



**VOLUME I:
WHAT THE PEOPLE SAID**

**REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC SOCIAL PLANNING PUBLIC DIALOGUE
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR**

SOCIAL POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Contents

Acknowledgements	iv
Foreword	v
Members of the Social Policy Advisory Committee	vii
Introduction	1
A Strategic Social Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador	1
The Social Policy Advisory Committee	1
Consultation and Public Dialogue	1
Submissions to Government	2
Understanding Changing Needs and Circumstances:	
Context for the Strategic Social Plan	3
A Time of Change	3
The Pressure on Social Programs	5
The Costs	6
Present Spending	6
Sources of Revenue	6
Common Themes	9
Concerns	10
Program and Service Cuts	10
Crisis of Values	11
The Way Government Does Business	12
Health	12
Education	13
Social Services	13
Children and Youth	14
Employment	14
Justice	15
Municipalities	15
Housing	16
The Voluntary Sector and Volunteers	16
Culture	17
Service Providers	17
Public Consultation	17
New Directions	19
Relationship between Economic and Social Development	19
Integrated Client-Focused Policy and Programs	19

Community Involvement	20
Partnerships	20
Maximizing Resources	21
Ongoing Consultation and Collaboration	21
Evidence-Based Decision Making	21
Forward Planning	22
Investing in People	22
Prevention and Early Intervention	23
Strengths to Build On	25
Human Resources	25
Opportunities for Growth	25
Services and Sectors	27
Social Services	29
Poverty and Income Security	30
Infants and Children	31
Youth	32
Families	32
Child Care	33
The Elderly	33
Persons with Disabilities	34
Strain on Workers	35
General	35
Health	39
Cuts and Increasing Costs	41
Access and Location of Services	41
Prevention and Early Intervention	41
Environment	42
Food and Nutrition	42
Institutional, Home and Community Care	43
Mental-Health Services	43
Children and Youth	43
The Elderly	43
New Roles and Models	44
Women	44
General	45
Education	47
Early Childhood Development and Family	49
School System	49
Post-Secondary	50
Access	51
Special Needs	51
Work Preparation	51
Literacy	52
Libraries	52

Employment	55
Social Implications	56
Employment and Income Security	57
Preparation for Work	57
Employment Creation and Support	58
The Work Place	58
General	58
Justice and Public Protection	61
Children, Youth and Families	62
Prevention	62
Victims	63
Court System	63
Rehabilitation and Supervision	63
Differential Impacts for Women and Men	64
Municipal Services	67
Municipal Government	68
Municipal Infrastructure and Services	68
Regionalisation	68
Housing	71
Adequate Housing	72
Housing for Vulnerable Persons	72
Boarding Houses and Apartments	73
The Voluntary Sector	77
Participation	78
Financial Support	79
New Roles	79
Partnerships and Responsibilities	80
Recognition	80
Culture	83
Cultural Products	83
Education	83
Financial Support	84
Partnerships and Responsibilities	84
Social and Economic Development	85
Principles and Values	87
Appendices	89
Individuals and Organizations who Submitted Briefs, Emails, Faxes and Letters ..	91
Organizations Participating in the Public Consultation Process	101

Acknowledgements

The Social Policy Advisory Committee wishes to thank the hundreds of people and organizations who participated in the public consultation process. We are indebted to the hundreds of people who participated in 100 meetings throughout Newfoundland and Labrador who generously shared their knowledge, experience, concerns and hopes for the future and to everyone who submitted written briefs. We are grateful for the magnitude, thoroughness and thoughtfulness of the submissions and comments.

This Report, *What the People Said: Report of the Strategic Social Planning Public Dialogue*, is based on the commentary and written work of those who participated in public meetings, submitted formal briefs, completed work books, recorded their "final thoughts" and evaluations, called us with their ideas and sent us messages via electronic mail.

Because of the format and nature of this document, sources have not been cited.

We hope views have been adequately and accurately reflected in this document.

Foreword

Newfoundland and Labrador is in the midst of profound social and economic change – caused by technological and demographic forces, global and world conditions, changes to federal government policy directions, an underdeveloped economy, the failure of the northern cod fishery, and provincial economic imperatives. The result is considerable upheaval for people and communities as we struggle with issues of government deficits and matters of personal security.

The impact of these various changes is reverberating across the Province as people are affected by, and try to adjust to, rapid and often unanticipated change.

In this climate of uncertainty the public and government are re-examining social policy and programs to determine if current models can and should be maintained and what changes might be made.

Some parts of our social system are not working as they should be. Some programs no longer meet the needs of people they are intended to assist; important services are not accessible to, or do not accommodate, all who need them; there are growing needs which are not being met, and many existing programs have become ineffective. Furthermore, the level of service is often restricted because of budgetary limitations.

In the past we assumed that those who were working would pay taxes which, combined with other revenues generated by governments, would be sufficient to underwrite an array of public services. However, government expenditures have outstripped revenues and, over time, annual deficits have led to high debt loads. Now governments are taking action to contain spending. These measures are affecting federal transfers for social programs and a wide range of income programs which are fuelling economic insecurity.

The strategic social planning consultations took place in the midst of these transitions. People were understandably uneasy and concerned about their personal well-being and the future of the Province.

The Social Policy Advisory Committee was moved by the depth of concerns many people and communities face. If we wish to protect our Province, if we want to develop its potential, if we want to build on what is good about Newfoundland and Labrador and if we want to cultivate social and economic development then we must quickly regroup to find new ways of doing things.

This is not a job for Government alone. Nor is it a job for the private sector, the public sector or the community in isolation. We face a task which demands that we each put aside our conflicts and forget our individual self-interests. We'll have to stop

depending on someone else and take on the task of turning our Province around not only to ensure this is a place where people can stay, but so that it is a place where people want to come.

There are no quick fixes; however, there are ways to improve the manner in which government does business and to assist the public to confront and control the future. Absolute attention and full participation of every single Newfoundlander and Labradorian in a most concerted effort will be essential in dealing with the issues this Province faces.

Policies, attitudes, programs and relationships should be reframed to support and invest more wisely in the social development of people and communities. The circumstances which create social problems and the barriers which hinder people from reaching their full potential have to be removed.

The Social Policy Advisory Committee believes, without equivocation, that the success or failure of this Province, the success or failure of this planning process and the success or failure for individual lives rests with the kinds of choices the Provincial Government makes to invest in the people of the Province. Newfoundland and Labrador will be defined by its social capital.

The Social Policy Advisory Committee has chosen to prepare a detailed report of the views we heard because we believe it is important that the feelings of the public be conveyed to government. Some might wish that a less detailed document had been prepared, highlighting only the main points. The magnitude of concerns expressed, however, convinced the Committee that the rich detail was worth telling.



Penelope M. Rowe
Chairperson

January 1997

Members of the Social Policy Advisory Committee

Penelope Rowe - Chair
Executive Director
Community Services Council
St. John's, NF

Joyce Hancock
President
Provincial Advisory Council on the
Status of Women
Stephenville, NF

Brenda FitzGerald
Executive Director
St. John's Region Community Health
Board
St. John's, NF

Beverly Kirby
Director
Port au Port Community Education
Initiative Inc.
Kippens, NF

Greg Anthony
Newfoundland and Labrador
Employers Council
St. John's, NF

Gale Burford
Associate Director
School of Social Work
St. John's, NF

Mary Ennis
Executive Director
Coalition of Persons with Disabilities -
Newfoundland and Labrador
St. John's, NF

Colleen Buckle
Public Health Nurse
St. Anthony, NF

George Saunders
Teacher
Bishop's Falls, NF

Angela Abbott
Student
Wabush, LB

Frank Clarke
Victoria

Margaret Scott
Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Centre
Memorial University
St. John's, NF

Debbie Forward
President
Newfoundland and Labrador Nurses
Union
St. John's, NF

Elizabeth Chaulk
Corner Brook, NF

Mary May Osmond*
Innu Nation
Sheshatshit, LB

* resigned because of personal commitments

Social policy is about how people interact. It is about processes, transactions and institutions which promote an individual's sense of identity, and participation and community. It promotes freedom of choice and social solidarity. Social Policy is about investing in people and cultivating change. It is the embodiment of certain values and relationships which enhance human development and well-being.

Introduction

A Strategic Social Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is developing a Strategic Social Plan which will set out long term objectives, establish priorities and define broad strategies for the Province's social programs and services. It will guide Government's social policy for years to come. It will also define Government's future relationship with the voluntary sector.

In combination with the Strategic Economic Plan, the social plan will constitute the overall policy framework for economic and social development into the 21st century.

The Social Policy Advisory Committee

In July 1996, Government appointed an independent group, the Social Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC), to carry out public consultations throughout the Province. The Committee comprises 15 private citizens from various backgrounds, interests and regions of the Province. One Committee member had to resign before the process was completed. Committee members worked as volunteers. The Committee will continue to advise Government during the implementation of the Strategic Social Plan.

SPAC was instructed to prepare a report of the consultation and to make recommendations for Government to consider as it develops the Strategic Social Plan, which is due to be released early in 1997.

Consultation and Public Dialogue

SPAC was asked to consult widely with the general public and with special interest groups, organizations, service providers and Government employees. The process began in August with a series of facilitated meetings around issues affecting the key sectors identified in Government's background document, the *Strategic Social Plan Consultation Paper*.

A detailed "How to Participate" brochure and a public dialogue schedule were released in early September, and meetings took place in 29 communities over a nine-week period starting on September 29 and concluding on November 25. A Social Policy Workbook was prepared, and evaluation forms and "Final Thoughts" questionnaires were circulated after many meetings.

SPAC members participated in 100 meetings, consisting of a variety of formats, including

- private sessions
- public meetings
- one-on-one drop-in sessions
- meetings with Government employees
- invitational meetings with stakeholders around key sectoral issues
- arranged round-table discussions with private individuals and representatives of a variety of groups
- meetings organized by specific groups, such as women's groups, literacy workers, social assistance recipients, rural development councils and zone boards, consumers of mental health services, child protection teams, family resource centres and disability groups
- opportunities for formal presentations of briefs.

Committee members spoke to and heard from more than 1,500 participants from 130 communities and received 685 submissions, workbooks, questionnaires, e-mails, letters and telephone comments.

Submissions to Government

This report, *Volume I: What the People Said*, is a fairly comprehensive summary of the issues raised across the Province. It does not necessarily represent the views of the Social Policy Advisory Committee. It is presented by general theme and by department or sector.

A separate volume, *Volume II: Investing in People and Communities – A Framework for Social Development*, contains SPAC's recommendations to Government.

Understanding Changing Needs and Circumstances: Context for the Strategic Social Plan

Forward planning is always better than simply coping with situations – and crises – as they arise. Good social planning can help Government assess the problems in the current system, make sure that people's needs are met effectively, prepare us for the future, and help ensure that Government provides services more efficiently and cost-effectively.

Today, in Newfoundland and Labrador, a sound and rational plan for the future is probably more important than ever before. As a society, we are facing tremendous social change; at the same time we are facing unprecedented cuts in federal funding to the Province, increasing demands for services, rising costs and reduced expenditures on social programs. How we address this situation will determine how – and if – we will fare now and in the future.

Good planning requires an understanding of the various factors and forces at work in society. This is important in order to know how we are doing at present, to understand the changes that are taking place, to recognize the problems to be overcome, and then try to anticipate what will be required in the future. The following sections provide background information against which the Strategic Social Plan will be developed.

A Time of Change

In the past 50 years, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador have experienced a political, cultural, economic and social revolution. The pace of change has been challenging for North America generally, but it has been even more dramatic in Newfoundland and Labrador, especially since Confederation in 1949.

Demographic changes have been particularly dramatic for this Province. Newfoundland and Labrador was the only Province to record a population decline in 1995 and 1996. In October 1996, the Province's population was an estimated 569,044, down from 584,000 in 1993. The birthrate has dropped to the lowest levels ever recorded and has fallen from being 40-60% higher than the national rate in the early 1970s to its current status, well below the national average. Out-migration of youth is intensifying this phenomenon. In 1995/96, the net population loss from out-migration of young people alone (between the ages of 20 and 34) was close to 4,400 with a net loss of over 20,000 people to out-migration since 1993. Well-educated people are leaving the Province in record numbers.

Not only are most of those leaving the Province relatively well-educated and young, but many have young families. This, combined with the fact that those who remain behind are living longer, means that the average age of the Province's population is increasing. Between 1991 and 2016, the under-45 age group is expected to *decrease* from 73% to about 50% of the total population, while those 45 and older are expected to *increase* from 27% to about 50%. If present trends continue, half the population will be middle-aged or older within 20 years. During the same period the population older than 64 will double. This will significantly affect the direction of social policy and program requirements.

Although all regions of the Province experienced population declines in the past 3 years, the most significant losses have occurred in rural areas, particularly the south and northeast coasts of the Island and the Burin Peninsula. The reason is that these are the areas which have experienced the largest employment declines. Interestingly, very few of those leaving the Province appear to be The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy (TAGS) recipients. As of August 1996, only 439 of the 25,460 TAGS recipients reported an out-of-Province address, suggesting fisheries workers have chosen to remain in the Province.

If the declining population from out-migration and the lowered birth rate continues until the year 2016, there will be impacts on many sectors.

Education: There will be considerably fewer children in the future, as much as 40% less than at present. The implications of this for education policy and delivery are enormous. Dispersed populations and small enrollments could potentially increase substantially the cost of education per child.

Health: The health care sector will have to respond to the increase in the 50+ population as there will be greater demand for different and accessible services targeted at this age group.

Labour Market: Labour market policies will be affected by the decline in the 20- to 44-year-old population which currently makes up 70% of the labour market. The changes to the skill mix and education from a smaller and/or older labour market could weaken our ability to compete.

Municipalities: Fewer people and an aging population will have to bear a greater burden for municipal infrastructure. This will influence municipal planning and services.

Provincial Finances: Tax-base erosion, declining federal transfers that are based on population, higher per capita public debt and less economic activity and consumer spending could have a negative impact on the Province's capacity to provide services.

The demand for many existing services is increasing and new demands will emerge as needs and demographics continue to change. Because Newfoundland and Labrador has a small population living in more than 700 communities scattered over a very large land mass, it is costly to provide health care, municipal services, highways and roads, legal services, good

schools and other social services. The changing demographics will make it even more costly to provide these services in the future.

The Pressure on Social Programs

Economic insecurity, low educational achievement and unemployment – which often go together – have an impact on almost every other human services system. Studies indicate that poor, uneducated and unemployed people generally have lower levels of health and require the greatest amount of care and treatment.

Recession, reductions in unemployment insurance coverage and the collapse of the groundfisheries have increased the demand for Social Assistance (SA) from less than 20,000 cases per month in 1989 to more than 35,000 monthly in 1996. Annually, the number of cases has increased from 48,240 in 1992 to 52,550 in 1995. This equates to approximately 100,000 people living in 50,00 households relying on SA at some point during the year. Nearly 20% of the Province's population now depends on Social Assistance at some point during the year. An analysis of the data shows that more than 50% of the people on SA are now under 25 years of age. Nearly 25% of all 18 to 24 year-olds in Newfoundland and Labrador received Social Assistance last year, and 32% of children aged 4 and under lived in families who were reliant on SA at some time during the year. In addition, the average length of time that people spend on SA has been increasing steadily.

Social Assistance payments in this Province are approximately only 30% of the Statistics Canada Low Income Cut Off Lines¹ for single people and approximately 50% for families. Virtually all SA recipients who are full-year recipients are poor; the greater duration on SA without employment income, the more likely the family is to be living in dire straits. Women, in particular, are affected by poverty. The situation is even worse for teenage mothers and for elderly women who do not have pension income or adequate savings. Poverty itself results in a complex array of interrelated social problems.

The main cause of poverty is the lack of paid work. The average annual unemployment rate in Newfoundland and Labrador (19.4%) remains double the national average (9.7%) and is the highest of any Province. The unemployment rate for youth is considerably higher at 29% in 1996. In addition, many people who have been out of work for a long time have simply stopped looking for employment, and are no longer counted in the unemployment rates.

The lack of employment makes it even more difficult for persons with disabilities to obtain work and job-training programs.

¹ This is commonly referred to as the poverty line.

Although the Province's educational attainment level has improved in recent years and more people are completing high school and post-secondary, our educational attainment and literacy rates are still below the national average. Compared to the rest of Canada there are fewer high school and university graduates. Nearly half Newfoundland and Labrador's population, age 15 and over, has less than a high school education.

The Costs

Financing provincial services is constrained for several reasons: Newfoundland and Labrador has a higher-than-average need for some social programs, a higher cost to deliver many of them, and a lower-than-average ability to generate revenues to pay for them because of high unemployment rates and a weak tax base. Together, these factors have severely strained both human and financial resources; the direct Provincial debt now totals nearly \$9 billion (including unfunded pension liabilities) and costs more than \$500 million a year to service. This represents an average debt of \$16,400 for every woman, man and child in the Province.

Present Spending. Of each dollar the Province spends from current account, 66 cents goes to social programs such as health care, education, justice, municipal services, housing, employment and social services. A further 16 cents is spent on interest payments on the provincial debt. The remainder pays for all other programs and services, such as maintaining roads and buildings, supporting resource industries, protecting the environment, enhancing business opportunities and promoting tourism and culture. These figures indicate that there is little flexibility to redistribute funds to social service areas from other departments.

Sources of Revenue. At present, about 57% of Government's total current account revenue comes from individuals and businesses in the Province, from such sources as sales tax, personal income tax, gasoline tax and payroll tax. Many of these taxes are higher than in any other Province. Government raises a relatively small amount from corporate and bank taxes.

The other major source of income is transfers from the federal Government. The two main transfers are equalization payments and funding to support social programs. However, Canada has been reducing its spending in recent years to control the growth of the national debt.

In 1996-97, the level of federal funding to support social programs decreased. On April 1, 1996, federal funding to support social programs came under a new program, the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST). Under the CHST, funding for programs is about \$100 million less in 1996-97 than it was under the old system. There have also been significant cuts in funding for social housing. The net effect is expected to be a substantial decline in cash entitlements when compared to 1995-96 levels.

