

Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities

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Ministers' Message

On behalf of the Province of Nova Scotia we are pleased to present the Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities Annual Report 2005 - 06. Persons with disabilities are unique individuals with diverse and sometimes complex needs. Families, governments, stakeholder groups, and service providers in Nova Scotia strive to help persons with disabilities meet their full potential everyday. Government sponsored programs are intended to promote opportunities for inclusion for persons with disabilities. An important component of inclusion is the possibility for persons with disabilities to participate in the labour market to their full potential.

In December 2003, the provincial and territorial governments and the Government of Canada endorsed the Multilateral Framework for Labour Market Agreements for Persons with Disabilities. In April 2004 the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia signed the Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities. The bilateral agreement provides an opportunity for governments to work together to improve the labour market opportunities for people with disabilities in Nova Scotia.

The Departments of Community Services, Education and Health in Nova Scotia work together to offer programs that enhance the employability of persons with disabilities, such as career counseling, campus-based supports, addiction treatment and mental health services.

This government is committed to working together with the disability community and other government partners to continue to offer services that meet the current and future diverse needs of Nova Scotians with disabilities.

Judy Streach
Minister of Community Services

Karen Casey
Minister of Education

Chris d'Entremont
Minister of Health

Introduction

The province of Nova Scotia has partnered with the Federal government for the past 45 years in delivering cost-shared programs for persons with disabilities making the transition to the labour force. This partnership began with the original *Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Agreement* in 1961 which evolved into the *Employability Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Agreement* and then the current *Multilateral Framework for Labour Market Agreements for Persons with Disabilities* agreement.

Nova Scotia is proud of the achievements made through this partnered cost-shared agreement. It has acted as a vehicle to transition thousands of Nova Scotians with disabilities into the labour force where they enjoy the same rights, privileges and opportunities as any employed Canadian.

If there are questions as to whether these same Nova Scotians with disabilities would have succeeded to the same extent if there was no partnered cost-shared agreement, the answer is a resounding no. The program approaches and supports provided under these agreements made and continue to make a profound difference in the lives of Nova Scotians with disabilities.

Nova Scotia through its Annual Report seeks to advise Nova Scotians in general, Nova Scotians with disabilities in particular and our Federal partners that these programs are effective. Nova Scotia is hopeful that this partnership will extend beyond the end of the current agreement in light of the thousands of Nova Scotians with disabilities who have moved from the marginal sphere of spectator into the rights, benefits and privileges of participation in the labour force.

The *Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Development Agreement for Persons with Disabilities* provides joint funding for programs and supports for persons with disabilities in Nova Scotia . Nova Scotia made a commitment to release an annual public report about the programs and services funded under the agreement. This is the second edition of the annual report and follows last year's *Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities Report 2004-05*. It describes the variety of programs and services funded under this agreement, and includes some indicators of progress. This report outlines program objectives, descriptions, target populations and cost-shared expenditures for the *Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities for the 2005-06* fiscal period. Program and societal data concerning educational attainment, labour force activity and employment income are also provided.

Background

In November 2002, Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Social Services approved a *Multilateral Framework on Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities* to guide the negotiation of a successor agreement to the *Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD)* agreement.

The *Multilateral Framework for Labour Market Agreements for Persons with Disabilities* (LMAPD) was approved on December 5, 2003 and became effective on April 1, 2004. Subsequently Canada and Nova Scotia signed a bilateral agreement regarding the transfer of federal money to Nova Scotia to support programs and services identified as eligible for cost-shared funding under the multilateral and bilateral agreements.

The goal of the LMAPD agreement is to improve the employment situation for people with disabilities in Nova Scotia. The Agreement attempts to meet this goal by:

1. enhancing the employability of persons with disabilities
2. increasing the employment opportunities available to them
3. building on the existing knowledge base

The 2004-05 federal budget included an additional \$30 million for the LMAPD initiative. Consequently, Nova Scotia received an additional \$845,128 in funding (based on a per capita funding formula), bringing the total amount of federal recoveries to approximately \$8.3 million per year. The additional monies support programs and services currently offered within Nova Scotia. The Province's annual investment in the program exceeds the cost-matching requirements for these federal funds with spending targeted toward employability and disability supports for Nova Scotians.

The Province of Nova Scotia offers a wide range of programs and services to support people with disabilities. These programs and services are delivered by three provincial departments, the Department of Community Services, Department of Education and Department of Health. This report describes the programs and services offered during the 2005-06 fiscal period, and provides statistical data and expenditures for the same period.

On December 3, 2004, the International Day of the Disabled Person, the Ministers of Education and Community Services, also representing the Minister of Health, met with the Nova Scotia Disabled Persons Commission. The Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities Baseline Report 2004 - 05 was publically released at this time. This first annual report was released in December 2005. This report continues to build on the previous reports. It fulfills Nova Scotia's commitment to report annually on activities under the LMAPD agreement.

Programs and Services

Department of Community Services

Operating under the *Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities*, the primary objective of the LMAPD programs offered by the Department of Community Services is to assist people with disabilities so they can become employed and achieve greater self-sufficiency. A wide range of programs and services are offered to individuals sixteen years of age or older with a disability or disabilities that may create a barrier to employment.

The department offers employment-related assessment, career counseling and training. Counselors collect information and assess applicants' skills and needs to determine program eligibility and develop realistic, achievable employability plans. Counselors also make referrals to relevant education and training programs, including on-the-job training.

The department also provides disability-related supports. These include hearing aids, vision aids and technical aids such as computer software, ergonomics and TTYs. Wage subsidies, job coaches and certain tools of the trade that allow people to engage in employment or employment related activities may also be provided.

The department's vehicle conversion program assists with certain transportation needs for clients who are employed or studying. This includes, but is not limited to, installing hand controls, as well as partial or total vehicle conversion. To qualify for this program a client must not have access to public transportation and their vehicle must be in good working condition.

Disability supports are also provided to employed applicants whose employment may be in jeopardy, to enable them to retain their employment. Supports under this service may include hearing aids, vision aids and technology upgrades.

The department also provides entrepreneurial support to individuals interested in self-employment. This may include assistance with the development of a business plan or start-up costs.

Program indicators

During the period April 1, 2005 through March 31, 2006, the Department of Community Services provided services for 754 people under the *Labour Market Agreement for Persons With Disabilities* (LMAPWD). Following acceptance into the program, the majority of these individuals become engaged at various stages in the process of career exploration and employment skill development. Completion of this aspect of the program may take anywhere from one to four years or more.

Of the 754 people in the program, 224 (29.7%) completed a program for which there was a specific start and end date. The parameters for this determination were, for example, a Community College program that ended with graduation in June 2006, or a post-secondary degree that ended that ended in May 2006, or a wage subsidy that began and ended during that time period.

The number of participants who obtained or were able to maintain employment was 229 (30.4%) This number includes individuals who began employment following completion of their training, as well as individuals who maintained employment through intervention under the vocational crisis component of the LMAPWD program. Program participants receive ongoing assessment and career counseling services, as well as employment support services.

Department of Education

The Department of Education, through the *Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities* (LMAPWD), provides a diverse range of programs, goods and services to support students with disabilities in post-secondary education. The objective of these programs is to enhance the employability of students with disabilities by assisting them in achieving individual success in their post-secondary studies. This is accomplished by reducing or removing educational-related barriers a student with a disability or disabilities may experience in post-secondary training environments.

Within the Department of Education the Post-Secondary Disability Services Division is responsible for the development, management and delivery of financial grants, goods and services that support students with disabilities pursuing post-secondary education.

Not all students with disabilities attending post-secondary receive support. Being disabled does not necessarily mean needing help, but for those who do require support, the Post-Secondary Disability Services Division ensures that all reasonable disability-training related supports are available and provided in a timely and professional fashion. The Division's service delivery goal is one of continuous improvement ensuring that students with disabilities have an opportunity to succeed.

Goods and service supports offered by the department ensure that students have an equal opportunity for participation and academic achievement in post-secondary environments. These supports include American Sign Language Interpreters; recruitment, training and monitoring of tutors and note-takers; ergonomic equipment and assistive technology; arrangements for tests or exams, including additional time, quiet rooms, assistive technology or segmented testing; and support from an adult daily-living needs attendant. To accommodate the delivery of goods and services, the department funds campus based Disability Resource Facilitators to provide direct client services that reduce or remove identified barriers for students with disabilities

The Department has Memorandums of Understanding with ten post-secondary institutions in the province and provides each institution with LMAPWD funding to facilitate their efforts in assisting students with disabilities. The Post-Secondary Disability Services division of the department continues to work closely with these institutions and students to identify barriers and the most appropriate goods and services to help the student succeed. The program uses a collaborative approach involving the student, Disability Resource Facilitator, disability service provider and instructors. The Memorandums of Understanding also allow the Department to collect post-secondary institutional data in a form that provides a means to measure program success.

Partnerships

Post-Secondary Disability Services respects and capitalizes on the expertise of advocacy organizations providing services to Nova Scotians with disabilities. Examples of this are agreements on service delivery that have been established with the *Society of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Nova Scotians* (SDHHNS), the *Independent Resource Living Centre* (ILRC) and the *Canadian Paraplegic Association* (CPA) Nova Scotia Division.

