

NEW BRUNSWICK'S DISABILITY ACTION PLAN FOR PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

Accountable Path Forward to an Equal Opportunity!

STATUS UPDATE February 2022



Premier's Council on Disabilities

Conseil du premier ministre
pour les personnes

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Disability Action Plan
Accountable Path Forward to an Equal Opportunity!
Status Update
February 28, 2022

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February 28, 2022

Dear Premier Blaine Higgs,

As Chairperson of the Premier's Council on Disabilities I am pleased to present this formal status report #1 for the Disability Action Plan- An Accountable Path Forward to an Equal Opportunity (July 2020).

Despite the additional challenges created by the Covid pandemic, we are pleased to report that significant results have been underway to address the recommendations of the Disability Action Plan.

We are especially encouraged by the current process being initiated to develop comprehensive provincial accessibility legislation for New Brunswick.

This progress report includes the status updates for 43 recommendations and action items which together are focused on removing barriers while also improving service and support in key areas for persons with disabilities across New Brunswick.

The Premier's Council will continue to monitor the Disability Action Plan and to report annually to government, the public, and to all stakeholders on the many actions being taken to implement this plan. The Council will also continue working to identify any barriers that exist that keep persons with disabilities from fully and successfully living within their communities.

The Premier's Council is committed to working with persons with a disability, their families, disability organizations, government departments and others to break down barriers faced by persons with a disability in our province. By working together, we can create an inclusive society for all!

Sincerely,



Randy Dickinson
Chairperson, Premier's Council on Disabilities

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Background

The Premier’s Council on Disabilities (PCD) is the advisory body for the Government of New Brunswick responsible for stakeholder consultation and engagement, research and study, and information sharing on issues related to the barriers of persons with disabilities. The Council envisions a New Brunswick where all persons are accepted, included, and valued. We strive to provide dynamic leadership to improve the quality of life for all persons affected by disability in New Brunswick.

The Premier’s Council on Disabilities helps to coordinate the Government of New Brunswick (GNB) approach to Disability Issues. This is done by working with other government departments and key stakeholders. The Council’s partnerships within government and with the not-for-profit sector are key factors as we collectively engage each other to improve the supports and outcomes for persons with disabilities, and their families, in New Brunswick.

The PCD Act defines “person with a disability” as a person who has long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder the person’s full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

To consider the largest range of potential opportunities for NB’s growth, the PCD organized a series of engagement opportunities and meetings with stakeholders around the province between early February 2019 and March 2020, to create a new provincial NB Disability Action Plan Strategy.

As part of the PCD engagement strategy for Persons with Disabilities, the Premier’s Council organized a Disability Stakeholders’ Summit for key provincial stakeholders, a provincial survey, several public meetings across the province, and one-on-one meetings with interested and key disabilities stakeholders, to identify and brainstorm how to break down barriers for persons with a disability.

The Disability Action Plan (or DAP) is a multi-year strategy that includes recommendations involving key disability stakeholders with a focus on: employment, education, poverty, housing, disability supports, accessibility, transportation, and recreation and wellness.

The DAP includes recommendations for action to respond to issues identified during the council’s consultation and engagement process.

For persons with a disability to reach their full potential, we need to ensure that they receive the same access as all other citizens.

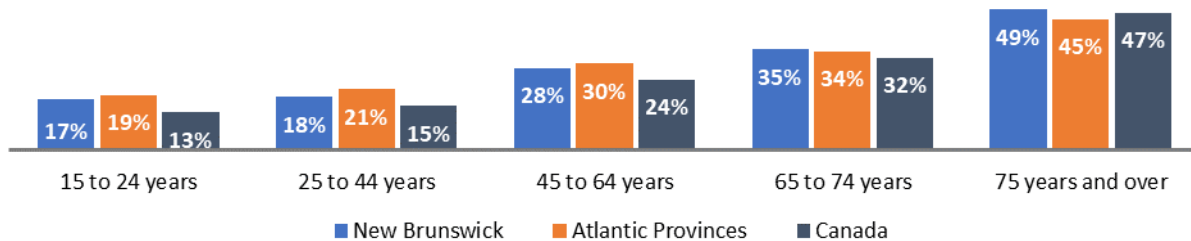
The Premier's Council prepared various drafts of this report to be shared with our partners for further input and revisions before this report was due for submission to government.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the many community stakeholders who provided a significant amount of feedback leading up to the release of this document. To monitor the actions taking place on all of these recommendations and to hold the implementation process accountable, the Premier's Council on Disabilities is committed to working with people with disabilities, their families, disability agencies, government departments, and other community organizations.

Key statistics for disabilities in NB & CANADA: Results from the 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability

In 2017, there were an estimated 161,590 New Brunswickers aged 15 years and over that had one or more disabilities. This represented 26.7% of the province's population aged 15 years and over, the second highest percentage among the provinces and territories, and well above the 22.3% seen at a national level. While the high number of individuals with disabilities in New Brunswick was, in part, a reflection of the province's relatively old population, even when age is controlled for, New Brunswick still ranks near the top in terms of prevalence of disabilities.

Prevalence of Disability by Age Group, 2017



Within New Brunswick and across the country, disabilities were more prevalent among women than men. This trend persisted across most broad age categories but was most pronounced among youth.

Both immigrants and individuals that were part of a visible minority group were less likely to have a disability than non-immigrants / individuals that were not part of a visible minority group. Within New Brunswick, among individuals aged 15 years and over, 22.1% of immigrants and 12.6% of individuals that were part of a visible minority group had one or more disabilities, compared to 27.1% of non-immigrants / individuals that were not part of a visible minority group. Nationally, 19.2% of immigrants and 15.0% of individuals that were part of a visible minority group had one or more disabilities.¹

As of 2017, 44.7% of persons with disabilities aged 15 years and over had completed some form of post-secondary education, compared to 52.1% of persons without.

¹ All data found in this document pertaining to immigrants, visible minority groups, education, and income were accessed through the [Community Data Program](#).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

“The purpose of the present Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.”

Article 1 – Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The international disability movement achieved a very important advance in 2006, with the adoption of the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD). The Convention follows decades of work by the United Nations to change attitudes and approaches to disability and to ensure full equality and participation of persons with a disability in society.

The convention was ratified in Canada in March 2010 with the consent of the federal, provincial, and territorial governments. The CRPD encourages governments to be proactive and states that:

Parties shall take all necessary measures to ensure the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.

– Article 7 (1)

In the development and implementation of legislation and policies to implement the present Convention, and in other decision-making processes concerning issues relating to persons with disabilities, States Parties shall closely consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, through their representative organizations.

– Article 4(3)

International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2021

Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID-19 world

December 3rd marks the annual observance of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This day aims to promote an understanding of disability-related issues, the rights of persons with a disability, and to highlight the gains to be made from the full inclusion of persons with a disability in every aspect of the political, social, economic and cultural life of the communities we all live in.

Celebrations are organized annually all over the World to showcase the contributions made by persons with a disability as agents of change and development in the communities in which they live.



The Secretary-General of the United Nations comments on this year's theme by saying:

“Realizing the rights, agency, and leadership of persons with disabilities will advance our common future.

We need everyone, including persons with disabilities, on board to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Around the world, persons with disabilities and their representative organizations are taking action to realize the call: ‘Nothing about us, without us’.

