized approaches are:

- Activities of daily living services and supports; and
- Community participation services and supports.

### Attachment 3 - Quotes from letters written to the Premier and the Cabinet

Over the last two months many citizens wrote to Premier Dalton McGuinty and to the Ontario Cabinet asking for revision of the Ministry's first Regulation. Here are excerpts from some of the letters—

“... [our son] ----- is significantly disabled, but has an active, meaningful life. With the help of his family and friends, his intention is that he will choose where he lives when he moves out of the family home. -----'s life will be determined by his needs and best interests. He will be able to decide how he spends his time, who he spends time with, and will continue to hire his own supports. This is the way of the future, and there are many, many individuals and families who believed that Transformation was supposed to make this a reality. The current Regulation creates a significant barrier to this ever happening.”

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“... We have two sons with disabilities who are not able to live independently on their own as adults. Our dream is for our sons to be able to live together in a supported home as adults. One son is already an adult and presently lives at home with us. He is still young and this is not a problem (many young adults live with their parents during or after college/university also), but he and his brother deserve the right to choose to live independently just as any other young adult does. Please do not deny them this right.”

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“... My family and my sister's friends already make considerable financial and other sacrifices to enable her to live in her own home, and the rewards are worth every one. My sister has found independence. She speaks up more than she used to and voices her opinion about her living situation. As a quadriplegic with a developmental disability, there are few places in her life where she has control; having control over her own living situation has given her that in spades.

We have a workable plan in place that will allow my sister to live independently, my parents to grow old without the strain of the physical care of their disabled daughter, and my brother and I and our families to live our lives as we wish in the knowledge that we do not have to step up to be direct caregivers for our sister.

I shudder to think of the damage to my sister's psyche and physical well-being if she were forced to move into a group home or a nursing home

because those are the only funded options available to her. I also shudder to think of the damage to my own well-being: there is no question that my life and that of my brother would be seriously disrupted if we had to worry about where to get the funding to continue -----'s current living situation if directed funding were to be unavailable to families who have put the time, energy, and resources into creating homes for their family members.

I live where and how I want to live given the constraints of my salary and the resources of my support system. I find the idea that my sister would be denied the opportunity to do the same because of a regulation which says, effectively, "we will support your adult living situation, but only if you're not too independent" to be grossly unjust. It is contrary to the whole ethos of the individualized funding system: we're supposed to be giving people more freedom, not taking it away."

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"... My wife and I have spent countless hours teaching our son, ----- who has Autism, that he needs to know how to make decisions on his own if he is to one day play an active roll in society. Please do not take away a basic right of -----, that he may decide his future of where and how he lives. It is not fair if his chances for assistance are greater if he is in a group home with someone else making those choices for him and less likely for him to get assistance if he chooses to be independently.

The current Liberal government is spending \$150 million a year to help kids with autism become more self sufficient, then why would you not let them make or have input into how their assistance be spent when they are adults on how to live? If your goal is to have children with ASD and other developmental issues become more self sufficient then it does not make sense that your goal is to provide assistance mainly to adults that do NOT want independence.

To quote the Ministry: "With the new Act, we can build a system of services and supports that is fair, so that everyone gets treated the same way".

Since 2004, the Ministry has allocated new monies totaling \$366 million to residential programs and agency infrastructure that is primarily for residential programs. In comparison, only \$47 million of new funding has been allocated to Special Services at Home, and \$26 million to the Passport Program. Please explain how this is fair, so that everyone gets treated the same way."

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"... We are sickened by the prospect that our adult daughter and son who live

in their own home with supports and have benefited from direct funding for residential supports and person directed planning will lose all we have worked towards.”

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“... My husband and I are well into our senior years. We have kept our son at home for 37 years and have recently purchased a larger home so that our son may continue to live home with support long after we are gone.

Two years ago we prepared an innovative residential proposal which included individual funding and also support from three agencies very eager to see this proposal come to fruition. To hear that the residential support is being left out of the Regulation is very alarming when we are already very stressed at setting up our home to be our son`s future home.