Society of deaf and hard of hearing Nova Scotians

The Department of Education entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the SDHHNS in 2001. The MOU articulates an agreement whereby the Society assumes responsibility for the provision of reliable and competent American Sign Language Interpreter services to Nova Scotians who are Deaf or hard of hearing attending post-secondary training. In 2005/2006 the Department engaged the Society in discussions on renewing the partnership.

Independent living resource centre

In 2005 the Department of Education entered into a Memorandum Of Understanding with the Independent Resource Living Centre (ILRC). The agreement provided for funding to the ILRC to develop and implement a student self-managed attendant care program. Students are trained by the ILRC in the recruitment, hiring, training and payroll functions for employing an attendant. Students involved with ILRC manage their attendant care needs as a business and acquire attendant care management capacities that will support their independence beyond their post-secondary experience.

Canadian paraplegic association - Nova Scotia division

The Department of Education has a Memorandum Of Understanding with the Canadian Paraplegic Association (CPA)- Nova Scotia Division which allows the CPA to employ campus based Disability Resource Facilitators who provide front line support and services to students with disabilities in post-secondary training. This agreement has acted as a vehicle to aid in the development of a provincially standardized field services model.

Post-secondary partners

Post-Secondary Disability Services has entered into Memorandums of Understanding with Universities across the province as well as the Nova Scotia Community College. The Memorandums of Understanding detail the departmental and post-secondary institutional commitments to ensure that goods and services are readily available, provided professionally and in a manner that responds to the individual students needs.

Each Memorandum has a requirement that the post-secondary institution develop, publish and implement a Three Year Accessibility Plan (TYAP). The TYAP details the efforts they will make to remove physical, systemic or academic barriers a student may experience while attending the institution. As well, it details how the post-secondary institution will enhance existing approaches to meet exceptional needs.

In addition to significant disability service accomplishments made by the nine universities and the Nova Scotia Community College, Post-Secondary Disability Services funded six special projects submitted by four post-secondary institutions. Special project funding was provided to encourage post-secondary institutions to develop and implement new program and/or service delivery approaches that enhance the level of post-secondary access/support to students with disabilities. The six special projects approved in 05/06 are:

1. Saint Francis Xavier University will be developing and implementing a transition to work model for students with disabilities graduating from post-secondary training.
2. Saint Mary's University will be hosting a Conference - "The Whole Student" - to be held on January 24th and 25th, 2007. The conference will be on counseling issues, assistive technology and services to students with disabilities in post-secondary training.
3. Saint Mary's University is researching the feasibility of collaboratively establishing, with other post-secondary institutions within the province, a central source of alternate format materials available to all post-secondary students with disabilities in the province.
4. Mount Saint Vincent University will be relocating staff that facilitate goods and services to students with disabilities to the Learning Commons located at the Campus Library. As well, new staff including, a psychologist, two student assistants and student volunteers will assist the student with an evaluation of the student's learning skills and strategies specifically targeted to remediation.
5. Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) is developing and implementing a web site that would profile to students with disabilities the breadth of programs, goods and services available to support them in their post-secondary studies. The Web site is be launched during the fall term of 2006 and will undergo refinements as the school year progresses.
6. NSCC is developing professional development opportunities for Disability Resource Facilitators in post-secondary environments as well as for interested professionals in the public and post-secondary educational systems.

Program indicators

More and more students with disabilities are entering and receiving assistance as they proceed through their post-secondary studies. This is an indication that post-secondary education in Nova Scotia is becoming more of an accessible and welcoming environment for students with disabilities.

- in 2003/2004 1600 students self identified
- in 2004/2005 1949 students self identified, an increase of 21.8%
- in 2005/2006 2273 students self identified, an increase of 16.6%

During the August 1, 2005 - July 31, 2006 school year the Department of Education Post-Secondary Disability Services Division provided support through its LMAPWD programs to:

- 1455 students with disabilities attending University
- 723 students with disabilities attending the Nova Scotia Community College system
- 95 students with disabilities attending Private Career Colleges

Students with disabilities graduating during the 2005-2006 school year:

- 161 graduated from University
- 304 graduated from the Nova Scotia Community College
- 54 graduated from Private Career Colleges (estimated)
- Post-secondary education makes a profound difference in obtaining employment for persons with disabilities. In a recent survey of 2004/2005 Nova Scotia post-secondary graduates - students with disabilities, it was found that:92% of surveyed students with disabilities graduating from University in the 2004/2005 school year were employed one year after graduation;
- the starting salaries for University graduating surveyed students with disabilities averaged \$32,320;
- 89% of surveyed students with disabilities graduating from the Nova Scotia Community College in the 2004/2005 school year were employed one year after graduation;
- the starting salaries for Nova Scotia Community College surveyed graduated students with disabilities averaged \$28,038;
- 75% of employed students surveyed stated that they could not perceive any problems with career advancement with their employer;

Program achievements are more than just the number of students with disabilities participating in or graduating from post-secondary education. The following are examples of 2005/2006 achievements for 8 of 10 publicly funded post-secondary institutions:

St. Francis Xavier University accessibility achievements 2005-2006:

Program advances

- provided leave to the Program Coordinator to examine literature and models of transition to employment services
- presented a proposal and obtained Special Project funding from Post-Secondary Disability Services for a Transition to Employment Project
- hired job tutor to assist in transition planning
- partnering with Career Development Centre and faculty from Schwartz School of Business regarding the transition to employment
- obtained funding and employed summer student from Program to continue research on the transition to employment and produce electronically accessible information bank.
- initiated project with Nursing Faculty to explore issues around accommodation in clinical placements
- negotiated accommodated testing for Canadian Registered Nursing Licensing
- established web-based system that allows daily printouts of exams, test location, type of accommodation and proctor name
- contributed to the design of new admissions form which allows students to highlight their abilities and include references

Awareness activities

- presented annual training workshops for new faculty, admissions advisors, financial aid officer, residence staff, first year students, education students, human kinetics students and students' union
- training session for Counseling Centre Staff , Equity Committee and University Senate Committee for Students with Disabilities
- provided six information workshops to employers who were on campus to recruit students for employment
- presented Program and adaptive technology display for Alumni Literacy Event
- presentation on post-secondary options for students with disabilities to Masters of Education students
- hosted one-day campus visit for students with learning disabilities from regional schools, their teachers and their parents to profile the accessibility of university

- continued visits to local Junior School to highlight success of students with disabilities at university which included:
 - Student panels
 - Classroom placements for student mentoring
 - Presentations on accommodations, adaptive technology and financial assistance to parents and teachers
- keynote Panel for Annapolis Valley Regional School Board Conference on Learning Disabilities
- day-visit to Cape Breton Highlands Academy with students, staff and alumni host
- Filmworks Project with Regional Development Association produced and premiered a 13 minute film "Road Runner" on daily access for a wheelchair user
- presentation at Atlantic Association of College and University Student Services on Transition to Employment Project
- represented St. Francis Xavier University at Canadian Association of Disability Service Providers in Post-secondary Education summer meetings and workshops

Physical access improvements

- Stakeholders Access Team completed annual campus audit tour and submitted priority plan for annual University budget
- renovated entrance to largest lecture theatre on campus. Nicholson Hall B33 now accessible for wheelchairs
- new campus residence includes two wheelchair friendly suites and one suite for environmentally sensitive occupants
- library phones relocated away from competing technology for hearing impaired

Adaptive technology

- workshops in use of current adaptive technology for Program staff and students
- purchased three laptops with adaptive software and eight zip drives for use in exam accommodation and temporary loan
- Students' Union purchased four Alpha Smarts for note taking services
- purchased six digital recorders and Key to Access for loan to students

Dalhousie accessibility achievements 2005-2006:

- ensured that one residence room on each floor of its new Risley Residence is fully accessible for students with disabilities - in progress
- established web based information on exam accommodation for students with disabilities, web based scheduling - to be implemented
- instituted a library policy allowing students with disabilities to have a six week rather than two week borrowing period for all books
- developed and implemented an accessible web site for students with disabilities providing information on accessibility and students with disabilities
- designated a co-ordinator/academic advisor to work with students with disabilities on time management, study skills and organizational issues
- enhanced their database on information referencing students with disabilities for more effective program management and performance tracking purposes

Acadia University accessibility achievements 2005-2006:

- provided dedicated space for mid-term exams for students with disabilities requiring exam accommodation;
- had the Co-ordinator meet with several academic departments to promote awareness and understanding of exam and classroom accommodation (ongoing in 2006/2007 school year);
- completed field research and presented a paper on the use of extended time given as part of exam accommodation;
- developed and administered a questionnaire to all students with disabilities at Acadia(initial stage of longitudinal research on making transition to University), a paper is being developed detailing the outcomes of the questionnaire;
- purchased 14 dedicated laptop computers for mid-term exam accommodations;
- recruited additional proctors to ensure availability for mid-term exam accommodations.
- developed an online electronic version of the exam accommodation registration form (ongoing refinement and development);
- begun the development and continued refinement of data from electronic forms to improve turnaround times and more precise statistical data collection;
- restructured staff duties to have part of a position's responsibilities to include organizing proctoring of tests, quizzes and exams;
- added to the specific material available on-line for students with disabilities;

- renovated the entrance to the Student Counseling building to ensure full accessibility to students regardless of disability;
- made the arrangements for and conducted interviews with each new self identified student with a Learning Disability ensuring that they are aware of programs available.