COVID-19 has laid bare the persistent barriers and inequalities faced by the world's 1 billion persons with disabilities, who have been among the hardest hit by the pandemic.

A disability-inclusive pandemic response and recovery should be guided by persons with disabilities themselves, forge partnerships, tackle injustice and discrimination, expand access to technology and strengthen institutions to create a more inclusive, accessible, and sustainable post-COVID-19 world.

I urge all countries to fully implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, increase accessibility, and dismantle legal, social, economic, and other barriers with the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.

On this International Day of Persons with Disabilities, let us commit to build a sustainable, inclusive and just future for everyone, leaving no one behind.”

The promotion of the full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of their human rights and fundamental freedoms and full participation by persons with disabilities will result in their enhanced sense of belonging and in significant advances in the human, social and economic development of society and the eradication of poverty.

Preamble (m)

History of the Premier's Council on Disabilities

Premier's Council on Disabilities

History

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 1981 as the International Year of Disabled Persons which provided a focus for some important efforts to take place in New Brunswick.

During a provincial conference in the fall of 1981, involving many consumers with a disability, parents, organizations serving persons with a disability and government representatives, it was decided that a permanent body was needed to maintain the momentum generated by the International Year of Disabled Persons.

The unanimous resolution of the conference prompted provincial legislation that created the Premier's Council on Disabilities in 1982. The Premier's Council is a body for consultation, study, and information sharing, which was created to advise the provincial government on matters relating to the status of persons with a disability.

The Premier's Council encourages and monitors government's compliance with the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.

Council's partnerships with government and not-for-profit sectors continue to collectively move the agenda for persons with disabilities and their families in New Brunswick forward.

Structure

The Premier's Council consists of a Chairperson and twelve members appointed by the Lieutenant- Governor in Council.

The Council has 4 full-time staff delivering the operations of the services for the province in both official languages.

Vision

A New Brunswick where all persons are accepted, included, and valued.

Mission

We provide dynamic leadership to improve the quality of life for all persons affected by disability in New Brunswick. We accomplish this by:

- **Being a strong voice and role model for full community participation**
 - **Providing research, advice, and direction to the Premier and Government**
- **Educating and increasing public awareness and the profile of individual rights, abilities, and values**
 - **Building strategic partnerships and networks**
- **Facilitating support for individuals, families, caregivers, professionals, and communities**

Unique Value Proposition

PCD is a nonpartisan advisor to the Premier and Government, who works to improve the quality of life and ensure full community participation of all persons living with a disability in New Brunswick.

Information & Resources

The Premier's Council produces several Information Directories including:

- The Directory of Services Offered to Persons with Disabilities in New Brunswick;
- Transportation Services and Vehicle Retrofit for Persons with Disabilities;
- Career Counseling, Job Placement Services and Career Training Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities;
- Financial Assistance for Persons with Disabilities;
- Housing and Barrier-free Access for Persons with Disabilities;
- Medical Funding Assistance for Persons with Disabilities;
- Sports and Leisure Funding for Persons with Disabilities

Role in The Disability Action Plan

- Acts to deliver on the recommendations in the DAP for which it is the lead;
- Chairs the Interdepartmental Committee for the DAP
- Works very closely in collaboration with departments, community groups, and persons with disabilities around the province on recommendations and actions within the plan. The Council also requests and collects updates from lead Departments for preparation of the annual status reports.

Summary of General Objectives

The general objectives for the DAP include:

- Helping ensure that persons with different types of disabilities have equitable access to needed services
- Promoting awareness and enforcement of basic human rights for persons with disabilities in a timely and cost-effective manner.
- Helping ensure that service providers are accountable for quality assurance and fair delivery of all programs and services made available to persons with disabilities.

The DAP outlines 43 recommendations for action by the Government of New Brunswick.

The recommendations are grouped into eleven specific categories of action, including:

- **Full Citizenship**
- **Accessibility and Barrier-Free**
- **Poverty**
- **Disability Supports**
- **Education**
- **Mental Health**
- **Housing**
- **Recreation and Wellness**
- **Employment**
- **Transportation**
- **Other**

Recommendation Updates and Status

Full Citizenship

Objectives:

- To make all communities in New Brunswick inclusive places for persons with disabilities.
- To educate the public at large about the vision and principles of full citizenship for all persons and to understand the positive potential and abilities of citizens with disabilities.
- To involve consumers in all aspects of the planning and delivery of public services and facilities.

Recommendation 1

Create an Ad Hoc Interdepartmental Committee by November 2020, with a mandate to work together to share information and actions related to the review and implementation of this Disability Action Plan. Each department/government agency shall appoint one senior staff member to serve for a term of 18 months with the committee expected to meet quarterly. External stakeholders could be invited to attend meetings as required to participate in discussions involving Plan implementation and/or deliver information updates.

Response from GNB departments:

- The Interdepartmental Committee on the Disability Action Plan, led by the Premier's Council on Disabilities, was formed in November 2020.
- Meetings occur on a quarterly basis to provide advice and to oversee GNB responses and actions to the DAP.

Recommendation 2

It is recommended that GNB adopt a Disability Policy Lens as a useful tool to assist government when developing or reviewing government programs and policies by 2021.

Response from GNB departments:

- A review of the ECO Procedures Manual is currently underway, including possible changes to the MEC templates/policy lens.
- Government will work with the Council to develop relevant training for public policy professionals.

Recommendation 3

By 2022, it is recommended that GNB identify and adopt a comprehensive set of benchmarks and indicators to measure outcomes for persons with a disability and inform decision making.

Response from GNB departments:

- FSCD is currently involved in work that is looking at a Comprehensive Disability Support Services model.
- This process will be reviewing indicators amongst the disability population including DSP, LTC, and FSCD.
- Expected timeframe for making the proposal is scheduled for 2022.
- The Community Data Program (CDP) is currently looking at this recommendation to see how it can contribute to capturing the data needed. The CDP is an initiative of the Canadian Community Economic Development Network.

Accessibility and Barrier-Free

Objectives:

- **To enhance the mandatory provisions under the legislation and regulations of the provincial building code to require consistent minimum universal design-barrier free access standards in all public facilities and buildings open to the public.**
- **To promote awareness of the population demographics to create more support for the business case that justifies expenses related to renovations or new construction to address barrier free access concerns.**

Recommendation 4

A New Brunswick Accessibility Act should be in force by the end of 2021.

Response from GNB departments:

- Pursuant to *Motion 78*, a Select Committee on Accessibility in New Brunswick was established and charged with conducting consultations with community stakeholders and government departments involved with the disability community and reporting to the House with recommendations.
- Between October 19th-22nd, 2021, the Committee, chaired by Ms. Kathy Bockus, heard from 18 different key stakeholders and departments.
- The Committee also announced an opportunity for the public to provide written feedback until December 31st, 2021.
- Once next steps such as the drafting of a final report are confirmed, ECO will work with all relevant parties to develop a critical path leading to a drafting proposal for a new *Accessibility Act*.