Employment Insurance to individuals has also decreased from \$1.1 billion in 1991 to \$675 million in 1995 – a loss of \$420 million. The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy (TAGS) has offset this loss but TAGS is scheduled to be eliminated by 1998.

The combination of low economic growth and federal transfer reductions has caused Newfoundland and Labrador's rates of revenue growth to drop substantially. In 1989-90, revenue growth was 9%. In the six years that followed, it averaged about 2.1%. During 1996-97 and 1997-98, revenues will fall rather than grow.

Common Themes

Social Policy Advisory Committee members met with people from every part of the Province. The concerns and issues that were raised – by people in outports and cities, and in submissions from groups representing many different interests and sectors – were similar throughout the Province.

Most participants – service users, health care professionals, educators, social workers, labour representatives, municipal councillors, civil servants, volunteers, and the general public – spoke of being at or near *a crisis point* because of the Province's economic situation and the impact this has had on people's social and economic well-being.

People are convinced that many components of our social system are not working as they should be, that important *services are not accessible* to all who need them, that there are new and growing needs which are not being met by existing services, and that many existing *programs and policies have become ineffective*, redundant or poorly focused. Some good policy is often not applied or level of service is limited because of stringent or narrow interpretations of client eligibility, or because funding is not adequate.

This has led to a conviction that *something very different has to be done* – that the time has come for radical and fundamental changes in the way Government has been doing business, especially in the social sectors. It has to *deal with the root causes of our problems, not just the symptoms*. Government has to *act quickly* if the downward spiral which many people and communities are experiencing is to be reversed.

People agree that a *logical, coherent and consistent long-term plan is required*. Ill-planned, short-term responses to underlying, systemic or chronic problems may – in the long run – harm more than they help us. We have to make the best and most effective use of all our resources.

During the public dialogue process we heard repeatedly of the values which people hold to be fundamental: *fairness, access, equality, equity and availability*.

Concerns

"When parents deny a child food, clothing and shelter, it's considered abuse. Yet when governments do it, it's called fiscal responsibility."

Program and Service Cuts

Throughout the Province, people spoke movingly of the consequences of the recent cuts in social programs and services. There is anger at the cumulative impact of cuts which have occurred in recent years and about the way these cuts have been made. *Government has simply gone too far*, making it difficult for many to meet basic needs for food and housing. The cuts have placed an intolerable burden on those least able to carry it.

Former Government employees whose jobs have been terminated are also casualties of these cutbacks. They, too, are facing uncertain futures, and are concerned about their families' futures in a Province where new jobs are so hard to find. Some of those who are now receiving income support wonder what the real net savings have been.

Reducing the debt and deficit may be valid long-term objectives, but these goals will not be achieved by dismantling the social safety net.

For most, cuts have come at the worst possible time. Their impacts, coupled with the continuing effects of the fisheries crisis, changes to unemployment insurance, increased difficulty accessing social programs, economic uncertainty, and chronic unemployment, underemployment and low wages, have led many to fear that Newfoundland and Labrador is on *the verge of social and economic collapse*; some are convinced we are already there.

Pointing to reductions in several service areas, rationing and tougher eligibility requirements, people believe that social policy is becoming mean-spirited. This is *pushing us towards a two-tiered social system with lower quality or fewer services available for those who are not able to pay for them*. This is particularly so in health, education, justice and social support services.

We were told that society is becoming polarized by an ever-increasing gulf between those who are well-off and those who are poor, between the employed and the unemployed, between those with and those without special needs.

There is a growing general *distrust of Government*, and a sense that Government has "broken faith" with the people. This growing distrust has also meant that many are *sceptical about the Province's true intention in developing the Strategic Social Plan*, in its current program review. Many believe that *reform really means more cutbacks*.

Crisis of Values

These factors have led to a view that some people and communities are being *abandoned by the provincial Government* and that *the federal Government is abandoning the Province*, reneging on its fundamental responsibility to support and protect all Canadians equally. Some believe that this demonstrates a "crisis of values" among Canadians, who seem to be adopting corporate principles at the expense of human dignity and compassion, even when they are using the language of equality and inclusion.

Corporate taxation and changes in social program transfers can only be addressed by the federal Government. However, *the provincial Government must take leadership, in cooperation with other Provinces, to lobby the federal Government* to amend its fiscal policies. As one group stated, *"We are greatly concerned that the provincial government has failed to challenge the federal government's attack on social programs and now turns to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador with the bad news that their lives, opportunities, health and security will be, perhaps irrevocably, changed."*

Another said, "We appreciate that the cuts at the federal level put the provincial government in a difficult position. However, instead of accommodating these cuts, we want our provincial government to challenge them, to JUST SAY NO! We want the Government to fight on behalf of the vulnerable elements of the population of this Province.... We want the Government to demand protections which guarantee our basic needs are met."

The basic, underlying premise that the deficit must be cut in order to improve our economic prospects was questioned. Citing the Auditor General of Canada, one group urged Government to develop a long-term debt strategy which takes into account public views on the level of debt we should carry, and to adopt an approach which considers not only the financial consequences of spending cuts but also our social and cultural well-being.

It was observed that deficit accounting procedures usually ignore the value of social infrastructure in generating and sustaining economic prosperity.

The need for a more equitable taxation regime, where large corporations pay a fairer share, was frequently voiced. As one commentator said, "By attempting to address the Government debt and deficit through public sector cuts, the federal and provincial Governments avoid their responsibility to implement fair taxation policies. At the same time, private corporations have access to even greater opportunities to make profits, at the taxpayers expense, through acquiring public assets and expanding private business into the delivery of health care, transportation, recreation and other public service areas."

The Way Government Does Business

Many participants spoke of the frustration they feel when dealing with many agencies and departments, of having to shuffle from office to office, and agency to agency, and still not get the service they require. They say that many rules, procedures and restrictions are irrational and ineffective, often costing taxpayers more than they save.

The Committee was told that services provided by different agencies or departments must become more collaborative. *Programs and policies must not be developed by different departments in isolation*, since policies in one department can impact on another, and since all affect the client.

We met with a man who had worked in a well-paid professional position all of his adult life until he was laid off some time ago. This man has five rather large and painful cavities. The Department of Social Services will not cover dental costs for filling cavities, only extractions are covered. The man does not want to have his teeth pulled, but he is in pain. He goes to his doctor regularly to obtain a prescription for a painkiller. Both the doctor's fee and the drugs, which probably cost more than it would to have his teeth filled, are paid for by the taxpayers of the province. Further, the drugs he is taking for the pain have the potential to result in additional costly complications.

Traditional agency jurisdictions and barriers must come down, and services must focus more on the client needs. There should be better linkages between departments – not only within the social sector, but within the economic sector as well. These linkages should also extend to federal departments and agencies.

Government agencies have to move away from *"turfism"* and *"protectionism"*, and focus on common, mutually-agreed-upon objectives. The structure of Government is seen as a significant problem – it is prone to *"empire building"* at the cost of people's best interests and rational policy development.

Changing the structure of Government can be assisted by *changing the "culture of Government"*. There is a feeling that some bureaucrats are more concerned with preserving their own jobs than doing more for the people they serve.

We heard that *the red tape must go*. It will not matter how good Government's policies are if they are not implemented effectively and efficiently across all departments and agencies.

Health

Access to health care and the erosion of universality were frequent concerns. People claimed that *we are moving towards a two-tiered health care system* as fees are increasingly implemented for services once covered by Medicare. There is fear that in the future, quality health care will only be available to those who can pay for it or have private health insurance.

This fear was further compounded in *rural communities which have a significantly reduced quality of care as compared to urban centres* because they find it difficult to recruit health professionals and the regionalisation of services has made health care virtually inaccessible.

Another significant health-related theme was the value of *prevention versus crisis intervention*. Many consultation participants stated that there was potential for significant long-term savings by investing in healthy lifestyles and good nutrition.

Education

Many public consultation participants were concerned about the effect of budgetary cutbacks on the quality of education in the province. *Education has long been recognized as the cornerstone of a strong economy but this recognition has not been supported with sufficient resources*. The effect of this has been decreased staff, fewer course offerings, the closure of institutions and increasing cost to students and families. Many educational institutions are inaccessible for persons with disabilities both in terms of physical infrastructure and necessary support services.

Motivation for finishing high school and pursuing post-secondary education appears to be diminishing, since even well-educated persons are unemployed. Further, while education has been depicted as a prerequisite to a productive future, *it is becoming increasingly difficult for some young people, particularly those with special needs, to go to colleges or university*. This is because of reorganization of the post-secondary system, reduced course offerings within some schools, the increasing cost of tuition and travel, the lack of safe and affordable housing, limited physical access for students with disabilities, reductions in grants, bursaries and scholarships, and the difficulty some young people have to obtain loans (because of their family income) and repay them (few employment prospects after graduation).

Social Services

Tensions are increasing between the working poor and people who qualify for Social Assistance, Unemployment Insurance and TAGS. This is due in large part to the differential payment levels and qualification criteria for various income supports as well as the perceived unfair distribution of social programs and growing sparsity of "liveable wage" employment.

The Committee heard from people who are employed but working in low-paying jobs. They often characterized themselves as not poor enough to qualify for Social Assistance and the supports that come with it, and not well-off enough to afford many of the services they need. Eligibility for some services is based on *means testing* rather than on *actual need for service*.

However, persons who qualify for Social Assistance are often eligible for services which have not been allocated the funds necessary for implementation. Reality for persons receiving

Social Assistance is a demoralizing lack of income security and financial dependence, and with insufficient funds to adequately clothe and feed their families.

Some observed that there is an *increasing tendency to "blame the victim"*, to assume that individuals are responsible for their own misfortunes. Such an attitude prevents people from understanding the systemic nature of many of the problems and further penalizes individuals who have little control over their own circumstances.

Throughout the public consultation process, many people felt that Government should guarantee a minimum income level for all citizens and remove the disincentives to work inherent in the existing Social Assistance regulations. *Continued cutbacks to programs within the Department of Social Services and failure to protect people from poverty will result in increased need for costly support services over the long-term.*

Children and Youth

Poverty and lack of employment are having a *devastating impact on community and family values, and especially on children and youth*. Young people are feeling alienated, disillusioned and hopeless about their future. They have nothing to do, few recreational activities, little exposure to work experience and few opportunities to develop a work ethic. They feel their lives have no meaning, and they have no reason to value work, their communities or themselves.

The effects of these attitudes are seen in the *increase in youth problems, such as alcoholism, substance abuse, the high drop-out rate and teen pregnancies*. Stress is a major problem for today's youth, and this often expresses itself in loss of respect for authority, and in violence and vandalism, frequently directed against community property. Many expressed concern that violence is increasing, in the home and in the community. People feel much less safe than they once did.

The growth in gambling and other *addiction-related problems* was cited as both a symptom and a further contributor to these and many other social problems. People attempt to escape the reality of poverty, hunger, depression and unemployment through substance abuse or by trying to "win the big one". Instead, this worsens the situation, making it even more difficult for these people to cope with day-to-day life, including providing for their children.

Employment

Unemployment, low income and poverty were perhaps the most consistent and widespread concerns wherever the Committee went. The lack of employment is the *single most important issue* that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians face, and solving unemployment would resolve many social problems and meet most of our basic needs.

People told us that they want to work to regain their dignity, self-confidence and independence. In addition to hardships for their families, the lack of jobs has meant a *loss of pride, personal self-esteem and self-worth*. Especially in rural communities, more and more people feel idle and that they have no purpose. Government should make the *creation of paid work* a priority for both the economic and psychological well-being of people.

Without paying jobs, most people can see no real long-term solutions to either our economic or our social crises.

Without work and with less assistance available to them, some families are unable to care for their children. In some communities, children are hungry. With poverty and hunger comes a host of other problems, and diminishing odds against ever being self-reliant. Poor children are more likely to be malnourished and unhealthy, perform poorly in school, and are often unable to afford to participate in school and recreational activities.

Justice

Within the justice system, we were told, there are important gaps in service. There are, for instance, *few resources for victims of crime*. While considerable effort and expense is spent apprehending, trying and incarcerating criminals, there is very little left over for the needs of victims and their families, whose psychological and emotional hurts often outlast their physical injuries.

Since victims of abuse, violent crime and sexual offenses tend to be the most vulnerable members of society – children, the elderly, dependent women, people with disabilities – many will have trouble coming forward without strong, accessible and sympathetic victim support. If victims do not come forward to make complaints to police, the crimes will continue and likely get worse. When they do come forward, their experience with the justice system can re-traumatize them.

As in many social areas, *prevention through social development is seen as the most effective means of dealing with crime*. Crime does not occur in isolation: it is often the result of poverty, violence or neglect.

Municipalities

The Committee heard of *growing tension and mistrust among some communities and regions*, fed by increasing competition and growing inequities. The tension and animosity were especially prevalent between the Island portion of the Province and Labrador. Within Labrador, native groups spoke of feeling even more isolated, alienated and neglected than in the past. There is a strongly held view that *Labrador's resources support the Island*, and that

Labradorians get back less than a fair share of the value of these resources in the form of services and other supports.

There is *a growing fear about the future and about rural communities in particular*. These fears are further fuelled by a perception that rural communities are not getting a fair or equitable share of resources, and that there is under way in rural areas a tacit dismantling of services which will ultimately drive people out of their communities.

Some spoke of *resettlement by stealth* – a sense that Government is eliminating rural communities service by service and leaving residents with no choice but to leave. They believe that recent decisions, such as the centralization of services, the reduction of teachers due to reduced enrolment, reductions in the quality of educational opportunities, reduction of municipal grants and related services, and the loss of health professionals, will result ultimately in the death of many communities.

People *want an affirmation that rural communities are important and valued* by Government and have a central role in its Strategic Social Plan, in our society and in our culture.

Housing

Inadequate housing is another serious concern for many. For example, the cuts in Social Services and the lack of affordable housing have caused people with mental illnesses, and other vulnerable groups, to live in deplorable conditions. Often these environments are not conducive to maintaining health. People with disabilities get caught in a vicious cycle because they cannot look after themselves without adequate resources, and they cannot get the money they need, even though independent care is less costly than institutional care.

The Voluntary Sector and Volunteers

Within communities we heard repeatedly that, in addition to the lack of necessary Government services, community capacity to provide support and assistance is overburdened and underfunded. *Volunteers and voluntary agency employees are feeling "burnt out" by rising demands and fading hope*. Changing demographics are increasing the demand on the voluntary sector at the same time as its pool of human resources is diminishing because of out-migration.

While many voluntary sector organizations feel they have a role to play in community economic development, they stated that they cannot do so without Government resource provision. It was also noted, however, that for the sector to be as effective as possible, it should operate at arms length from Government and retain its roots in the community. *Agencies in the sector want to move towards a more cooperative, participatory relationship with Government* where both interact as equals.

Culture

Participants spoke of the "*erosion of culture*" in our society. While social change, the media and out-migration were seen as having a profound impact on our culture, we were told that the impact is made worse by a lack of a clear policy, institutional supports and infrastructure needed to preserve and keep our culture alive. Arts and culture must be supported through public policy.

Although cultural products – such as art, music, literature, handcrafted goods – have an important economic value, the Committee was reminded that culture must be valued for its own sake, as an important aspect of life. As one person put it, "Our culture must be real, living, not just a show we put on for tourists." Some suggested that Government officials lack a working knowledge of the arts industry in Newfoundland and Labrador and thus cannot support or promote it properly.

Service Providers

Many *Government employees* echoed concerns raised by other participants, but also described the additional difficulty of working under the dual threat of losing their own jobs and being unable to provide adequate services to their clients because of staff and service cuts. Increased workloads, paperwork, more time spent on administration rather than on service delivery, and the general attitude of depression among their clients, have led to a growing sense of frustration among public servants.

In rural areas especially, some Government employees described a widening distance between themselves and senior people within their departments. They believe their concerns are not given due consideration by upper management, that they are not asked for their opinions and they are not listened to. They express concern that they frequently cannot meet the needs of the people they are expected to serve because of a lack of resources, high case loads, and constant pressure to tighten service delivery. Many *operate on a reactive basis and have little latitude for early intervention in addressing social problems*. There is a desire for more autonomy and flexibility in local decision-making, and for the authority to deliver services which are more specifically suited to the communities and regions in which they work.

Public Consultation

There is also frustration about *the way consultations with the public are conducted by Government*. Some said they had been "consulted to death". Some remarked that most of what they had to say to the Social Policy Advisory Committee had been said many times before in other consultations, without any apparent effect. As one group said, "We have often seen many such commissions and committees ... and have wondered whether any significant progress has been made by us appearing before them."

While people do want to be consulted, they want it to be genuine and to have a real purpose. Instead of numerous *ad hoc* task forces vetting specific issues, people said that consultation should be part of a logical, on-going process of dialogue among Government, the regions, communities and other stakeholders. They also indicated that Government should account for what it does – or does not do – with the information received in consultations.

New Directions

"It is not economic development goals that should govern social goals, or social goals that govern economic goals. We must recognize that this is a false dichotomy given that both of the arenas for policy and action are overlapping, interdependent and mutually interactive."

In addition to shared concerns and tensions, the Social Policy Advisory Committee heard many views about the direction social policy should take, and about what Government should do in order to develop a sound Plan that will improve existing services and meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Relationship between Economic and Social Development

Participants in all parts of the Province stressed the fundamental need for Government – and the public – *to recognize that social and economic development are one and the same*. The Committee was told again and again that social and economic policy, planning and development must go hand-in-hand. The Strategic Social Plan and the Strategic Economic Plan should be one integrated plan; economic and social development should not be pursued as separate policy initiatives. To ensure integration, procedures should be in place to make sure that initiatives are mutually supportive. Some suggested that a fully integrated plan would also incorporate environmental issues.