Saint Mary’s University accessibility achievements 2005-2006:

- Completion of a modern Exam Accommodation Centre to better handle the 1000+ exams invigilated for students with disabilities.
- With support from a Post-Secondary Disability Services Special Project grant, the Atlantic Centre leads a committee to establish a province wide alternate format production service for print handicapped students attending post-secondary educational institutions.
- The Atlantic Centre and the Department of Education Post-Secondary Disability Services are developing a “Whole Student Conference” for post-secondary educational faculty and administration working with students with disabilities. This is supported with a Special Project grant.
- In an effort to improve accessibility on campus, Saint Mary’s University has spent over \$463,000 in 2005/06 for the following improvements:

a) Upgrades of the elevators in the McNally Main and South.....	\$300,000
b) Installation of a person lift in Writing Centre.	\$25,000
c) Braille signage in elevators in Loyola Residence	\$4,000
d) Braille Signage in elevators in Rice Residence.	\$6,000
e) Making washrooms in McNally Theatre Auditorium accessible.	\$120,000
f) Covering of costs over and above the financing provided by Department of Education for creating a fully accessible Exam Accommodation Centre.	\$8,000

Total SMU expenditures for improved accessibility: \$463,000

- Continued growth and development of the Liberated Learning Project, which uses an advanced speech recognition application to display text from lectures in real time and web-based on-line notes, thus eliminating the need for conventional note taking.
- This past year, the Alexander Graham Bell National Historic site began testing the Liberated Learning technology and a first pilot of the technology has taken place in a high school.
- The former Lieutenant-Governor, the Honourable Myra Freeman and the current Lieutenant-Governor, the Honourable Mayann Francis became official Patrons of the Atlantic Centre.

- With assistance provided by the Atlantic Centre, Tara-Lynn Cosman, a mobility-impaired student at Saint Mary's University, took part in an exchange program with Hiroshima University in Japan.
- By the end of the 2005-06 Academic year Centre provided support for approximately 280 students with disabilities.
- A recent donation to the Atlantic Centre brings the total to 13 bursaries and named scholarships available for students with disabilities, making over \$12,000 available each year for eligible students with disabilities.
- In 2007 and 2008, Saint Mary's University will be featuring new, state-of-the-art accessibility features in the Science Building, which is currently undergoing major renovations. And in 2007 Saint Mary's will be developing and implementing a new campus wide signage project to improve accessibility.

Mount Saint Vincent accessibility achievements 2005-2006:

- developed and implemented a program to train tutors on strategies specific to working with students with disabilities
- completed psychological assessment on 4 Learning Disabled students
- installed a desk top computer and accessibility software at the Crow's Nest (Student Centre)
- added to the University web-site material on students with disability self-advocacy, and funding opportunities
- increased consultations with students with disabilities and faculty in finding solutions/strategies to meet classroom and learning needs of students with disabilities
- e-mailed students with disabilities and posted at the Financial services offices information on students with disabilities and grants available for financial support and obtaining goods and services required because of disability
- reviewed their website evaluating its accessibility using the "Bobby" web accessibility software program
- arranged for alternative classroom seating for students with disabilities in a number of their classrooms
- submitted a proposal and obtained PSDS Special Project grant funding for the relocation of staff and other resources to support students with disabilities academic efforts at the Learning Commons located in the University Library

Nova Scotia College of Art and Design accessibility achievements

2005-2006:

- developed and implemented a Note taker training program providing training to note takers for students with disabilities
- installed internet connections in several classrooms for services provided to students who are Deaf
- made the washrooms in the new student lounge accessible for students with disabilities
- installed a fire alarm based on visual alerts for students who are Deaf

Cape Breton University accessibility achievements 2005-2006:

- developed and implemented an electronic note taking program
- incorporated five accessible residence rooms in a new residence
- installed a Home Automated Living (HAL) software system in a residence room for a high level need student with a disability in residence
- completed the first year of operation for the Jennifer Keeping Centre for students with disabilities which opened in May 2005
- recruited, trained and employed on a part-time basis two Cape Breton University students to work in the Jennifer Keeping Access-Ability Centre, the students responsibilities being to assist with tutoring and to be responsible for the conversion of printed materials into an electronic format for print handicapped students
- developed an accessible web site for the Jennifer Keeping Access-Ability Centre
- revised and re-published the Cape Breton University Accommodation Guide
- assisted in the establishment of the first 24 hours per day - 7 days per week attendant care program for a student with a disability living at a University Residence in the province of Nova Scotia
- installed four new disability accessible computer systems for students with disabilities
- completed physical plant upgrades to make the Cape Breton University campus more accessible, i.e. curb cuts
- purchased high speed scanner for alternate formatting of texts for Cape Breton University students (in addition providing service to Nova Scotia Community College, Marconi Campus students)
- developed Policy for students with disabilities

- developed and completed the first Annual Orientation for parents and students at the Jennifer Keeping Access-Ability Centre
- expanded the loaner Program to include software - Kurzweil, Dragon Naturally Speaking, Zoom Text, etc. and equipment - Key To Access, tape recorders, Franklin Spellers, etc.
- acquired 8 accessible desks for classrooms use
- established an assistive technology training program for students with disabilities
- added 2 additional workstations in Jennifer Keeping accessibility Centre

Nova Scotia Community College accessibility achievements 2005-2006:

- continued to provide services to over seven hundred and twenty (720) students with disabilities
- continued development, refinement and expansion of Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) Special Admissions program which supports students graduating with an Individualized program Plan (IPP) from the public education system who attend the Community College. Students registered with NSCC Special Admissions have opportunity to access curriculum modifications if required to successfully gain employment in their field of study. In the 2002-2003 academic year, approximately 60 percent of students enrolled under Special Admissions accessed curriculum modifications, in 2005-2006 less than 20% of students entering NSCC under Special admissions required modifications, meaning 80% of the students were able to receive FULL certification in their program of study
- NSCC Disability Services continues to serve on the Provincial Services and various community agencies on a provincial plan for successful making the transition of individuals with disabilities through the various stages in their lives. Additionally, we are working with Online Learning in the development of an interactive transition planning series to be used by students in secondary school with disabilities who are intending to enter an NSCC program
- created a Disability Services Advisory Committee comprised of leaders from many community and government agencies. The committee's mandate will be to provide advice, guidance, feedback, and recommendations to NSCC Disability Services on any issue, policy, or process with a view to promoting inclusionary practice and improving opportunities for students with disabilities to access post-secondary learning
- all students registered with Disability Services were invited to one-on-one summer work sessions where they received assistance/training in: how to apply for student loans and grants, use of assistive technology, tour the campus they would be attending, complete Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) as well as Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System(WHIMS) courses

- updated all brochures and forms
- piloted a program model for alternate format testing
- redesigned their service delivery model with affects of more streamlined processes, increased communication with faculty and Academic Chairs and creation of packages for students and faculty
- reviewed and had approved the NSCC Disability Services Policy reflecting current case law and language
- developed and implemented a Self Advocacy Toolkit for students with disabilities;
- created two Disability Services teams as vehicles for collecting and sharing professional development resources. One team is learning new assistive technology software and programs so that all Disability Resource Facilitators can become comfortable with the latest developments and be effective in recommending software to students. This team has received training on the Key to Access, which is a portable memory stick that provides users with access to their assistive technology programs at any computer, whether at home or on campus. The other team is planning a professional development opportunity for metro faculty, staff, and students about Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). They will then assist in the construction of an ADD Toolkit that will be shared across the province
- made application and obtained Special Project funding from PSDS for the development and implementation of a website detailing all possible information in a fully accessible format on meeting the needs of students with disabilities attending Nova Scotia Community College programs
- made application and obtained Special Project funding from PSDS for the development and implementation of a professional development program for Disability Resource Facilitators and other interested parties

2005/2006 student satisfaction survey results:

During the 2005/2006 winter semester of the Nova Scotia Community College and Universities Post-Secondary Disability Services distributed 340 surveys to students with disabilities. The surveys focused on student satisfaction of programs goods and services provided to meet their disability related needs. One hundred and thirty eight (138) students responded to the survey giving a 41% response rate.

