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A REPORT TO
CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION
ON THE REQUIREMENTS FOR SUITABLE
ACCOMODATIONS FOR PERSONS WITH A
DISABILITY BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF
PRESENTATIONS MADE TO THE
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE DISABLED
AND THE HANDICAPPED
or
HOUSING FOR PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

-
A CONSUMERS PERSPECTIVE

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February 1982

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement

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l'habitation

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REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF BRIEFS AND REPRESENTATIONS
REGARDING HOUSING ISSUES TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
THE DISABLED AND THE HANDICAPPED

OBJECTIVES:

To review the public briefs and representations to the Special Committee on the Disabled and the Handicapped in order to:

- i) identify the issues and problems relating to the housing of disabled persons as elaborated in the public presentations; and
- ii) document the incidence of issues and problems as raised in the public presentations.

To analyze the housing issues and problems relating to CMHC programs and activities as identified in the public presentations to the Committee.

To provide conclusions regarding the type and nature of appropriate and feasible government programs to address the issues and problems identified in the public representations to the Committee.

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1. INTRODUCTION

On May 23, 1980, a Special Committee was formed to act as a Parliamentary Task Force on the problems of the Disabled and the Handicapped (Terms of reference, appendix 1). Its purpose was to evaluate the scope and effectiveness of existing government programs for the disabled and the handicapped and to recommend new initiatives. The committee was also charged with suggesting measures to improve the quality of a range of available programs and services including housing.

Briefs were submitted, from all parts of Canada by government departments and agencies; groups providing services to disabled persons; consumer organizations made up of persons with a disability and by disabled persons themselves. This report contains a partial summary of salient points relating to housing found in the English language briefs, mostly from individuals and non-government organizations.

Since there was no provision made for transcribing verbal presentations at the hearings, comments wherever appropriate, are based on my own hand-written notes made during the hearings held in Western Canada, Toronto, and Ottawa. The code attached to the briefs is made up of three components. The first number refers to the province of origin of the resenatation, the second number attempts to show whether the brief was from a national or local organization, or presented by a private individual. Finally, as briefs were received an additional unique number was assigned to each. For the sake of simplicity, I have only listed the province from which the brief was received.

2. HOUSING ISSUES

2.1 Is there a shortage?

H.U.B. in Newfoundland

This organization stated that many individuals would be ready to move from institutions into community based accomodation, if such accomodations were available.

Ron Kanary (Nova Scotia)

Mr. Kanary stated that in his estimation many persons with a disability are wasting away in nursing homes and institutions because of the lack of alternate housing. He is a director of a housing cooperative presently under construction. He states that the waiting list already exceeds the 31 units being developed.

Other comments.

Jim Ashin Ph.D (Ontario)

"Housing is entirely inadequately available for disabled persons".

Mrs. Lilian Braithwaite (British Columbia)

"Major concerns: Housing - suites unsuitable, unaffordable and unavailable to those who require them".

British Columbia Coalition of the Disabled

"Definite lack of handicapped housing available. Long waiting lists for present housing".

Consumers' Association of Canada (Ontario)

This national consumer organization felt that there was a shortage of housing for persons with disabilities. Unfortunately this housing is practically non-existent and less than satisfactory.

The information gathered by the Special Parliamentary Committee as typified by the above quotes indicates that the situation is crucial. However, the extent in quantifiable terms to which persons with a disability face a housing shortage is very difficult to determine.

This paper reflects the feelings presented to the Parliamentary Committee that in fact there actually is a shortage of housing suitable for persons with a disability in all parts of Canada. The question of whether the shortage is perceived or real must be determined by another mechanism and is addressed in a recommendation. We will identify certain key issues and outline some possible solutions.

3. APPROPRIATE FACILITIES FOR PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

3.1 Opinions on the type of housing required:

Ontario Association of Professional Social Workers

Since disabilities range from relatively minor inconveniences to severe paralysis, there is therefore a requirement for a continuum of accommodation to match the degree of disability and make independent living easier. These options should vary between chronic care institutions to accessible apartments with support care.

