

Project Overview

The March 2020 mandate letter to the Honourable Heather Stefanson, Minister of Families, included a request to develop a means of tracking and publicly reporting on wait times for programs serving people with disabilities and their families. The Department of Families provides these supports primarily through two programs, Children's disABILITY Services and Community Living disABILITY Services.

Children's programs

- Autism outreach
- Behavioural Services
- Child Development Services
- Applied Behavioural Analysis
- Children's Therapy Initiative
- Child Development Clinic
- Respite Services
- Summer Skills Programming
- After-school care for Adolescents
- Supplies, Equipment and Home/Vehicle Modifications

Adult programs

- Community Residential Care
- Respite Services
- In-home Support Services
- School in-service and Summer Programming
- Day Services
- Supported Independent Living
- Home Share
- Transportation

The Department of Families is planning to post wait time information for disability services online. For some programs, tracking wait time data is challenging (e.g., for programs that do not yet collect this information or programs where eligibility assessments are conducted by outside organizations, which may impact total wait times). The department is interested in consulting with community stakeholders to determine which disability services should be a priority for wait time reporting, and how often wait time information should be updated.

Engagement Overview

Stakeholders in the disability community requested that government conduct a brief survey to determine engagement preferences before proceeding with the more in-depth engagement on waitlist transparency for disability services. An online survey was open from August 31 to September 15, 2020. This survey asked participants if they would prefer to be consulted using an online survey, online focus group, in-person focus group, teleconference or mail survey (paper copy of the survey); preferred time of day for focus groups or teleconferences, etc.

The department invited people with disabilities, their family members, agencies that serve people with disabilities and advocacy organizations to share their perspectives. Invitations to participate were sent to Family Advocacy Network (FAN) and People First, both of which offered to further distribute the invitation to their contacts, as well as other organizations such as Inclusion Winnipeg, Community Living Manitoba, Continuity Care, Cerebral Palsy Association of Manitoba, Manitoba Possible and In the Company of Friends.

In addition to the online survey, a series of meetings were held with FAN and People First to get input into the engagement preferences survey, review the results and discuss next steps.

What We Heard

A total of 44 responses were received. Nearly one quarter of respondents (10 out of 44) were on a waitlist themselves or were a family member of someone on a waitlist.

The vast majority of survey participants preferred to be engaged via an online survey (64 per cent) or online focus group (27 per cent). Of those who wanted to participate in an interactive session, 64 per cent preferred daytime and 13 per cent preferred evenings.

Next Steps

It is anticipated that the online survey on waitlist transparency for disability services will open in early November, and will remain available for three weeks. The survey will be available in alternate formats upon request, and will also be available in paper form. As well, at least two interactive webinars (one daytime and one evening) will be held. More webinars may be held, depending on demand.

These engagements will help government determine which wait times for disability services are of particular interest to the community, and will help inform where to direct data collection resources.

Questions?

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Shelley Jonasson at shelley.jonasson@gov.mb.ca.