

Our response to the Human Resource Crisis in the Disability Services Field

The Community Living Association for the Little Divide supports the efforts of the Alberta Council of Disabilities Services (ACDS) in their campaign to address the significant human resource crisis we are facing in our field. We are having a very difficult time recruiting and retaining employees. We believe the primary reason for the human resource shortage we are facing is the poor remuneration our employees receive. We are performing a vital service to some of the most vulnerable people in our community.....**people with disabilities**. The human resource crisis in the field of disability services has and is impacting the people we support, our agency, and community in the following ways:

- ♦ We are unable to provide consistent supports to a growing number of clients.
- ♦ New people who require service are waiting because of staffing shortages.
- ♦ People are getting less service or are being served in larger groups because of staffing issues.
- ♦ The people we serve are faced with ever changing support staff that are unfamiliar with them in relation to their personal story, their wants, desires and needs.
- ♦ Our employees are forced to work many hours over a typical work week or work a second job to have a living wage.
- ♦ Our employees are tired, overworked, and are having their lives affected at a personal level from the current job expectations.
- ♦ The skilled workforce we have developed is leaving to work for human service employers that can offer a higher wage and better benefits, better working conditions, or they are leaving the human service field completely.
- ♦ The continual orientation and training of new employees is compromising our financial resources and affecting the morale of existing staff.
- ♦ We are facing increased risk and liability as an organization.

As stated by ACDS "If the wage issue is not addressed, this field will witness an increase in risk and injury for both those receiving and giving service. At the same time there will be a decrease both in the quality of care and quality of life of individuals with disabilities."