Marcel J. Dessureault (Quebec)

"...lack of suitably accessible accomodations; too few alternatives between totally independent home-living and total care in institutions"

K-W services for the physically disabled (Ontario)

There is a need for multiple solutions to the range of housing needs which will allow for as much independence as possible for all ages and disabilities.

Royal Ottawa Hospital (Ontario)

In its brief the Hospital emphasized the need for a variety of housing possibilities which should be made available to the handicapped.

These would include:

- integrated housing with built in personal care services;
- group homes,
- institutions such as nursing homes and chronic care hospitals.

Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded, Prince Edward Island Division

As a result of de-institutionalization, there is a need for group homes, supervised apartments, "professional tutor homes", and in general the availability of other residential opportunities which exist for others in society.

Canadian Association on Gerontology (Manitoba)

Models must be developed that are more appropriate to residential living designs for the aging/disabled rather than the custodial approach. A concept which has been derived from the inappropriate application of acute care models to residential settings.

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (07 3 422)

Communities should be assisted in the provision of a variety of housing alternatives to meet the requirements of disabled individuals with different levels of independence. Appropriate support services should be available for those who need personal care assistance on a

weekly or daily basis. With such resources, more persons with a disability could achieve higher levels of independent living than is currently possible in most communities.

From the evidence, it is clear that an accommodation shortage exists and that because of both the variety and degrees of disability there is a corresponding need for a continuum of housing options which will allow for maximum integration and independence. In larger urban centres or where numbers warrant, this continuum should ideally include institutions, nursing homes, participation homes, group homes, housing cooperatives, integrated apartments and accessible units without support care.

Based on the presentations to the committee we shall now examine a few of the options presently available.

3.2 Institutions as a necessary evil

Persons with disabilities have a right to choose from among a range of options. The choice of living in an institutional setting is a decision which the person with a disability must make on their own. Institutions take on many different forms, but essentially they take away a person's freedom with a series of rules and regulations.

Waterloo County Cerebral Palsy Council (Ontario)

There will always be a group of disabled persons so severely disabled that they will be unable to live outside of a Participation House. Housing must become available as an alternative to institutionalization.

Community Services Council of Newfoundland, Labrador

This organization endorses the principles of normalization and reduced emphasis on institutional care. A greater emphasis on community-based services with adequate support services - all of which must be in place before the withdrawal from the institutional concept can occur. This council feels that, more support and direction from the Federal Government is required.

It must, however, be remembered that some persons with a disability lack the confidence or knowledge to select housing alternatives which others in society take for granted. As a result many persons with a disability will not readily exchange their comfortable and secure environment for a more

independent life style. The right to live in an institution should not be taken away. This option should be part of the continuum of housing alternatives and be made available to all persons with a disability.

However, if possible, these institutions should be set up for different peer groups rather than having young adults within old age homes.

The residents should be encouraged to participate in the development of the rules and regulations of the institution. It is hoped, but not necessary, that these institutions will become a stepping stone to alternative accomodation.

3.2.1 Some negative comments regarding institutions

Kitchener - Waterloo Hospital Rehabilitation Unit (Ontario)

The practice of placing physically handicapped young adults in the geriatric wing of a local hospital is a practice that can hardly be condoned, professionally or socially.

British Columbia Coalition of the Disabled

The housing situation sometimes forces individuals to move into institutions as they cannot locate accessible housing.

Centres Offering Independent Lifestyles (New Brunswick)

Institutionalization must be deemed the very last resort for dependent physically disabled adults.

People First (British Columbia)

This organization is a self-help advocacy group for mentally handicapped persons and they feel that there should be no institutions and that everyone should have a chance to live in the community.

The presentations before the Committee, regarding institutions were for the most part delivered in a very emotional manner. These presentations had a strong impact on the committee members.

The impact on the committee appears to have carried over into the recommendations in the Obstacles Report which emphasize the need for alternative housing and support care services.

3.2.2 The Benefits of de-institutionalization

Waterloo Region Social Resources Council (Ontario)

All necessary community support systems should be established as the preferred method...and institutionalization as a last option.

Cost of nursing home bed	\$10,220 per annum
Cost of chronic care bed	\$21,900 per annum

and the total cost of accomodations with support care services in an integrated apartment is even lower.

