

# weaving a story of change

The Independent Facilitation Demonstration Project

learning so far...

ontario  
independent  
facilitation  
network  
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# weaving a story of change

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learning so far...

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# introduction

There are an estimated 70,000 people with developmental disabilities in Ontario. Fewer than 20,000 have spaces in agency directed residential settings; most of them require day/employment support on weekdays as well. By 2018, 24,000 people will access Passport direct individualized funding to enable people to create more customized support.

## **The Space for Independent Facilitation's Contribution:**

The current system generates two tensions that define the space for Independent Facilitation's contribution:

### ***Tension 1: The Government offers two different funding arrangements to people and families.***

**Arrangement one:** The Ministry contracts with agencies to offer a minority of people a combination of residential and day/employment programs to provide a single answer to 24 hour support when their turn comes on a wait list. Even though a significant amount of new investment goes to increasing the number of residential beds, there remains a significant shortfall which is likely to continue.

**Arrangement two:** The Ministry offers the opportunity for people to receive direct individualized Passport funding, so they and their families can develop a customized model of support. This involves organizing their available personal, family and community assets and Government benefits, both generic (income support, employment services, health, housing, etc.) and developmental disability specific.

It is important to note, that the average Passport allocation

(significantly less than \$35,000) per person falls well short of expenditures on agency directed residential/day/employment service combinations (more than \$100,000).

Making the best of the Passport option takes significantly more work on the part of people and families to plan, mobilize, access and sustain the constellation of assets that support a good life. It is facilitating this work across a spectrum of family and community differences that has shaped the work of Independent Facilitation.

The Independent Facilitation Demonstration Project (IFDP) has demonstrated that real progress can be possible even while people are waiting for Passport funding. This increases the focus and impact of individual funding when it comes.

### ***Tension 2: Most agencies' struggles with transformation that absorb a great deal of attention and open a space for people and families to innovate that cannot be managed from the top.***

Despite growth in individualized funding, agency directed group service designs consume the larger share of expenditure on developmental services. The Ministry, and each of its funded agencies, manage a tension between maintaining agency capacity to offer good group oriented supports and developing agency capacity to transform its offerings to implement the Social Inclusion Act (SIPDDA).

For those people and families who choose it, individualized

funding creates a space outside this agency based work for person and family driven innovation, both individual and collective. This is the space in which Independent Facilitation makes its most significant contribution.

The process of Transformation requires a new capacity to invest in local innovation, created by people, families and allies. These investments recognize that person-directed innovations are different from innovations designed and implemented by agencies and call for new ways of assuring accountability, sharing learning and sustaining what works.

The Ministry has recognized the movement towards social inclusion and self-direction. Some people want individualization for places to live, work, and participate as a valued community member. These desires call out for significant investments in the relatively uncharted territory of person-community level innovation.

There is no 'silver bullet answer'. Individually crafted responses through Independent Facilitation are a viable option for many people who are difficult to fit into traditional program models, or just don't want to "fit".

### **Calling For New Collaborations**

The Ministry, service providers, individuals, families, advocates all agree new options are needed. Since future options are not yet clear, there need to be new safe spaces to generate cross boundary agreements on potential options. The boundary issues include health, child welfare, corrections, addictions, mental health, family supports, aging, dementia.. and more. Although indigenous issues add additional layers of jurisdictional complexity - none of these issues will go away or be ignored. Responses limited to

narrow silos will only add to the chaos and frustration.

Innovative options such as Independent Facilitation are not 'THE answer', but they are a key element in a family of responses - new and old - that desperately need to collaborate so that citizens have genuine opportunities to contribute.

People WANT to be contributing citizens in and of the community. Agencies of all shapes and sizes WANT to support people and families to be fully participating citizens. The Ministry WANTS to liberate and support the capacities of citizens who have historically been excluded to be fully engaged citizens.

To create this feasible future, there must be collaboration on a scale we have not yet seen. It will require mutual trust, respect, transparency - AND funding. Endless 'projects' that create glimpses of hope only to fade into oblivion, erase the very energy and trust that can build this desirable future on which we fundamentally all agree.

The Independent Facilitation Demonstration Project's learning journey to Weave A Story Of Change outlines the history, complexity and possibility of creating and sustaining the contribution of one innovative option of support.