Poverty

Objectives:

- **To reduce the overall level of poverty among persons and families with disabilities.**
- **To create a new income program for persons with disabilities.**
- **To ensure that persons with disabilities have enough income to meet their basic needs and a reasonable standard of living in the community.**

Recommendation 5

It is recommended that the Department of Social Development remove persons with disabilities from the regular categories and policies under social assistance to create an entirely separate Disability Benefits Program by 2022.

Response from GNB departments:

- As part of Social Assistance Reform 2021, a task force has been established to review disability support services and programs offered by the Department of Social Development, including income support.
- The task force includes representatives from primary and allied health care, the Premier's Council on Disabilities, and the New Brunswick Disability Executives Network, as well as individuals and family members who have had first-hand experience with disability support services and programs.
- It will advise the Department on issues related to enhancing support services and coordinating delivery of these services.
- Members will propose a comprehensive model, including recommendations for implementation.

Disability Supports

Objectives:

- **To improve access to disability supports.**
- **To ensure that consumers are actively involved in the development and delivery of disability support programs.**
- **To ensure that the type of disability involved, the age of the person, personal or household income, or where they live will not be barriers to obtaining necessary disability supports.**
- **Supports and services need to be based on individual needs and not only on diagnosis.**

Recommendation 6

GNB to develop a strategy to better assess, recommend, recycle, and fund assistive technology by 2023.

Response from GNB departments:

EECD - Anglophone sector:

- A new process was developed and rolled out in the anglophone school districts starting fall 2019.
 - EECD provides funding to districts twice per year and the process for identifying and providing appropriate assistive technology is done at the school and district level.

EECD - Francophone sector:

- For the past few years, EECD has been providing funding to francophone school districts who then identify and provide appropriate assistive technology within their schools.

Recommendation 7

GNB to develop and implement a provincial strategy to attract and retain home support workers that is based on wages that support an adequate standard of living by the end of 2022.

Response from GNB departments:

- Work in the Department of Social Development has been ongoing with Family Support Workers which has led to some wage increases over the last 2 years.
- In 2021, Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour made two announcements respecting training and certification in the occupations of Personal Support Worker and Human Services Counsellor. As of July 1st, 2021, applications are being accepted for certification in both occupations and fees are waived for an indeterminate time. As of August 1st, the cost of training in the two occupations is being subsidized.

Recommendation 8

It is recommended that the Department of Social Development update the equipment list to include the following under the Health Services Program by 2023:

- a) Sight loss equipment
- b) Assistive technology & Communication equipment
- c) Hearing loss & cochlear implants equipment

Response from GNB departments:

- Equipment that is provided through health services is continually being assessed, but the addition of sight loss equipment and hearing loss equipment would require significant funding.
- Next step is to have a larger discussion with the Department of Health and EECD.

Recommendation 9

It is recommended that all Health Canada approved drug therapies are listed as first-line therapies on the NB provincial drug formulary, for those living with a disability such as Muscular Dystrophy and Multiple Sclerosis, by April 2021. Early intervention allows for less disease activity and disability.

Response from GNB departments:

Not started.

Recommendation 10

GNB to develop a plan by 2025 to raise awareness on the need to have access to interpreters in the health care, justice, etc. sector where a critical service may be accessed by a Deaf consumer.

Response from GNB departments:

- Social Development currently holds an interpreter service contract with New Brunswick Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services.
- This contract includes interpretation services for all New-Brunswickers, not just clients of Social Development. The current contract expires in 2023.
- Next step is to have discussions with the appropriate stakeholders on a plan to raise awareness to access critical services for a Deaf consumer.

Recommendation 11

GNB to expand the Integrated Service Delivery model used to serve children and youth and adopt a similar model for ensuring timely access and delivery of services to adults with disabilities, particularly those with more complex needs by 2022.

Response from GNB departments:

- This work is within the scope of the Comprehensive Disability Support Services Review that is currently underway.

- It is not expected to be an expanded Integrated Service Delivery model but will fill a gap in the transition for children and youth programming (FSCD) to services for those 19 and over.

Education

Objectives:

- To ensure that the inclusive public-school system continues to evolve so that all students with any disability are supported to reach their full potential.
- To ensure that any educational reforms (policy and programming) are aligned with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and support an inclusive education model in which children and youth with a disability learn in common learning environments with their age peers.
- To increase the number of students with disabilities who go on to successfully complete post-secondary education options.
- To ensure that teachers and other staff in the education system are properly trained and supported to enable all students to enjoy an inclusive education.

Recommendation 12

GNB to develop and adopt an inclusion policy and appropriate programming for the early learning and childcare sector that supports the full inclusion of children with a disability in early learning and ensures that parents have equal access to daycare throughout New Brunswick, by 2021.

Response from GNB departments:

EECD – Anglophone Sector:

- The Anglophone School Districts have hired seven Early Learning Consultants to support early learning and childcare facilities in the shift to the Inclusion Support Program.
- EECD's target is for 35% of designated facilities to have received on-site support by March 2022.
- Training for Inclusion Support Workers is underway via webinars that are being offered by the New Brunswick Association for Community Living and the objective is that 60% of support workers will have received this training by March 2022.

EECD – Francophone Sector:

- Francophone School Districts have hired five French-speaking Early Learning Consultants.
- The target is for 40% of early learning centres to have received on-site inclusion support by March 2022.
- Inclusion Support Workers in the Francophone sector are also taking the webinars being offered by the New Brunswick Association for Community Living and the objective is that 100% of workers will have completed this training by March 2022.

EECD – Both sectors:

- In March 2021, amendments were made to the Early Childhood Services Act to include provisions respecting inclusion in early learning and childcare.
- Revisions to the Enhanced Support Worker Program have been initiated to broaden the program scope to align with the legislative requirements and the program has been renamed the Inclusion Support Program to reflect the range of supports that may be offered.

Recommendation 13

In consultation with stakeholders, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will look at developing clear guidelines for the requirement of a psycho-educational assessment to increase availability and ensure children needing the assessment receive it within 6 weeks, by March 31, 2021.

Response from GNB departments:

EECD – Anglophone Sector:

- EECD provides access to a digital assessment library for school and school district-based educational professionals across the province. An intervention approach is being developed and dedicated training will begin in 2022-2023.

EECD – Francophone Sector:

- An intervention approach is being developed and training for this approach will be offered to resource teachers in 2022-2023.

EECD – Both sectors:

- EECD is part of a multi-department committee that is currently working on the Psychologist Resource Strategy to help address the shortage of psychologists in the province.

Recommendation 14

It is recommended that EECD have a strategy to develop coordinated services for prevention of mental illness for children and youth and to address mental health challenges being experienced by children and youth by 2023.

Response from GNB departments:

EECD – Anglophone Sector:

- EECD has partnered with William Morrison & Associates to provide mental health resources for educators. A series of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) webinars were developed and provided to NB educators.
- The Anglophone sector is offering courses on personal wellness to grades 3-5, and Personal Development and Career Planning to grades 6-10 which provide suicide prevention and positive mental wellness.
- Thirty-nine Behaviour Intervention Mentors were added to the Anglophone schools to provide support and intervention at the middle school level.
- Funding and training continue to be offered to school and school districts in areas of mental health and wellness, Violent Threat Risk Assessment, suicide prevention, and trauma-informed practices.

