
A Message from the Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario

January 2022

Thoughts for 2022

Many of us who have been involved in disability issues over the years – like full inclusion and receiving adequate, flexible, individualized funding & support for people with disabilities – are interested in social justice as a whole. And this is the time of year when many citizens think about others in need – people who are marginalized, or people experiencing discrimination. What this message is bringing forward are social justice issues that have been close to many of our hearts throughout 2021.



The Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario (IFCO) Leadership Group has been sharing in some good discussions with people, families, and allies over the last months.

A number of important issues facing people living with disabilities are front and centre.

They are listed here for your thought and consideration:

- Ending poverty for people living with disabilities
- Human rights and legal capacity: the importance of having choice and control over one's life
- Access to affordable housing and adequate support funding as adult citizens (without long waits)
- Ending the systemic discrimination of people living with disabilities
- Halting the default to institutionalization of people needing additional supports, especially younger adults living with disabilities, and Seniors who want be supported at home.

Below are excerpts from the IFCO Message dated Dec. 27, 2021 sent to members, friends and allies as we approached the New Year. This Message contained links to articles and information about all of the above topics, some of which were time limited. Here are a few relevant excerpts, highlights and links as per the points listed above.

Ending poverty for people living with disabilities

- **Disability Without Poverty:** The mission of the *Disability Without Poverty* movement is to get the Canadian Disability Benefit into the hands of people with disabilities as soon as possible. And to have it implemented nationwide without claw backs to people's existing supports and benefits. Learn more about this movement led by people with disabilities supported by families, friends, service providers, allies and organizations: <https://www.disabilitywithoutpoverty.ca/our-movement/>

Human rights & legal capacity: the importance of having choice & control over one's life

- **Family Managed Home Care (FMHC) and taking away the rights of people with developmental disabilities:** In October 2021 various grassroots groups in Ontario put out a call to send letters to Minister of Health, Christine Elliott about changes needed with Family Managed Home Care (FMHC). Some families have shared that in their responses they are being told the Ministry of Health is 'exploring ways to address these concerns'. This is a bit vague with no guarantees at this point, and why a second round of email letters is needed. Families, whose family members rely on home care, continue to feel incredible pressure and worry. Having to pursue guardianship of their loved one in order to receive self-directed home care support is a big price to pay. What many believe is that guardianship would not only strip their loved ones and friends of their basic human rights, it would leave them more vulnerable into the future.
- **Legal capacity – a priority for People First of Canada.** From their website: "People First of Canada believes that all people, regardless of disability, have legal capacity. People have the right to make their own decisions and choices. The decisions and choices made by a person with an intellectual disability need to be honoured in terms of legal capacity and the authority to act. If a person has a support network or decision-making team, this needs to be honoured in terms of legal capacity and the authority to act on behalf of the person." To continue reading use this link: [Legal Capacity – People First of Canada](#)
For more on human rights and legal capacity from People First of Canada, click here: [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(UNCRPD\) – People First of Canada](#)

Supporting people to have more choice & control over their lives. What IFCO is saying:

- **ABOUT INDIVIDUALIZED FUNDING:** IFCO believes having adequate individualized funding is a part of the solution for some of the concerns facing people living with disabilities today. Self-determination and support for decision making are also key. Having individualized funding (which includes direct funding as one form) means that people can organize and purchase supports that are personalized and tailor-made to their lives. It means choosing one's own supporters, being supported in your own home option with what you want to do and who you want to live with. It also means having reliable and flexible support for home care.



- **ABOUT INDEPENDENT FACILITATION:** IFCO also believes that having the OPTION of independent facilitation that is funded, available and positioned outside the current systems/agencies (direct service providing agencies and central access places) would be another big part of the solution. Independent facilitation as a role with no strings attached: helps people through a process of strengthening their voice, and making choices – assists within a family context or with others, helps create a vision for life, supports individuals with making different decisions than the system has to offer in the way of menus, and helps to mediate and broker their supports. People living with disabilities are already at a disadvantage within difficult and complicated systems of support in Ontario. They need every opportunity to be heard and to build confidence over time. A skilled independent facilitator assists in this way.

Access to affordable housing and adequate support funding as adult citizens

- **Systemic Discrimination Against People with Disabilities, A Nova Scotia Example: *N.S. Court of Appeal rules there is systemic discrimination against people with disabilities***, By Staff – The Canadian Press – October 6, 2021. “Nova Scotia’s highest court has ruled there is systemic discrimination in the province against people with disabilities who are seeking services and housing in the community. In a landmark decision issued today, the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal said the provincial government’s failure to offer people with disabilities “meaningful” access to housing and care is demonstrated by long wait lists” To read the full article click here: <https://globalnews.ca/news/8248747/nova-scotia-systemic-discrimination-disabilities-services-housing/>

Ending the systemic discrimination of people living with disabilities

- **What is Ableism? Thoughts to consider:** More and more, out in the public eye, is talk of systemic discrimination regarding people living with disabilities. We are also hearing more and more the use of the term ableism in conversations with friends and allies. To understand more about what ableism means, go to this link:
[What is Ableism? \(aoda.ca\)](http://aoda.ca)

Halting the default to institutionalization of people needing additional supports, especially younger adults living with disabilities, and Seniors who want be supported at home

- **Seniors for Social Action Ontario (SSAO):** “The mission of this group is to identify alternatives to institutionalization and encourage governments to finance these alternatives with a goal to end institutionalization.” Here is the link to their home page: <https://www.seniorsactionontario.com/>
- The work SSAO is doing offers another example where we, as like-minded citizens, can support each other’s efforts. Their work is relevant today whether you or a loved one in your family need support as an elder now, or would be needing support later! Below is a link to their resources:
<https://www.seniorsactionontario.com/policyandresearch>

A NOTE OF APPRECIATION!



THANK YOU to the individuals, families, and allies who have been participating in gatherings and connecting with us throughout 2021. We thank you ALL for your support of the Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario (IFCO). Many thanks also to the volunteers who have assisted with our events, future planning, information gathering, partnering and more!

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