The emerging economic zone boards are providing new directions for economic development, but they should recognize the importance of *integrating social and economic policy*. Community development must include both economic and social development. While the Province's Regional Economic Development Boards are coming together to assess economic needs and develop economic strategies, in some zones this is being done in isolation from social considerations. A better approach would see regional economic development strategies being formulated in conjunction with social development objectives. People noted that this will require more concerted and intensive community support.

Integrated Client-Focused Policy and Programs

People believe that many of the problems associated with bureaucratic inefficiency, lack of coordination and ineffectiveness can be solved by *a more integrated approach to program development and delivery*. *Focusing more on the client*, within a flexible, person-centred, holistic approach, would go a long way to achieving integration across service providers, as would removing barriers between professionals providing the services.

It might also help to prevent policies and programs from being developed without an understanding of the impact they will have on individuals, or on groups, such as women who are often affected differently by policy decisions in many different departments and agencies.

Within such a *flexible, client-centred approach*, services would coalesce around individual needs, rather than the reverse, as teams work with the individuals and their families. They should be client-driven rather than program-driven, and the person using the service should be an active participant in his or her own tailored plan. At present, people have to fit programs rather than having programs fit people.

Repeatedly, people recommended a comprehensive and integrated multi-disciplinary approach, with services delivered horizontally and not vertically, and where those who provide the service are *accountable to the client*.

Community Involvement

More integrated, client-centred strategies would also foster a less institutional approach and encourage (and require) *more community-based care and community involvement*. Indeed, one of the most common desires articulated during the consultations was for more individual and community-level involvement in service delivery and program management, with appropriate levels of support and resources from Government. This might lead to better and more effective delivery to users, and more successful integration of individuals within the community.

However, with more community involvement must come *more community authority in decision-making and adequate resources to meet needs*. "One size fits all" approaches are no more appropriate for communities than they are for individuals.

Partnerships

Partnerships among communities, agencies and Government must be balanced. They will not work if Government simply wants to tell the other partners what it wants them to do; all participants must have mutually-agreed upon, common goals. With more responsibility must come more resources and more authority. Decision-making should involve informed local groups nearest to the service recipients. These should include Government field staff, who should be able to apply programs flexibly and creatively to meet individual needs.

Effective partnerships among the voluntary sector, the community and Government will require investment as well as new attitudes. More investment in leadership, infrastructure, support services and information is required for community-based and community-oriented services to be truly effective. In essence, Government cannot "download" responsibility without "uploading" resources and authority.

Discussions will also be required to identify the appropriate responsibilities of Government, the voluntary sector and communities. Progressive partnerships will not be formed without role identification, responsibility setting, and evaluation mechanisms.

It was suggested that a community-based team approach involving education, health, justice, social services and business sectors would result in tremendous progress towards providing social programming that meets the real needs of children, students, their families and the whole community:

More community-driven and community-oriented services would also address issues of *accessibility*. Many good services and programs that exist today simply cannot be accessed because of where they are delivered or the criteria which limits eligibility.

Maximizing Resources

Many pointed to valuable assets and resources which already exist in many communities but are frequently under-utilised – *schools and libraries*. Several participants proposed new strategies for using these facilities as centres of community service and development, as well as for continuing and life-long learning. Instead of being the objects of cuts, they should be seen as community development investment opportunities.

Ongoing Consultation and Collaboration

More individual and community involvement, more realistic and responsive programs, and better planning for the future will require more *consistent on-going consultation with stakeholders and the public*. We heard from many groups and individuals that a process

for continuous interactive dialogue between Government and the community is required, and not simply rounds of consultations cut to fit Government's current agenda and timetable. *People want to be involved in a significant way throughout the process of Government policy-making and implementation.*

Comment from public consultation participant: "For the first time in my life, I have felt my voice and ideas are important. We have a lot to say if they would listen. We know the needs better than anyone. We are living it."

Evidence-Based Decision Making

Many people commented that *Government decisions are not well-grounded in current knowledge and experience*. While we were told that the information that Government needs to make the best decisions *is* often available – provided over the years in studies, consultations and through the voice of the people – there is a concern that much valuable research and

evidence-based information is not well known to policy advisors, decision-makers and politicians.

To support more meaningful and effective public participation, to strengthen the basis for community decision-making and to ensure that all who take part are better informed, the Committee was told that *independent research and information gathering and dissemination* should be emphasized.

Forward Planning

Funding *commitments to external organizations and programs should be long term*, so that planning and service delivery can be forward-looking, efficient, cost-effective and meet the needs of individuals. Frequently, funding from all levels of Government is for short periods, often allocated annually. All too often the efforts and energies of the service providers are diverted to seeking funds. This results in inefficiencies and sometimes wastes public money.

Investing in People

Throughout the consultations the Committee heard another clear and consistent theme: *the economy and spirit of this Province will be strong only if the people are strong.*

The Committee was told that Government and the people of Newfoundland and Labrador must recognize and act on the recognition that the best investment in this Province is an investment in its people. *Strong and effective social programs are an investment* in protecting and enhancing our best and most important assets, and not a drain on our financial resources.

Investing in people – in health, education, literacy training, job-readiness, and social well-being – is the best way to reap future dividends. It is the strategy we must employ if we want young people and families to stay in Newfoundland and Labrador instead of leaving with all their skills, their energy and the future assets that are embodied in *their* children.

Investing in our "human capital" is not a strategy for the short term. It is a long-term investment that will take time to mature. Because we may not see an immediate pay-off on some investments, these choices may be difficult for politicians to make. But this is the course Government must follow if it is committed to *ensuring that people have the opportunity to live with dignity, and have a real chance to be independent, to prosper and to be secure.* This is what is required if we are to become self-sufficient as individuals and as a society.

Prevention and Early Intervention

Because the cost of preventing a problem, of meeting a need before it becomes a crisis, can be a fraction of the cost of repairing it in the future, such investments will pay for themselves many times over. Indeed, we were told, investing in *prevention and early intervention* – especially involving children – should be a key strategy in any plan developed by Government.

Early childhood intervention strategies not only assist the development of children but the stability and well-being of their families, too. Further, as one respondent observed, "If we can engage families in the problem solving from the very beginning, rather than labelling and rejecting them as the problem, our chances of restoring children to healthy functioning families are so much the greater."

"We have a clear choice. We can continue to use the excuse of lack of funds for systemic shortcomings, or urge for commitment on the part of politicians, bureaucracies, communities and families to make the welfare of children our top priority... . In the long run the latter choice is likely to prove to be most cost effective as we break the cycles of abuse and of poverty, and as we decrease the numbers of children who, deprived of the essential building blocks to healthy development, may grow up to be a charge on society in other ways."

As a priority, the Committee was told that effective programs will *have to address the fundamental issue of childhood poverty and marginalization*. They will not only have to ensure adequate income support for their families, but must open up new opportunities for these children to mature responsibly, with a good sense of self-esteem, confidence and hope. One group cited the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child: "Children must have the first call on a nation's resources in bad times as well as good".

Support for healthy child development should even begin before the child is born (e.g. prenatal nutrition programs for expectant mothers reap tremendous benefits). Since the early years are critical for development and are a major indicator of future adult behaviour, child-oriented prevention programs will save tremendous personal, social and financial costs in the short term as well as in the long run.

For example, if hungry children are fed, teachers often notice an immediate improvement in attention span and participation levels.

It was suggested that some childhood prevention strategies should be directed toward parents (or high school students), in the form of parenting courses and education in nutrition and health.

Effective *strategies must also be in place for youth*, strategies which help keep them in school, assist them in making the transition from school to work, and allow them to develop as productive citizens.

Child-oriented strategies have to be developed not only in the context of the family, but in the context of the community, too. Just as the solutions required by each child are different, so are the capacities of various communities to support their needs.

Healthier communities which provide a good social environment can play a positive role in the lives of our children, youth and all citizens.

Strengths to Build On

"We've been here [for a long time] now and we're not going away. We have too much that's worthwhile. We have just got to get it right, to get on with all those things we do best."

While the Social Policy Advisory Committee listened to the concerns of many who are feeling the cumulative effects of the last decade of economic crisis and recession, the restructuring of the health care and educational systems and reductions in social support programs, we also heard strong expressions of determination and hope for the future.

Human Resources

People throughout the Province cited our *underlying strength and resilience as a people*. They spoke of our strong cultural heritage, our traditions of concern and caring for others, our readiness to help others in times of adversity, our willingness to move forward, and our great diversity of skills and abilities. Many referred to the *potential to build upon the network of volunteers and community-based, voluntary-sector organizations*, such as women's centres, consumer associations, family resource centres, seniors groups, church groups, service clubs, and Regional Economic Development Boards. As well, people noted the tremendous gains which have been made in recent years in the percentage of young people who graduate from high school and obtain post-secondary education.

Opportunities for Growth

Some believe that our best and brightest opportunities lie just ahead, and that – together with our traditional skills and resources – they will become the foundation of a renewed and reinvigorated economy and society.

Participants pointed to the *recent growth in industries* such as information technology, manufacturing, aquaculture and tourism, and the contribution they are making to economic diversification. The *increasing strength and vitality of Newfoundland and Labrador's resource-based sector* – the Voisey's Bay nickel mine and mill, the Argentia smelter/refinery complex, the Hibernia, Terra Nova and White Rose offshore oil developments, and the offshore oil transshipment facility in Placentia Bay – were mentioned, not only for the immediate employment opportunities and revenues, but for the associated industrial opportunities these projects are bringing. However, people want to ensure that the benefits of these developments are reaped by residents of the Province both through the appropriate tax regime and job creation.

Many participants noted that the *Regional Economic Development Boards offer new opportunities* for capitalizing on these and other developments, and for coordinating economic development throughout the Province.

In some regards, *people are also becoming a little more optimistic about the Newfoundland and Labrador fisheries*. Since the closure of the Northern and 3PS groundfisheries, many fishing enterprises have diversified and are processing new or under-utilized species. In addition, there is growing hope that the 3PS stocks may soon be reopened as well. For many fisherpersons, 1996 was one of the most productive years in decades.

Services and Sectors

During the consultations, many people said we must have more integration and co-ordination among Government departments and with individuals and community groups, and stressed the importance of breaking down program and agency barriers. Nevertheless, Government is organized by department, and services are delivered through specific programs and agencies.

This chapter summarizes the public's views along departmental lines, following specifically the Services portion of the *Strategic Social Plan Consultation Paper* published by Government.

It is important to bear in mind, however, that most of the comments we heard did not deal with the jurisdiction or mandates of specific departments. Rather, they were focused on those who use the services. Consequently, comments organized by department in this section can often apply to more than one service area, and many cross agency boundaries.

This section reports on the range of issues raised by public consultation participants; the views expressed are not necessarily those of the Social Policy Advisory Committee.

"We have to understand that we are all at risk of needing to be caught by the social safety net. Our response depends on the support we have in our families and our communities and what we need to cope and survive. Poverty is a result of systems which serve people with money. We are concerned that using terms such as consumers and users implies that people use up resources when they need some part of the social safety net. While we do need to be more efficient, we still need to respect people and accord them the dignity they deserve."

Social Services

Lack of income security and financial dependence were dominant and recurring themes throughout the Province. Some people fear being unable to feed themselves and their children, or losing their homes. They want a guaranteed, basic level of financial support, not only to provide the necessities of life, but to allay the increasing stress of living with uncertainty about the future.

People believe that Government must protect individuals and families from poverty by whatever means are necessary. Poverty, we were reminded, affects children most severely and puts our greatest asset at risk. New strategies must focus more specifically and effectively on the needs, welfare and protection of children and youth, within their families, their communities and society. Sound strategies aimed at the welfare of children can prevent many social problems from occurring and diminish the effects of others.

Many echoed the words of the *Strategic Social Plan Consultation Paper* – that poverty, low levels of education and unemployment are both the cause and the result of a recurring cycle of distress which works against future improvement, frustrates opportunities for advancement, discourages initiatives and injures self-esteem.

The Social Policy Advisory Committee also heard that simply providing equal opportunities or equal access to services is not enough to remove the barriers that impede people with special needs. Disabilities often impose severe starting penalties on those they affect, and often persons with disabilities require other support just to ensure a "level playing field". As Government acknowledges in the *Consultation Paper*, "since the odds are against individuals with disabilities, we must first even the odds before they can have equal opportunity."

Although the Government cuts have affected people using many service areas, most agree that the cuts affecting Department of Social Services (DOSS) programs have had some of the most severe and damaging impacts.

The \$61 special-needs allowance (usually for food for families in receipt of Social Assistance) has been cut; user fees for prescriptions are causing new hardships; most home support services have been cut by 10% with no new applications being considered unless deemed an "emergency"; the transportation subsidy for medical appointments has been (with few exceptions) eliminated; an emergency foster care home for children was recently closed; income tax rebates to recipients of Social Assistance are now calculated as income and are clawed back;

and the Department is enforcing recovery of over-payments even when the over-payment was due to departmental error.

It was noted that the cumulative impact of these cutbacks is greater still. There has not been an increase in basic rates for several years, despite inflation. This means that many people are in effect living with lower incomes than in years gone by.

The Social Policy Advisory Committee heard repeatedly of the hardships the cuts in funding and rationing of services are having on many people, but these have been particularly onerous for the most vulnerable members of society, those least able to meet their needs in other ways. Government should recognize the detrimental impact of its recent cuts, re-examine its priorities by listening to the people, and change the way it goes about making its decisions.

When programs are changed, there should be an adequate transition period to help people understand and adjust to the changes. Careful monitoring is required to determine the full impact of the changes, and to ensure that people continue to receive adequate support.

Social workers and other DOSS front-line workers, already labouring under increased work loads and pressures, reiterated the additional hardships caused their clients by the cutbacks, and described the negative impact this has had on their own ability to do their jobs.

New approaches that were proposed often involved early childhood development strategies. Recognizing the importance of early childhood development for future health, education and well-being, people want more of a focus on early childhood development, on pre-natal and child nutrition, and on ensuring that all children have a safe, happy and stimulating environment, with adequate income support, and an equal chance to succeed. Over and over people emphasized the importance of assisting families to enhance their parenting skills.

The following sections capture more detailed commentary from public dialogue participants.

Poverty and Income Security

- with limited budgets and the high cost of living, food expense is falling into the discretionary spending category
- the work ethic is being lost because of the design of present income support programs

“It is hard to live on what we are receiving from the Department of Social Services. What we get in a month, we should get every two weeks so we can afford more, like food and clothes.”

“My family and I can hardly make do. It’s really hard for me because I have two teenage boys who need help in different areas and they’re [Dept. of Social Services] telling me there’s nothing they can do. It’s going to be too late when something happens.”

- there are conflicting policies across departments, and the penalties for earning income support, rather than correct, continuing poverty; income support programs should be reformed so that people are not penalized for earning income
- Social Assistance programs should be redesigned to enable people to work, either through added incentives or work programs
- low paying jobs make it impossible to maintain a reasonable standard of living and may require greater supplementation; the working poor have problems similar to those of recipients of Social Assistance
- the stress caused by poverty in families is resulting in increased behavioural problems in children
- there is a stigma associated with receiving Social Assistance; we must develop a respect for people who are poor; as one participant remarked: "I have to spill my guts to get a bit of Social Assistance."
- Government should assess eligibility for assistance based on individual income rather than on family income
- income support should be implemented on a sliding scale; it should not be reduced for those in education or training programs
- food banks and clothing thrift stores help increase self-sufficiency, but the full responsibility for meeting basic needs cannot be borne by charitable organizations
- not all communities have food banks and thrift shops so some people are at a greater disadvantage in supporting themselves and their children
- a basic standard of living should be a right
- we should have a basic Bill of Social Rights guaranteeing an adequate level of service and support to all citizens.

Infants and Children

- difficulties in unemployed and low income families are exacerbating social problems for children; special needs supports are only available for the most disadvantaged children, and they have to be in a crisis situation before they can receive help
- the Province should have a food security policy; a school breakfast or lunch program is required to feed all poor children a nutritious meal every school day
- social workers should be assigned to the schools where, in partnership with the teachers, they can better meet the needs of children and youth
- services must be equally accessible to all children; at present there is unequal access to services and supports, depending on geographic location
- cutbacks in funding for children's services, such as speech therapy and physiotherapy, result in children – especially those in low income families – not having access to services, or being placed on long waiting lists
- efforts of the Division of Child Welfare should be the result of cooperation and integration among social workers, foster care givers and families

- the establishment of a Child Advocate, a Children's Policy Secretariat, a Division of Family Services or a Child and Family Services Department might be ways of helping to ensure integrated solutions to child issues
- Government should revisit and implement recommendations from previous research, such as those in the report of the Select Committee on Children's Interests.

Youth

- there is a "policy gap" in protection and services for 16 to 18-year olds who are not covered by provincial legislation; protection and services are not provided for youth between 16 and 18 years of age; the *Child Welfare Act* should be amended to cover this group
- the Department of Social Services has no services for teenagers to mediate between them and their families, or to provide shelter until resolution is reached within the family
- too many youth are turning to welfare as their primary source of income; people are worried about young people getting drawn into the welfare system and becoming dependent on it; some said youth should be expected to "do something" for their cheque – either work, study or perform community service
- teenage pregnancy is still a problem in some regions where some teenagers see this as a way of leaving home and getting their own place, away from parents
- alcohol and drug use is increasing, and involving younger and younger children
- depression, idleness, and hopelessness about the future are driving up youth depression and suicide rates.

Families

- the federal Government must reform its Child Tax Credit system to make it fairer, more effective and – where necessary – more substantial; the Province must push this issue
- the imbalance in supports provided to natural families compared to those for foster caregivers is breaking up family units; foster care provides children with things like clothing, toys, and nutritious food that the parents couldn't afford while receiving Social Assistance; parents have had to put their children in foster care because they cannot provide them with enough to eat
- except in extreme cases, children should not be separated from their family environment
- services must support the healthy development of families; we should have programs and expertise to develop parenting skills, including education about nutrition and child development
- accessible, supportive parenting intervention mechanisms are needed, such as a parent's help line, a network of people to intervene by providing respite support, and counselling
- multi-purpose, multi-disciplinary family resource centres are needed in all communities and regions

- women and children have difficulty leaving abusive households because of a shortage of accessible shelters; children who are raised in such abusive situations are not only cheated out of their childhoods but also their futures
- in order to escape their family situations, some young girls may marry early or get pregnant; the result is a new cycle of parents with few parenting skills who are unable to clothe or feed their children properly.