Margaret Wagner (07 9 611)

In her presentation, Margaret Wagner recommended that government provide aid for the remodelling of homes. Cost for institutionalization her child in a full care would be approximately \$36,000 yearly (\$100/day). The option is to spend \$15,000 for home renovations to her home and supply a van. In the long run, Government would still better allocate its resources if the cost of renovations and transportation could be covered.

Denyse Handle (Ontario) The Uncertified Human A Pro-Life Magazine

She feels that "...whereas provincial governments will pay for the institutional care of a handicapped child, they will frequently not pay for renovations or services or equipment that would make it possible to keep the child at home."

Many young children end up in institutions because their families cannot cope with their physical or mental disability without some support systems in place.

Alberta Association for the Mentally Retarded (01 4 408)

The association believes that the provision of support care services can be used as a tool for de-institutionalization.

The benefits of de-institutionalization appear to be clear. But, the mechanism for support systems must be in place before disabled persons leave the institution. One of the recommendations later in this report suggests that a definitive study be carried out to answer these concerns.

If the study does show that money is saved through de-institutionalization it is felt that these saving should be put towards the provision of personal and community support services before persons with a disability are released from institutions.

3.2.3 Funding as a tool for de-institutionalization

Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded (New Brunswick)

The association recommends that the transfer of cost shared funds for the construction or maintenance of institutions for mentally retarded persons be stopped, and that these funds be allocated to community programs and services.

The following is an example of the reallocation of funds, conditions could be placed on the renewal of Federal/Provincial agreements, which supply operating revenue to institutions housing mentally disabled persons. These new conditions could be applied to all institutions which for arguments sake have over 25 persons and would force them to annually reduce their operating revenue by 5%. If the anticipated revenue saved was allocated under strict guarantees to the provision of personal and community services, before the de-institutionalization process occurred, it is possible that the majority would be better off. In the long run, as the annual 5% decrease took its toll these underfinanced institutions would be forced to close. These empty insititutions could be utilized for community activities. It is important to note that, in the initial stages, it would be necessary for governments to provide more than these savings for the alternatives to be built. In the long run, it is essential that the saved revenue be made available for more suitable housing alternatives and accompanying community support services. Much study is required before funding could become a viable tool for de-institutionalization but it is a method worth considering. The historic acceptance that conditions could not be attached to block funds is being proven false.

Alberta Association for Mentally Retarded

The association believes that support care services can be used as a tool for de-institutionalization.

Waterford Hospital (Newfoundland)

The hospital recommends that the process of de-institutionalization be implemented through the use of hostels and halfway-houses which will encourage integration.

3.3 Group Homes with Support Care Services

3.3.1 Advantages of group homes

A group home can be an interim step towards a more independent environment and is cost effective.

CORDI (Ontario)

This group home in Ottawa points out that it costs \$30 per day at CORDI vs \$100 in an institution.

"Further independence can be gained from co-operative apartment living" therefore, CORDI is an interim residence and some of their residents actually move into accommodations on their own.

Montreal Neurological Hospital and Institute (Quebec)

The hospital reports that there is a need for group homes with shared attendant care. Community housing, such as small group homes, for the young disabled population must receive greater priority.

Brandon Mental Health Centre (Manitoba)

The Brandon Mental Health Centre described the need for small community residences which will integrate and solve problems of loneliness and dislocation from friends and families.

Many persons with a disability progress to the point where they can eventually leave the group home environment and move into an integrated apartment. This is made possible partly through access to shared attendant care. An integrated apartment encourages personal development and builds confidence.

3.3.2 Effect of municipal by-laws

People First (Ontario)

"There should be no restrictions in by-laws to stop group homes".

"That under the revised Planning Act, municipal by-laws should not be permitted which directly or indirectly restrict the establishment and operation of residences in the community for ex-patients. Residence in the community

is an absolute right and should not be violated by by-laws or other practices, i.e., should not be subject to local veto".

Municipalities, through their National Association, should seek to eliminate this restriction across Canada. There have been instances where group homes have been blocked by persons who are afraid of having them in their neighbourhood. This practice should be outlawed.