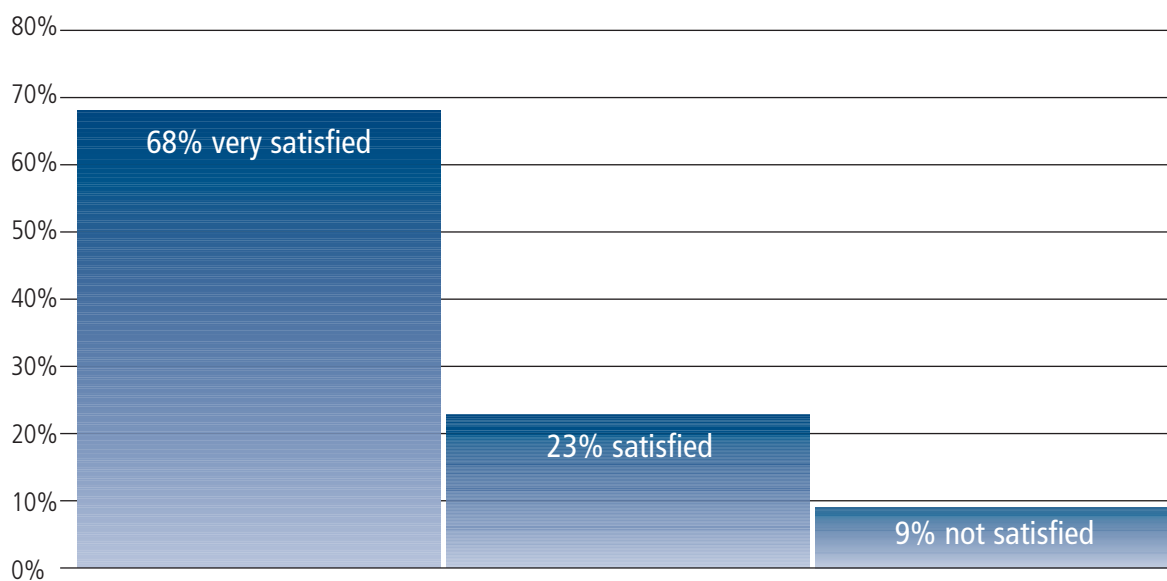
Of the 138 responding students 88% of the total advised that they had received services. In response to a question on satisfaction with their relationship with the disability service provider on campus, 97% responded that they were either very satisfied or satisfied with the working relationship. 91% indicated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the tutoring services provided (Figure 1). This result mirrored the result on note taking where 91% indicated they were either satisfied or very satisfied.

For exam accommodations provided 94% of the students with disabilities indicated they were either satisfied or very satisfied with services provided.

Questions on availability of assistive technology and training in the use of assistive technology produced a 94% satisfied or very satisfied response.

Of the individuals who received American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter services 87% indicated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with ASL interpreter services provided.

figure 1: satisfaction with tutoring received



2004 / 2005 graduate employment follow-up survey results:

During the months of July and August 2006 Post-Secondary Disability Services conducted a post-secondary graduate follow-up telephone survey of students with disabilities who graduated at the end of the 2004/2005 school year. A total of 182 LMAPWD graduates from the Nova Scotia Community College, Private Career Colleges and Universities were identified to be surveyed. Eighty six (86) students were contacted giving a response rate of 47%.

Of the 86 contacted 10 advised that they had returned for additional post-secondary training leaving 76 students which were contacted and responded to the employment survey.

table 1: employment rates of post-secondary graduates 2004/2005 school year

Institute	Employed
University	92 %
Nova Scotia Community College	89 %
Private Career College	57%
Totals	87% employed

Nine out of ten 2004/2005 school year graduates with disabilities at either University or Community College secured a job one year post graduation.

The difference in employment rates of male versus females was within 2% indicating that male/female and disability appeared not to be a factor for securing employment after graduating from post-secondary education. This is consistent with Statistics Canada's "Women in Canada, A Gender Based Statistical Report" which stated "women with disabilities with either a university degree or community college diploma were about as likely as their male counterparts to be employed". The report suggests that post-secondary education acts as an equalizer between men and women with disabilities when making the transition to the labour force.

Graduation from post-secondary education is a very positive investment for preparation for transition to the labour for either men or women with disabilities. Post-secondary graduates with disabilities are employed at a higher rate than their non post-secondary trained peers, earn higher salaries, and have the self perceived opportunity to advance within employment without their disability presenting as an advancement barrier.

Graduating students with disabilities did quite well in reference to starting salaries. The average starting salaries for 2004/2005 graduating University students with disabilities one year post-graduation was \$32,320, this compared well with typical Atlantic Canada University graduates of 2003/2004 two years post graduation of \$36,800. (Source: Millennium Scholarship, "The Price of Knowledge 2004: Nova Scotia). Community College graduates fared considerably better with starting salaries of \$28,038 one year post graduation which was higher than the Millennium Scholarship report indicating \$24,800 for Atlantic Canada Community College graduates two years post graduation. It should be noted that the comparisons on male starting salaries in

reference to persons with disabilities were higher than their female counterparts. This was consistent with national and provincial statistics both for both persons with and without disabilities as reported in Women in Canada, A Gender Based Statistical Report, 'Women generally have lower incomes than men.'

table 2: male and female starting salaries class of 2004/2005 graduating post-secondary students with disabilities

Institute	Male Yearly	Female Yearly	% difference	Average
University	\$35,000	\$29,640	-15 % for women	\$32,320
Nova Scotia Community College	\$31,200	\$24,876	-20 % for women	\$28,038
Private Career College	\$27,040	\$18,720	-31 % for women	\$22,880

The numbers look quite positive and are supported by the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Report: Labour Market Agreement for Persons With Disabilities which stated "Statistics Canada Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics Data (SLID), in 2001-2003, employment grew by 11.1% for persons with disabilities, as compared to a decrease in employment by 1.6% for persons without disabilities. In addition, the employment rate grew by 3.4% as compared to 0.4% for those without disabilities. Over the same period, the average employment income grew by \$1,500 for persons with disabilities where it decreased by \$600 for persons without disabilities". The SLID data references persons with disabilities with and without post-secondary training.

Case studies

Post-secondary supports: John is a young man with cerebral palsy, non-verbal and quadriplegic. He is attending university, currently enrolled in a Bachelor of Business Administration program. John has been provided with a Vanguard augmentative speech communication device as well as an attendant. The supports he has received have enabled him to perform to his potential, enabling him to attend 4 courses per year and achieve an honours average. Without appropriate supports John would most likely have spent a more limited life. Ambition as well as LMAPWD supports leveled the playing field for John, and he may well achieve his goals of becoming a lawyer.

Post-secondary supports: Ruth is severely learning disabled and was advised by professionals throughout school that university wasn't really an option for her. Ruth began attending university in 2002. Ruth used LMAPWD funded tutoring, note taking and proctoring while pursuing her Nursing Degree. She graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Nursing in 2006 and obtained a job prior to graduation at a hospital as a nurse.

Post-secondary supports: Bill had malignant medulla blastoma (cancer of the brain), which left him with residual paralysis on one side of his body, and an eating disorder. He earned an Honors Science Degree in Geology with LMAPWD support and was hired prior to graduation as a geologist. Bill is now inside the Arctic Circle exploring for gold with a major mining company.

The Department of Health

The Department of Health provides programs and services to people with disabilities within the mandate of the Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities through Addiction Services and Mental Health.

Addiction services

Addiction Services offers a wide range of programs and services in education, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation for individuals, families and communities affected by substance use-related problems. The primary objective is to address the individual employability needs of individuals, and their families, to lessen the impact of substance use-related problems on employability and to further address vocational crisis. The target population comprises individuals sixteen years of age or older who are harmfully involved with alcohol and other drugs.

A range of treatment and rehabilitation options are delivered by service providers under District Health Authorities throughout the province. Options are based on a client's needs, short and long term goals and ongoing assessment. Programs and services are available on a residential, day or outpatient basis for individuals, groups or families.

Structured treatment occurs in a group setting and helps clients develop a realistic plan for overcoming employment or vocational barriers. Outpatient Services are delivered on a group or individual basis. Other services, such as Withdrawal Management, and Addiction Education Program, provide support to clients to reinforce long-term recovery and address employability. They are provided on an inpatient and day-patient basis.

Workplace outreach provides information, education and training to employers. It addresses the issues associated with substance-use problems and the disabling impact of addiction on employees, employability and the workplace. The goal is to reduce barriers for people preparing for, attaining and retaining employment.

Addiction Services Employability programs can be accessed through a range of prevention and treatment services located in more than 30 communities across the province. Addiction Services Employability Programs are focused on four of five priority areas including: (1) education and training; (2) employment participation; (3) connecting employers and persons with disabilities; and (4) building knowledge.

Program indicators

Addiction Services facilitate the improvement of work-related skills (e.g., personal management skills) through participation in addiction education programs, structured treatment program, and community-based programs. The focus of Addiction Services is on improving client independence and facilitates clients' connection to employers through ongoing assessment and treatment planning.

Addiction Services is contributing to the continuous improvement of labour market policies by undertaking an evaluation of the impact of Addiction Services on the employability of clients. The report will be ready by the end of November 2006.