Child Care

- support for child care is inadequate; a universally accessible, publicly funded child-care system should be available
- social services subsidies for child care are insufficient and are adversely affected by minor increases in income levels; this means that the working poor are penalized for trying to get ahead, and their children suffer
- lack of child care is a barrier that can keep single parents from going to work
- new legislation and accompanying regulations on licensed child care (about which the industry was not consulted) have been prepared for the last four years but have yet to go to the House of Assembly; legislation should cover standards, regulations and licensing for child care for children under two years of age, and support home-based child care
- the wages of child-care workers should reflect the necessary training and associated responsibilities of their position; this will attract well-qualified and committed child-care workers and ensure better quality care
- many children are also being cared for at home by parents, so there is still a requirement for community outreach and family support
- even a good day care is not the best option for some children; some require more individualized, less competitive and more nurturing settings
- the Province should work with the federal Government to initiate a national child-care program.

One mother told us that because of economic stress she had a breakdown so her children were put into voluntary foster care. One of the children has a disability and goes to the Janeway for regular visits. When the child lived with her and she brought him to the Janeway she was put up at a hostel and given \$7 a day for food. Now when her child goes to the Janeway, both the foster parents, the natural mother and the second child are put up at a hotel and given full per diem rates for food. At the foster home the children have nice clothing, good food and lovely toys. If they return home, they will have no new clothing, an inadequate diet and few toys. She wonders if her children would be better off staying in foster care.

The Elderly

- family support for seniors is decreasing as younger members move away; a community-based approach will make better use of dwindling public finances
- community kitchens are part of the community solution for seniors' home care.

- transportation to recreational and medical facilities is a problem for many people and especially for persons with disabilities and for seniors
- for seniors and persons with disabilities, medical expenses – such as prescription costs and medical supplies – are often paid out of the allotted food budget since medical subsidies have been reduced
- the Province should have a Department responsible for seniors which can look at this group and decide on the most integrated, client-centred way to meet their needs
- increases in long-term care costs have created hardship for some family members.

Persons with Disabilities

- adequate support services for persons with disabilities will decrease isolation, depression and the need for chronic care later in life
- within a supportive community setting, individuals with developmental delays can learn to integrate and develop life skills relevant to community living; activities outside the home should be provided for better integration into the community
- persons with disabilities are more vulnerable than other people to sub-standard living and housing conditions
- children with disabilities should have more access to specialized equipment and treatment subsidies, with eligibility determined by the child's need for the service, rather than family income
- equipment should be loaned to children with disabilities so that, as they outgrow the equipment, it can be passed on to other children
- it is sometimes more difficult for people with disabilities to advocate their needs
- with the movement towards regionalized services, persons with disabilities fear that they will become even more isolated from those with decision-making authority
- without income from employment, persons with disabilities do not have the same chance for proper nutrition or housing; this can harm their health as well
- cuts to the Social Services drug subsidization budget are causing crises in the mental-health sector
- some people will never be able to work because of their disabilities; adequate supports must still be maintained
- persons with "invisible" disabilities, such as those who are hard of hearing, also require support services; approximately 10% of the Newfoundland and Labrador population is hard of hearing
- programs and services for persons with disabilities should be based on an Independent Living Model so that people are empowered to take control of their lives
- plans for the future of persons with disabilities depending upon a parent or family care giver should be in place to alleviate long-term worry of the family.

Strain on Workers

- social worker caseloads in some regions are currently above the national average and above the norm considered for good care
- social workers are only able to deliver crisis services, leaving no time for prevention; only individuals in crisis situations are receiving intervention
- front-line Department workers do not have enough decision-making authority; there are no funds for their discretionary-use in emergencies; some have little supervisory support and do not have adequate on-the-job training
- social workers are concerned about increasing administrative demands for paper work and increasing reliance on doctors to authorize certain services for clients.

General

- Canada needs a *Social Security Act* to restore the rights and protections that poor people had under the Canada Assistance Plan; these include the right to an adequate income when in need, the right to appeal decisions about welfare, the right to assistance without discrimination, and the right to choose work or training
- a social audit should be used to determine what is working effectively and what is not, throughout the Province
- many programs are not meeting the needs of the people they are intended to serve
- the Department and its employees should focus more on a community development approach
- there is inconsistent service delivery among workers as well as across regions
- there were complaints about perceived negative attitudes of some departmental workers and DOSS investigators' intrusive behaviour and violations of privacy
- clients should have better access to information to ensure they know their rights and available supports; their choices should be respected and supported
- adults in receipt of Social Assistance require better access to appropriate dental care, especially the filling of cavities
- Government should redesign DOSS programs so that they are flexible and can provide support services without requiring that users be in receipt of Social Assistance to be eligible
- gender issues and equity are a problem within DOSS; for example, social workers (usually female) are required to use their own vehicles while male workers in other departments often have use of Government cars
- the Departments of Social Services and Health should work together for a more streamlined approach to service delivery
- regulations of the Department of Social Services prohibit the working poor from accessing subsidized treatments and support services; the working poor do not have sufficient income to pay for these services themselves

- all support services should encourage personal independence by focusing on solutions to a client's problems without being restricted to the rigid guidelines and financing of current programs
- client involvement is essential for the successful implementation of a client-focused approach to service delivery
- the Department of Social Services, including its income support and other support services, is in immediate need of reform.
- the income maintenance and service delivery components of the Department should be separated.

"I've seen communities mobilized around lifestyle issues to lessen the impact of an adult chronic illness such as heart disease through the Heart Health Program. You need to have experts in the area to take the lead. The supports are not there in all communities. The communities may come together, but they will need support to be effective. People will rally around, fundraise, but we must be aware that basic financial support needs to be available even to undertake that. I've also seen whole communities become depressed because of the economic depression in their communities."

Health

Everywhere people spoke about losing *access to health-care services*. Erosion of "universality", the progression toward a two-tiered system where those who can afford to pay can receive better care and avoid long waiting periods by purchasing private services, increasing user fees, reduction in existing services, and increasing centralization of special care are all seen as threats to the health of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Furthermore, the costs of medication, medical supplies and services which were previously covered when a person was an in-patient are now being passed on to individuals when they receive care in the community. A double system is emerging which clearly fosters preferential treatment for those who can afford to pay and those who have private insurance or other forms of income support, since they can obtain services readily and quickly. Those who cannot pay are placed on long waiting lists. If this continues, many poorer people will end up with second-class service and delayed attention.

Many noted the responsibility the federal Government has to ensure national health-care standards, and urged the Province to take a strong stand on this issue. There was grave concern that the much-cherished, public health-care system which has developed in Canada is at risk. It was felt a national debate must take place to ensure the public is well informed about the insidious undermining of the principles of Medicare.

Respondents stated that viewing the health-care sector as a "business" and making cuts based on a "bottom-line" mentality is fundamentally wrong. High-quality, publicly-funded and universally-accessible health care must be viewed as a basic right of all citizens, whatever the financial cost and wherever they live.

Both health-care workers and members of the public raised the issue of under-staffing and increased workloads for health-care professionals, underlining the lower level of service, longer waiting periods and increased risks that result.

The lack of doctors in rural areas makes basic health care inaccessible. Over 70 doctor positions are unfilled and incentives to attract doctors are needed.

Many in rural communities pointed to the disparity between rural and urban areas, and the perception that people in rural areas are being denied adequate care because of the withdrawal of local services and the increased costs of travelling to larger centres. Increasing centralization makes it difficult to ensure that even basic needs can be met in many communities, especially with the associated increase in transportation costs.

A cost-related concern is that Government will move towards privatized health-care and support services. Many fear that the implementation of a US-type model will, in the long run, result in higher costs and reduced quality of services in order to reduce costs for the health-care system.

Another significant recurring theme was the benefit of increasing emphasis on *prevention*. While there will always be a need for curative treatment, many participants observed that by concentrating on good nutrition (especially in early childhood), by promoting healthy lifestyles (including sports and recreation), by working to stop unhealthy habits (such as smoking) and by ensuring that people do not live in poverty, many problems can be prevented or diminished. The consequences of ignoring prevention can be very expensive, and some – like poor nutritional habits – are often passed from generation to generation.

Linked to the concept of prevention is a changing and expanding concept of health and the "determinants of health" – all the factors which affect our physical and mental well-being, including biological endowment, lifestyle, quality and accessibility of health care, human and natural environment, education, social and economic development, public policy, social services and the justice system. In particular, it was noted that higher income levels are the most important factor related to good health, followed by educational levels and a record of healthy childhood development. Environmental factors are also important health determinants and we must guard against weakening environmental standards which could negatively affect health status. A more proactive approach to health issues should build on these facts.

The need for improved mental-health services both as essential public services and through a community-based model of self-help was highlighted frequently.

Increasing community-based care for people who are recuperating, or suffering from chronic conditions, or for seniors, was also seen as an important direction to pursue. Care based in the family home, or near to family and other kinds of community support was suggested as a way of decreasing delivery costs (as compared to expensive institutional care) while enhancing the quality of life for patients and their families. However, it was noted that present policies would have to be changed to ensure that removing a person from an institution does not result in less care or higher costs to the family. For instance, at present, when people are in hospital, their drugs are paid for, but once they are discharged they must pay for their own medications.

The public remarked that some policies and approaches to service provision actually conflict. For example, one policy may push people out of hospitals while other program decisions cause them to be readmitted and to remain in hospital because of insufficient community supports.

The following sections capture more detailed commentary from public dialogue participants:

Cuts and Increasing Costs

- the costs to individuals and families for long-term care for chronic illnesses are too high and are growing
- the Province should pressure the federal Government to change the drug patent laws to break drug monopolies and thus lower costs
- people are losing confidence in the quality of health-care services provided in hospitals because of service and staff cuts
- when it implemented the Canada Health and Social Transfer, the federal Government reduced funding for social programming in Newfoundland and Labrador - including health - by approximately \$100 million in this year alone.

Access and Location of Services

- the working poor are unable to access many medical services and treatments because they cannot afford to pay for these items themselves and their employment income disqualifies them from Government subsidies; many workers do not have private insurance
- Government regulations should change to enable the working poor to access medical treatment subsidies
- to ensure an equitable level of service in all regions it is important that specific standards of service be developed
- Labradorians have to go to St. Anthony for services that do not exist in Labrador; access to universal Medicare is limited
- transportation to recreational and medical facilities is a problem for many people and especially so for seniors and persons with disabilities
- there is a shortage of ambulance services in rural areas; reductions in Government-paid per diems for private ambulance services may cause some to close, and so cause further shortages
- the problem of recruiting and retaining medical staff in rural areas is worsening and there are vacant positions in many areas
- resources and services should be allocated, based on the principles of universality and accessibility
- universal Medicare must be protected and expanded, with any recent cuts and restrictions reversed.

Prevention and Early Intervention

- if we focus on a health promotion model, we must recognize that it is not a substitute for medical services; a balance must be maintained
- we have to stress people's responsibility for their own health; this is an educational awareness process
- recreational activities are effective in the promotion and maintenance of healthy lifestyles, resulting in less illness and decreased dependence on medical services for people of all ages

- aboriginal communities have severe addiction rates and high levels of poverty, but few intervention or support services are provided
- screening for potential health problems needs to take place earlier in a child's life; tests should be available to all children by three years of age; if problems are found we must be able to provide follow-up services within a reasonable time frame
- Government should implement a public awareness campaign about preventable health hazards
- Government must strengthen occupational health and safety legislation to protect the health of workers on the job
- the Department of Education's cutting of Home Economics and Health programs from the school curriculum is a step backwards, away from prevention; high school graduates are coming out of school and cannot cook, and do not have a knowledge of nutrition
- breastfeeding is the best source of nutrition and prevention against allergies that a child can have, yet breastfeeding mothers do not receive a nutrition supplement from the Department of Social Services whereas others get it for formula
- the percentage of the population with diabetes has reached epidemic proportions; we need a strategic plan for managing the disease, including mechanisms for early diagnosis and treatment
- we must prepare now for the changing health needs of our aging population, keeping in mind the decreased numbers of young people to assist in taking care of the elderly and persons with disabilities.

Environment

- because environmental factors are important health determinants, deregulation in the current provincial environmental impact assessment review must be monitored; there are no financial resources available to do separate, unbiased Environmental Impact Statements, and we have to accept the industry position
- our lakes, rivers, ponds and surrounding coastal waters are polluted with sewage and other human waste
- noise pollution is having detrimental effects upon our auditory senses, resulting in hearing loss for some people
- environmental pollution has a detrimental impact on health - unclean water spreading disease, noise pollution causing hearing loss, air pollution leading to respiratory disorders; protecting our natural environment can effectively promote health and well-being.

Food and Nutrition

- Government does not have a Food and Nutrition Policy; the Department of Health does not have a provincial nutrition consultant; there are no community services to assist in nutrition and home economics

- food security is the basis of good health; without food security the poor will be hungry and ill; poor nutrition and hunger can have a devastating effect on health and create or aggravate many other social problems
- healthy eating habits may assist people who are at risk of developing diabetes to avert onset of disease, expensive health treatments and other associated illnesses such as kidney disease
- DOSS has cut vitamin supplements for pre-natal mothers
- the cost of food is three to four-times higher in Labrador; Social Assistance rates need to increase to reflect the living costs in individual communities; a Guaranteed Annual Income supplement should fluctuate this way as well.

Institutional, Home and Community Care

- we need to clarify what services can and should be delivered at the community level
- present policies often conflict, one pushing people out of hospitals and another pushing them back in because of inadequate community-based supports
- there should be more involvement of individuals, family and communities in determining and implementing appropriate health strategies
- we have to reduce the cost of home care for persons with long-term illnesses.

Mental-Health Services

- there is a growing requirement for mental-health services because of changing social and economic stress on communities
- suicides rates are increasing in some regions
- community-based services such as self-help and peer support groups can be effective in addressing the needs of persons with mental-health illnesses
- community-based mental-health services should be available throughout the Province
- the need for mental-health services would decline if there were more jobs
- persons with mental-health problems who are given money to look after themselves are often taken advantage of by their landlords and supposed "caregivers"; no one checks to ensure that their needs are being met.

Children and Youth

- preventing alcohol and drug abuse among young people should be a priority
- more mental-health services designed to suit the needs of children and adolescents are required throughout the Province.

The Elderly

- the cost of seniors' homes is too high
- some spouses of seniors experience financial hardship as a result of the costs of purchasing institutional care; the present formula for determining how much people must pay towards

their spouses' care in nursing homes often leaves the spouse living at home in straitened circumstances

- nursing homes and similar institutions are geared towards medical treatment or care; often all that seniors require is additional home or personal care, since their extended families are not living near by to support them; providing such support would allow them to stay in their homes and remain contributing members of their communities
- more independent housing suitable to the physical needs of aging seniors should be made available
- many seniors have nutrient deficiencies which may eventually lead to respiratory and kidney problems; this can be alleviated through community support and home visits by alternative health professionals with information on nutrition; nutrition studies indicate that 25% of our senior population is nutritionally at risk
- there are insufficient services in some communities for seniors
- the growing numbers of seniors over the next 2 decades will put extreme pressure on the need for accessible health care services.

New Roles and Models

- the concept of health must be broader than the absence of illness; it should include social, economic, environmental and physical factors
- an expanded application of alternative health care, such as midwifery and homeopathic medicine should be considered
- alternative health-care providers should be covered under Medicare
- an expanded roles for nurses – as nurse practitioners – should be developed, especially in rural communities
- we need to move from *informed consent* to *informed decision making* within individual patient/client settings; wherever possible, patients should be involved in determining appropriate treatment strategies
- limited financial resources are one of the reasons professionals and policy makers in the health sector have not made a full transition from the institutional health-care delivery model to the population health model
- a population health model will need to integrate with education, social services and justice; it is a mistake to have institutional board functions separated from community board functions
- one of the barriers to integration of services is that our traditional health insurance payment system does not cover the cost of services provided in the many areas of prevention or alternate care
- a new provincial strategy should be part of a new national strategy.

Women

- drugs are prescribed too readily, especially to women

- specialized women's health care services are lacking throughout the Province, ie. breast care clinics and gynaecologists.

General

- there are weaknesses in our health-care governance structure because we have not clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- the working poor have medical needs which are not being met because they have no medical insurance, cannot afford to pay and are not covered by Government
- since income is an important predictor of health, economic and social policies, which affect people's jobs, must also be recognized as affecting their health
- all medical issues have an ethical side; health-care professionals need to be more skilled in this area and should keep pace with changing views; the ethics surrounding the last six months of a person's life, the over-medicalization of birth and death and the under-medicalization of mental-health issues should be addressed.

"My child is 11 years old and he has Cerebral Palsy. He used to have a 'challenged needs' teacher but he lost this support this year because when tested they found he had a high IQ. But he's an auditory learner, he reads at a grade 2 level and he's physically disabled so now he sits all day at school and can't participate. He comes home and we teach him his day's school work. It's exhausting and frustrating for him - he doesn't want to go to school. Some kids just don't belong in the mainstream."

Education

Concerns were raised everywhere about both the quality and policies of our present educational system, and about future needs and opportunities. Good education is essential for both social and economic development. It is the cornerstone of a strong economy, economic prosperity and progressive social values. Ensuring a strong and accessible system of education must therefore be a priority for both economic and social policy.

The Committee heard that while the numbers of students remaining in school is improving, budget restrictions are having a detrimental effect on the quality and availability of education – decreased staffing, fewer course options, the closure of institutions and increasing costs to students and parents. Some people remarked that in the process of restructuring, the real purpose of education and improvements to the curriculum are being neglected.