EECD – Francophone Sector:

- EECD has partnered with William Morrison & Associates by providing tools and resources for Francophone sector school personnel as well as families by providing an annual evaluation for wellness and resilience in all Francophone schools in the province.
- The Francophone sector is offering continued learning in mental health first aid as well as a Threat, Risk, and Violence Assessment Program for teachers.
- School districts added sixteen behaviour management mentors in their high schools. In February 2021, these mentors undertook a three-year training course that reflects the latest research on behaviour and how the brain affects behaviour, and also included a support component.

EECD – Both sectors:

- Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) is now available in all school districts.
- The Child & Youth Teams provide a range of social/emotional and mental health services to children and youth in schools.

Recommendation 15

In collaboration with school districts and community partners, EECD will look at developing strategies and resources to ensure the clear and consistent understanding and implementation of *Policy 322* throughout NB public schools by the end of 2020.

Response from GNB departments:

EECD – Anglophone Sector:

- In conjunction with community partners, a series of Policy to Practice documents have been developed. Three have been released and the final two are forthcoming.
- The Anglophone sector formed an inclusive education steering committee in 2018 to work with community partners and schools to strengthen inclusive education in New Brunswick.
- A review of Policy 322 – Inclusive Education was completed.

EECD – Francophone Sector:

- A consultation with various stakeholders took place in mid-February 2021. As a result of this consultation, EECD is in the process of establishing priorities and timelines.
- The focus begins with Objective 1 of EECD Francophone Sector’s ten-year plan.
 - This objective focuses on the development of a life and career plan so that all students can reach their full potential.
 - A transition plan that supports Objective 1 has been developed and this plan will be piloted in six francophone schools beginning in January 2022.
- Training was also offered to new resource teachers called “Formation en pédagogie inclusive”.

Recommendation 16

It is recommended that GNB develop, adopt and implement a provincial policy on transition from high school for youth with a disability, for both the anglophone and francophone sectors by 2022.

Response from GNB departments:

- The PCD held meetings with PETL and EECD to create a Transition Guide. The *“Transition Guide for Students with Disabilities- Helping You Navigate Post-Secondary Education”* was released in April 2021 through a partnership with the Renaissance College.

EECD – Anglophone Sector:

- The Anglophone sector partnered with PETL to fund a position on the Education Support Services team who focuses on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) for Career Education and Transition.
- Transition plans are now formalized electronically as part of a student’s Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) within the ESS Connect Platform.
- The Anglophone sector partnered with the New Brunswick Association for Community Living on a pilot project working with students who have a significant disability and their transition to community life.

EECD Francophone Sector:

- The Francophone Sector decided not to write a policy on this, but instead decided to establish a process with the various stakeholders.
- The Francophone Sector developed a transition plan which will be piloted in six schools as of January 2022.

EECD – Both sectors:

- Currently, a Response to Intervention (RTI) approach that addresses the transition needs of all students is being developed in collaboration with both sectors.

Recommendation 17

GNB to identify and address barriers to accessing postsecondary education by 2023.

Response from GNB departments:

- Since 2009, Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour’s Access & Success Program has provided grants to publicly funded post-secondary institutions to support innovation in removing barriers and support students from under-represented groups, including persons with disabilities, through the duration of their studies. Project funding is available for up to three years at 100% of the funding requested, and at 50% in the fourth year. The Program is based on the premise that institutions will operationalize successful projects permanently and share best practices across the post-secondary education sector for the benefit all New Brunswick students.
- There are no provincial student financial programs targeting persons with disabilities. Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour administers two federal programs:

- The Canada Student Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities (CSG-PD) allows eligible students with permanent disabilities to receive \$4,000 (the amount for funding has recently been increased in response to the COVID-19 pandemic) per academic year to cover the costs of accommodation, tuition, and books.
- The Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Students with Permanent Disabilities (CSG-PDSE) is available to students with permanent disabilities who qualify for the CSG-PD and who have exceptional education-related costs such as tutors, notetakers, interpreters, brailers, or technical aids. The CSG-PDSE grant provides up to \$20,000 per academic year.

Recommendation 18

It is recommended that EECD review the implementation of a culture linguistic component in the early childhood intervention transition plan for deaf students from K-12 by 2021.

Response from GNB departments:

EECD – Anglophone Sector:

- GNB continues to support students in the Anglophone sector who are Deaf via the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA), the inter-provincial cooperative agency, which provides culturally and linguistically responsive educational support services, programs, and opportunities.

EECD Francophone Sector:

- Like all students attending francophone schools in the province, students with hearing impairments from Kindergarten to Grade 12 are part of the movement to develop Acadian culture and the French language. It is within this inclusive philosophy that students with hearing impairments subscribe to the same language and culture as their peers.

Mental Health

Recommendation 19

GNB to develop and implement a dedicated strategy to enhance access to mental health services for people with mental health concerns (including people with a co-occurring disability) by December 2021.

Response from GNB departments:

Not started.

Recommendation 20

GNB to create a provincial committee to develop a long-term plan to ensure mental health and addiction services supports are readily available to those with a mental health illness by 2023. This committee will also look at issues around mental health and the law.

Response from GNB departments:

Not started.

Housing

Objectives:

- **To increase the number of accessible and affordable housing units in the province.**
- **To promote universal barrier-free design concepts in all new housing projects including renovations of existing housing stocks where feasible.**

Recommendation 21

It is recommended that the Department of Social Development increase the number of supportive housing options for people with disabilities, including an increase in the quantity of affordable and accessible housing supports options by 2023.

Response from GNB departments:

- The Department of Social Development supports the implementation of supportive housing models through existing programs and planned activities identified in the Provincial Housing Strategy.
- New Brunswick has over 14,600 rental units within the affordable housing portfolio (some maintained by the Province and some owned and maintained by the private and non-profit/co-op housing sectors that are subsidized by Social Development).
- Over \$6.8M will be invested across the province over the first three years of the 2018-2028 CMHC-NB Bilateral Agreement with the Federal Government to create more affordable rental units.
- This agreement will directly result in removing approximately 1,200 households from the provincial waiting list and placing them into new affordable housing units.
- The Canada-New Brunswick Housing Benefit was made available to all eligible households in New Brunswick on June 21, 2021 and will provide short-term rental assistance (up to

three years) to help New Brunswick families with children who are struggling to afford rent as a result of working part-time or at a lower-paying job.

- The Province has engaged in an extensive consultation process to obtain input into the development of the Federal and Provincial Housing Strategies, as well as the 2019-2022 Action Plan under the Bilateral Agreement.
- Cross-governmental and cross-sectoral sessions were held for stakeholders to provide feedback on elements of these housing plans.
- International and cross-jurisdictional scans were also conducted.
- The comprehensive consultation process that was undertaken ensures that the various housing needs across the province were incorporated into the development of the objectives and targets of the Action Plan.
- Social Development is currently in the process of developing a framework to create a person-centered approach to facilitate navigation through the housing continuum.

Recommendation 22

It is recommended that the Department of Social Development create a resource document in multiple formats to clarify the process to access housing support from government, including eligibility requirements and details on the process by 2021.

