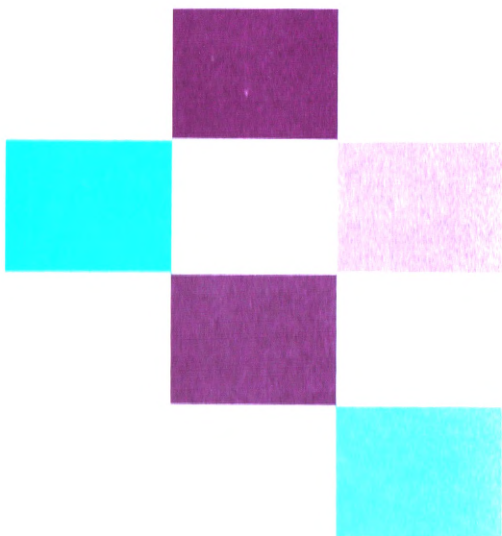


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# Provincial Strategy for Coordinating Disability Issues



Province of  
British Columbia

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# Provincial Strategy for Coordinating Disability Issues

On June 2, 1994, Premier Mike Harcourt announced; a *new integrated strategy* to coordinate disability public policy issues throughout British Columbia.

This strategy, or process, is the result of a collaborative effort of the Premier's Advisory Council for Persons with Disabilities and Government, in consultation with communities of British Columbians with disabilities.

## Mission

To put in place, in partnership with the community, an integrated strategy which:

- ◆ Coordinates disability issues across government
- ◆ Ensures direct and open lines of communication between government, people with disabilities, their families, allies, organizations representing people with disabilities and support agencies;
- ◆ Ensures direct and ongoing input into decision-making on policy and program priorities by persons with disabilities
- ◆ Establishes disability issues as a priority with the Provincial Government.

# Why was the Strategy Developed?

## Vision

To support an environment where all British Columbians with disabilities, regardless of sex, age, race or socio-economic status, have equal access in all aspects of their lives.