Primary indicator 2005-06*	LMAPD accountability framework definition	Operational definition
1. The total number of people actively participating in programs.11,824	Participating: Engaged in a program or service with the objective of preparing for, attaining or maintaining employment as outlined in the person's action plan.	Clients aged 16- 65. Medical elements of Detox are not eligible for recoveries.
2. The total number of people successfully completing programs.5,449	Completing: finishing all the steps in the participant's employment action plan. Program: interventions outlined in the participant's employment action plan.	The number of people who complete their employment action plan and/or obtain employment during the fiscal year.
3. The total number of people employed as a result of program participation 805	Employment: any job that is paid at minimum wage or above, or equivalent when earnings are not based on an hourly wage.	The number of people who obtain a job during the fiscal year. The participant does not have to be employed at the end of the fiscal year to be counted.
4. The total number of people sustained in employment in the case of vocational crisis 1601	Sustained employment: an employment situation where a person requires intervention(s) in order to retain a job during a vocational crisis. Vocational crisis: a disability-related change or event that puts at risk a participant's preparing for, attaining, sustaining or maintaining employment.	The number of people who receive a vocational crisis intervention(s) during the fiscal year. Vocational crisis interventions are provided only to persons who are employed when they register for an Addictions Program(s).

* Note: Addiction Services is in the process of implementing a new data base, Assist (Addiction Services Statistical Information system Technology). Where operational, data was taken from Assist. In areas where Assist was not operational data was taken from StatIS (Addiction Services Client Management Information System),as well as, a manual review of files.

Mental health services

Mental Health Employability programs can be accessed through the Clubhouse and Employment Skill Development and Support Programs located in various areas of the province. Typical participants in mental health employability programs include working age adults with mental disabilities who have the potential for employability, and consumers of mental health programs who have the potential for employability.

The Clubhouse programs operate by a set of international standards and believe the following: that work is a deeply regenerative & reintegrative force in our lives; that employment is a fundamental right of citizenship; and that employment opportunities need to be available to all members regardless of diagnosis or disability.

Clubhouses are located in Truro, New Glasgow, Sydney, Dartmouth and Halifax, Nova Scotia. Clubhouse programs address all five priority areas and provide varying degrees of the following:

- on site skill development: participation in a “work ordered day”
- vocational development: supported employment, transitional employment and independent employment
- job readiness: resume writing, job search, interviewing, crisis vocational counseling and communication skills with employers and peers

Employment Skill Development and Support programs provide assistance in the development of vocational skills to obtain employment; opportunities to develop work skills for employment; assistance with learning new skills to start own business; and support to help participants gain confidence in their own ability to seek job opportunities and obtain satisfactory work.

The Employment Skill Development and Support Programs are located in Berwick, Sydney, and Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. These programs address all five priority areas and provide varying degrees of the following:

- job readiness skill development;
- work skill development;
- vocational training; and
- entrepreneurial skill development.

Program indicators

Employment is a key determinant of health and steps to develop marketable employability skills in persons with mental health disabilities is a priority of community supports programs. The mental health employability programs are taking action to change the way employers view persons with mental illness. For example, many clubhouse programs offer “transitional” and “supported” employment opportunities for individual members, and have implemented processes for attaining job placements with employers.

The long term goal for many people in recovery from mental illness is the attainment of employment. However, also recognized as important steps along the way to employment are short term successes such as regular attendance and participation on an individual basis in the clubhouse programs.

For the fiscal year 2005-06, each employability program reported on the total number of individuals who regularly attended, and actively participated in, the clubhouse and employment skill development and support programs. Participation was affected by a number of factors including the individual’s health status, and therefore varied according to the individual. The total number of individuals who regularly attended and participated in the employability programs were: 179 for Employment Skill Development and Support, and 755 for Clubhouse Programs.

The structure of the clubhouse programs allowed for activities with both set time periods and ongoing participation in the work ordered day program. Movement from one activity to another depended on an individual’s choice and his/her readiness for more structure. Each employability program reported on the total number of individuals who successfully completed the program when the clubhouse or employment skill development and support program has a start and an end date. Most of the employment skill development and support programs had specified start and end dates and many clubhouse programs did not. The numbers were the following: 120 for Employment Skill Development and Support, and 71 for Clubhouse Programs.

Each employability program reported on the total number of individuals who, following completion of an employability program, gained employment as a result of this participation. The numbers were: 59 for Employment Skill Development and Support, and 202 for Clubhouse Programs.

For some individuals, ongoing assistance of the mental health program to remain employed was required. Each employability program reported on the total number of individuals who once obtaining employment were able to be maintained in that employment with some support from the employability program. The numbers were: 23 for Employment Skill Development and Support, and 218 for Clubhouse Programs.

Cost-shared expenditures 2005 – 2006

	Total Expenditure	Federal Contribution	Provincial Contribution
Community Services, Employment Assistance			
Employment related assessment & career counseling	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000
Referral to education and training programs	\$ 200,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Provision of disability related supports	\$ 200,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Vehicle conversion	\$ 120,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000
Vocational crisis	\$ 188,000	\$ 94,000	\$ 94,000
Entrepreneurship	\$ 40,230	\$ 20,115	\$ 20,115
Sub-total:	\$ 2,748,230	\$ 1,374,115	\$ 1,374,115
Education, Post-Secondary Disability Services			
Program administration	\$ 530,000	\$ 265,000	\$ 265,000
Grants to students	\$ 1,427,000	\$ 772,500	\$ 654,500
Field service delivery	\$ 1,560,000	\$ 780,000	\$ 780,000
Attendant care	\$ 84,000	\$ 42,000	\$ 42,000
Interpreter services	\$ 310,000	\$ 155,000	\$ 155,000
University Disability Program Support	\$ 837,000	\$ 418,500	\$ 418,500
NSCC Disability Program Support	\$ 600,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000
University and NSCC Contributions	\$ 1,653,000		\$ 1,653,000
Sub-total:	\$ 7,001,000	\$ 2,733,000	\$ 4,268,000
Health			
Workplace Outreach	\$ 361,776	\$ 122,000	\$ 239,776
Addiction Services	\$ 10,159,160	\$ 2,791,115	\$ 7,374,044
Administrative Costs	\$ 2,951,410	\$ 285,000	\$ 2,666,410
Clubhouse	\$ 1,966,719	\$ 674,000	\$ 1,292,719
Employment Skill Developmental Support	\$ 453,055	\$ 219,000	\$ 234,055
Continuing Care Brain Injury	\$ 4,275		\$ 4,275
Arm & Leg Prostheses	\$ 192,833	\$ 92,000	\$ 94,833
Sub-total:	\$ 16,089,228	\$ 4,183,115	\$ 11,906,113
TOTAL	\$ 25,838,458	\$ 8,290,230	\$ 17,548,228

Societal indicators

The following charts represent societal indicators of labour market participation for Nova Scotians. Indicators include: educational attainment, labour force activity and employment income. The 2004 baseline report presented societal indicators using data from the Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS), Canada's principal source of detailed statistical information about disability issues. PALS was first conducted in 2001 and it will be conducted again following the 2006 census. This year's report uses another important Statistics Canada survey, the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID), to present societal indicators. SLID is conducted annually and is a rich source of information about income, employment, education and other topics for the adult Canadian population. SLID tracks the same individuals over a period of years. The SLID data provides information about the education levels, employment earnings and trends within these measures for people with and without disabilities.

Participation in the labour force

Charts 1 and 2 show the level of participation and non-participation in the labour force by individuals aged 16 to 64. Individuals are considered employed only if they were employed for the entire year. Similarly individuals those who are unemployed or not active in the labour force experienced that employment status for the whole year. Individuals who experienced changes in their employment status during a calendar year are portrayed in Chart 3.¹

People with disabilities are more likely than persons who are not disabled to not participate in the labour force - this can be seen in the lower percentages of employed persons with disabilities (Chart 1) and the higher percentage of persons with disabilities who do not participate or are unemployed (Chart 2). Similarly fewer persons with disabilities are likely to experience a change in their employment status during any given year. There have been improvements in the percentage of persons with disabilities participating in the labour force over the five year period 1999 to 2004.