Response from GNB departments:

- The Housing & Homelessness branch is committed to supporting the creation and implementation of a resource document in a paper format available in two different font sizes to clarify the process to access housing programs including eligibility requirements.
- In the Fall of 2020, the Department of Social Development launched the Social Supports NB website.
 - This website is designed to help New Brunswickers easily find information about government and community services and programs.
 - It was quickly expanded in 2021 to include information for people living with a disability, older adults and New Brunswickers looking to access housing programs.
 - Social Supports NB plans to continue building on its resources over time to provide accessible and user-friendly information.
- The 211 database is another useful tool which launched in October 2020 through funding from the Government of Canada in partnership with the Government of New Brunswick, as well as contributions from the United Way and others.

- This is a database website along with a telephone service to help New Brunswickers obtain information about community programs and services available, including housing programs and services.
- Social Development is currently in the process of developing and promoting an educational/awareness campaign about all Social Development Housing Programs.

Recreation and Wellness

Objectives:

- **To increase the number of persons with disabilities of all types and ages participate regularly in healthy recreation and wellness activities.**
- **To ensure that all public recreational programs and facilities are doing what is necessary to enable the inclusive participation of persons with disabilities.**

Recommendation 23

The Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture to develop a new sport and recreation plan for NB by 2021.

Response from GNB departments:

- Through their goals and objectives pertaining to inclusion and accessibility at all levels of sport, the Framework for Recreation Canada and The Canadian Sport Policy have influenced the development of specific items of the Sport and Recreation Branch (SRB) strategic plan (2016 -2020 – currently under revision for update).
 - Strategic goal #2 of the plan is Inclusion and access – improve inclusion and access to sport and recreation for populations that face participation constraints.
- The Sport and Recreation Branch has recently developed internal strategies related to Persons with a Disability (2018/19 & 2019/20)
 - These strategies had goals related to:
 - increased access to adapted equipment,
 - increased participation in sports and recreation
- Two recent products of the SRB internal strategies have resulted in the development of the Inclusive Community Recreation Infrastructure Fund (ICRIF) launched in 2021.

- The ICRIF objectives of this funding program is to support community recreation efforts that improve inclusion and access to existing recreation infrastructure for populations that face constraints to participation.
- The second initiative is a change to the existing Go NB Program that supports opportunities for persons with a disability to participate in quality programming through the development of programming or purchase of adapted equipment.
- The aforementioned policies, frameworks and strategies have provided an alternative to an updated NB sport and recreation plan.

Employment

Objectives:

- **To increase the overall employment rate of persons with a disability**
- **To increase the participation of persons with a disability in post-secondary education and training**
- **To enhance pre-employment and income support policies and initiatives to actively encourage and facilitate access to employment for persons with a disability**
- **To develop engagement strategies with employers to increase their recruitment and retention of persons with a disability**

Recommendation 24

GNB to collaborate with stakeholders to review the Pan-Canadian Strategy on Disabilities and Work to assess its potential for adoption as the strategic framework for promoting the employment of persons with disabilities in New Brunswick.

Response from GNB departments:

- In 2021, an interdepartmental working group was established. The working group generally agrees that the Strategy's vision, principles, and objectives align with GNB approaches. Next steps to be determined and may depend on the outcomes of the Select Committee on Accessibility in New Brunswick.

Recommendation 25

GNB will continue to support the Employment Assistance Services (EAS) Network.

Recommendation 26

The Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour to coordinate with stakeholders to design and implement an enhanced service delivery model and more flexible employment supports to assist in the labor market integration and retention of persons with disabilities by 2022.

Response from GNB departments for recommendation 25 and 26:

- Following extensive consultation with stakeholders and service providers, Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour will implement a new model of employment service delivery. Starting in April 2022, Employment Assistance Services will be outsourced to a new cooperative of third-party service providers who will work toward a common set of targets and performance measures.

Recommendation 27

Revisiting and improving the Equal Employment Opportunity Program by removing barriers to employment and by providing more opportunities and advancements to persons with a disability, to increase their participation in the public service. It is also crucial to have GNB as the model employer by 2021.

Response from GNB departments:

- GNB, through the Equal Employment Opportunity program, has received approval for a federal grant (approx. \$190,000) and will use these funds towards delivering a 1-year special project aimed at creating increased employment opportunities within GNB for persons with intellectual and development disabilities (I/DD).
- Working in partnership with I/DD employment specialists, the New Brunswick Association for Community Living, GNB aims to provide ongoing employment for 10-15 persons from the I/DD community by 2022-2023.
- Resources for this effort have been secured and work began in November 2021.

Recommendation 28

Consult on amending the Employment Standards Act to prohibit the use of sub-minimum wage stipends for persons with a disability (and others), by the end of 2022.

Response from GNB departments:

- In April 2021, Minister of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour met with the New Brunswick Association for Community Living on their brief, *Reform of Employment Standards to Ensure Minimum Wage Equality for Persons with Disabilities in New Brunswick*. Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour has partnered with Social Development to provide province-wide training on an Employment First approach for all thirty-eight of the agencies involved with delivering the Employment Support and Services Program (ESSP, formerly the ADAPT program), and positions have been established for two Transition Coordinators.

Recommendation 29

Create sustained public awareness through media and other campaigns on the potential of people with a disability to work and the labour market needs of New Brunswick employers by 2021.

Response from GNB departments:

On hold until a decision is reached for recommendation 24 on the *Pan-Canadian Strategy on Disability and Work*.

Recommendation 30

Establish experiential learning programming with income supports for persons with a disability by 2021.

Response from GNB departments:

- Experiential learning is a priority for Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour:
 - In 2021-2022, \$5.85M was allocated for K-12, college and university participation in the Future NB and Future Wabanaki programs. In 2020-2021, approximately 4,500 students benefitted from participation in Future NB and/or Future Wabanaki in K-12 or NB's 4 publicly funded universities.
 - PETL continues to partner with EECD and PSE institutions to collect data on students with a disability who access Future NB. Because of self-identification requirements, collecting data on participation of students with disabilities at the post-secondary education (PSE) level is a challenge.

- PETL continues to partner with key stakeholders such as NBACL and Ability NB to identify solutions of increasing engagement and success for students and employers.
- The Experiential Learning and Employment (ELE) Continuum, is delivered in partnership with Social Development through joint regional working groups that work with third party service providers, identify labour market needs and recruit employers for work placements. The usual annual target of 8 classes per year with 96 participants has been impacted by COVID-19 restrictions.

Transportation

Objectives:

- **To increase the number of carriers who offer affordable and accessible transportation services for travelling in our communities and across New Brunswick.**
- **To develop programs of financial incentives to enable non-profit community organizations and private taxi companies to acquire and operate accessible vehicles for public transportation for seniors and/or persons with disabilities.**
- **To provide funding for community transportation alternatives.**

Recommendation 31

Create a Transportation Access Implementation Committee to oversee the recommendations contained in the rural and urban transportation plan for New Brunswick and the 2020 Overcoming Poverty Together Report by 2021.

Response from GNB departments:

- As per Overcoming Poverty Together 3, ESIC provides leadership, financial resources, operational support, and strategic advice to the regional transportation service providers around NB. ESIC continues to develop and support regional transportation plans around NB to increase accessibility, affordability, and availability of transportation services.
- As part of Local Governance Reform, ESIC is working closely with 12 new Regional Service Commissions (RSC's) to successfully integrate the Community Inclusion Networks (CIN's) with the RSC's. This collaboration will support improved community development outcomes within each Regional Service Commission, which includes building and improving local and regional transportation services. The target date to complete the integration of the RSC's and the CIN's is January 1, 2023.