3.4 Integrated Apartments

Helen P. Smith (Ontario)

"The Federal Government is urged to take the lead in encouraging the provision of adequate housing facilities for the physically handicapped along the line of Winnipeg's 1010 Sinclair, Fokus 1 and 2. Further, it must urge the provision of personal care facilities in every city in the land".

Truro Committee IYDP (Nova Scotia)

There is a clear need "...for more integrated housing units and/or complexes designed primarily for the disabled with rents tailored to suit income - having able bodied tenants included. Normalization is the key word here".

The benefits of integrated apartments stem from the availability of shared support services. However members still retain their privacy in this environment.

Many persons in our society chose to live in apartments. With the provision of shared personal care services, it should be possible for persons with a disability to have greater access to this option. The integrated apartment, with support care services - varying according to the level of changing needs - allows for privacy and in many cases is a preferred accomodation option.

3.5 Housing Co-operatives

British Columbia Coalition of the Disabled

The Coalition states that the members who reside in a cooperative should include both disabled and non-disabled persons and thereby achieving a certain level of integration. If the cooperative was exclusively for

persons with disabilities then an institutional atmosphere could develop. Generally, the development of cooperatives is left up to voluntary organizations. This is in many cases ineffective since voluntary organizations do not have the expertise and must spend a lot of time researching the methodology. Consequently, very few voluntary organizations have effectively establish cooperatives.

Timmins Mental Health (Ontario)

Housing co-operatives should be funded and established for high-functioning handicapped individuals, and/or existing apartments in Timmins should be altered to provide accessibility and potential accomodations.

Ronald Kanary (Nova Scotia)

Mr. Kanary as the director of a housing co-operative has already stated that the waiting list exceeds the number of available units.

This is a clear indications that to many cooperatives do offer a suitable option. Co-operatives can allow for integration to occur between persons with a disability and those who have none. Since they are self initiated and managed, and there is more control and responsibility placed in the hands of the members. Over time, and with proper training, almost anyone can learn to operate a co-operative. This has the desirable effect of reducing the burden and the involvment of government.

Unfortunately, the opportunity to develop these skills is not as readily available as it is required. Training possibilities should be made available either through courses at a community college or in the form of a training package available to a member in the home.

Also the lack of member participation in some co-ops is a serious problem. For the majority, integrated co-ops are a very desirable option.

4. USER GROUPS

4.1 Persons with a Physical Disability

Participation House Ottawa (Ontario)

This group rejects the concept of large institutions in favour of small group homes or integrated apartments with different levels of support care.

For the severely disabled, more care is required than is available in an integrated housing project. There is a need for Group Homes for severely handicapped young adults who are not mentally retarded but require a high level of personal care services.

Cheshire Homes of London Inc. (Ontario)

Because of a very long waiting list for accomodation with personal care, there is a requirement for an additional Cheshire house of 12 units which would include both one and two bedroom apartments and provide 24 hour support care services.

British Columbia Coalition of the Disabled

"...there is a definite lack of group homes. Long waiting lists to get into group homes. Very little expansion of the program in the last few years".

Bernadine Morris (Ontario)

"Housing - Encourage more support for group homes so as to promote maximum independence for special needs people".

The postitive reinforcement that exists when suitable accomodations and personal care services are available is exemplified in the group home environment, for persons with a disability. The transition whereby many disabled persons have been able to leave institutions to enter group homes is dependent upon the provision of personal care services. The members of these group homes have a greater degree of control over their lives amd are more likely to demonstrate a greater determination to become even more fully integrated into the mainstream of society since they have control over their environment.

4.2 Persons Who Are Mentally Retarded

Lou Wise (Ontario)

A real need exists for groups home for up to 12 severely and profoundly retarded persons with supervisory staff near treatment facilities. She recommends that this home be build on one level in order that persons with mobility problems can be easily accomodated. This group home would have the training and recreational functions attached directly to the home. As a result they would be able to offer complete services to those residing in the home.

Saskatchewan Association for the
Mentally Retarded

They are aware that CMHC is the "primary method used for purchasing housing to serve persons with handicap(s) in Saskatchewan. This has proven to be a most satisfactory method for establishing group homes and has allowed a great many people to enjoy this community-based option..."