We did not choose an institution for our son. He deserves the same financial support as he would receive if he received a residential placement with an agency. As all aging parents who have made similar choices we deserve to be recognized as capable caregivers, and supported in our choice.”

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“... As taxpayers and parents of a person with developmental disabilities, we expect the Ontario government to be fair and effective in its spending for disability supports.

The proposed new regulation that would make residential funding only applicable to agency services such as group homes, and would discriminate against those who want a better alternative.

There is a better alternative. People with developmental disabilities, with the help of family and a circle of friends, can live their own life plan, can choose where they live, can decide what to do with their time, can choose with whom they spend their time, and can hire their own supports. This is the way of the future.

The proposed regulation would not allow residential funding to be used for the better alternative. It would be a devastating setback for all families that want a real transformation.”

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“... We have a 26 year old son with autism still living at home and as we approach retirement in the next few years we have to explore residential

options that will best suit his needs. Is it not his right as a citizen to have the flexibility to look at all options for his future housing? The same funding that would be allocated to an agency to support him in a Group Home setting should be available to him should he choose another option. Incidentally, there is very little funding available for this either and my son has been on the residential waiting list for 18 years without any offer of a suitable placement. All we are asking is that there is flexibility for all individuals in these circumstances. “

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“... We already see the effect of such a regulation. Our 25-year-old daughter - --- moved out of our home into her own apartment in July 2009. Two weeks before she moved out of our home her Special Services at Home Program funding was cut by 26% ... just when support was needed most! Considering that the funding we received previously was inadequate, how should we describe 26% less funding?!!!

Our daughter has consistently been told, either in words or in actions, that she is not worth the investment of your government. The transformation of developmental services has given us hope. However, if this regulation is approved without concern for people who live beyond the service system (i.e. not within an agency staffed home) then what hope will we have?”

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“... My son has a good life in his community with creative supports through individualized funding. He requires 24 hr constant care and supervision and would not survive the grim life in a nursing home with 2.5 hrs of care a day, meaning restraints the rest of the time. His funding was achieved through a strenuous political process and we will not give it up. His life depends on proper support. It is time that this model of support is valued instead of threatened.”

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“... my brother receives residential supports from a transfer-payment agency, and I am a member of the Board of Directors of that Association. However I believe that choosing who provides residential supports for your loved one should be a decision made by families based on their unique circumstances and intimate knowledge of the supports that need to be in place for their family member. not imposed by bureaucratic regulation.”

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“... I have friends who have made pioneering efforts to implement individualized funding in creative ways. This has made the life of the disabled member of that family more fulfilling and productive than it otherwise could have been, and incidentally made highly efficient use of the tax dollars he depends on. A crucial component of this success is their ability to use some of his support dollars to enable him to live in circumstances suitable to his needs and goals.

There is no more fundamental component to a self-directed life than the ability to make decisions about how and with whom one will live... . ensure that the Regulation lives up to the stated intentions behind the bill, which include allowing people with disabilities to make effective use of direct funding in all the important aspects of living as productive and satisfying a life as is possible.”

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“... I have seen the expansion of Ontario’s developmental services. I know that most are set up in ways that still provide the fewest choices to people they perceive as having the greatest challenges. By contrast, as Family Alliance has written, it is “the flexibility of direct funding” that “allows people to follow their own life plans on their own schedules, to live where they want to live with whomever they want.”

The cost-effectiveness of innovative and inclusive alternatives has been clearly documented. Creative people have tried to collaborate with your Ministry to ensure that Bill 77 promotes new possibilities.

But now all good faith is lost because you demonstrate that you’re still just thinking about “beds”. Little change can be achieved as long as most MCSS funding is tied to segregated residential programs.

Take us forwards, not backwards. MCSS must revise the Regulation - to demonstrate that “inclusion, choice, self-determination and citizenship” are NOT just empty words, but honest government directives.”