The cost cuts are being passed on to parents for bus transportation, school supplies and school activities. This is causing hardship for many low income families, particularly those with several children.

Within the primary and secondary school system, funding cuts have led to ever-increasing fund-raising efforts. These demands and requests to buy fund-raising products are especially difficult for low income families and in economically depressed areas. Because providing some basic services and classroom tools (such as computers) now depends quite heavily on the success of fund-raising and donations from businesses, disparity between schools and regions is increasing.

Students with disabilities feel the impact of funding cuts even more so than others because they have lost many of their supports and services. Furthermore, as class sizes grow, teachers are less able to assist these children individually. In some cases, children with disabilities are unable to attend school since appropriate supports are unavailable.

In addition to their jobs as teachers, educators are faced with the stress and strain of acting as role models, supervising extracurricular activities, providing counselling services, integrating students with disabilities into overcrowded classrooms, working with violent and disruptive students, and supporting children who are poor, abused or living with family breakdown.

Career counselling is a weakness in the system. There are not enough guidance counsellors and the student-to-counsellor ratio is too high. Existing counsellors have to spend too much of their time on teaching and personal counselling. As well, career information and planning is inadequate; information about labour-market trends should be analyzed and made available.

The growing prevalence of social and behavioural problems in the schools is increasing demands on Guidance Counsellors for personal counselling. They have little training for this type of counselling and many felt social workers should be placed in the schools to provide this support for students and families.

There are also problems for students making the progression from secondary to post-secondary education. Some educators in the post-secondary field complained that many people entering their institutions are ill-prepared despite being bright, and some lack basic skills such as writing ability.

Within the post-secondary system, the closure of institutions and increasing tuition costs were seen as barriers to education and training. It was observed that closure of schools is harmful to communities in economic terms because of lost jobs, and the resulting out-migration of teachers, support staff and services, and students.

It was suggested that, instead of being used as a justification for cutting back on schools, classrooms and courses, the present decline in school enrolment should be an opportunity to improve the quality of education with better student-teacher ratios, more support services for children and better opportunities for interactive learning.

Recreational facilities and programs, which are often seen as having lower priority in times of restraint, must be recognized as playing a key role in the healthy development of children and the prevention of illness.

Many participants observed that the concept of, and responsibility for, education must not be confined to the school system. Parents should be involved in stimulating their children before they enter the school system and for supporting their efforts during their school years. There should be universally accessible pre-school programs to give young children a solid educational foundation and to enrich their experiences before entering the formal school system. The business community has a role to play in helping students and unemployed people with on-the-job experience and training opportunities. More long-term programming is required in the education system and at a community level to provide opportunities for adults to improve basic literacy levels.

Schools, however, also need to become involved in life-long learning opportunities for adults, and members of the community need to participate more fully by sharing their experiences and expertise. For parents and families, schools can become much more important centres of activity, especially for the provision of other family-oriented services. Many schools are vacant in the evenings, on weekends and throughout the summer, when they could be used for other kinds of educational activities (such as Adult Basic Education) and as resource centres for all community members. By becoming "community schools", the buildings and their valuable resources should be community assets, and they should never close their doors to educating citizens and developing the community.

A similar expanded role was cited for libraries. The network of libraries throughout the Province provides resources for both formal education and life-long learning. These resources include state-of-the-art computer equipment obtained through special federal programs; in some communities this equipment may represent the only opportunity many residents have to learn new skills and access new information. However, at present, many of these resources are under-utilized because library hours and staffing are being reduced.

Because the foundation for all future learning and development is begun at conception, we cannot separate health concerns and social circumstances from educational issues. Such stresses as poor nutrition (including that of expectant mothers), hunger, poverty, family violence and disabilities can interfere with the development of the infant and young child, can seriously interfere with learning at home and in school, and can have economic and social consequences for the whole community.

Many who spoke to the Committee argued for a comprehensive and integrated vision of education, which extends across all age levels, bridges the gap between pre-school and kindergarten, school and work, school to post-secondary education, integrates school and library resources more intrinsically within the life of the community, addresses the special needs of individuals and regions, values excellence, and recognizes that people will only attain their greatest potential within a healthy, supportive and safe environment. Such a system must be fully accountable to the people of the Province.

The following sections capture more detailed commentary from public dialogue participants.

Early Childhood Development and Family

- there is a need for a better focus on early childhood/preschool education and enrichment; present pre-school programs are weak – the school system should expand its mandate to make facilities available for programming
- parents may require support to break down barriers that limit their involvement in their children's education: many parents indicated that they feel intimidated in schools
- the Department of Education no longer staffs a Child Health Services Coordinator and has eliminated its Early Childhood Education Consultant
- decision-makers need to use evidence-based research in their decision-making process.

School System

- high-school students should be offered parenting courses
- more recognition is required of the important role schools play in the lives of children and young people; other helping professionals (health, social workers, police) should have closer relationships with schools, preferably on site; services provided in school could then include
 - ▶ social programs such as support groups
 - ▶ opportunities for children to discuss their issues with helpful adults
 - ▶ expansion of non-stigmatizing nutritional programs in schools

- ▶ enriched family-life education, providing adolescents with opportunities to interact with small children
- ▶ policies to promote safety in school
- speech-language pathologists based in the schools would allow for direct access to children who might otherwise be overlooked
- violence among children must be addressed; anti-bullying campaigns should be mounted
- there is a significant level of "teacher burn-out"
- the school system should adopt more flexible, creative and challenging approaches to education; however, there is much resistance to change in the present system
- programs are tailored to the main stream with few alternative approaches; a student-centred approach is needed rather than a program-based approach
- the definition of "success" in education should be expanded to include self-esteem, satisfaction and well-being
- all students are encouraged to move to the median/average
- curriculum is not pushing students and many are not challenged; most take the easy way out and are not encouraged to do better
- excellence should be highly valued and encouraged in both teachers and students
- learning materials should be, where possible, culturally relevant
- more teacher training should be available
- schools should move from a seniority model to teacher evaluation, based on the performance of individuals working in the system.

Post-Secondary

- the loss of public colleges in some regions will result in increased costs for students who must re-locate to continue their education
- declining enrolment at Memorial University is seen as the result of increased tuition fees, and increases in travel and accommodation costs, which make it impossible for many people to afford a university education
- the family income cut-off level for loan eligibility is too low, especially if more than one child is attending a post-secondary institution
- student loans should be based on student income and not on family income
- tax deductions are needed for student loan payments
- because of increasing post-secondary education costs, many students graduate into a weak job market with very high debt loads
- poorer people are especially reluctant to incur large debts, and high tuition fees are a disincentive for them to further education
- costs of post-secondary education should be frozen
- Government should consider adopting a free tuition policy or distributing "tuition coupons" based on a student's academic achievement

- student loan repayment after graduation should be based on the individual's income level and ability to pay
- many post-secondary institutions are physically inaccessible to persons with disabilities
- safe and adequate housing that is affordable to students should be made available
- a strategy should be in place to retain youth and graduates in the Province.

Access

- school programs, facilities and the quality of education are uneven throughout the Province; especially in rural areas, students do not have truly equal opportunities to education
- to overcome access problems and regional differences, distance education and open-learning opportunities are important alternatives
- better access to technology is needed for schools in rural areas; information technology for isolated areas should be used to view and access the outside world
- Government should investigate the impacts of busing children long distances; it was argued that long bus rides each day encroach on valuable family time, are tiring for small children and diminish opportunities for children to participate in extracurricular activities.

Special Needs

- early testing, diagnosis and treatment will assist in the healthy development of children with learning disabilities
- however, diagnosis is useless because services are often not available to meet the diagnosed needs
- educators should be better educated about learning disabilities
- there is a perception that post-secondary institutions are reducing their supports to students with disabilities
- post-secondary institutions in this Province are not adapted to students who are completely deaf so they must attend institutions outside Newfoundland and Labrador
- the supports for the hearing impaired in post-secondary are insufficient and there is a fear that even the existing supports will be eroded in the future
- reductions in the budget for the School for the Deaf have begun to affect the services the school is able to provide
- supports must be provided to ensure schools are fully accessible to students with disabilities.

Work Preparation

- there are not enough guidance counsellors in schools, and career information is very weak; high-school students often do not know what educational opportunities are available; they do not know the criteria for funding programs, and often lack the academic prerequisites to enter educational programs of their choice
- all high school graduates should complete an employability-skills profile

- rational career choices cannot be made without accurate information about the labour market
- we need more co-operative and entrepreneurship education in schools
- millions of dollars are spent on training which does not lead to jobs
- weak communication skills are a common barrier for young people
- innovative approaches to work preparation are now being provided through the non-profit voluntary-sector (e.g. the READY program); and through partnerships at the community level (e.g. the Port au Port Community Education Project).

Literacy

- a Province-wide co-ordination of strategies to combat illiteracy is needed
- a consistent set of standards for the content and delivery of ABE are needed, including a single recording system and greater accountability for public funds
- comprehensive, coordinated and long-term policies and programs for literacy services are lacking; existing programs are seen as sporadic and arbitrary
- literacy education should be a right, without cost to the student; there is insufficient long-term financial commitment to literacy training
- literacy is an integral part of community empowerment and development; communities which have literate populations are far more likely to support entrepreneurship, expand their economies and provide social supports; the literate society is more open to change and better able to adapt
- federal jurisdictional issues have resulted in a lack of investment in literacy training as funding is primarily available for "peripheral" work, such as the preparation of manuals
- some agency or authority should be responsible for the Province-wide coordination and delivery of literacy programming with such responsibility supported with adequate resources
- community schools and community centres could offer Adult Basic Education programs.

Libraries

- library boards feel devalued because of funding cuts and the lack of reference to libraries in the Consultation Background Paper
- because of the diversity of information they contain, libraries can support information needs in all the social sectors, such as
 - ▶ tourism through the collection of materials on Newfoundland and Labrador
 - ▶ the work of Social Services in assisting poor families, families at risk and people with disabilities by promoting the value of literacy to society and providing the means for all citizens to develop and improve their literacy skills
 - ▶ the health-care system with information and materials promoting healthier lifestyles
 - ▶ education and training, and helping people adjust to new technologies
 - ▶ cultural endeavours, and preserving and providing access to our written cultural heritage
- members of the arts community suggested that public libraries have a greater role to play in providing access to Newfoundland and Labrador literature and writing.

"A guaranteed annual income would do much to alleviate poverty. Unless and until such a philosophy is acceptable to all Canadians, the least our Governments can do is provide a guaranteed annual amount of economic support for children, regardless of who their parents are. ... A guaranteed annual income for the support of children is necessary: without adequate income children's basic needs cannot be met. In addition the abolition of poverty is the first line of defence against abuse and neglect. If parents or guardians abuse or misuse such trust then this would be grounds for a finding of neglect."

Employment

People in this Province want to work. The lack of employment opportunities is a profound and fundamental concern among all groups in all regions. The relationship among unemployment, poverty, and an array of other social problems was widely acknowledged.

Many believe that much of the increased demand for services, such as mental health-care, counselling, and other health-care services, can be attributed to unemployment, and that by creating work Government can go a long way towards reducing many of the demands in other sectors. As the *Consultation Paper* observes, improving the employment situation in this Province will not only increase our ability to afford social programs, it will reduce our need for them.

In addition to saving service costs, a stronger employment climate will also save substantial human costs, in terms of lost dignity, lost self-esteem and hopelessness.

Without good, long-term employment opportunities, there is also a great fear that we will continue to lose young people and their families. Many of those who are leaving are our most talented and best educated. Because of the great difficulty in creating lasting employment, most initiatives have focused instead on education and job training. A frequent result has been well-trained individuals living in communities without work; at that point emigration becomes the only option.

Without jobs, many communities will simply die out, and much of our culture will be lost with them. Young people especially will move away.

People recognize that what we lose through out-migration is more than just people: many who are leaving are those best able to create new economic opportunities for others in the future.

Other participants noted that an increasing number of families and single individuals are requiring Social Assistance as a result of unemployment and the discontinuation of Unemployment Insurance (now Employment Insurance) benefits. With increased competition in the job market for even low-skill positions, many of these people are becoming further marginalised despite the fact that many have work experience and some type of post-secondary training. The marginalization is especially prevalent among those people who lack education and workforce experience.

As bad as the employment situation is for most, it is even worse for young people, women and for people with disabilities. Women still earn substantially less than men, and still face harassment and sometimes violence in the workplace. The workplace practices continue to limit access of persons with disabilities to employment opportunities. Few employers, particularly in rural areas, limit the ability of youth to gain much needed work experiences as part of their education.

Most people with disabilities want to work, to be self-reliant and to contribute a full measure to society, but largely due to a lack physical accessibility and job accommodations, a significant proportion of the population with disabilities cannot access employment of any sort, and most who do must find work through some kind of Government subsidized employment program.

As in many other sectors, emphasizing and facilitating community-based and community-driven development were seen as critical strategies for addressing employment issues. Participants want to identify new and more creative social programs that will draw upon the training and skills of unemployed or underemployed community members and apply them to community development initiatives, to let them participate in their own solutions, and to keep them from leaving.

Ironically, the move towards entrepreneurship and economic diversification has been stymied by what has historically been the Province's largest employment sector - resource-based industries such as the fishery. People are finding it difficult to move away from seasonal employment and Government income support.

It was suggested that a comprehensive, long-term plan be developed to prepare young people to work and to understand their employment options, including entrepreneurship. In particular, the Regional Economic Development Boards are seen as critical mechanisms for enhancing work opportunities, involving the business sector in education and for fostering an entrepreneurial spirit. The involvement of youth on these Boards may not only make them aware of the opportunities which exist in Newfoundland and Labrador, but give them a sense of control over their future – a feeling that is all too uncommon among youth today.

Supporting the work of the Regional Economic Development Boards, developing closer ties and coordination with local school resources and the educational system, developing better support within community organizations, finding better and innovative means of providing local work experience, and ensuring more appropriate and realistic career counselling in schools were also seen as important elements of an effective approach to development.

The following sections capture more detailed commentary from public dialogue participants.

Social Implications

- the growing numbers of young people who are living in poverty with no prospects for employment or recreational activities are getting into trouble with the law

- many social problems are caused by lack of work; social problems make it harder to find work
- low wages are a disincentive for people to move off social services
- more decent jobs with benefits will mean more economic activity in general, higher revenues, lower debt, personal income security, and economic growth in both the short and long term
- the Provincial Government has created an environment of dependence through its programs because the Federal Government was paying the bills through transfer payments; now that transfer payments are reduced, the programs are suddenly too expensive to maintain
- we should stop blaming the unemployed for being unemployed.

Employment and Income Security

- income support must encourage work rather than penalize people for accepting even low-paying jobs
- single, "able-bodied" recipients of Social Assistance, who receive \$89 a month, are cut from Social Assistance and must take student loans if they wish to attend post-secondary institutions; these individuals cannot manage on the loan amounts and need income support
- no matter how much our employment situation improves, there will always be a legitimate need for support for unemployed people, for those who cannot work and those in transition between jobs
- Government should develop and adopt a guaranteed annual income strategy.

Preparation for Work

- the education curriculum places too much emphasis on training for jobs rather than on developing informed individuals capable of being citizens in a democracy, and able to adapt to new circumstances
- youth are not coming out of school prepared for today's realities
- employment/entrepreneurial skills, leadership and community development programs should be required as parts of a solid, basic education
- we need more co-operative education programs so that people can gain exposure to work and work experience
- post-secondary training programs are often based on out-of-date information and might not suit the demand and supply gaps in the labour market
- enormous pressure is being placed on current high school graduates compared to those of past generations; not every one can be an entrepreneur; not everyone should go to university
- with the increasing cost of obtaining an education (high student loan debt) and the supply of jobs decreasing, the return on one's educational investment dollar is diminishing while the risk increases

- we must place a greater value on volunteering and working for community agencies, and recognize the value of this work and of its work experience.

Employment Creation and Support

- we need to create sustainable, meaningful employment, not expensive short-term projects
- however, make-work projects are better than no work
- more women should be involved in entrepreneurship
- Government should initiate a peer lending program for low income individuals to start businesses with small amounts of money
- more resources should be put into the Graduate Self-Employment Program so that it will be more accessible to young entrepreneurs
- there is too much red tape involved in starting businesses
- federal and provincial Government business service centres should be physically and administratively integrated

The Work Place

- the minimum wage is not adequate
- Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation restricts home-based businesses; this should be changed
- the work place should move towards job-sharing, and address the related union and income-support issues
- a four-day work week would encourage a more equitable sharing of limited employment opportunities, as long as employers did not expect five-days' work for four-days' pay.

General

- people are affected by external forces and have no influence or control over the changes inflicted on them
- with Government administrations changing every four years or so, development and delivery of job creation policy can be inconsistent
- we need more discussion on the distribution of wealth in this Province and the country
- we need to take a global perspective of employment.

"... a child in care went home for a weekend visit. To escape the abusive situation occurring there she returned to her placement. Finding nobody there and the place locked up she obtained entry by breaking a window. This child was subsequently charged with break and entry. In another situation a child in a group home ran from a perceived negative intervention by the only worker on duty. He took the worker's car and was promptly charged with theft. Advised by his lawyer to plead guilty, on the assumption that no serious sanction would be imposed, he was sent to Whitbourne. Here we have two young people, designated in need of protection, who acquire young offender's status because of shortcomings on the part of protectors."

Justice and Public Protection

Personal security and safety are important to everyone. The sense that our society is becoming more violent, especially towards children, is of grave concern, even though our serious crime rates remain low.

Concern for victims of crime – especially violent crime – was raised frequently, and it was often said that the current justice system expends disproportionately more effort and money on perpetrators than it does meeting the needs of victims and their families. If victims do not feel sufficient support exists in the justice system, or they believe they will be re-victimized by the court process, they will be unlikely to come forward and the crimes will continue.

Some pointed to the need to create an office of Child Advocate (as recommended in the report from the Special Committee on Children's Interests) to protect the best interests of children involved with the courts.