Chart 1: % Employed 1999 – 2004

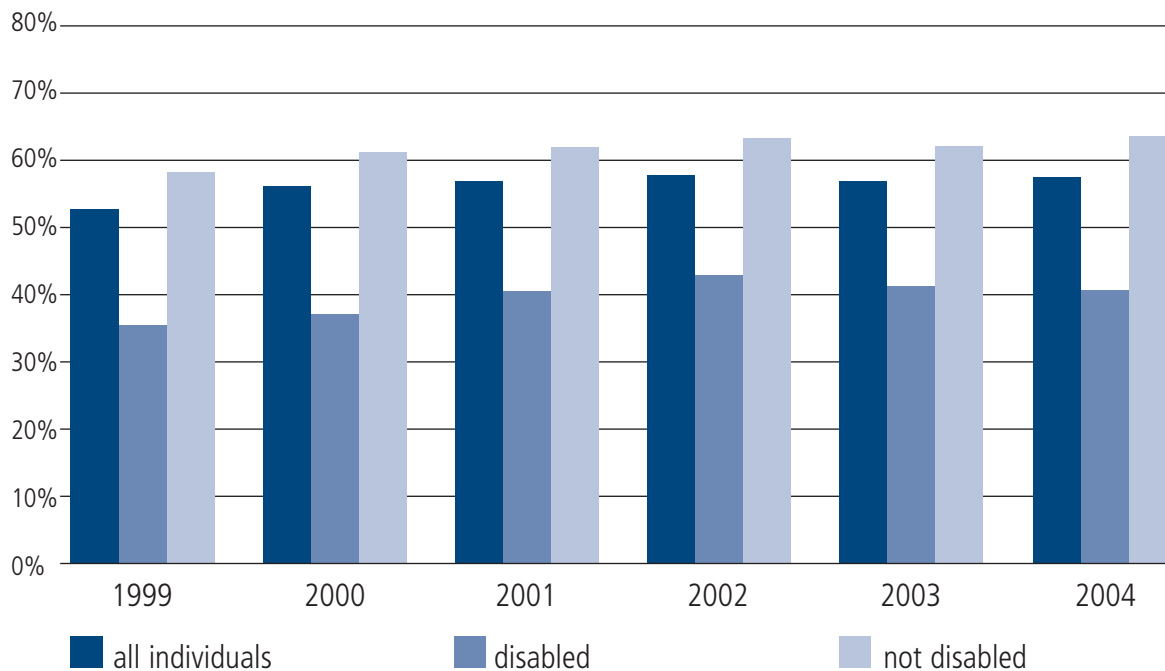


Chart 2: % Unemployed or not in labour force 1999 – 2004

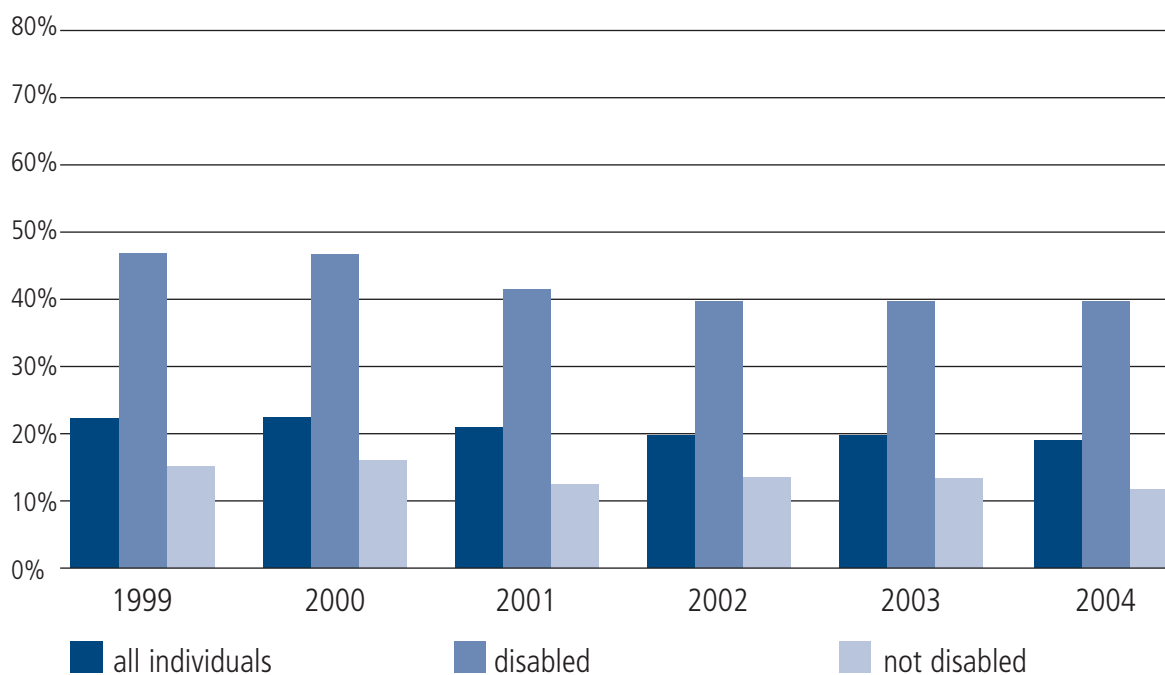
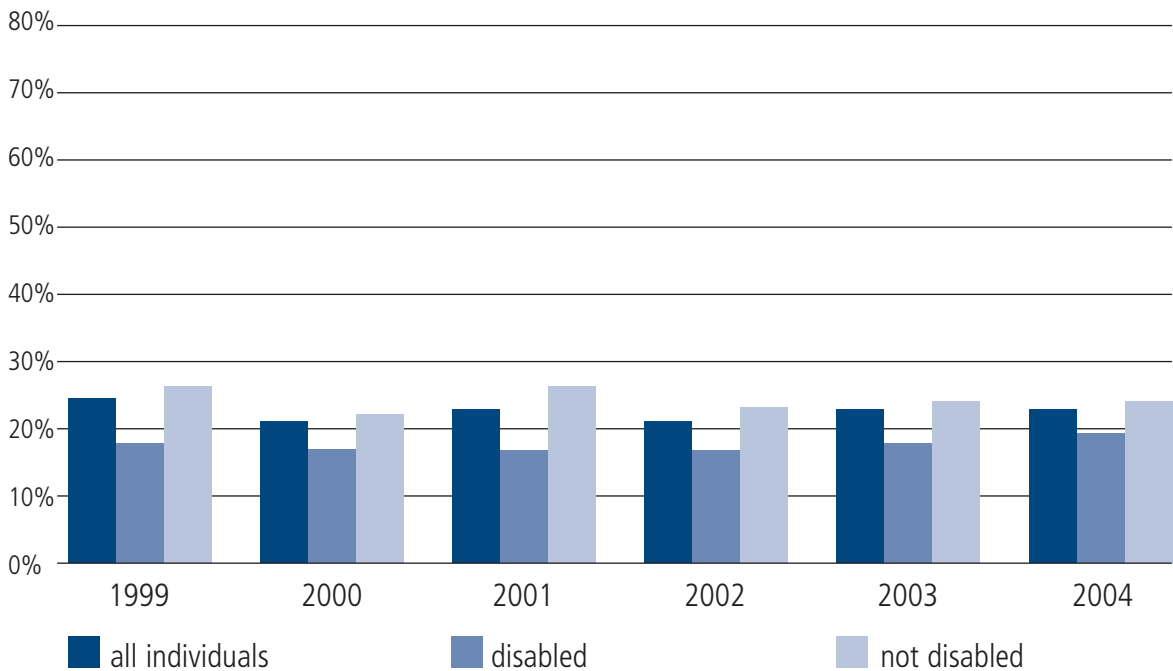


Chart 3: % Experiencing change in employment status



Earnings

Chart 4 shows the percentage of all individuals, disabled persons and not disabled persons who had earnings in each year.² People with disabilities are less likely to have earned income than people who do not have a disability.

Average earnings by individuals show slight variation between years in the period 1999 to 2004 (Chart 5). Earnings of persons with disabilities show increases between the beginning and end of the period and a slight upward trend. Due to a fluctuations of average earnings among persons without disabilities, individual earnings of persons with disabilities have improved significantly relative to persons without disabilities (Chart 6). As a percent of earnings of persons with out disabilities, the earnings of persons with disabilities has ranged from 83% in 1999 to a high of 93% in 2002. The data in Charts 5 and 6 include only individuals with earned income.³

Charts 7 and 8 show the income distribution for persons with disabilities and persons with out disabilities who have earned income in the years 1999 through 2004. There is not a great deal of variation between years for either of these two groups. People with disabilities are more likely to have lower incomes than people without disabilities. There are more people with disabilities earning higher incomes, greater than \$30,000, at the end of the period than at the beginning.

