



Citizens With Disabilities – Ontario

www.cwdo.org

“Together We Are Stronger”

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Together We Are Stronger: Final Report March 31, 2018

What You Need to Know

It can be hard for people with disabilities to get work. Changes have made it easier for people with disabilities to get and keep jobs. But, barriers still exist. We asked people with disabilities what they thought barriers to getting work are. We found three areas that people with disabilities would like to see change. These areas are:

1. What people think,
2. Costs, and
3. Accessibility.

Why We Did This

We think all people should be part of their communities. To be part of a community people must be seen and included. We think that work helps people to be seen and included.

People with disabilities can have a hard time getting and keeping jobs. Many factors control access to work for people with disabilities. Some factors are job support programs or transit. These factors can create or limit access to work. Factors that limit access to work for people with disabilities are called barriers.

Knowing what the barriers to work are means we can try to change them. To find barriers we talked to people with disabilities. We also

talked to people who work in job support programs. We have some suggestion based on these talks.

How We Did This

People with disabilities were part of the project from start to finish. This type of project is called participatory action research. We found information in three different ways. These three ways are:

1. A review of policies and programs that connect disability and work. This type of review is an environmental scan.
2. A review of written works that connect disability and work. Written works could be peer-reviewed or self-published. This type of review is called a literature review.
3. We talked to two groups of people. First, we talked to people with disabilities. Then we talked to people who work in job support programs. We talked to people in groups, called focus groups. Sometimes we talked to one person at a time. This type of chat is called an individual interview.

We talked to 55 people with disabilities. Then we talked to 18 people who work in job support programs. For more information, please read our full report: cwdo.org/node/581.

What Did We Find?

During the first two parts of the projects we found:

1. There are 17 policies and programs that make up disability job support in Ontario.
 - What a disability is can be different in each policy or program.
2. There are over 400 people working to support people with disabilities with jobs.
3. There is a wide-held idea that people with disabilities should take low paying jobs.
4. Having a fund to help meet the needs of people with disabilities is helpful.
 - The Ontario Public Service has a fund that is a good example.

5. Support to find work needs to include all stages of finding a job.
 - The Vocational Rehabilitation Services Act was a program that used to do this.

We put the main concerns of the people we talked to into three areas. These areas are what people think, thinking about costs, and lack of accessibility.

What People Think About Us

Barriers based on what people think come from myths about people with disabilities. Belief in disability myths mean that people with disabilities are:

1. Offered low paying jobs
2. Offered jobs not relate to the skills
3. Offered jobs not related to the education they have.

Myths about disability can affect people:

1. Who hire people
2. You work with
3. That help people find work.

Myths mean that many people do not know the real problems that people with disabilities have when finding, getting, and keeping work.

What People Think It Will Cost

Workspaces are often made in ways people with disabilities find hard to use. A barrier to hiring people with disabilities might mean changing:

1. The workspace
2. How work is done.

Job support programs are paid based on the number of people that get jobs. This way of getting paid means there is less concern about people having:

1. Well-paying jobs
2. Jobs that they have skills for
3. Jobs they went to school for.

Transit Is Not Accessible

People must get to a workspace to get or keep a job. There is transit for people with disabilities in Ontario. This transit can:

1. Take a long time
2. Be hard to use.

These issues can make it hard for people with disabilities to use transit to get to work.

Ontario has policies about accessibility. These policies should make places easy to access by people with disabilities. People are not being made to follow these policies. When people don't have to follow this policy, people with disabilities are excluded.

It can be hard to deal with barriers to finding a job or getting support to live.

What Can Be Done?

We have 7 ideas on how to make it easier for people with disabilities to get and keep work. Our ideas are below.

Change Disability Myths

We think that the myths about people with disabilities need to go away. Myths could go away if people learned what people with disabilities could do. We have two ideas on how to show what people with disabilities can do:

1. Creating work sites where people with different abilities engage with each other
2. Creating spaces for young people with different abilities to engage with each other.

Change Focus of Job Support Programs

Funding of job support programs focuses on how many people get jobs.

3. We believe that a focus on job matching to a person's skills would help people get work that they are trained for.

Fund Accessibility at Work

Workspaces might not be usable by people with disabilities. It will cost money to change the workspace. This cost could make people worry about hiring people with disabilities. To get rid of this barrier we think:

4. Large companies should have a fund to make local workspaces accessible,

5. People with disabilities should have more support to open their own business.

Make Transit Accessible

6. Accessible transit is key to make sure people with disabilities can get and keep work. Accessible transit plans should make sure:
 - Transit is easy to access
 - All transit routes are accessible
 - Accessible transit can be booked the same day
 - Transit is affordable.

Understand Emotional Barriers

Dealing with the myths of disability daily is hard. People with disabilities need support in coping with this stress. We think job support workers should:

7. Support disabled people to find a job using what they know about trauma.

What is Next?

We want to work on some of the barriers talk about above. We plan to connect with other disability organisations and seek out funding. To find out more or to join our work, see our website: cwdo.org.

Want More Information?

For more details on the project, read all six reports.

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| #1 | Background on people with disabilities in Ontario, methods, and details on policies and programs: | cwdo.org/node/561 |
| #2 | In-depth details about policies and programs for people with disabilities in Ontario: | cwdo.org/node/562 |
| #3 | Recent debates about disability and employment in Ontario: | cwdo.org/node/576 |
| #4 | Review of the feedback from people with disabilities about jobs, policies, and programs: | cwdo.org/node/577 |
| #5 | Intersection between disability, employment and other factors like sex or race: | cwdo.org/node/578 |
| #6: | Summary of the finding, recommendations, and next steps: | cwdo.org/node/581 |

Citizens with Disabilities – Ontario

Citizens with Disabilities – Ontario is not for profit group. People with disabilities run this organization. We want to make sure the rights of people with disabilities are respected. We want to see all people being part of their communities. We would like to see people with disabilities get involved to:

1. Make decisions on policies
2. Make decisions about how public money is spent
3. Make decisions about what events happen.

Since 2016 we have been focused on these areas:

1. Employment
2. Human rights
3. Technology
4. Ending life ethics
5. Access and inclusion policy and programs.

Hilda Smith, Clear Writing Consultant

Hilda Smith is a clear writing consultant. We wanted more people to understand our research, so we hired Hilda to write this report.

Please visit Hilda's website for more details on clear writing and her consulting services at <https://hildasmithblog.wordpress.com/consultation-workshops/>.