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“... These are the vulnerable ones in our society; it is a reflection of your leadership and our society how the most vulnerable are treated! Most of this population cannot advocate for themselves and so you have a huge responsibility to ensure that they have equity and fairness in all situations of funding. Having had our own son in this situation we have exhausted our

personal resources to support him just as in the case of the hypothetical person, Alice. There needs to be some equity and dignity and really it is a human rights issue.”

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“... With transformation, each eligible adult will have an individual budget, and it should reflect the six categories of supports and services to which the Social Inclusion Act applies. The person, with their family and support network should have the choice of control over those funds and how they are to be administered. Funding should be able to move with a person, so people with disabilities may live and participate where they choose, close to family and friends, throughout the province of Ontario.”

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“... It would severely curtail the social and personal freedoms that some of our dearest friends and neighbours currently exercise by living independently with supports of their own choosing, and that those of us who are not disabled take for granted as a most basic right of respect. ”

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“... The MCSS website states the intention of the government is to “have a system in which adults with a developmental disability and their families can have more choice and control over their lives”. It is difficult to think of an aspect of one’s life that could be more important than where and with whom one lives. If the government provides funding for residential services only through service agencies, then individuals with developmental disabilities and their families are denied choice and control over these most important decisions.

Individuals may be forced to accept living arrangements (if and when available) in group homes that are not suitable or desirable for them if the alternative is no support for residential services whatsoever. The result is that individuals and their families will not have a meaningful say in the people with whom the individual may share a home or even a room, or the choice of community in which the person will live, or even the persons who will help the individual with the most personal types of care. It is a negation of the dignity and right of self-determination of individuals with developmental disabilities. This would be a contradiction of the government’s stated intent and a betrayal of the purpose and the process of development of the new legislation.”

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“... As a parent with a daughter with a developmental disability who has been supported all of her life with a direct funding option, I am appalled that the current draft of the regulation being presented may exclude her from a direct funding option for residential support. This exclusion would deny choice to the most vulnerable people in our province. It would also go against the spirit of the new legislation it is meant to support... . That is full choice, citizenship and equity in supports for this sector of individual people ”

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“... When proclaimed in October 2008, the new Social Inclusion legislation was viewed by many of the families we support as progressive and gave them hope. It seemed to allow more flexible supports for people with additional needs through self-directed individualized funding. It appeared to recognize that individualized funding is an effective and necessary mechanism by which to promote inclusion, choice, self-determination and citizenship. It gave hope to Ontarians that there would be authentic transformation. The new Act stated that people with disabilities can choose how they will get their disability supports, that is, they can choose to use the services of an agency or they can choose to receive equivalent direct funding which they can use to coordinate their supports.

The Government ... proudly declared that Ontario's system of developmental services would be transformed "to create a more accessible, fair and sustainable system of community-based supports" and "give families more choice and flexibility in how they care for their family members" (MCSS Spotlight on Transformation, April 2008) and a "key feature of the [new] legislation" is "direct funding options that would enable people with a developmental disability and their families to buy their own supports" (MCSS Spotlight on Transformation, July 2008)... the Regulation, as it is currently written, acts as a real barrier to achieving these ends... It neither reflects nor promotes the kind of transformation that is needed in today's society.”

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“...This regulation does not make sense - it will neither save the government any money nor make services for people with disabilities any easier to acquire. Many of our generation of young people with disabilities has been raised and educated in the community with the parents and families taking on the major responsibilities. Let's be honest - this has saved the government thousands and thousands of dollars and also provided the person with the

disability and their families with choices and the ability to chose what's most important for this person.

This would be a major step backwards in our society and make families and communities feel helpless, again, in their search of appropriate supports for many of our loved members with a disability.

ALL citizens of this great country have the right to live with dignity and security, let's not deprive these vulnerable citizens of their opportunity to achieve this goal.”

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“... Our family, along with others, has promoted the idea of inclusion for all. A basic tenet of inclusion is choice, including the choice of where to live and where to experience program deliveries. Cutting off direct funding for residential programs will force people into programs they do not want, going contrary to the spirit of the Charter of Rights and Freedom.