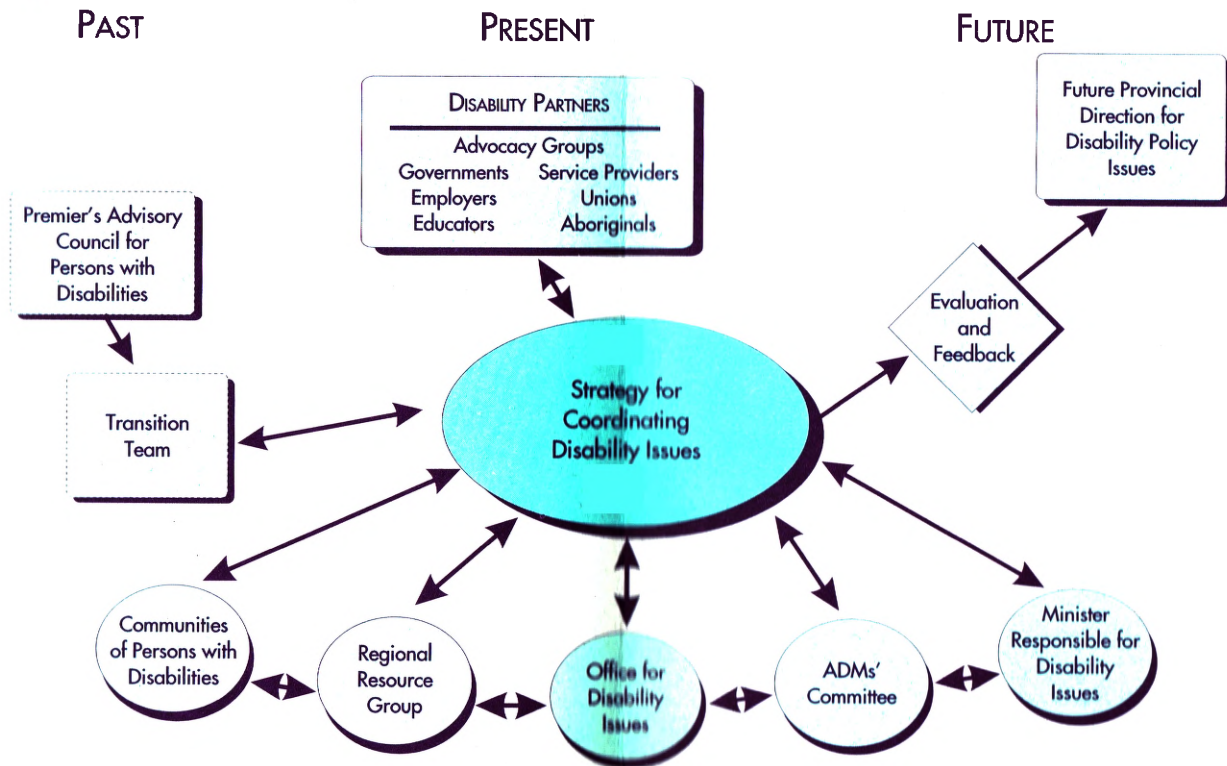
## Mandate

The *strategy's mandate* is to:

- ◆ Heighten awareness of disability issues in the province
- ◆ Ensure open communications between government, those with disabilities and related agencies
- ◆ Facilitate ongoing input into public policy and program priorities of government

## Principles

The strategy is established on the basis of the principles of respect for individual diversity and experience, self-determination; the right to achieve full potential and growth; community partnership, joint decision-making; ongoing communication and continuity of progress.



### Appointment of a Regional Resource Group

- ◆ Through ten representatives of geographical locations throughout B.C., addresses unique community needs, including the aboriginal community
- ◆ Priorizes disability issues needing resolution from the community perspective
- ◆ Liaises with the community to ensure two-way communication between the community and government
- ◆ Works closely with the Office for Disability Issues and recommends priorities for action

### Office for Disability Issues (ODI)

- ◆ Reviews policy and legislation which may affect persons with disabilities, and recommends action across provincial government ministries
- ◆ Facilitates public education on disability issues, attitudes and assumptions, and reports on government policies, initiatives and progress in resolving disability inequity
- ◆ Works with all other groups in the process to address broad disability policy issues
- ◆ Does not have a program budget, does not fund projects, is not a committee

# Contacts

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Ministry of Education, Skills and Training  
Minister Responsible for Disability Issues

# Coordinating Disability Issues

The *strategy* for coordinating disability issues is operative (beginning June 1, 1995) for eighteen months as a pilot project, and will be evaluated after 9 months, and again at 18 months. This evaluation will determine the future directions of disability policy in the province.

For the purposes of evaluating the success of the strategy, the focus will be on action in the following priority theme areas:

- ◆ Education, training and employment
- ◆ Community living supports
- ◆ Transportation

These priorities have been established on the basis of extensive consultation with persons with disabilities in British Columbia.

The strategy is neither linear nor hierarchical, but is composed of *five interdependent components* that each have specific roles and responsibilities. These are:

## Communities of Persons with Disabilities

- ◆ Will continue to advocate for improvements in rights and services for those with disabilities
- ◆ Will set their own agenda and work towards resolution of disability inequities, with enhanced access to government through the components of the strategy

## **Assistant Deputy Ministers' Committee**

- ◆ Plays a key role in developing cross-ministry budgets and the coordination of disability issues within the provincial government
- ◆ Links with other related ADMs' Committees and reports to the Deputies' Council
- ◆ Through working groups, examines themes such as: aboriginal issues; community living supports; education, training and employment; developing a "disability lens" to guide policies and programs; transportation; and, travel and accommodations policy

## **Designation of the Minister of Education, Skills and Training Responsible for Disability Issues**

- ◆ Ensures that disability issues are brought to the Provincial Cabinet
- ◆ Is accountable to the Premier and British Columbians for demonstrated commitment to resolving disability issues, including involving persons with disabilities in government operations