There is evidence that this option can and has been satisfactorily used.

Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded,
Nova Scotia Division

Without doubt their organization disapproves of the institutional setting. They are committed to the principle of community-based residential alternatives. Community residences either as group homes where disabled persons learn the many skills required to function in society such as budgeting and how to work and hold a job. There is also a need for development homes where disabled persons learn other basic skill such as eating, dressing, personal hygiene are very important.

The organization feels that there is an identifiable need for respite care to be made available in these homes. This will allow parents to have a place to leave their children for periods of time and give them a break, from in some cases, an exhausting situation.

4.3 Post Phyciatric Patients

Canadian Mental Health Association,
Manitoba Division

Group Homes are required to be small and professionally staffed. It is felt that there would be a benefit if the residents would be made responsible for the care and maintenance of the home.

Ontario Public Service Employees,
Mental Health Union

The union felt that even though governments continue to close beds in institutions, there does not appear to be an accompanying increase in the support services required by persons who have had a history of mental health problems.

A description of available types of housing is listed in the brief, this includes private non-profit boarding and lodging facilities. This organization warns that these facilities have a very unsatisfactory history which requires regulation and a consideration of minimum standards. As an alternative they felt that the emphasis should shift to making more community group homes available.

Ontario Friends of Schizophrenics
Metro Toronto Chapter

Housing appears to be one of the two most desperate needs of schizophrenics. "Picture the unemployed single male, poorly dressed and under medication which caused unpleasant parkinsonian side effects trying to rent a room".

The group continued by noting that initially, group homes may be necessary for the transition from institutions, but eventually it would become obvious that schizophrenics do not want to live with other schizophrenics in a group home. They would rather live in a housing environment based on a family volunteer component.

It must be remembered that because of a lack of motivation there is a need for some form of support care services, otherwise some would not survive.

The housing problems of persons with a mental disability are linked to society's attitudes and to the problem of insufficient income rather than the need for special or modified housing. A possible solution to this dilemma for persons who have left psychiatric hospitals, is a rent subsidy which will enable them to afford integrated housing units.

4.4 Autistic children

Ottawa Chapter, Ontario Society for Autistic Children
Ottawa Valley Autistic Homes

The Society's approach to accommodation was to recommend sheltered group homes or farm residences incorporating a gainful work program for adolescents. They propose that these units be made up of about six beds, clustered together and sharing recreational facilities.

They also recognize the importance of being able to offer some parental relief for short periods.

4.5 Muscular Dystrophy

Barbara Jackson, Muscular Dystrophy
Sault Branch (Ontario)

Their group feels desperately that there is a need for housing units with support services to become available for persons with a disability and their preferred option would be group homes. They also felt that it was necessary to include at least one bed for parental relief.

Muscular Dystrophy Association of Canada (Ontario)

Presently many young persons affected by neuromuscular disorders are in institutions for the aged and chronically ill. It is recommended that peer group residences be established as a suitable alternative.

The group home, with support care services, can offer the necessary level of support care that is available in the institutional environment, but yet encourage independence and participation not available in an institution.

Muscular dystrophy is a childrens disease which becomes progressively worse very quickly and for the most part, persons who contract it have a very short life expectancy. As a result the establishment of peer homes for these children would be beneficial.

5 FACTORS AFFECTING SUITABILITY

5.1 Link between personal care services and accomodations

Cochrane Temiskaming Centre for Physically
Handicapped Children

Accessible subsidized accomodations are a must for persons with a disability, but unless funds are made available to establish a variety of residential programs, the provision of these accomodations may become useless.

Canadian Rehabilitation Council
for the Disabled (Ontario)

The existence of accessible accomodation alone is insufficient for a person with a disability to achieve his maximum level of independence. There is a need for community services and personnel support care to be available.

Even though accomodations may be developed in certain locations with the best of intentions, the lack of parallel personal support care services may preclude disabled persons who require assistance from living in these accomodations. Unfortunately, some provincial governments do not appear to be aware of or willing to acknowledge this important link. This author will develop in this paper a precedent for CMHC to assume the new and chllenging responsibility for the development of a new cost-shared program with the provincial governments, but to place specific restrictions on how these funds may be spent.