Recommendation 32

GNB to lead a project to identify how to best utilize current and coming innovations in personal transportation to better support persons with a disability as they live, work, and raise a family in NB by 2020.

Response from GNB departments:

Not started.

Recommendation 33

GNB to amend the Motor Vehicle Act to allow municipalities to impose a fine of \$172.50 for misuse of accessible parking.

Response from GNB departments:

Not started.

Recommendation 34

GNB should continue to support the NB Vehicle Retrofit Program and ensure adequate funding is allocated for this program.

Response from GNB departments:

DTI was previously responsible for the NB Vehicle Retrofit Program and had entered into a contract with Ability NB to administer it. The present contract will expire March 31, 2023. SD has taken over managing the contract from DTI. SD confirms that they have taken over the administration of the present contract with Ability NB from DTI back-dated to April 1, 2021 and moving forward SD will ensure funding and any other obligation set out under the contract continues to be delivered until the expiration date of March 31, 2023.

Other

Recommendation 35

GNB to work with Indigenous communities and stakeholders to address the specific issues around access to services for Indigenous people with a disability wherever they live in the province by 2023.

Response from lead department:

- An interdepartmental working group has been assembled and is carrying out preliminary research on services for Indigenous persons with disabilities.
- The Select Committee on Accessibility plans to engage with Indigenous peoples by inviting each First Nation community to participate in the process; this will further inform GNB's progress on Recommendation 35.

Recommendation 36

The Department of Social Development should create a Working Group with the Deaf community and agencies to develop a strategy on communication and awareness by 2021.

Response from lead department:

The PCD, SD and the NBDHH have started meeting to work on a strategy around communication and awareness. The ReThink Ability Training will also be a valuable tool to address this recommendation. SD, NBDHH, PCD and other agencies sit on the advisory committee for this project.

Recommendation 37

The GNB website should be more accessible not just in terms of technology but also language and ease of navigation. The province will explore more accessible ways to communicate with citizens by 2023.

Response from GNB departments

Not started.

Recommendation 38

The Department of Social Development should actively support people with a disability to open a Registered Disability Savings Plan if they are eligible for the federal Disability Tax Credit.

Response from GNB departments:

- As part of Social Assistance Reform 2021, a task force has been established to review disability support services and programs offered by the Department of Social Development, including income support.

- The task force includes representatives from primary and allied health care, the Premier’s Council on Disabilities, and the New Brunswick Disability Executives Network, as well as individuals and family members who have had first-hand experience with disability support services and programs.
- It will advise the department on issues related to enhancing support services and coordinating delivery of these services. Members will propose a comprehensive model, including recommendations for implementation.
- The Premier’s Council on Disabilities has partnered with students from the Renaissance College who are performing a Canada-wide environmental scan on the promotion of RDSPs to see how New Brunswick can better encourage people with disabilities to participate. Implementation strategies are to be determined, pending the results of the environmental scan.

Recommendation 39

GNB to create an Ad-Hoc interdepartmental committee by the end of 2020 to oversee and enforce a provincial autism strategy for adults with autism as well as make ongoing recommendations for change. The committee will be made up of autism stakeholders and relevant government departments.

Response from GNB departments:

The PCD has met with all agencies supporting individuals with autism in the province to gather feedback. Ongoing discussions with DH to address this recommendation.

Recommendation 40

GNB to review current funding model to support the delivery of improved services and programs related to Autism by 2021.

Response from GNB departments:

Work has been started in partnership with DSP, FSC and complex cases to ensure consistency and optimal service delivery to clients.

Recommendation 41

All departmental staff of the Government of New Brunswick should be reminded about the disability-related information resources available from the Premier's Council on Disabilities through the various online services directories. This would assist the departments to be able to direct clients with disabilities to other resources in addition to provincial government programs.

Response from GNB departments:

- As part of the PCD's communication strategy, the PCD has created a communication plan and information package to disseminate to all GNB departments.

Recommendation 42

GNB to consult on the creation of Service Animal Legislation in NB that provides access to public places to persons with disabilities who use service animals by reason of disability.

Response from GNB departments:

- The creation of Service Animal Legislation was one of the many topics heard by the Select Committee on Accessibility in New Brunswick in October 2021.
- Once the committee releases its final report, ECO will work with other key departments to establish next steps on this DAP recommendation.
- The PCD has met with Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, the Human Rights Commission, Public Safety and users of service animals to gather feedback.

Recommendation 43

GNB to consult with the disability community to ensure appropriate supports are in place during safety and emergency situations.

Response from GNB departments:

The PCD has reached out to disability organizations that support people with a disability to identify these appropriate supports.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Disability issues continue to touch the lives of nearly all of us through family members, as consumers with a disability, and through the knowledge that each of us will likely require some level of support as we age.

Disability issues are often complex. Effective solutions require well-coordinated partnerships between sometimes diverse stakeholders across each of the economic, social, and political sectors of the province.

And, great strides have been made since the inaugural New Brunswick Disability Action Plan in 1985.

Over the years many, many individuals, communities, agencies, departments, and others have provided leadership and worked tirelessly to make this happen here in our province. And yet, much remains to be done.

In this status report, we offer concrete progress updates on the recommendations presented to government on how to tweak the workings of the many service delivery systems to improve effective and efficient outcomes for more persons with a disability and to strengthen meaningful partnerships amongst government, the community sector, and private sector.

As a necessary first step, the Premier's Council has enhanced the level of engagement between the many disability stakeholders that must be involved in doing this work differently and more effectively.

The Premier's Council has taken the responsibility to follow up with each Department individually and with the government collectively to hold everyone accountable for action on these recommendations.

We will report annually to the public and review and update the plan as required.

We will continue to send out the message that relevant governmental and departmental policies should be reviewed as needed to better align these efforts with the goals of the Disability Action Plan.

The global pandemic of COVID-19 has and continues to put a strain on our system, however the Premier's Council will continue to work with government and the community to increase opportunity and inclusion for people with a disability in our province.

Thank you all for your continued support and partnership in working towards our common goal to reducing barriers for persons with a disability in NB.

Appendix A: Objectives, Values and Principles

Accessibility and Barrier-Free/ Universal Design

Accessibility often describes the degree to which a device or a service is accessible by as many people as possible. Accessibility is most often strongly associated to universal design, which is the process of creating products and places that are usable by people with the widest possible range of abilities, operating within the widest possible range of situations, whether a person has a disability or not.

Accessibility also includes a focus on people with disabilities and their human right to achieve their full potential as citizens and members of their community. Several definitions of accessibility refer directly to access-based individual human rights, laws, and regulations that enable people with disabilities to access information and services that minimize all the barriers they face. These include, but are not limited to, physical, political, social, and economic barriers. In many countries this has led to initiatives, laws, and regulations intended to achieve these objectives.

Poverty

The rate of poverty among people with disabilities has historically been much higher compared to the general population. Also, as compared to those without a disability, people with disabilities require more supports, equipment, and programs to reach their full potential as citizens. These requirements cost money to which many people with disabilities simply do not have access.

