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To BCGEU members in Components 3 & 6
Please post and distribute
January 23, 2007

BCGEU launches review of Community Living BC

We need to hear from you!

BCGEU members working in the community living sector are in a unique position to provide frontline feedback on the current service issues facing this sector.

Your union needs to hear from you. Our goal is to prepare a public report on the challenges facing CLBC. The BCGEU will also host a forum on community living services this spring.

Workers, advocates and caregivers will join together at the forum to discuss the challenges facing the current delivery system, and consider improvements that are needed.

Your experiences as frontline workers in the system will provide important context for this discussion.

What are the challenges you face every working day? What kind of additional services or resources are needed?

Your opinions are important - whether you work directly for CLBC as a Component 6 member, or work for a community social service employer as a Component 3 member.

Over the coming weeks, members of your local will be contacting you to seek your feedback and ideas for the report and other actions we could take. We will also be talking to families and advocacy groups and interested members of the public.

We have also set up a dedicated email address so that you can send us your comments. You can choose to identify yourself for contact follow-up, or remain anonymous. All information is kept private and confidential.

Please send comments and information to:
communitylivingimpact@bcgeu.ca

Or, send your comments by regular mail to:

**Community Living Impact
c/o BCGEU
2994 Douglas Street
Victoria BC, V8T 4N4**

Challenges and changes

BCGEU members who work in the community living sector have a critical role in providing services to some of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

But over the last year and a half, the community living sector has undergone a significant change.

After a much delayed and troubled developmental period, Community Living BC (CLBC) began operating on July 1, 2005.

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The launch came with the commitment to deliver stable, quality services to persons with developmental disabilities and – over time, to apply a new service-delivery model.

Waitlists for services were to be a thing of the past. The Campbell government and the Board of CLBC boldly promised that the new agency would better support the hopes and dreams of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

But over the last several months, the CLBC's promise of more and better services seems to have fallen by the wayside.

CLBC has confirmed that it is facing a \$40-million dollar budget shortfall in this fiscal year alone.

Waitlists for services are bigger than ever.

The provincial treasury board is requiring that the CLBC show and report savings in its operations. The Residential Options project mandates the closure of residential group home beds, and transfer of care to individual service providers.

And recently the all-party legislative committee reviewing budget issues for the next fiscal year recommended that government "*consider adding additional funding to Community Living BC for the*

developmentally disabled and their families, including support for youth as they transition into adulthood, and residential supports and services."

The BCGEU is also looking at how much additional budget funding the BC Liberal government may deliver in their 2007-08 budget. Will it be enough to meet service needs?

We look forward to receiving your comments and any other information you would like to share.

In Solidarity,

Community Living Impact Working Group

Component 3 Members:

James Cavalluzzo, Component Chair
Members: Trudy Ames, Gale Engstrom,
Joanne Dyck

Component 6 Members:

Doug Kinna, Component Chair
Members: Don Philpot, Christine Muir
Mike Eso, BCGEU Staff Representative