As in many other social areas, prevention through social development is seen as the most effective way of dealing with crime. As Government's *Consultation Paper* notes, crime does not occur in a vacuum. Many offenders come from backgrounds of violence, neglect or poverty – or a combination of the three. Many are under-educated, unemployed, engage in substance abuse, and lack a stable family unit. Some suffer from mental or emotional disorders. Though in recent years there has been an increase in crimes committed by youth from affluent families, it was noted that these young people have better access to legal advice and support. The more effective we are in addressing health, education, employment and income security problems, the better our society will become at crime prevention as well.

Clearly, the best strategy for stopping criminal behaviour and preventing victimization, is to address the root causes of crime. Not only is this approach more effective than punishment or rehabilitation of the offender, but its cost savings – in both human and financial terms – are substantial.

We were told that preventing and reducing crime will require new strategies that cut across many sectors and departments, strategies that re-affirm cultural values and strengthen the family and the community so that they can better support the emotional needs of individuals, and better recognize problems before they become crimes.

In particular, it was suggested that community and culturally appropriate strategies be considered as a model for community-based mediation, family support and alternatives to incarceration, as well as for restorative justice.

Other restorative justice approaches such as Family Group Conferences were suggested. The principles of restorative justice are that it has a community orientation, can include victim-offender reconciliation, and is more likely to help a young person understand the consequences of the actions he or she has taken and to develop empathy for others.

Good sports and recreational opportunities for youth, youth employment strategies, a greater involvement in volunteer activities and more participation in the life of communities can provide young people with constructive ways to spend their time and develop pride in themselves. However, such facilities have been losing support in many areas since they are seen as low-priority items, perhaps because decision-makers do not realize their full role and importance.

The following sections capture more detailed commentary from public dialogue participants.

Children, Youth and Families

- we need to implement stronger regulations and law enforcement for parents who renege on their child-support payments; national child-support guidelines are needed to create a more enforceable and speedier system
- more support is needed for families involved in the civil justice system; children no longer receive preparation for court
- there should be increased use of videotaping to avoid the need for repeated questioning and having to face the perpetrator in court
- there should be support in the community for children once they are released from institutional care
- parents require support to deal with the civil justice system
 - ▶ social workers remove children and appear in court on their behalf
 - ▶ cases are often delayed for two years or more
 - ▶ parents require support and need to obtain an advocate on their behalf
 - ▶ the system must be able to respond to calls for help from parents before a crime is committed.

Prevention

- not enough emphasis is placed on intervention and measures to prevent crime, especially crimes committed by young people
- despite recognizing the link between poverty and crime, Government's cuts have worsened the economic situation of many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians; any savings realized may well be reclaimed by increased legal and social costs
- we need to encourage communities to take more responsibility for local problems

- the present system results in inappropriate criminalization of certain behaviours and ineffective punishments (eg. young offenders, persons with mental illness)
- police should inform the community of the presence of high risk offenders.

Victims

- the rights of the victim must take precedence over the rights of the offender
- the justice system re-victimizes the victim, especially child victims and their families
- punishments meted out to offenders by the justice system should take into consideration the effect of the offense on the victim; the offender should be more accountable to the victim
- community attitudes should change so that they do not support criminal behaviour and are more supportive of victims, particularly with regard to child sexual abuse
- inter-sectoral teams (social workers, educators, health and justice professionals) should work to promote and protect the well-being of victims, particularly children
- the justice system should provide counselling supports to victims so that they do not become offenders/abusers themselves.

Court System

- prolonged court proceedings are costly to taxpayers and cause stress and financial hardships; Government should consider mediation to resolve certain types of disputes
- legal aid services should be available to both the victim and the offender in family abuse cases, particularly for child custody and settlement of property claims
- legal aid does not provide enough support for civil cases, especially for women in cases of abuse or marital breakup
- custody and maintenance applicants are no longer eligible for legal aid
- there is a severe lack of services for people with mental illness:
 - ▶ psychiatric problems do not get attention in emergency departments
 - ▶ alternatives are not available, so many people with mental-health problems are taken to the lock-up
 - ▶ the criminalization of non-criminal behaviour has thus become a problem and people are branded as criminals rather than patients
 - ▶ a non-criminal safe place is needed, preferably a hospital, which is in the process of being developed through the Waterford Forensic Committee.

Rehabilitation and Supervision

- Government has been moving away from a rehabilitative model to a punitive model; an example of this is the "warehousing" of women in the Clarenville prison vs rehabilitation programs in Stephenville
- cuts have been proposed to rehabilitative programs at the Whitbourne Youth Centre
- most offenders are incarcerated a long distance from home and family support
- we should expand alternative sentencing options such as electronic monitoring programs as a cost-saving and rehabilitative alternative to prisons

- we need more information on options for transition houses
- there is a need to focus more on youth-diversion programs and other community-based alternative measures, such as Sentencing Circles
- more information is required on such issues as whether or not peace bonds are working for women, and on the pressures women face not to charge abusive family members.

Differential Impacts for Women and Men

- women have different legal needs from those of men; the justice system needs to be more sensitive to women's issues; women and men do not have equal status in the justice system
- there is often an acceptance in the community of offenders against women and an opinion that women provoke attacks
- after a divorce, the male's income generally increase while the female's income decreases
- there is a lack of adequate accessible safe housing for women (and children) in abusive situations
- women have different legal issues and needs from those of men. Criminal legal aid is most often used by men whereas women require civil legal aid. Access to civil legal aid is severely limited because the program is underfunded and often women cannot afford to retain private representation in seeking maintenance orders or divorce proceedings.

"People without water and sewer in their homes and those not using the system in their homes collect water in buckets from streams, often quite a distance from where they live, and dump human waste outdoors within very close proximity to houses, thus creating public health problems which were meant to be alleviated but instead still exist."

Municipal Services

Since nearly all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians live in incorporated communities, concerns about the adequacy of municipal services and infrastructure were common. Paying a fair share of the municipal tax burden was another issue raised during the consultations. Many from incorporated municipalities resented unincorporated communities not paying a fair share of taxes for the services provided by the Province.

Municipal spokespersons often cited cuts to municipal grants as their primary concern, and spoke of the impossibility of maintaining infrastructure and former levels of service, especially with the small tax base and weak economy that underlies most municipalities. Demographic change and out-migration is having drastic effects on the tax base of many municipalities. The people who remain, we were told, cannot sustain further tax increases. Municipal representatives spoke not only of having to postpone new services and needed improvements, but of losses in current infrastructure investments since they can no longer afford upkeep costs.

Today, we were told, some communities feel abandoned by Government, especially some smaller and isolated rural communities which fear they are headed for resettlement. Bell Island, for example, is concerned about increases in ferry rates which make it too expensive for some people to leave the island to look for work, and discourage tourists from coming to the island and spending money on local businesses.

Some participants also observed that companies may benefit from the use of municipal infrastructure, services and other facilities such as roads, street lights, garbage collection, water and sewerage, and recreational facilities, without paying municipal taxes. Collection of municipal taxes from those who refuse to pay is costly and time-consuming, whether done through the council office, debt-collection services or the courts.

It was also suggested that even where a company is not located within a town, it should pay applicable municipal taxes and fees if it does business primarily within the town and if it is making use of and benefiting from municipal infrastructure, services and facilities. We were told that provincial legislation should be amended to permit towns to impose and collect municipal taxes and fees from such companies.

Many people noted that a healthy community requires more than adequate infrastructure and services; it requires a sense of security, caring, belonging, pride of ownership and community participation - it requires quality of life.

The following sections capture more detailed commentary from public dialogue participants.

Municipal Government

- in some communities it is difficult to get volunteers to run for councils, as managing financial problems (e.g. getting debtors to pay) is too difficult
- there is also a concern about "untrained" volunteers having to bear the responsibility of managing substantial sums of money
- some councillors are put into the position of having to decide about cutting services to friends and family members who have not paid taxes
- in the past, promises of services got people elected, but now to get elected we promise lower taxes despite having no revenue alternatives
- the Provincial Government has been making unilateral decisions about municipalities without consultation; no transition period has been allowed for communities to plan
- the lines of communication need to be strengthened between both levels of Government and municipalities.

Municipal Infrastructure and Services

- some communities will never be able to be self-sufficient
- cutting services, such as water and sewerage, to delinquent tax payers causes health hazards; this can be especially problematic for poor families since they may not be able to afford to be reconnected
- many rural communities are home to a large number of seniors who cannot afford additional taxes but who should not lose the services they rely on
- communities cannot afford sewage-treatment services even though they know they should be in place
- cost-saving measures have included contracting-out garbage collection, turning off street lights and refinancing loans to affordable levels
- communities need more recreational activities but they are often the first items cut
- to be a healthy community requires more than adequate infrastructure and services; it requires a sense of security, caring, belonging, pride of ownership and community participation – it requires quality of life
- more attention should be paid to physical planning; there has been an ad hoc approach in the past.

Regionalisation

- having a large number of separate municipalities in the Province is financially unsound; we should look at population areas rather than municipal boundaries since a larger population base could provide more economical services
- demographic changes and out-migration may necessitate the regionalisation of some municipalities as their tax base becomes too small
- regionalisation and municipal partnerships are needed to rationalize services; clusters of municipalities are needed for cost-effectiveness

- other social services could be delivered regionally as the infrastructure is established
- elected regional councils should be established and the election mechanism should be identified according to regional needs
- if there are to be fewer municipalities, it must be because that is what people want, not because it is imposed
- regionalisation may not be desirable (or advantageous) for all communities and areas
- there will be some resistance to regionalisation by some communities
- funding could be withheld from regions unless they regionalise
- a facilitation mechanism is needed for municipal partnerships; a framework for decision-making is needed
- the attitude of people has to change to accept accountability and responsibility for their communities.

"Housing is important to all sectors of society but it is not enough to provide makeshift shelters and boarding homes. Certain standards and regulations must be in place and heeded."

Housing

A frequent and urgent concern during the consultations was the need for adequate housing for individuals and families. As the *Consultation Paper* and other commentators observed, one in six households in the Province (27,200) has a housing problem but lacks the income to address it. Families make up over 60% of those in need, and seniors and unattached individuals account for 22% and 15% respectively. In the future, housing needs will be affected by such demographic factors as the growing seniors population, an increase in single parent families, and continuing migration from rural to urban communities.

Because Newfoundland and Labrador contributes to social public housing on a federal/provincial basis only and through allowances for Social Assistance recipients, the end of federal funding will preclude help to other needy households. We were told that the recent cuts to social programs have further reduced the ability of some to provide adequate housing for themselves, because more of their limited funds must now be spent on other necessities.

We also heard that many vulnerable people forced into boarding houses live in deplorable conditions because provincial inspection and control of these properties is inadequate. This is especially problematic for persons who have left institutions and are more vulnerable.

The example of the Residential Alternatives program was put forward as a model for supported housing. These are community based, home-like living arrangements operated by a volunteer incorporated board of directors under the auspices of the Department of Social Services. This arrangement, in addition to supplying shelter, provides a home-like environment which fosters emotional support and physical care for individuals making an adjustment to community living. This allows opportunities for individuals to interact with each other and the community at large, and encourages independence, self-reliance and acceptance by other members of the community. It also facilitates long-range individual plans for the full integration of the individuals into the community.

Many participants urged the provincial Government to challenge the federal Government on the abdication of its responsibilities for ensuring that adequate shelter is available for those who cannot afford market rents and other housing costs. It was also suggested that the Province develop and implement its own social housing program after federal financing is withdrawn, which would also play a valuable role in generating employment and economic growth. Decent housing is an essential human need, and should be recognised as a fundamental right, guaranteed for all.

The following sections capture more detailed commentary from public dialogue participants.

Adequate Housing

- better integration and coordination among responsible departments and agencies (Social Services, Justice, Health, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, Municipal Affairs) are required; Government should set up a clearing house to coordinate all housing needs
- Social Assistance rental allowances are too low to secure adequate housing in the private market
- waiting times for existing housing are very long, but are not a true indicator of housing needs since many give up or know it is pointless to try
- there are also long waiting lists for renovations and repairs
- there is a shortage of 1, 2 bedroom housing units available for single individuals (youth, seniors and single parents), while there is an oversupply of 3, 4 bedroom housing stock
- in rural areas a large number of homes are becoming vacant as young people move away
- singles and senior singles are an increasing group in our population; it appears NLHC policy does not address their housing needs, as most units are for families and renovation to single units is considered costly
- individuals and families should be matched with housing that fits their needs; as their needs change, their housing requirements might change - the system should be flexible enough to accommodate this
- alternative housing arrangements should be considered (i.e. shared for singles, single parents, single seniors)
- regulations and standards regarding housing quality and safety across the Province should be made stricter and enforced through regular inspections
- a continued infusion of money is needed for the upkeep of housing, not merely for its initial purchase
- the roles and responsibilities for ensuring adequate housing conditions need to be clarified between municipal and provincial authorities to ensure greater accountability in problem resolution
- the federal Government, in cooperation with the Province, should be urged to reinstate the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program and its commitment to public housing.

Housing for Vulnerable Persons

- adequate housing is unavailable to meet the special needs of seniors, singles, youth, persons with disabilities, socially disadvantaged and other vulnerable groups
- ex-psychiatric patients get caught in a cycle (slum housing – poor nutrition - substance abuse – no treatment or counselling) and are unable to escape it on their own

- slum housing for ex-psychiatric patients should be unacceptable; such housing is often overcrowded, unsanitary, unhealthy and generally results in a poor quality of life and bleak prospects for the occupant
- vulnerable individuals, such as seniors and ex-psychiatric patients, living in boarding homes are often turned out at 9:00 am and not allowed to return until 5:00 pm; many end up on the streets all day without food or shelter
- many do not complain about poor living conditions out of fear of eviction, and many never feel safe
- seniors need extra money to repair their homes since they often cannot do the repairs themselves
- seniors villages could be developed so that nursing and home support services could be delivered more efficiently from a central location instead of from house to house
- contractors building housing developments should be required by law to make a certain percentage accessible or adaptable for seniors and persons with disabilities
- a house is simply a structure; providing housing that meets the needs of people also requires such supports as job training, life skills training and different forms of counselling
- we need emergency shelters and housing for displaced persons
- there is a lack of adequate safe houses; such housing should be separate for men and women.

Boarding Houses and Apartments

- boarding homes and lodging homes must be better regulated and the regulations fully enforced
- the present process of giving landlords 5 days notice before an inspection gives slum landlords the opportunity to improve their properties and remove excessive numbers of residents before the housing inspector arrives
- the *Residential Tenancies Act* needs to be revised and improved; this should be done after a process of public consultation; the legislation has to be given teeth to shut down slum housing
- legislation should be enacted to permit impromptu and regular inspection of rental housing units, boarding homes and lodging homes
- the Landlord Tenants Board should be more supportive of tenants; it does not provide necessary information and assistance for their clientele; it is very legalistic which fosters an attitude of fear, vulnerability and bias among the tenant clientele that it is intended to represent and serve; the Board needs to supply simpler, more user-friendly information
- the location of the Landlord Tenant Relations Division in Elizabeth Towers is considered by many tenants – e.g. persons without transportation, seniors, persons with disabilities or with children – to be inaccessible and it needs to begin to provide better customer service
- both landlords and tenants could benefit from educational awareness of the rights of the other party

- a formal relationship should be established among all responsible parties to provide safer, adequate and affordable housing
- emergency shelters are needed for those displaced because they speak out about their substandard living quarters.

"The days in which Government can be expected to do 'everything' have passed and we are not about to engage in mourning. But neither are we, in the voluntary sector, willing to accept a changed world in which the value-driven services have been reduced, replaced or removed altogether by a Government which has overlooked our capacity, or failed to engage us in a mutually accountable 'new way' of doing things."

The Voluntary Sector

The voluntary sector, sometimes called "the Third Sector", is made up of all groups which have volunteer governance. These include charities, non-Governmental organizations (NGOs), co-operatives, recreational and sports groups, and other not-for-profit groups. Most are active at the community level, and have broad-based "grass-roots" participation. In addition to volunteer involvement, voluntary sector organizations employ thousands of people in Newfoundland and Labrador as paid staff, directors or specialists.

Government's *Consultation Paper* identifies the voluntary sector as having special qualifications and experience which can help Government establish its social policy priorities, and providing advice about the potential impact of Government decisions on the community. This is because of its close connections and activities within the community which allows groups a grasp of local circumstances and needs which would be difficult for an outside agency. It also allows for a much faster response to situations that develop at the local level.

During the consultations, the Committee heard from people representing many parts of the voluntary sector. While supporting the concept of stronger and more equitable partnerships with Government, many expressed serious concerns about the demands which are already being exerted on community organizations and volunteers. We frequently heard about "volunteer burn-out", about overloading existing volunteers to the point that people quit, and that new people are reluctant to get involved.

It was also remarked that there are not many young people involved in community activities. Out-migration of the Province's youth might account for the limited number of young people who take part in volunteer activities.

Many were concerned that Government's real objective is to "download" its own responsibilities to the voluntary sector as a cost-saving measure.

Voluntary organizations usually originate because some public service is lacking, or because an existing service needs strengthening. Traditionally, the voluntary sector identifies needs and tries to respond by addressing them directly or through cooperative approaches. Many organizations, which provide tremendous support to individuals and communities, operate without the benefit of long-term, secure funding and are thus obliged to spend considerable time and energy in fund-raising. This added work detracts from time spent providing service, and the extra effort contributes substantially to burn-out.

Increased responsibility and burn-out is especially significant for women since women are the family's primary caregivers and tend to be more involved in service provision volunteer activities. As more services are relinquished by the public sector, the more women will be expected to carry the burden.