The rate of disability increases as a population ages. The aging of the provincial population means that every person will either be disabled or have a high potential of becoming disabled, and most will likely live in poverty at some point in their lives.

From a policy and program perspective, it is best to think of disability and poverty as a population issue rather than simply a condition of a designated group of individuals.

The high and increasing level of disability in New Brunswick means that a successful poverty reduction strategy needs to have a significant focus on persons with a disability.

Disability Supports

Disability supports address service needs for personal assistance in daily living to facilitate the personal development of individuals with disabilities, as well as their participation and inclusion in their communities. Disability supports need to be flexible and based on the needs of the individual to be most effective in achieving desirable outcomes. The persons with disabilities involved and/or their caregivers need to be actively engaged in the development, negotiation, and direction of their own personalized and flexible disability supports.

As individuals possess different disabilities, there may be a need for different types or levels of disability supports that must be tailored to the individual. Some families will have the necessary financial means to cover the costs of their own disability supports or will have access to insurance to help offset these costs. However, for many persons with disabilities, assistance may be required from public and community resources. This assistance for disability supports can provide them with the tools they need to function independently and with dignity, to be able to fully participate in their community. It will be very important to carefully assess the needs of each individual by using their input and personal objectives to best design a suite of supports to achieve their goals in a manner that is sustainable and fair to all concerned.

Education

To be successful today, every citizen needs to have strong literacy and numeracy skills with an appropriate education to help prepare them to interact successfully with their social peers and to attain their goals of self-sufficiency.

For persons with different disabilities, it is crucial that they have full and complete access to all levels of educational opportunities in order to offset any barriers that may be created by their disabilities. It is equally important that persons with disabilities have complete access to all forms of post-secondary education that are available in the province and elsewhere. We need to ensure that teachers and other support staff are properly trained and prepared to respond to the support requirements necessary to ensure a good education for all students with disabilities. We also want to see that facilities and programs are designed and constructed to be barrier-free for students, staff, and visitors with different disabilities.

Education opens doors for people. Persons with disabilities can thrive and succeed when provided with the quality education to which they are entitled.

Housing

Having a safe, suitable, and affordable place to live is one of the things that most citizens would take for granted as a basic necessity for life. However, for persons with certain disabilities, barrier-free access is a determining factor in where they can and cannot live. This obstacle often limits their possible choices of residences, based on both affordability and accessibility. Newer developments that include more barrier-free options are often priced out of reach for the majority of consumers with disabilities due to their fixed incomes. The current amount of available non-profit public housing choices is inadequate to meet the vast demand from low-income consumers and families across the province.

Affordable and accessible housing needs to be situated in areas adjacent to schools, shopping, medical services, banking, recreational opportunities, and other community related programs. The defined location of housing is critical to not allow the lack of affordable and accessible transportation to become a barrier to participation in the community. Some persons with disabilities will also need access to support services, such as homemakers and attendant care, to be able to live independently in their choice of housing in the community.

Employment

Persons with a disability can make good employees, and they must be employed in the same fashion as all other people trying to enter the labor force. However, people with disabilities have always had much more difficulty finding employment and keeping their position(s).

Being employed is often necessary for a person, with or without disabilities, to have the resources to fully participate in their society. Even so, labor participation rates and employment rates for people with disabilities is far too low in New Brunswick.

When government examines the policies relating to employment, these issues should be explored:

- what the future employment needs of the province look like;
- working with employers to identify the types of accommodations that can be made (ex. flexible hours, job sharing, job coaching, mentorships, peer support);
- increasing opportunities for youth (ex. summer programming, co-op placements); and
- establishing work-site physical accessibility.

A continued effort should be made to increase the level of awareness of employers about the valuable contribution individuals with a disability can make to the workforce (i.e. hiring an individual with a disability is not a burden).

Transportation

Transportation provides the vital lifeline for people with disabilities to access employment, education, healthcare, and community life. Transportation services also enable individuals with disabilities to live independently within their communities.

Without adequate transportation, full inclusion of persons with a disability in community life is impossible. Even so, in New Brunswick, transportation services are very often not accessible to individuals with disabilities. This is the case in rural areas especially, where there are rarely new transportation supports and policies developed or implemented, and where adequate funding is seldom available.

We must purposefully take the steps needed to increase and improve access to more consistent, affordable, and accessible transportation options for persons with a disability throughout New Brunswick.

Recreation and Wellness

People with disabilities need to have regular access to recreational and active-living opportunities to maintain their physical and mental well-being, as such access has proven to be a benefit for all citizens. Some persons with disabilities may require adaptive programming or special equipment to participate in such activities, due to the nature and degree of their disability. However, if the disability allows, some individuals can participate in the same programs and recreational activities that their counterparts without disabilities take pleasure in. Unfortunately, there are barriers. To this day, we still have many recreational facilities that were built without enough consideration for the needs of participants and spectators with different disabilities. The other reality for many persons with disabilities is that they have limited income and are unable to afford transportation, participation, and admission fees, required equipment, etc. to participate in many typical recreational and active-living experiences.

We would like to compliment the facilities and programs across the province who have made fundamental efforts to increase the number of people with disabilities who are able to participate in their services and programs by making them more barrier-free and by offering support if needed by any participants with disabilities.

Appendix B: Scorecard Status of Recommendations

Glossary

Acronyms	
DAA	Department of Aboriginal Affairs
DH	Department of Health
JPS	Department of Justice and Public Safety
DSD	Department of Social Development
DTI	Department of Transportation and Infrastructure
EECD	Education and Early Childhood Development
ECO	Executive Council Office
ESIC	Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation
FTB	Department of Finance and Treasury Board
OAG	Office of the Attorney General
NBHC	NB Health Council
NBHRC	New Brunswick Human Rights Commission
PCD	Premier's Council on Disabilities
PETL	Post-secondary Education, Training and Labour
PO	Office of the Premier
SNB	Service New Brunswick
THC	Tourism, Heritage and Culture
WEB	Women's Equality Branch

Complete 6	Progress Underway 31	Not Started 7
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Recommendation		Lead	Status
1	Create an Ad Hoc Interdepartmental Committee by November 2020, with a mandate to work together to share information and actions related to the review and implementation of this Disability Action Plan. Each department/government agency shall appoint one senior staff member to serve for a term of 18 months with the committee expected to meet quarterly. External stakeholders could be invited to attend meetings as required to participate in discussions involving Plan implementation and/or deliver information updates.	PO ECO PCD	Complete
2	It is recommended that GNB adopt a Disability Policy Lens as a useful tool to assist government when developing or reviewing government programs and policies by 2021.	PO ECO PCD	Progress Underway
3	By 2022, it is recommended that GNB identify and adopt a comprehensive set of benchmarks and indicators to measure outcomes for persons with a disability and inform decision making.	PCD PETL NBHC DSD	Progress Underway
4	A New Brunswick Accessibility Act should be in force by the end of 2021.	PO ECO PCD	Progress Underway
5	It is recommended that the Department of Social Development remove persons with disabilities from the regular categories and policies under social assistance to create an entirely separate Disability Benefits Program by 2022.	DSD	Progress Underway
6	GNB to develop a strategy to better assess, recommend, recycle and fund assistive technology by 2023.	DSD EECD PETL	Progress Underway
7	GNB to develop and implement a provincial strategy to attract and retain home support workers that is based on wages that support an adequate standard of living by the end of 2022.	PETL DSD WEB DH	Progress Underway

