



# AAN POVERTY REDUCTION

**Date/Time:**  
January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 /1:30pm –3:30pm

**Location: Zoom**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87857857181>

**Chairs: Allyson Dann, Margot Brunner**

**In Attendance:**

Brad Robertson (Community Advocate)  
Brittany Finlay (U of C)  
Colleen Huston (Disability Action Hall)  
Darryl Janzen (Cerebral Palsy Alberta)  
Keri McEachern (Self Advocacy Federation)  
Meri Topchieva (Alberta Ability Network)

Mezaun Lakha-Evin (Alberta Ability Network)  
Sam Mason (Voice of Albertans with Disabilities)  
Shane Rempel (Southern Alberta Brain Injury Society)  
Tasha McMullan (Independent Living Resource Centre Of Calgary)  
Vivienne Momoh (Community Advocate)

## Meeting Minutes

Land Acknowledgement  
Welcome and Introductions

Discussion items:

**Sent Briefing Note Recommendations to Minister Nixon**

- Sent the briefing note to government officials regarding the cost-of-living survey on December 2022.
- Received acknowledgment of correspondence from the Minister

**Community Response to the Re-Indexation of AISH**

- Disability Action Hall clients were expecting more money from the re-indexation than they received. When people asked if they can better afford their necessities, many said no.
- The Minister invited people in the community to speak to the media regarding the increase in AISH. Unfortunately, no one spoke to the media as the \$100 increase does not meet the cost-of-living needs. This is the first time in 20+ years that supporters of the Disability Action Hall did not speak to the media.
- ILRCC clients are also frustrated at the current increase as \$100 more a month can barely help with paying the bills.
- VAD's clients are accepting of the current situation and dissatisfied with the increase.
- Self-Advocacy Federation clients are disappointed in the amount that was given. SAF is focusing on the Canada Disability Benefit for legislative action.

- The re-indexation is by 6% with a \$100 for the next 6 months until June 2023.
- SAF shared information on AISH Facebook groups who appears to have a lot of misinformation about AISH.
- Medical supply prices have gone up by 15% and many families are paying out of their own pocket. Once the \$100 ends, the increase in medical supplies will still persist, leaving families in a worse financial situation.
- Consensus from community is that advocating the government for ongoing supports will not be well received. The government feels that they have listened to the community by increasing social support.
- Messaging to be created for the upcoming elections.
- Housing is becoming a serious issue and will be included in the table's mandate.

### **Strategy for the upcoming election**

- The meeting introduced the new Chief and discussed supporting the passing of Accessibility Legislation.
- As the election is less than 5 months away from us, the table will focus efforts on collecting community support to make Accessibility Legislation an election issue.
- We want to communicate with MLAs to encourage Accessibility Legislation.

### **FCSD and PDD**

- There are thousands of people not getting support from PDD because once the application is received, PDD considers it as "open" while their clients are not getting any services.
- Some clients have been waiting for services for over 2 years.
- Almost every situation is denied and automatically goes to appeal.
- U of C has engaged with families across Canada in regard to what their experience is when accessing services and the barriers they're encountering. Many said there are challenges in learning about new programs and accessing them due to long wait lists or time-consuming processes.
- Needs to be a way where we can carve out part of the FMSA role so people can get services quicker.
- People who receive contracts from PDD for their staffing support, either go with an agency or family-managed.
- Many people go to family-managed contracts (FMC) because they can hire their own staff and have no other choice as there are low vacancy rates at the service provider level.
- No service delivery or administration goes with FMC, saving PDD 30% of service deliveries and giving families more flexibility. There are responsibilities that go with getting a FMC contract as you must go to classes and train your employees, which also lets PDD have no liability for what goes on.
- For example, if something happens to someone with a FMC contract such as a death in care, PDD takes no liability for that. When not properly supported, there is a lot of room for abuse and neglect.
- Family resource centers received money from the government to provide better support for FCSD and PDD clients. However, they have a very narrow scope as they are responsible for training and workshops.



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- All applications for Social Services Supports are online now. Makes it harder to access for those without laptops or phones.

## **Introduction to Provincial Disability Poverty Reduction Strategy**

- There are several provinces with a poverty reduction strategy, but Alberta is not one of them.
- Mezaun created a draft poverty reduction strategy that includes people with disabilities with solutions to poverty.
- The table is introducing a poverty reduction strategy and will be looking into its support and benefits of it for the next couple of months.
- If we decide to go through with this strategy, the table will seek support from U of C and other groups. Such as the O'Brien Institute of Public Policy.

## **Action Items:**

- Kathryn Oviatt will book a meeting with the Advocate's Office to discuss the consultation group process with them and see when they will be ready to go into the community and get feedback. The meeting will take place in the next month or two.
- Researching existing poverty reduction frameworks.
- Mezaun, Alison, and Margot to review Poverty Reduction Strategy Framework.

Wrap-Up/Adjournment

## **Next meeting:**

**Date:** February 21, 2022

**Time:** 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm

**Location:** Zoom