Chart 4: % With earnings 1999 – 2004

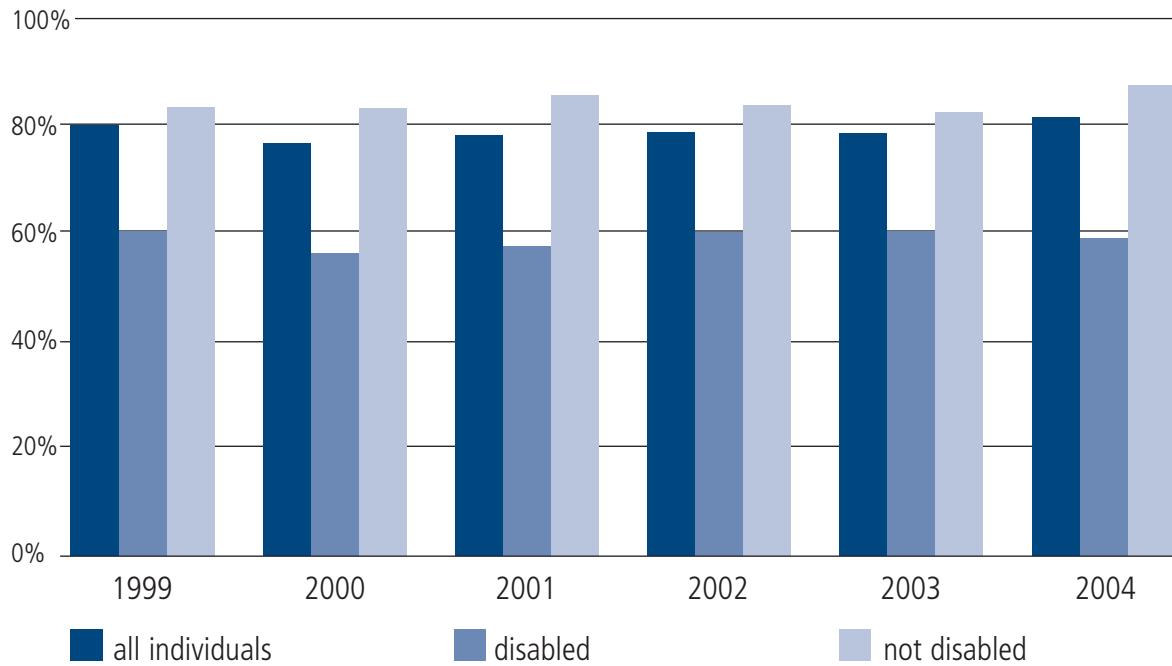


Chart 5: Average individual earnings 1999 – 2004

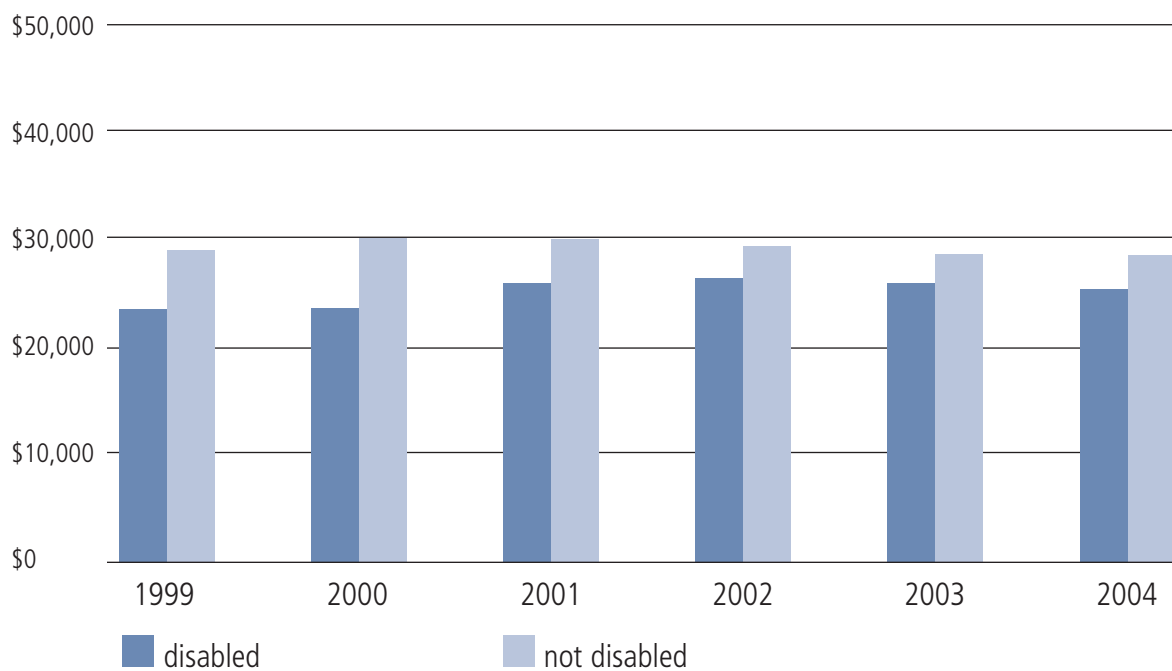


Chart 6: Earnings of persons with disabilities as a % of earnings of persons without disabilities

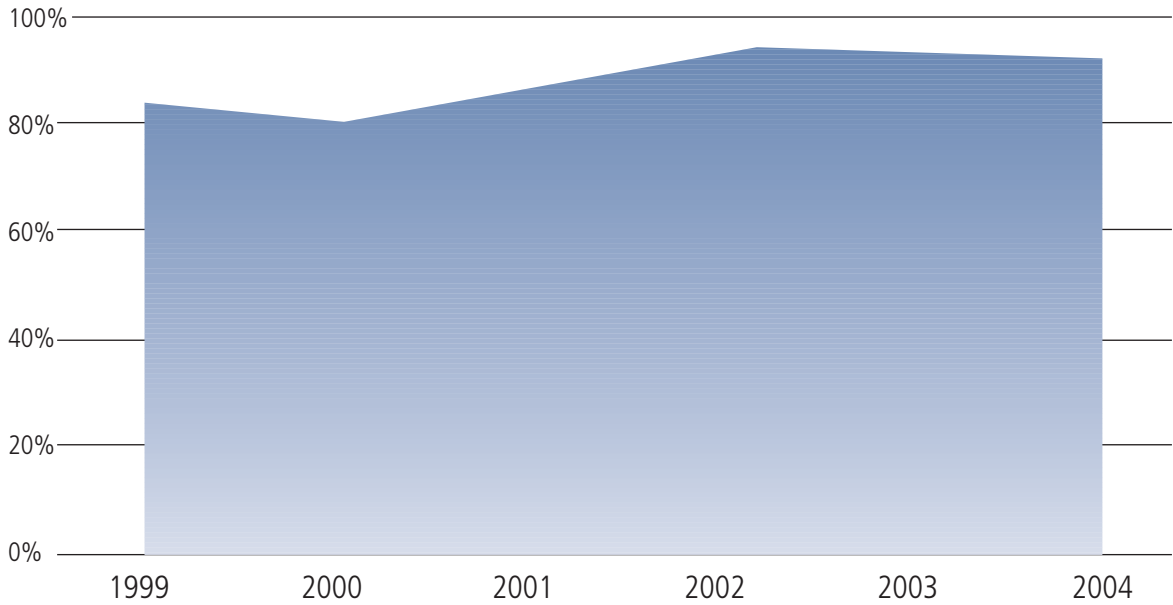


Chart 7: Income distribution among persons with disabilities

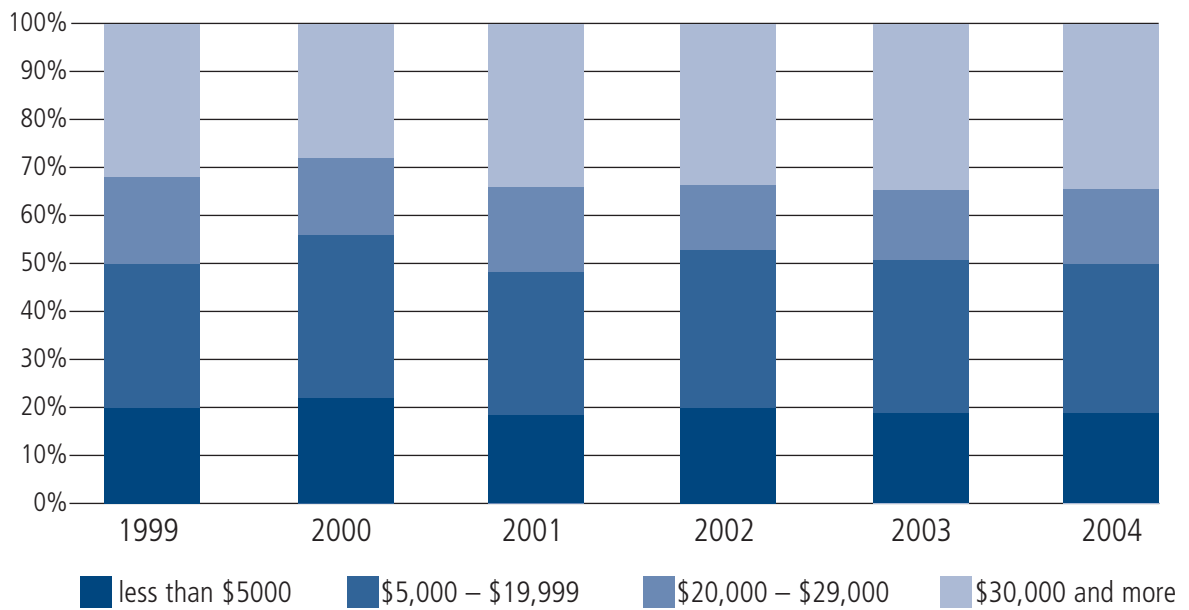
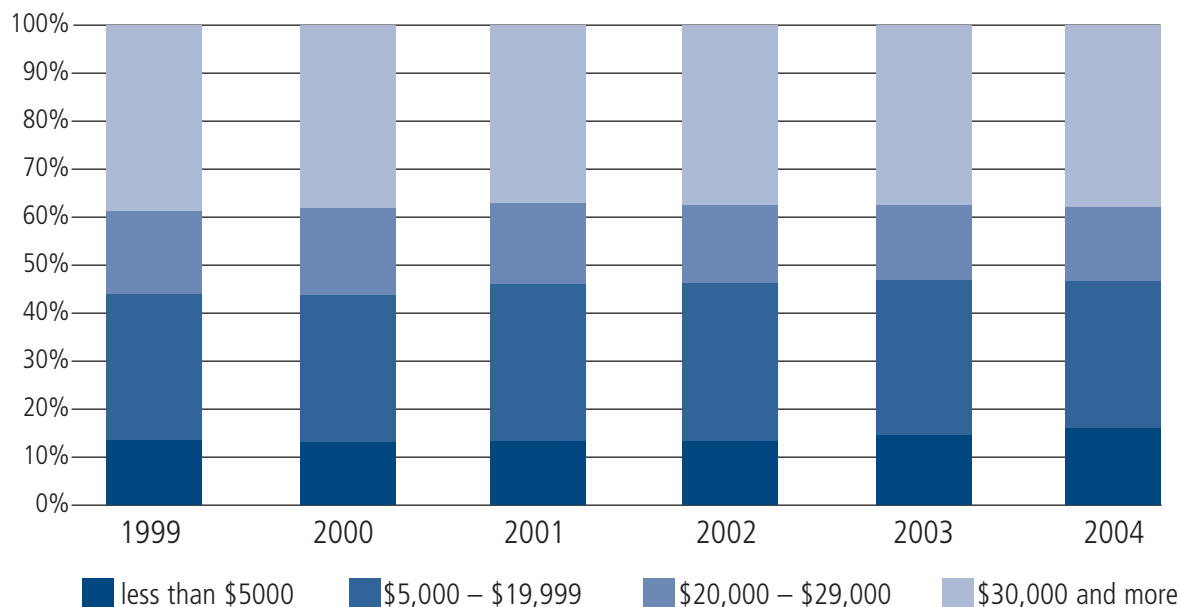