It was made clear that if Government wants expanded and extended voluntary sector participation in the delivery of human services, it will have to extend a significant measure of authority, financial support and other resources. Numerous voluntary agencies are unable to raise the necessary funds on their own because of existing economic circumstances. Some of the specific requirements raised were the following:

- ▶ the establishment of a funded research agency for voluntary groups to consult as they develop policy and programs
- ▶ roles and responsibilities for Government and the sector must be clearly defined
- ▶ policy, planning and program development must be undertaken jointly by Government and the sector, or with the specific community groups involved
- ▶ there should be mutual accountability between Government and the voluntary sector
- ▶ the sector and the individual organizations involved must be able to maintain their independence from Government
- ▶ volunteers must not replace or displace paid workers
- ▶ the sector will need more paid staff and other support to organize volunteers
- ▶ more and better volunteer training will need to be provided
- ▶ more and wider responsibilities will also require investment in organization infrastructure (offices, office equipment, phone services, etc.)

In cases where voluntary organizations receive public funding, presenters underlined the importance of establishing funding and evaluation criteria to ensure that public money is spent effectively. As one group noted, "If voluntary and non-profit organizations are to be part of the solution, it must be within a framework of stable funding, defined expectations and accountability." Criteria and guidelines should be established in collaboration with the sector.

Concerns were also raised during the consultations about inter-group conflict and competition within the voluntary sector, which sometimes prevent it from working as effectively and efficiently as it could. These issues will need to be addressed, especially if the sector is to increase its workload and to engage in more extensive partnerships.

The following sections capture more detailed commentary from public dialogue participants.

Participation

- community involvement is eroding; agencies are having a hard time recruiting volunteers both because of a declining provincial population and an increasing workload as Government services are downloaded
- the sector is perceived as a Government agent paid to carry out Government objectives

- to encourage public participation and contribution Government should create a more favourable tax climate; it might consider tax credits for volunteering
- Government has allowed an erosion of community development in the last ten years; now they are looking to a sector that is just not able to cope with their expectations
- downloading on families' responsibilities for the disadvantaged is putting stress on families, particularly on women
- leadership is weak in some rural communities
- volunteers are motivated to participate by passion, beliefs, and causes; if partnerships are forced, there will be a further loss of volunteers
- not many young people are becoming active volunteers
- a serious problem with "workfare" concepts is that it removes choice and runs counter to the spirit of volunteerism
- "community service" programs must be negotiated with the voluntary sector, not unilaterally imposed through Government programming.

Financial Support

- Government cannot pass responsibility to the community to meet standards and then provide too few funds to accomplish the objectives
- policies and procedures are needed for evaluating and funding the voluntary sector; Government funding decisions are made without warning and can threaten the survival of some agencies
- the atmosphere of competition that exists among agencies in the volunteer sector is created in part by Government because of funding
- a current perception is that the volunteer sector groups are only considered for Government funding if they suit Government objectives
- the missions of organisations, or priorities within organisations, sometimes shift because of Government funding pressure
- although more research and analysis needs to be done on the activities of the voluntary sector, Government should take into account the work already done in setting its priorities and making decisions; it does not value this information sufficiently

New Roles

- development of the voluntary sector needs to be understood as an essential mechanism for investment in community social and economic development
- in the voluntary sector, seniors can be advocates for seniors; minimum funding would support a large network
- the voluntary sector needs to establish a new relationship with Government; Government has a responsibility to understand the volunteer sector

- schools should be used more extensively and effectively in support of voluntary sector activities; collaboration is needed within the Government system to use school facilities and equipment for the good of the whole community

Partnerships and Responsibilities

- ongoing consultation and collaboration are needed with the sector on social policy and program development and implementation; mechanisms need to be established
- true partnerships mean common goals and long-term objectives
- many agencies consult with Government as partners, but when advice goes against the goals of Government, consultation is seen as advocacy
- there was an attempt to move towards partnerships in the Department of Social Services by creating a Director of Community Agencies, but this position has since been cut
- a real commitment to partnerships implies equal accountability of both partners to each other and to their constituents; a formal contract between the voluntary sector and Government should be put in place with both sides having the right to have a say and to make choices
- volunteer agencies need to work together and should develop partnerships apart from Government; the voluntary sector should have a single voice to respond to Government
- the sector needs to protect its autonomy and ties with community

Recognition

- there should be better recognition of the value, legitimacy and role of the voluntary sector; there should be better recognition of its professionalism, expertise, resiliency and resourcefulness
- often the public using volunteer services do not realize they are provided through voluntary agencies; they think it is Government
- it must be recognized that, in addition to service, volunteering offers a sense of values, citizenship and commitment, and strengthens democracy.

“Culture is pervasive. It is our past, present and future.
It is our connections to where and how we live....
Historically, Newfoundlanders have been very
adaptable, able to respond to changing times. As we are
presently faced with difficult economic circumstances,
we must find ways to adapt again.”

Culture

The way in which people perceived and defined culture varied throughout the Province. Some public consultation participants described it as our emotional and intellectual response to our landscape, others spoke of it as our connection to where and how we live, while others referred to it as the heart and soul of how society functions.

While many people had different understandings of the meaning of culture, most agreed that Newfoundland and Labrador's culture is at risk. It was felt that our values, aspirations and standards are strongly influenced by our American neighbours and Canadian counterparts, particularly through the media. In addition, there are no Government infrastructure supports or policies in place to preserve our culture. As a consequence, there is fear that our unique culture is eroding.

Some members of the public stated that it is Government's role to promote cultural awareness, a role many felt has been neglected. There is a perception amongst the arts community that Government officials and decision makers are generally ignorant about the arts and cultural issues. Some people referred to Government's inability to comprehend the multi-departmental implications of its decisions. This does not allow for the recognition or utilization of cross-sectoral cultural enrichment opportunities.

It was pointed out that Government lacks a cultural policy and that such a policy must be developed which recognizes and supports the value and necessity of culture in socio-economic development. Products such as arts and crafts are but one manifestation of culture and protecting Newfoundland and Labrador heritage entails more than supporting cultural producers and products.

The following sections capture more detailed commentary from public dialogue participants.

Cultural Products

- cultural products are not the same thing as culture; protecting Newfoundland culture entails more than supporting cultural producers and products
- arts and culture are more than products to be sold to tourists
- a cultural characteristic of Newfoundlanders is that we feel our Newfoundland cultural products are inferior; we must break down that attitudinal barrier.

Education

- the curriculum of the provincial education system fails to utilize the expert artistic resources available, such as artists, writers, and actors

- provincial public agencies tend to rely on their national counterparts for direction so that the cultural value of local input, including text books and reading material, is not taken into consideration
- culturally relevant materials should be integrated into the curriculum as much as possible
- there are opportunities to increase public cultural knowledge through libraries, but this will not happen without increased availability of Newfoundland literary materials.

Financial Support

- funding for the arts community is uncertain, with no clear idea on whether it will soon expire or continue into the future
- studies have shown that the average working artist earns less than \$10,000 a year but have the highest demands put on them to donate their time and talent to charities
- for every dollar the Government puts into culture, it gets six dollars back
- the economic renewal plan must be kept in place, with adequate funding to further the mandate of the cultural labour force in the Province
- a substantial budget should be made available to the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council to enable it to support the projects of various cultural workers
- provincial sales taxes should be eliminated on art valued up to \$1,000
- the provincial art procurement program should be increased by at least 15% per year
- artists should be eligible for Unemployment Insurance, Canada Pension, Workers Compensation and many other support services that are available to the majority of professionals in the Province
- close to 56% of professional artists have a post-secondary education but many artists are living in poverty; a study should be conducted into the causes of poverty among Newfoundland and Labrador's professional artists
- references to culture in the Consultation Paper are related to cutbacks and financing decisions.

Partnerships and Responsibilities

- Government decision-makers only pay lip service to culture because they have never placed any value on culture
- an in-depth study of the social and economic benefits that the arts industry provides to the community should be undertaken by Government
- Government officials need a working knowledge of the arts industry to be able to promote it properly
- the only successful way to Government support is through an effective lobby campaign
- it should not have to be an exercise in successful lobby techniques by the arts community to get Government to recognize the value of culture and to support the arts community
- information and policy recommendations are forwarded to Government officials on an ongoing basis but it doesn't seem to change the direction the Government is moving in
- Government should support the arts and culture through public policy
- a mechanism is needed so that the community can have input into Government decisions about cultural issues.

Social and Economic Development

- cultural and arts groups contribute to our cultural identity and well-being, education, visual literacy and economic growth
- the work of the arts community can lessen community tensions and increase communication
- there are opportunities for economic development in the film industry; the facilities and talent are already in place
- the people of Newfoundland and Labrador can support local industry by buying products produced in the Province
- tourism exports are often thought of as a solution, but they are not the full solution to our economic problems
- culture must be valued for culture's sake; it should not be viewed strictly from an economic viewpoint
- culture should not just be seen as a marketable commodity, but an important aspect of our lives.

Principles and Values

The following is a summary of some of the principles and values which the people of Newfoundland and Labrador who participated in the public dialogue said should form the foundation for the Provincial Government's Strategic Social Plan:

1. The Strategic Social Plan should reflect a Government commitment to invest in people and communities as an essential component for economic development.
2. Social policy should be developed in conjunction with economic policy to recognise the interdependent relationship between the two.
3. Everyone's basic needs should be met.
4. All programs should foster personal dignity and independence.
5. The healthy development of children should be a priority.
6. The different impact social policy and programs can have on women and men should be taken into account.
7. Individuals and communities should be included as active partners with Government in social policy and planning, service delivery and evaluation.
8. Service standards which can be measured and evaluated should be endorsed.
9. Greater emphasis should be given to early intervention and prevention approaches in all sectors of social policy and service delivery.
10. Social policy should be based upon knowledge and experience.
11. The impact of any proposed changes in services or programs should be taken into account, with particular emphasis on interdepartmental linkages and potential conflicts.
12. The Strategic Social Plan must include mechanisms for on-going communication between Government and the people of the Province.

13. Social policy should take into account the different needs and priorities of different regions and communities.
14. Involvement of the voluntary sector is vital to the successful implementation of programs and services.
15. People should be valued and their self-esteem developed.

Appendices

Individuals and Organizations who Submitted Briefs, Emails, Faxes and Letters to the Social Policy Advisory Committee

Abbott, Gretta
Ability Employment Corporation
ACAB Group
Addiction Services, Community Health – Western
Adult Learners, Local Literacy Associations, Community Workers and Concerned Citizens from
the Central Region
Agnes Pratt Home
Alexander Bay Public Library Board
Andrews, Gertrude
Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador
Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archivists
Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland
Atlantic Provinces Library Association
Austin, D.H.
Avalon Community Accommodations Board and the Avalon Employment Inc
Avalon East School Board

Baccalieu Board of Economic Development
Baccalieu Trail District Labour Council
Baie Verte Peninsula Economic Development Association
Bay d’Espoir Integrated School Board
Bay Roberts Library Board
Bay St. George Status of Women’s Council
Bayview Heights Academy
Behm, David and Tomblin, Leslie
Belbin, Eric
Bell Island Head Start Program
Bellamy, Cathrine E.
Benjamin, Elinor
Best, R.
Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Bay St. George
Bishop, Marjorie
Bishop’s Falls Public Library Board
Blow-Me-Down Local Library Board
Bonavista Library Board
Bonavista Peninsula and Surrounding Area Literacy Outreach Worker (Economic Zone #5)
Bonne Bay Hospital Citizen’s Action Committee
Botwood Public Library Board

Boulos, Peter
Bourne, Dorothy
Bouzanne, Patricia
Bowles, Ron
Brief on the Health Care Industry
Brighter Futures, Bell Island
Brother T.I. Murphy Learning Resource Centre
Browne, Elizabeth
Buchans Public Library
Buchans Public Library
Burgeo Public Library
Burin Memorial Library Board
Burin Peninsula Community Enrichment Committee

C.O.O.L.

Cabot College Faculty of Early Childhood Education
Canadian Federation of University Women, St. John's Club
Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, Newfoundland Chapter
Canadian Mental Health Association, Newfoundland Division
Carmanville Public Library Board
Carter, Eric
Cashin, Linda and Hansen, Thor
Central Division Public Library Board
Cerebral Palsy Association of Newfoundland
Chilcote, Sandy and Chilcote, Elaine
Church, Elizabeth
Churchil Falls Town Office
Churchill Falls Public Library
City of St. John's
Coady, Scott
Coalition of Persons with Disabilities – Zone 8
Coalition of Persons with Disabilities – Newfoundland and Labrador
Colbert, Carolyn and Colbert, Patricia
Collins, Carl
Community Action Committee
Community Alliance for Better Solutions
Community Economic Development Resource Team. Trinity-Conception Community
Development Community Community Health – St. John's Region
Community Health – Western
Community Literacy Centre, St. Barbe Development Association
Community Services Council
Conception Bay South Public Library
Concerned Citizen, Labrador West
Concerned Citizen, Nain.

Cooper, Leslie
Cooper, Loretta
Cooper, Shirley
Corbett, Linda
Cormack Public Library
Corner Brook Community Mental Health Initiative
Corner Brook Public Library
Cornish, Peter
Cousens, Jewel
Cow Head Conversation and Heritage Committee
Cow Head Library Board
Cow Head School Complex
Coxon, Muriel
Crocker, Pauline
CUPE Local 2329
CUPE Research Branch
Cutler, Noreen

Davis, Patricia
Dawson, Elizabeth
Deemer, Sharon and Hurich, Charles
Denine, Ann Marie
Dept of Government Services and Lands
Dept. Of Social Services, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Dicks, Lorraine
Downton, Clarence
Duggan, Arthur
Dunphy, Rosena
Durnford, Rosemary on behalf of Roger Matchem

Earles, Ronald
Eastern College of Applied Arts, Technology and Continuing Education
Eastern College
Eastern Newfoundland Regional Community Health Board
Ellsworth, Mark
Epilepsy Newfoundland and Labrador
Eric G. Lambert School
Evans, Geoff
Exploits Valley Community Coalition (EVCC) Partner Council
Exploits Valley Community Coalition

Faculty of Medicine's Division of Community Medicine
Fagan, William T.
Family Home Childcare Association of Newfoundland and Labrador

Fatima Academy
Faulkner, Alan
Ferry Users' Committee, Bell Island
FINALY (Futures in Newfoundland and Labrador's Youth)
Finn, Rosemary
Finn, William R.
Flynn, Loretta
Fogo Island Hospital
Fogo Island Literacy Association
Foley, Bernard
Food Bank Network
Foote, Winnifred
Fortune Bay North Family Resource Committee
Fortune Library Board
Fowler, Cecil
Fox Harbour Library Board
Furlong, M.

Gabbard, Juanita
Gaines, Phyllis
Gander Public Library Board
Gander Status of Women Council
Gateway Status of Women Council
Gill, Chris and Scott, Linda
Good Samaritan Citizen Club
Goodfellow-Bailie, Robin
Gover, Fred
Grade 7 Class, Cow Head School
Graham, Ruth
Grand Bank Memorial Library
Grand Falls-Windsor, Bishop's Falls Community Food Bank Inc.
Grand Falls-Windsor Public Library Board
Greene, Teresa
Gros Morne Laubach Literacy Council
Guy, Q.C.

Halfyard, Art
Hall, W.A.
Harbour Breton – Connaigre Child Protection Team
Harbour Breton Public Library Board
Harbour Grace Historical Society
Harbour Grace Memorial Library Board
Hardy, Deanna
Harkins, Alfreda

Harmsworth Public Library
Health and Medical Care Research Group
Health Care – Bell Island
Health Care Corporation of St. John's
Health Labrador Corporation
Hemmins, Joan
Hepditch, Catherine
Hermitage Public Library
Hermitage Public Library Board
Hollett, Susan
Holwell, Rosina
Holyrood Public Library Board
Holyrood Public Library
Home and School Association
Hopkins, Martha
Housing Advisory Committee
Houston Family
Human Resources Development Canada
Humber Literacy Council
Humber Valley Community Employment Corporation
Hyron Regional Economic Development Corporation

Immaculate Conception School
Industrial Adjustment Service Committee (IAS)

Jackman, Dermott
Jackson, Lorraine
James, Bernice
Jason, Tommy
Joseph E. Clouter Memorial Library

K.M. Homes Limited
Keats, James
Keefe, Mr. and Mrs. Michael
Kelly, C. Maeve
Kettle, Glenda
Kimberley, Dennis, Professor
Kindale Library Board
Kiwans Club of Bell Island
Kiwans Club of Grenfell
Knowling, William R.
Kufeldt, Kathleen

Labrador City Council

Labrador City Recreation Commission
Labrador College
Labrador Legal Services
Labrador West Ministerial Association
Labrador West Status of Women Council
Larkin, Sandra
Learning Disabilities Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
LeGrow, Robert
Li, Yuanlin
Lippold, Karen
Literacy Development Council
Literacy Outreach Office, RED OCHRE Regional Economic Development Board
Lonardo, Angela
Long Range Regional Economic Development Board
Long Term and Chronic Care Committee of Corner Brook

M.O.M.S. Support Group
Maher, Dennis
Malone, Gerald
Mann, Diane R.
Marie S. Penny Memorial Library
Marystown Recreation Commission
McIsaac, Theresa
McLean, Edna
Meadows Community Council
Mennonite Central Committee
Mercer, Steve D.
Mews Library
Miller, Linda
Moores, Marion
Morton, Paul
Mount Pearl Public and Resource Library
MUN Council of the Students' Union
MUN Department of Earth Sciences
MUN Faculty of Education
MUN School of Nursing
MUN School of Physical Education and Athletics
MUN School of Social Work
Murdoch, Peter and Murdoch, Janice
Music Industry Association of Newfoundland

National Action Committee on the Status of Women
National Film Board
Natural History Society of Newfoundland and Labrador

Newfoundland and Labrador Ambulance Operators Association
Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Social Workers Special Interest Council
Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour
Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Co-operatives
Newfoundland and Labrador Foster Families Association
Newfoundland and Labrador Genealogical Society Inc
Newfoundland and Labrador Health Care Association
Newfoundland and Labrador Home and School Federation
Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association
Newfoundland and Labrador Nurses' Union
Newfoundland and Labrador Parks and Recreation Association
Newfoundland and Labrador Publishers' Association
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
Newfoundland and Labrador Women's Institutes
Newfoundland Association for Community Living
Newfoundland Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists
Newfoundland Dietetic Association
Newfoundland Historic Parks Association
Newfoundland Library Association
Newfoundland School for the Deaf Parent-Teacher Association
Newfoundland School for the Deaf Student Council
Northern Lights Academy