Prince Edward Island Council
of the Disabled

Since the key to independent living for persons with a disability is personal support care services, there is a need to actively recruit and train personal care attendants.

The question of training for personal care staff should be considered. Leadership is required. CMHC could publish a paper or have it become part of an information package made available to persons with a disability or rehabilitation personnel. This paper could assist in outlining the options available to persons with a disability in developing an appropriate personal support care system.

In one of the more moving presentation to the Committee, Kay Reynolds of Prince Edward Island describes the plight of a 56 year old women who is forced into an institution because of a lack of suitable accomodation and support care services. Unfortunately there is insufficient detail to determine if there were any other extenuating circumstances.

A system, which does not provide personal support services in conjunction with appropriate accomodation for persons with a disability forces these people to become institutionalized.

Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded
New Brunswick Division

The Association recommends that community living, community-based services and home-support services be given high priority in planning and allocation of funds. The Federal Government must give home-support services a higher priority in future budgets.

Manitoba League of the Physically Handicapped

The League stresses the importance of community support and services to encourage independent living. Even though

Manitoba has a program unique in Canada, there are still some gaps and inadequacies.

The Federal Government should be encouraged to convince all provinces that there is a need to implement and supply home support services by designating funds for that specific purpose. They list what they feel is necessary.

Basic Standards - minimum criteria for staff
 - insured services regardless of income
 - consumer input
 - availability of 24 hour coverage.

Housing and personal support services in combination, give the person with a disability control over their lives. It is important that non-disabled persons recognize that persons with a disability, either individually or through their organizations must be consulted when governments or agencies establish personal care services. Consumer input must occur. These services are ultimately designed for specific groups. It is these groups who are best qualified to develop the service.

There is also a need for an appropriate revenue generating mechanism, such as a new Provincial/Federal cost-sharing program. The purpose of this program will be to allocate funds which will guarantee that these services will be provided in an equitable and consistent manner across Canada. A first step in developing this new program would be the evaluation and modification, where necessary, of existing programs.

Unfortunately, at present no cost sharing agreements exist between the federal and provincial governments for the explicit provision of personal care services. Persons with a disability find it difficult to understand why services available in one province are practically non-existent in another.

It appears, that for many years, various Federal departments and Agencies have discussed among themselves who it is that is to assume responsibility for providing leadership in establishing cost sharing programs which will allow persons with a disability universal access to personal care services on a 24 hour basis regardless of income, degree of handicap or place of residence. It is this authors opinion that the discussions have not and will not yield a definitive answer. Now is the time for CMHC to assume a leadership role.

5.2 User Fee for personal care services as a deterrent

Visiting Homemakers Association (Ontario)

"User charges often act as a deterrent to service, with the 'fee' seen as a further handicapping burden".

User charges for personal care services do act as a deterrent. These services must be readily available and unencumbered to all who have need of it.

It is not unreasonable for disabled persons to be responsible for the ordinary costs which others in society face. It seems unreasonable to ask them to pay for the extraordinary expenses which they incur as a result of being disabled.

5.3 Design

Federation of Canadian Municipalities (Ontario)

The Federation recommends that NRC and CMHC conduct further studies on the design of residential accommodation incorporating the requirements of disabled and handicapped persons. This will permit the integration of disabled and handicapped persons into multi-family apartment buildings.

Frederick B. Roger (Ontario)

"Housing is more expensive as wheelchair living requires greater space, larger halls, bathroom and bedrooms to accommodate the chair".

Prince Edward Island Council of the Disabled

CMHC should not only review its non-profit group funding program and increase the level of funding, but it should also redefine its definition of architectural accessibility.

Consumers' Association of Canada (Ontario)

Housing inadequacies are perpetuated through a "lack of caring and ingenuity on the part of architects, building contractors and the industry in general, plus the inflexibility of government sponsored building programs".

Dr. David Barnes (Ontario)

Housing must be of a respectable size and be aesthetically pleasing.