We believe it has enormous potential - **if** it is funded and supported appropriately. It is NOT a silver bullet. It is only one of the family of new options that we can and must develop to create better and secure lives for disadvantaged citizens.

We must ultimately create support structures that are sustainable so we do not betray the hopes and capacities of people once again. This will not be easy - but it is possible.

# who is this document for?

...**people with developmental disabilities, their families, and allies** -- to help them understand what Independent Facilitation is and how it might be able to help them in creating the life they need and want

...**the Ministry of Community and Social Services** -- to support its efforts to transform Developmental Services and make a case for Independent Facilitation as a valuable investment in innovation that supports the MCSS vision to develop services that enable people to be included and belong; to contribute as community members; and live as citizens equal to all other citizens

...**DSOs** -- to provide a clear understanding of what Independent Facilitation is and who may benefit from this type of service offering.

...anyone who is interested in becoming an **Independent Facilitator**

## language we use

In this report we will use the following language:

**“people”** - people with developmental disabilities.

**“families”** - people who have a family member who has a developmental disability...“families” can also include parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles etc. Family can mean a person who feels a deep sense of love and responsibility for a person with developmental disabilities.

**“allies”** are people who stand with and support people and their families as they work toward living as a citizen and community member. Allies are not paid to offer this support.

**“Independent Facilitator”** is a person in an ongoing relationship with people and their families, together planning for and developing individualized support that makes it possible for this person to live and participate as a citizen and community member.

**“Agencies”** are organizations that provide direct services for people with developmental disabilities.

**“staff”** are people who work as a personal support worker for a person with a developmental disability.

**“funding”** is the money that the government makes available to people, families, and agencies to pay for supports and services.

**“DSO”** is the Developmental Service Ontario office. There are regional offices across the province. The DSO is the access point for adult developmental services.

**“the Ministry”** is the Ministry of Community and Social Services that is responsible for funding services and support for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

**“IFOs”** are Independent Facilitation Organizations that offer Independent Facilitation as a support to people and their families.

**“OIFN”** is the Ontario Independent Facilitation Network — an organization that involves people across the province who are interested in the work of Independent Facilitation, and how it can make a difference in the lives of people with developmental disabilities.

**“IFDP”** is the Independent Facilitation Demonstration Project — a 2 year project funded by the Ministry to explore how Independent Facilitation can be offered as a support for people in more communities across the province.

**“emerging communities”** are communities and networks throughout Ontario that currently have no access to Independent Facilitation. The Project includes preliminary contacts and future development with a focus in the near North and the North of Ontario.

**“SIPDDA” or “Social Inclusion Act” (2008)**. The law that guides the Ministry to offer funding and services to support people with developmental disabilities. Its full name is *“Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008 (SIPDDA)”*

# where to start reading?

The Report is divided into parts.

Each of the parts is connected to the other parts but they can be read separately.

You don't have to start at the beginning. You can pick from below what sounds most interesting to you, and start there.

## INTRODUCTION

WHO IS THIS DOCUMENT FOR

LANGUAGE WE USE

WHERE TO START READING

### **PART A: Change, Innovation, and the Independent Facilitation Demonstration Project**

This is about the history of how we see, treat, and support people with developmental disabilities. The Ministry is faced with the challenge of innovating, creating new models of support that match the view of people as citizens. The IFDP is one effort to create a viable support offering that can be one option for people.

### **PART B: What People Say About What They Want And Need**

This is about what people and families say about what they want and need, and how Independent Facilitation is a model that responds to what people are saying.

### ii **PART C: What Is Independent Facilitation And Who Can Benefit**

iii This is about explaining what Independent Facilitation is, through stories and descriptions. It is also about identifying who can benefit from Independent Facilitation.  
iv  
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C-1

### A-1 **PART D: The Challenge Of Getting Started**

This is about the efforts and challenges facing communities that want to make Independent Facilitation as a service offering in their community.

D-1

### **PART E: Looking Forward**

B-1 This is about the focus of work for OIFN going forward. It is also about the need for working together with the Ministry, people and families, service agencies, and OIFN. People and families need support to make the best use of their Passport direct individualized funding to develop customized support options. There will be better innovations if we work together.

E-1