Recommendation		Lead	Status
8	<p>It is recommended that the Department of Social Development update the equipment list to include the following under the Health Services Program by 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Sight loss equipment b) Assistive technology & Communication equipment c) Hearing loss & cochlear implants equipment 	DSD	Progress Underway
9	<p>It is recommended that all Health Canada approved drug therapies are listed as first-line therapies on the NB provincial drug formulary, for those living with a disability such as Muscular Dystrophy and Multiple Sclerosis, by April 2021. Early intervention allows for less disease activity and disability.</p>	DH	Not started
10	<p>GNB to develop a plan by 2025 to raise awareness on the need to have access to interpreters in the health care, justice, etc. sector where a critical service may be accessed by a Deaf consumer.</p>	DH JOAG DSD	Progress Underway
11	<p>GNB to expand the Integrated Service Delivery model used to serve children and youth and adopt a similar model for ensuring timely access and delivery of services to adults with disabilities, particularly those with more complex needs by 2022.</p>	DH DSD JPS	Progress Underway
12	<p>GNB to develop and adopt an inclusion policy and appropriate programming for the early learning and childcare sector that supports the full inclusion of children with a disability in early learning and ensures that parents have equal access to daycare throughout New Brunswick, by 2021.</p>	EECD	Complete
13	<p>In consultation with stakeholders, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will look at developing clear guidelines for requirement of a psycho-educational assessment to increase availability and ensure children needing the assessment receive it within 6 weeks, by March 31st, 2021.</p>	EECD PETL DSD DH	Progress Underway
Recommendation		Lead	Status
14	<p>It is recommended that EECD have a strategy to develop coordinated services for prevention of mental illness for children and youth and to address mental health challenges being experienced by children and youth by 2023.</p>	EECD DH	Progress Underway

15	In collaboration with school districts and community partners, EECD will look at developing strategies and resources to ensure the clear and consistent understanding and implementation of Policy 322 throughout NB public schools by the end of 2020.	EECD	Progress Underway
16	It is recommended that GNB develop, adopt and implement a provincial policy on transition from high school for youth with a disability, for both the anglophone and francophone sectors by 2022.	EECD PETL	Progress Underway
17	GNB to identify and address barriers to accessing postsecondary education by 2023.	PETL	Progress Underway
18	It is recommended that EECD review the implementation of a culture linguistic component in the early childhood intervention transition plan for Deaf students from K-12 by 2021.	EECD	Progress Underway
19	GNB to develop and implement a dedicated strategy to enhance access to mental health services for people with mental health concern (including people with a co-occurring disability) by December 2021.	DH DSD	Not started
20	GNB to create a provincial committee to develop a long-term plan to ensure mental health and addiction services supports are readily available to those with a mental health illness by 2023. This committee will also look at issues around mental health and the law.	JOAG DH	Not started

Recommendation	Lead	Status
21	<p>It is recommended that the Department of Social Development increase the number of supportive housing options for people with disabilities, including an increase in the quantity of affordable and accessible housing supports options by 2023.</p>	DSD Progress Underway
22	<p>It is recommended that the Department of Social Development create a resource document in multiple formats to clarify the process to access housing support from government, including eligibility requirements and details on the process by 2021.</p>	DSD Progress Underway
23	<p>The Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture to develop a new sport and recreation plan for NB by 2021.</p>	THC Progress Underway
24	<p>GNB to collaborate with stakeholders to review the <i>Pan-Canadian Strategy on Disabilities and Work</i> to assess its potential for adoption as the strategic framework for promoting the employment of persons with disabilities in New Brunswick.</p>	PETL PCD Progress Underway
25	<p>GNB will continue to support the Employment Assistance Services (EAS) Network.</p>	PETL Complete
26	<p>The Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour to coordinate with stakeholders to design and implement an enhanced service delivery model and more flexible employment supports to assist in the labor market integration and retention of persons with disabilities by 2022.</p>	PETL Complete

Recommendation	Lead	Status
27	Revisiting and improving the Equal Employment Opportunity Program by removing barriers to employment and by providing more opportunities and advancements to persons with a disability, to increase their participation in the public service. It is also crucial to have GNB as the model employer by 2021.	FTB Progress Underway
28	Consult on amending the <i>Employment Standards Act</i> to prohibit the use of sub-minimum wage stipends for persons with a disability (and others), by the end of 2022.	PETL Progress Underway
29	Create sustained public awareness through media and other campaigns on the potential of people with a disability to work and the labour market needs of New Brunswick employers by 2021.	PETL PCD Progress Underway
30	Establish experiential learning programming with income supports for persons with a disability by 2021.	PETL Progress Underway
31	Create a Transportation Access Implementation Committee to oversee the recommendations contained in the rural and urban transportation plan for New Brunswick and the 2020 Overcoming Poverty Together Report by 2021.	ECO ESIC Progress Underway
32	GNB to lead a project to identify how to best utilize current and coming innovations in personal transportation to better support persons with a disability as they live, work, and raise a family in NB by 2020.	DTI ESIC Not Started
33	GNB to amend the Motor Vehicle Act to allow municipalities to impose a fine of \$172.50 for misuse of accessible parking.	JPS Not Started
34	GNB should continue to support the NB Vehicle Retrofit Program and ensure adequate funding is allocated for this program.	DSD Complete

Recommendation	Lead	Status
35	GNB to work with Indigenous communities and stakeholders to address the specific issues around access to services for Indigenous people with a disability wherever they live in the province by 2023.	DAA Progress Underway
36	The Department of Social Development should create a Working Group with the Deaf community and agencies to develop a strategy on communication and awareness by 2021.	DSD Progress Underway
37	The GNB website should be more accessible not just in terms of technology but also language and ease of navigation. The province will explore more accessible ways to communicate with citizens by 2023.	SNB Not started
38	The Department of Social Development should actively support people with a disability to open a Registered Disability Savings Plan if they are eligible for the federal Disability Tax Credit.	DSD FTB PCD Progress Underway
39	GNB to create an Ad-Hoc interdepartmental committee by the end of 2020 to oversee and enforce a provincial autism strategy for adults with autism as well as make ongoing recommendations for change. The committee will be made up of autism stakeholders and relevant government departments.	DSD DH Progress Underway
40	GNB to review current funding model to support the delivery of improved services and programs related to Autism by 2021.	DSD DH Progress Underway

41	<p>All departmental staff of the Government of New Brunswick should be reminded about the disability related information resources available from the Premier's Council on Disabilities through the various online service directories. This would assist the departments to be able to direct clients with disabilities to other resources in addition to provincial government programs.</p>	<p>DSD DH EECD PETL THC DTI ESIC PCD</p>	<p>Complete</p>
42	<p>GNB to consult on the creation of Service Animal Legislation in NB that provides access to public places to persons with disabilities who use service animals by reason of disability.</p>	<p>ECO PCD PETL NBHRC</p>	<p>Progress Underway</p>
43	<p>GNB to consult with the disability community to ensure appropriate supports are in place during safety and emergency situations.</p>	<p>PO JPS DSD</p>	<p>Progress Underway</p>