Standards must continue to be improved and be tested by normal consumers in order to answer the above criticisms.

There is a need for Supplement Number 5 to become mandatory part of the National Building Code Regulations, be updated, and used as the minimum acceptable standards when accommodations are being developed for persons with a disability. This code must reflect the specific needs of persons who will become users of the accommodations. Only by having direct input from persons with a disability, can this code in the long run truly reflect the requirements of the users.

5.4 Affordability and Housing Allowance

Statistics have shown that the income levels of disabled persons on a whole are significantly below the National average. This can affect the quality of accommodation that persons with disabilities can afford.

One solution, which has received considerable attention, is the use of housing subsidies which would allow persons with disabilities to more easily locate themselves and use normally unavailable but useable accommodation. The advantages are outlined below. Developers of social housing policy should consider these options as demand requirements change.

Vancouver - Richmond Association for the Mentally Retarded (British Columbia)

The Association recommends the implementation of a housing allowance which would:

- integrate mentally disabled persons into existing communities and thereby depopulate large institutions.
- allow flexibility in housing selection.
- improve the cost-benefit ratio of existing homes for mentally disabled persons.
- lead to the elimination of most or all zoning, building code, health, fire, etc., restrictions since there would be no necessity for group homes.
- decrease government administration costs.
- allow for greater choice of where to live.
- encourage non-profit and private development to increase number of units for disabled persons.
- simplify shelter subsidy programs.
- allow for a continuum of living arrangements persons with a disability.

Lower Mainland Coalition (British Columbia)

Up to now, government has provided supply side incentives such as capital write-offs, interest write-down, and Section 441B Rental Housing Sales Programs. No individual disabled person will apply for a subsidy because of the complexity and nature of the program. Non-profit agencies can not afford to have requisite housing expertise permanently on hand because of the cost.

A possible solution is a reasonable direct cash transfer made regularly to families or individuals which would enable them to afford adequate housing, matched to their needs, from existing units.

Advantages of an allowance based on income and housing costs are:

- greater social integration of persons with a disability and non-disabled persons
- social equitablity throu a choice of options
- incentives to the private sector to modify existing units
- lower administration costs.

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada (Ontario)

The Society points out the need for special government housing allowances, which would provide primary housing and 24 hours personal support care.

Manitoba League of the Physically Disabled

The League call for the provision of rent subsidy to a person with a disability if the individual finds suitable accomodations which are too expensive.

The arguments for direct transfers of financial resources to persons with disabilities are very persuasive. Some argue that there would be too much of an opportunity to "cheat", but there is no proof that this would occur. This option could be made available at the outset only in areas with few useable units and only to persons who could show definite need. This option would initially be introduced on a last resort basis.

5.5 Location

There is a demonstrable need to locate housing for persons with a disability in close proximity to municipal, health

care, educational services and areas of potential employment because many persons with a disability are transportation handicapped. Many housing projects whether they be cooperatives or group homes are finding it impossible to locate within a reasonable distance of essential services. The high cost of land appears to push the unit price above the maximum allowed under present guidelines as set down by CMHC. The maximum unit prices should be considered more carefully when it is to be applied to accommodations for persons with a disability.

5.6 Matching available units with demand

Canadian Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled (Ontario)

Regional housing registries of accessible units be developed and maintained.

In any housing market, there is some difficulty in matching consumer needs with units already existing in the market. The problem stems from the difficulties inherent in exchanging information among interested parties.

A disabled person faces many obstacles when moving out of an institution into a public housing unit or any other form of housing. In many cases there is a long waiting period required before a suitable apartment becomes available. Even after a person with a disability is informed that there is an apartment available in a public housing complex, that person might find that in many cases suitability is limited to basic access to the building. The accommodation itself may not be useable.

A partial solution is to encourage rehabilitation hospitals, consumer organizations of disabled persons themselves, or other appropriate groups in large cities to locate and develop an inventory of all buildings or units which are accessible and grade them according to their degree of useability. There is a need for an organization - preferably existing - to assume the responsibility for the creation of, updating, and provision of an information source for disabled persons looking for appropriate housing.

