

A New Vision for Saskatchewan: Changing Lives and Systems through Individualized Funding for People with Intellectual Disabilities

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Key Objectives

The purpose of this report is to highlight and analyze the existing models of individualized funding (IF) and individually funded services (IFS) — supports that help people with disabilities overcome barriers to enable them to fulfill their daily needs. Individualized funding has four principles:

- Individuals can use informal and formal support networks to develop their plans
- Funding allows individuals to purchase supports and services
- Individuals must have control over the funds
- Funding must be portable within jurisdictions

Key Findings

- The principles of IF models reflect the social model of disability — i.e., individuals have the right to make decisions regarding their lives, they have the right to participate fully in society, and hence the right to full citizenship
- IF allows individuals to take an active role in determining how they can reach their short- and long-term goals
- Individuals can be aided by a support network and/or an independent planner to secure the supports and services, who should be active participants when the individuals negotiate the terms of their plan with government officials
- IF initiatives undergo periodic changes; whoever handles the programming must remain flexible, be willing to invest in program evaluations, and ensure service providers have adequate funding to adapt their existing services to meet the needs of their clients

Best practices associated with IF models include:

- the active role played by individuals with an intellectual disability in planning and selecting the supports and services that best suit their situation
- supported decision-making opportunities embedded in legislation, reflecting that decisions are typically made through consultation with others
- funding tied to the individual rather than the service provider the individual chooses to use
- funding for services and supports covering all the major components that contribute to quality of life — health, employment, social relationships, education, transportation, and housing
- funding portable within a jurisdiction in order to maximize access to services and supports
- the individual remaining eligible for generic services and income supports

Community Partner: Saskatchewan Association for Community Living

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