Oke, Mollie

Ozon, Ron

O'Reilly, Glenda and Peckford, Jill

Parents' Support Group of Bell Island

Parmenter, Michael

Parsons, Patricia

Parsons, Robert

Partnerships in Education Regional Committee

Patey, Lorne

Paul, Tonya

Penney, Anna

Perry, Gloria

Pickett, Norma

Port au Port Community Education Initiative

Post Secondary Division, Department of Education

Postlethwaite, J., Reverend

Pottle Centre

Power, Ann

Power, Gary

Power, Paula

Primary Health Care Project/Practice
Private citizen, Grand Falls-Windsor
Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women
Provincial Information and Library Resources Board
Provincial Public Libraries Board
Provincial Public Library System
Puffin Turnovers
Purcell, Bryan

Queen Elizabeth II Library
Quick, Betty
Ramea Lioness Club
Recreation and Sport Division, Dept. Of Tourism, Culture and Recreation
Red Ochre Regional Economic Development Board
Redmond, Greg
Rees, Gordon
Reid, Doreen
Rideout, Elisabeth
Rising Tide Theatre
Rocky Harbour Public Library
Rose, Jeremy
Royal Black Preceptory
Rushoon – Terrenceville Branch of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers Association
Ryan, Jane
Ryan, Shannon

Salvation Army Social Services Divison
Saunders, Patsy
Schaefer, Dale
School Children's Food Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador
School Counsellors' Association of Newfoundland
Senciall, Ian
Seniors Resource Centre
Shave, Vera
Sheppard, Peggy
Simmons, Roger, M.P.
Singh, Sankatha
Small, Patricia
Smith, C. Neville
Smith, Judie
Southern Harbour Public Library Board
Spracklin, Floyd
St. Alban's Public Library
St. Croix, Dianne

St. Francis Association
St. John's InfoNET
St. John's Library Board
St. John's School Lunch Association
St. John's Seniors Resource Centre
St. Pat's Guild
St. Peter's Elementary Parent/Teacher Council
Stead, Cynthia
Stephenville Library Board
Storch, Fran
Students of Cow Head School Complex
Sullivan, Deana Stokes

Teachers on Wheels
Tenants Action Association
Tetford, Denise
The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahà'is of St. John's
The Wellness Centre
Thistle, Patti
Thorne, Violet
Thurgood, Ronald and Grier, Katherine
Torbay Public Library Board
Town Council of Nain
Town of Bishop's Falls
Town of Deer Lake
Town of Grand Falls-Windsor
Town of Labrador City
Town of Pasadena
Town of St. Anthony
Town of St. Lawrence
Town of Wabana
Traditional Meals and Snacks Ltd
Traverse, Helen
Traynor, Harry
Trepassey Area Senior's Peer Advocate Group
Tri-Town and Area Laubach Literacy Council
Trinity Conception Community Employment Corporation Inc
Turpin, Cathy
Twilight Club
Twillingate Public Library Board

Victoria Community Development Corporation
Voices for Justice in Housing

Wabush Public Library Board
Walsh, Patrick
Walsh, Thomas
Waples, Jane
Watts, Isobel
Wecks, Mildred and Wecks, Max
West Coast Library Association
Western Health Care Corporation
Westviking College, Corner Brook Campus
Whelan, Rose
White, Bernadette
Winsor, Jeanette
Women's Enterprise Bureau
Woodford, Irene
Woodford, Mary
Wyse, Bride

Young, Christine

Organizations Participating in the Public Consultation Process

We are grateful for everyone who met with us. The following list is incomplete because not everyone signed the attendance sheets.

50 Plus

Action Environment
Advisory Committee on Senior Citizens
Advisory Council on the Economy
AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador
Allied Youth
Alternative Measures
Ambulance Services
Anglican Church, Hawke's Bay
Anthropology Department, Memorial University
Association for Community Living
Association of Early Childhood Educators
Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador
Atlantic Provinces Library Association
Aurora Branch – NLTA
Avalon Community Accommodations Board
Avalon East School Board
Avalon Employment Incorporated
Avalon Regional Telecentre

B.A.I.L.
B.A.Y. TV
Baccalieu Board of Economic Development
Baccalieu Trail District Council
Badger's Quay Lions Club
Baie Verte Chamber of Commerce
Baie Verte Peninsula Economic Development Association
Baie Verte Public Library
Baie Verte Single Parent's Group
Battle Harbour Regional Development Association
Bay D'Espoir Association for Independent Living
Bay D'Espoir Integrated School Board
Bay Roberts Library Board
Bay St. George Association for Community Living

Bay St. George Community Employment Corporation
Bay St. George Mental Health Program
Bay St. George Senior Citizens Home
Bay St. George Status of Women's Council
Bell Island Co-op
Bell Island Ferry Users Committee
Big Brothers Big Sisters, Bay St. George
Bishop's Falls Public Library Board
Bonavista Alternative Measures
Bonavista Library Board
Bonavista, Plate Cove East, Trinity and Munroe
Bonavista South Regional Development Association
Bonavista – Trinity – Placentia Integrated School Board
Bonne Bay Hospital Citizens' Action Committee
Bonne Bay Hospital / Rufus Guinchard Health Centre
Botwood Public Library Board
Brighter Futures Coalition
Brookfield Hospital
Brother T.I. Murphy Learning Resource Centre
Buchans Public Library
Burin Memorial Library Board
Burin Peninsula Brighter Futures Inc.
Burin Peninsula Community Enrichment Committee
Burin Public Library

C.A.C.L. Labrador West Branch
C.H.A.D.D. – Labrador West
C.O.O.L Creating Our Own Lives Writers' Group
Cabot College
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Canadian Coast Guard
Canadian Diabetes Association
Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, Newfoundland
Canadian Hard of Hearing Association
Canadian Labour Congress
Canadian Mental Health Association
Canadian National and Marine Atlantic Pensioners
Canadian National Institute for the Blind
Canadian Paraplegic Association
Canadian Red Cross Society
Cape Committee
Cape Freel's Development Association
Cape Freel's Heritage Trust
Cara House

Catholic Women's League
CBN Recreation Directors Association – Bay Roberts
CBN Recreation Practitioners – Harbour Grace
CBS Library
Center Brook Development Association
Central Newfoundland Coalition of Disability Association
Central Newfoundland Regional College
Central Newfoundland Regional Health Centre
Central-Eastern Literacy Outreach
Cerebral Palsy Association of Newfoundland
CHANNEL
Choices for Youth
Churchill Falls Public Library
City of Mount Pearl
City of St. John's
Civic #4
CNEREDC – Zone 14
Coalition of Persons with Disabilities – Newfoundland and Labrador
Coast of Bays Corporation
Come Home Year, Greenspond
Community Based Assessment and Remedial Centre
Community Health Central Region
Community Health Eastern Region
Community Health – English Harbour West
Community Health – Pool's Cove
Community Health St. John's Region
Community Health Western Region
Community Mental Health Initiative
Community Physiotherapist
Community Services Council
Conception Bay North Recreation Association
Conception Bay South Public Library
Conne River Band Council
Conne River Health and Social Services
Cormack Public Library
Corner Brook Public Library
Corner Brook Status of Women's Council
Corner Brook Women's Centre
Council of Students Union
Cow Head School Complex
CUPE 2329 – Provincial Public Library Board
CUPE Newfoundland and Labrador
CUPE Research Branch
Curran Memorial Public Library

Daybreak Parent / Child Centre
Department of Development and Rural Renewal – Clarenville
Department of Development and Rural Renewal
Department of Education
Department of Environment and Labour
Department of Finance
Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Department of Forest, Resources and Agrifoods
Department of Government Services and Lands
Department of Health
Department of Justice
Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs
Department of Social Services, Skills Assessment and Training Centre
Department of Social Services
Department of Social Services – St. Anthony
Department of Social Services – Port Saunders
Department of Social Services – Labrador City
Department of Social Services – Newtown
Department of Social Services – Wabush
Department of Social Services – Lanse au Loup
Department of Social Services – Englee
Department of Social Services – Forteau
Department of Social Services – Grand Falls-Windsor
Department of Social Services – Corner Brook
Department of Social Services – Bay L'Argent
Department of Social Services – Grand Bank
Department of Social Services – Marystown
Department of Social Services – Benois Cove
Department of Social Services – Milltown
Department of Social Services – McIver's
Department of Social Services, Child Welfare Division
Department of Tourism, Recreation and Culture
Department of Works, Services and Transportation
District Labour Council
District Labour Council – Carbonear
Dorset Youth Justice Committee
Dr. Walter Templeman Hospital

Eagle River Credit Union
Eastern College
Eastern College – Bonavista
Eastern College – Clarenville
Economics Department, Memorial University
Emerald Zone Board

Emmanuel House
Employers Council
Employment Services Office – St. Shott's
Employment Services Office – Trepassey
Enterprise Network
Epilepsy Newfoundland and Labrador
Exploits Alternative Measures
Exploits Valley Community Coalition Partner Council
Exploit's Disability Association
Exploit's Valley Community Coalition

Faculty of Medicine, Community Medicine
Family Home Childcare Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
Family Support Group
Fatima Academy School/Public Library
Ferryland Community Development
FINALLY
Fogo Island Literacy Association
Fogo Island Public Library
Food Bank
Fortune Bay North Family Resource Committee
Fortune Library Board
Foster Parents Association
Fox Harbour Library Board
Franco-Jeunes Inc
Friends of Midwifery

Gander and Area Laubach Council
Gander Status of Women Council
Gander Women's Centre
Gateway Status of Women Council
Genesis Association for Persons with Special Needs
Good Samaritan Senior Citizen's Club
Grand Bank Memorial Library
Grand Falls -Windsor Public Library Board
Grand Falls -Windsor Public Library
Grand Falls-Windsor, Bishop's Falls Community Food Bank
Green Bay Youth Justice Committee
Greenwood Academy, Milltown
Grenfell Regional Health Services
Gros Morne Laubach Literacy Council
Gulf News

Harbour Breton – Connaigre Child Protection Team
Harbour Breton Public Library
Harbour Grace Memorial Library Board
Harbour Grace Memorial Library
Harmsworth Public Library
Head Start
Head Start Day Care Centre
Health and Medical Care Research Group
Health Care Corporation of St. John's
Health Labrador Corporation
Heart and Stroke Foundation
Heritage Canada
Hermitage Public Library Board
Holland Memorial School – PTA
Holy Family Parish – Port au Choix
Holyrood Public Library
Housing Advisory Committee
Housing Corporation
Human Resources Centre – Harbour Grace
Human Resources Development Canada
Humber Literacy Council
Humber St. Barbe Roman Catholic School Board
Humber Valley Community Employment Corporation

Immaculate Conception School
Independent Party
Industrial Adjustment Service Committee
InfoNet
Iris Kirby House

Jack & Jill Preschool
John Howard Society
Joseph E. Clouter Memorial Library

K.M. Homes
Kindale Library Board
Kinsmen Recreation Commission – Port Saunders
Kinsmen – St. Anthony
Kiwanis – Bell Island
Kiwanis Club

L.I.S.T.E.N.
Labrador City Council
Labrador City Recreation Commission

Labrador College
Labrador Inuit Association
Labrador Inuit Health Commission
Labrador Legal Services
Labrador South Health Centre
Labrador South Home Care
Labrador Straits Development Corporation
Labrador Straits Outreach
Labrador West Employment Corporation
Labrador West Ministerial Association
Labrador West Status of Women Council
Labrador West Youth Justice Committee
Labradorian
Learning Access Centre – Bonavista
Learning Access Centre – Monroe
Learning Access Centre – Plate Cove East
Learning Access Centre – Trinity
Learning Disabilities Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
LIFE Committee (Learning Information for Everyone)
Lion's Club
Literacy Development Council
Literacy Development Council – Grand Falls-Windsor
Literacy Development Council – St. John's
Literacy Outreach – Shoal Harbour
Long Range Regional Economic Development Board
Long Term and Chronic Care Committee
Longside Club
Lorraine Hearn Support Group Against Family Violence
Lumsden Town Council

M.O.M.S. Support Group
Marystown Memorial Library
Marystown Recreation Commission
Meadows Community Council
Mental Health Services, Janeway Children's Hospital
Mill Lane Enterprises
Milltown Town Council
Mokami Status of Women
Mount Pearl Parks and Recreation
Mount Pearl Public and Resource Library
MUN School of Nursing
MUN School of Physical Education
MUN School of Social Work
MUN Sociology Department

Musgrave Harbour Town Council

N.L.R.D.C.

Nain Alternative Measures

National Action Committee on the Status of Women

New Democratic Party

Newfoundland Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Newfoundland Alzheimer's Association

Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Social Workers

Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Occupational Therapists

Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Social Workers Special Interest Council

Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Co-operatives

Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Municipalities

Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour

Newfoundland and Labrador Foster Families Association

Newfoundland and Labrador Health Care Association

Newfoundland and Labrador Health Project

Newfoundland and Labrador Home School Federation

Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation

Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association

Newfoundland and Labrador Midwives Association

Newfoundland and Labrador Nurses Union

Newfoundland and Labrador Parks and Recreation

Newfoundland and Labrador Pensioners and Seniors Federation

Newfoundland and Labrador Publishers Association

Newfoundland and Labrador School Trustees

Newfoundland and Labrador Social Worker's Association

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers Association – Rushoon-Terrenceville Branch

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers Association

Newfoundland and Labrador Women's Institutes

Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Corrections Centre

Newfoundland Association for Community Living

Newfoundland Association for the Disabled

Newfoundland Association of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists

Newfoundland Career Academy

Newfoundland Dietetic Association

Newfoundland Historic Parks Association

Newfoundland Literacy Association

Newfoundland Lunch Program – Carbonear

Newfoundland School for the Deaf Parent-Teacher Association

Newfoundland School for the Deaf Student Council

Newfoundland Senior Citizens Federation

Newfoundland Statistics Agency

Nordic Economic Development

Northern Pen
Nor'Wester
Notre Dame Youth Justice Committee

O.K. Society
Occupational Therapy Organization
Our Lady of Labrador Youth
OXFAM

P.J. Gardiner Institute
P.L.I.A.N
P4 Youth Centre
Parent-Teachers Association -Holland Memorial School
Parents Rights Group
Parents' Support Group – Bell Island
Partnerships in Education Regional Committee
People First of Newfoundland and Labrador
Placentia Library Board
Placentia Town Council
Port au Choix Town Council
Port au Port Community Education Initiative
Port au Port West Public Library
Port aux Basques Ambulance Service
Port aux Basques Public Library
Port aux Basques Southwest Action Committee
Port aux Basques Town Council
Port Blandford – Western Brook Development
Port Saunders Chamber of Commerce
Port Saunders Public Library
Port Saunders Town Council
Pottle Centre
Progressive Conservative Party
Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women – Gender
Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women
Provincial Association Against Violence
Provincial Information and Library Resources Board
Provincial Public Libraries Board
Public Library Board – Bishops Falls

Queen Elizabeth II Library

R.C.M.P. Mary's Harbour
Rabbittown Literacy Program
Random North Development Association

Red Bay Town Council
Red Ochre Regional Board Literacy Outreach Office
Red Ochre Regional Board
Right to Life Association
Rocky Harbour Public Library
Roman Catholic Church, Labrador City
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Royal Newfoundland Constabulary
Rufus Guinchard Health Centre

Salvation Army
School Children Food Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador
School Counsellors Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
School for the Deaf
Seniors Resource Centre – St. John's
Seniors' Peer Advocate Group – Trepassey
Shea Heights Community Centre
Single Parents Association of Newfoundland
Sir Thomas Roddick Hospital
Society of Rural Physicians of Canada
South Coast and District Labour Council
Southeastern Aurora Development Corporation
Southern Avalon Development Association
Southern Harbour Public Library Board
Southwest Coast Action Committee
Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of St. John's
Sports Newfoundland and Labrador
St. Alban's Public Library
St. Alban's Recreation Committee
St. Anthony and Area Chamber of Commerce
St. Anthony Lion's Club
St. Anthony Public Library
St. Anthony Recreation Advisory Committee
St. Anthony Town Council
St. Barb Development Association Literacy Outreach Office
St. Barbe Development Association Community Literacy Association
St. Edward's Elementary
St. Francis Foundation
St. George's Public Library
St. John Ambulance
St. John's Fire Department
St. John's Library Board
St. John's School Lunch Association
St. John's Youth Diversion

St. Mary's All-Grade School
St. Michael's High School
Stella Burry Corporation
Support Group Against Family Violence

Tenants Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
The Advertiser
The Georgian
The Labradorian
The Packet
The Salvation Army – Musgrave Harbour
The Salvation Army – Wesleyville
The Western Star
Town of Bishops Falls
Town of Gander
Town of Grand Falls-Windsor
Town of Labrador City
Town of Nain
Town of St. Lunaire-Griquet
Town of Stephenville
Town of Wabana
Trepassey Crime Prevention Committee
Tri-Town and Area Laubach Literacy Council
Trinity Conception Community Development Corporation
Trinity Conception Community Employment Corporation
Trinity Placentia Development Association

Unified Family Court

Voices for Justice in Housing

Waterford Hospital
Wellness Centre
West Coast Library Association
Western Health Care Corporation
Western Newfoundland Chapter Diabetes Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador
Western Regional Library Board
Westviking College
Whitbourne Public Library
Wigwam Family Tree House
Women Interested in Successful Employment (WISE)
Women's Centre
Women's Economic Network
Women's Economic Network, Placentia

Women's Enterprise Bureau
Women's Institute – Carmanville
Women's Policy Office

YM/YWCA
Youth Council – Bartlett's Harbour