If looked upon strictly from a financial perspective, such direct funding would be less per assisted individual because families are very good at stretching out resources.

It seems to us that from a financial, moral and legal (Charter of Rights) standpoint, any exclusion of direct funding for residential programs needs to be reconsidered.”

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“...The regulation being proposed results in individuals with disabilities being excluded from accessing the largest funding allocation the Ministry has set up - for residential housing support. People with disabilities have the right to live where they want, and to live with whomever they want. The result of this proposed regulation will be that group homes will prevail as the only housing option for people with disabilities, simply because there is no access to funding that would enable them to choose how, where and with whom they will live.

This proposed regulation is inequitable, and discriminatory for people who have a vision of choice, self-determination, full inclusion and citizenship in their communities.

The proposed regulation is, by de-facto, denying citizens with disabilities their right to access funding and services that will enable them to direct, and to be in control of their quality of life.”

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“... My daughter has been supported all of her life at the centre of our community with a small amount of direct funding, I am appalled that the current draft of the regulation being presented may exclude her from a direct funding option for residential support. This exclusion would deny choice to the most vulnerable people in our province. It would also go against the spirit of the new legislation it is meant to support. That is full choice, citizenship and equity in supports for this sector of individual people.”

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“...We have a 27 year old who has a developmental disability and has been fully included in her community her whole life. With appropriate direct funding and the support of her family and support circle, she can live a more meaningful life, contributing to her community if she received direct funding so that she can choose where she will live, with whom she will live and hire those supporters of her choosing.”

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“... I would ask that you please put yourselves in the shoes of the individuals living with developmental disabilities like my 17 year old and see how you would feel. My son believes that no one cares. What kind of society do we live in when we stop caring about each other and our own welfare?

Stop cutting essential services to people who really need it. ”

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“...We have a family member ----- who has had the opportunity to explore her "residential options" - thanks to the direct funding that she had been receiving. She has a great deal of specific needs - which are extensive due to her dual diagnosis. However, she and her support network were able to, over a number of years and trials, realize what worked for her to have a "life in community". The only way we were able to achieve this was because of the chance to try different residential options, using direct/ individualized funding- until we found one that worked for her.”

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“...We have a 23 year old ....., with developmental and physical disabilities. He requires support in many ways to be able to participate in our community. But with the help of his family and friends, his intention is that he will choose where he lives when he moves away from his parents. He will be able to decide what to do with his time, choose with whom he spends his time, and can hire his own supports. This is the way of the future, and there are many, many individuals and families that believe Transformation was supposed to make this a reality ... Our son and all people with disabilities are citizens of Ontario who deserves a better future and fair access to funding allocated for residential supports.”

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“...We have been waiting patiently since the transformation of Developmental Services began in 2003 only to feel betrayed time and time again. And we are not alone! Based on the Opportunities and Action document, people were counting on this government to implement individualized funding so that people could access the services which best meet their needs for a full life of participation in community. This regulation as it stands does not fit the government's intent to provide fair and equitable supports and true choice for people, their families and/or their support networks.

The Federal government has tabled a motion to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on December 3, 2009; the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. On December 10, 2009, the day the Olympic Flame entered the House of Commons, a motion to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the time of the Paralympic Games in 2010 was passed unanimously in the House. This Regulation is contrary to the values and principles set out in the Convention as well as this government's own Opportunities and Action document.”

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“...As taxpayers and parents of a person with developmental disabilities, we expect the Ontario government to be fair and effective in its spending for disability supports. The proposed new regulation would make residential funding only applicable to agency services such as group homes, and would discriminate against those who want a better alternative.

There is a better alternative. People with developmental disabilities, with the help of family and a circle of friends, can live their own life plan, can choose where they live, can decide what to do with their time, can choose with whom they spend their time, and can hire their own supports. This is the way of the future.

The proposed regulation would not allow residential funding to be used for the better alternative. It would be a devastating setback for all families that want a real transformation.”