Submission from the South Okanagan Similkameen Brain Injury Society (March 4, 2014)

Support, Aids and Devices

Questions #1

* Definition of Person with a disability is too narrow.
* Why do we have to degrade ourselves when we do not choose disability. The “paperwork” process is so onerous, it delays any useful assistance and causes great anxiety and distress. We are told to sell our home, car and are left to eat dog food.
* Quality of life, and grovel for what you can get, just to get by.
* Grateful for the help.
* Take our voice seriously and make change happen.
* In crisis mode already increasing anxiety. If barriers could be reduced, it would increase wellness and functioning because the stress of the system would be reduced.
* It is the right thing to do and it is time.
* It is time for change, said Christy Clark
* Quality of life
* Asking “Why” is insulting
* For personal safety having devices available to people at a cost within their budget or as part of the overall health system would prevent further deterioration and disability, such as “Life Line” program.
* RE Paperwork – travel out of town weekly for medical care PT, OT, social work are helpful, but I can’t drive due to disability. Cost to get to medical treatment limits # of trips the I can afford.
* Access to Scoial workers and other services
* Transportation costs

Question #2

* Build society where this question is not needed. Why is this question applicable for anyone in society
* More awareness of the differences in people
* Patience( on the part of service providers in the public at grocery store) to take the time to understand what people need
* “Advocates” can help people achieve outcomes and get more respectful treatment (doctor and MSD) should not be necessary
* Having to divulge the disability to every person I meet just to get help
* Not disregard our requests for help
* Stigma needs to be removed.
* More education of young ones will help to bring awareness
* Continuous core funding for supporting agencies and organization so programs don’t end
* More compassion, less cliché
* Hire staffers in government who have a real interest in the reason for the work to help people

**Support, Aids and Devices**

**Question #3**

* Take people along with you when you go to places like MSD, doctor to help with short term memory loss
* Emotionally fragile people need to be treated better to reduce anxiety, frustration and increase acceptance
* Take away protective glass walls that separate us and make us feel like criminals
* Coordination between agencies to increase effective service to an individual
* A good support includes housing we can afford that fits our needs
* $ for ongoing programs – core funding
* Greater sharing of information
* “Secret” words that allow access to programs and funding. Without the knowledge of the exact words to use, funding is denied to assist with things like medical travel, temporary shelter when homeless, and medical devices
* Government should offer a course to help people figure out the methods to locate and secure funding and services. Current system is very complex
* Understand where anger comes from. People feel as thought their basic needs are being unmet. Food, shelter, clothing, medical treatment. Dignity is impacted and the need for self-preservation cuts in. People get angry and act out because of poor treatment.
* If I attended an office where “disability” was the focus instead of the current system at MSD for instance, staff could be better informed and result in treating people more humainly. Would reduce anger and frustration. Years ago an MSD worker had a specific case load, they got to know us and our needs. Communication was more effective.

**Question #4**

* Change in structure of MSD be easier to access
* More workers sensitive to people trasumatized by the government system to facilitate all services needed.
* Support funding to cover nutritionally balanced diet costs
* Government legislation to ensure continueity of helping non-profit services
* Public being more accepting of people with Brain Injury
* More affordable homes, safe housing
* Access to affordable entertainment
* More services for Brain Injury Support
* Social activities that are inclusive