Chart 8: Income distribution among persons without disabilities



Educational Attainment

Charts 9 and 10 display the level of educational achievement of persons with disabilities and persons with out disabilities. People who have disabilities are less likely to have finished high school or to have achieved post-secondary education than people who do not have disabilities. The number of people whose highest level of education was less than high school decreased between 1999 and 2004 for both groups. Among people with disabilities the percentage dropped from 35% in 1999 to 26% in 2004. The drop in the percent of people with out disabilities not finishing high school was not as great, going from 22% in 1999 to 17% in 2004. There was an increase in the number of people with post-secondary education in both groups. Among people with disabilities the percentage with post-secondary education increased from 45% in 1999 to 52% in 2004. The increase was only marginally greater for those without disabilities, increasing from 50% in 1999 to 58% in 2004. The gaps between the educational achievement of persons with and without disabilities appears to be narrowing.⁴

Chart 9: Educational achievement – persons with disabilities

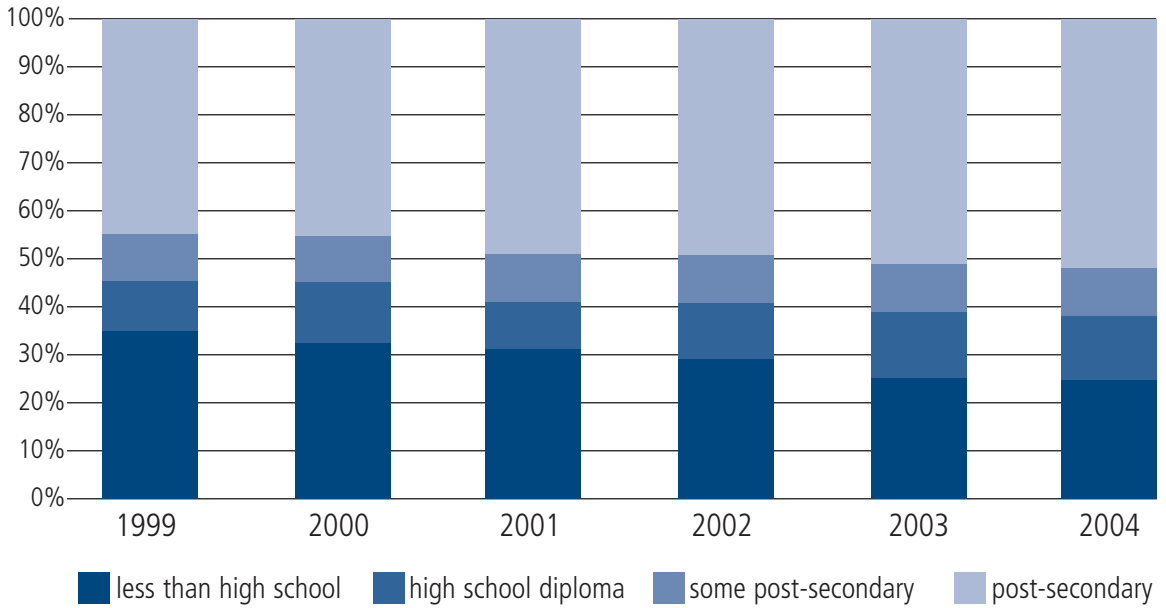
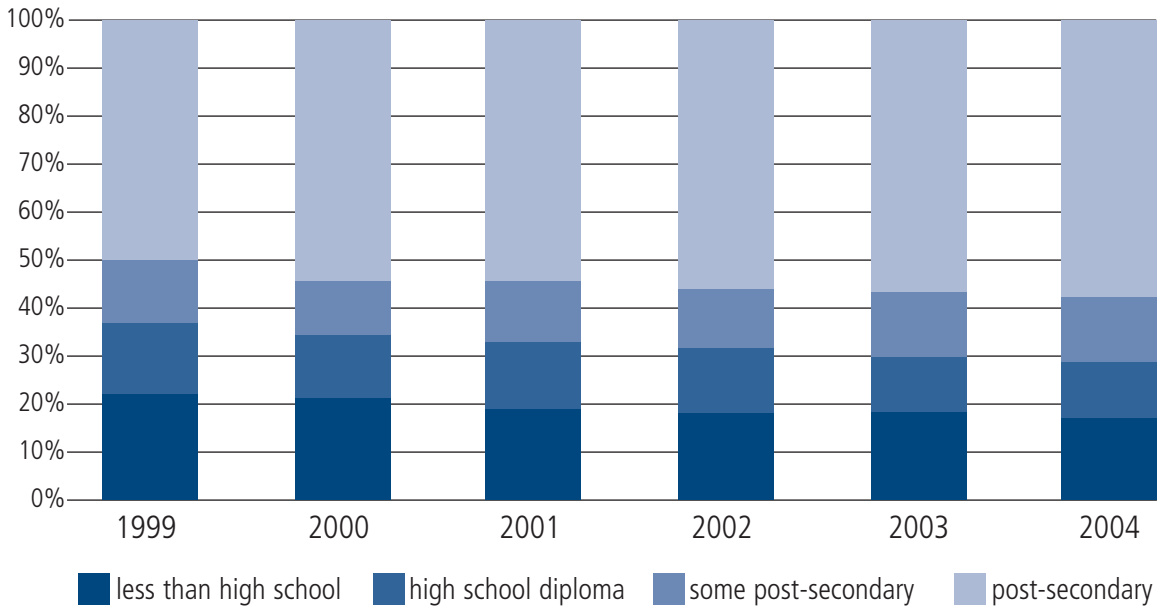


Chart 10: Educational achievement – persons without disabilities



Looking Ahead

The development of the *Multilateral Framework for Labour Market Agreements for Persons with Disabilities* provided an opportunity to maintain and strengthen Nova Scotia's labour market programs and services for persons with disabilities. The current agreement was scheduled to end March 31, 2006. It has been extended through mutual agreement of Nova Scotia and Canada to March 31, 2007.

Over the course of the Canada-Nova Scotia bilateral agreement, Nova Scotia has engaged the disability community and reviewed current programs to ensure optimal effectiveness and efficiency. Nova Scotia continues to engage the disability community.

Nova Scotia is committed to continual improvement of our programs. Program evaluation is capable of assessing the effectiveness of programs and services. Nova Scotia and Human Resource and Social Development Canada have been negotiating the potential for evaluating the programs and services funded under the LMAPD agreement. A Joint Nova Scotia - Canada Evaluation Committee (JEC) has been established. A literature review and data review report have been prepared as background material. An evaluation framework has been developed including a logic model, detailed plan and methodology report (including identification of key evaluation methodologies, such as key informant interviews, survey of program participants and sampling plan, and data linkages for analysis, etc.). The framework identifies potential performance indicators, outputs and outcomes to address key evaluation issues and questions to meet the evaluation objectives. A draft data sharing agreement has also been prepared and will be finalized before the evaluation can begin. It is anticipated the summative evaluation will commence in 2006 – 2007.

Nova Scotia is committed to public reporting and will release annual reports on progress to Nova Scotians. Looking ahead to the future affords us the opportunity to reflect on and determine the best course of action. The government of Nova Scotia welcomes the opportunity to work with the Government of Canada to maintain and develop effective ways to provide meaningful supports for persons with disabilities in order that they may partake fully in all aspects of society.

Endnotes

1. The data source for Charts 1, 2 and 3 is Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Table R23403CB-01.
2. The data source for Chart 4 is Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Table R25468VT_Table3A.
3. The data source for Charts 5, 6, 7 and 8 are drawn from Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Table R25468VT-3B.
4. The source for the data in Charts 9 and 10 is Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Table R25468VT-02B.



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