This group would generally inform disabled persons of the eligibility requirements and method of obtaining public housing, and if necessary, personal and home support services. As a disabled person's abilities change, there may be a continuing need to reevaluate their housing requirements. Disabled persons living in accessible accommodations would be encouraged to notify the organization maintaining the inventory

before they relocate. It is important that disabled persons themselves are involved with this program since they are more keenly aware of the requirements.

Persons looking for accommodation for persons with a disability often do not know what is appropriate for a given disability. The number of housing units administered by provincial public housing departments which are deemed to be useabled are exaggerated. It has been suggested that even if all public housing was modified to become barrier free it could probably be shown that there would still be insufficient accommodation to satisfy present and future needs.

5.7 Integration

British Columbia Coalition of the Disabled

The Coalition wishes to avoid housing for the handicapped only. Integration of handicapped and non-handicapped is necessary.

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (Ontario)

The Association points out that there is a need for a range of housing alternatives to provide maximum independence. These should be located near community resources. However, care should be taken not to create ghettos.

Montreal Neurological Hospital and Institute (Quebec)

The Hospital calls for a choice in housing options, from government institutions, to group homes with supervision and independent living with community support.

"Integration if possible, segregation if necessary"

There is a clear-cut need for the establishment of housing options which are an integral part of society. Segregation is the last choice.

Oxford Regional Centre (Ontario)

The Centre recommends integrated flexible housing which would contain subsidized self-contained units coupled with home support services.

Raleigh Orr (Nova Scotia)

He expresses a need for integrated housing units designed for disabled persons with appropriate rent subsidies.

Ontario Association of Professional Social Workers

The Association recommends the development of education programs to improve the level of awareness of the general public and the building industry for the different housing needs which persons with a disability have. Appropriate housing means truly integrated housing.

Canadian Physiotherapists Association (Ontario)

The Association recommends that the Federal Government take the initiative in providing public education programs for the general public which raise public awareness and aid in the integration of the handicapped.

There is a need for programs which will develop a continuum of accommodations.

Truro Committee IYPD (Nova Scotia)

"Need is evident for more integrated housing units and/or complexes designed primarily for the disabled with rents tailored to suit income - having able bodies tenants all. Normalization is the key word here".

One basic principal that was reiterated throughout the testimony - especially the verbal, unrehearsed presentations by disabled persons themselves - was the need for integration into all areas of society. Awareness, education and acceptance will follow from personal contact between non-disabled and persons with a disability living together as part of a neighbourhood.

6 ACTIONS WHICH MAY INCREASE THE STOCK OF USEABLE ACCOMODATIONS

6.1 The need for the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP)

Prince Edward Island Council of the Disabled

The council stated that because of the shortage of useable homes, it encourages the modification of existing homes to fill these needs.

RRAP be made available to landlords and homeowners for conversion of existing dwellings regardless of these premises being in an NIP area.

Canadian Association on Gerontology (Manitoba)

"That the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, or any other appropriate group/agency, be encouraged to develop a home renovation programs specifically designed to fund the types of home renovations necessary to enable aging/disabled persons to remain independent in the environment of their choice".

Social Planning Council of Ottawa (Ontario)

The Council recommends that CMHC establish a policy and set aside funds to provide forgivable loans or grants for essential renovations to existing housing and for the removal of architectural barriers so that physically disabled persons would not be forced to relocate.

British Columbia Coalition of the Disabled

"Make government funds available for renovations to private housing or to landlords for renovations to make a home accessible".

Grey-Bruce Association for Parents of Physically Disabled Children (Ontario)

This association feels that the cost of modifications within the home or apartment are either too expensive or impossible to effect for most persons with a disability. The specific solutions they recommend are the modification of the ground floor bathroom and bedroom, enlarged doorways, and installation of ramps.

Ontario Federation for the Physically Handicapped

The Federation recommends that the Federal and Provincial Governments cost-share home support services, and building renovations, which would allow aging people and those with a disability to remain in their homes and communities.

Federation of Canadian Municipalities

The Federation recommends that the federal Government, in cooperation with the provinces, develop an effective home modification program to allow persons with a disability, regardless of age or cause of disability, to live in their homes wherever possible.

Muscular Dystrophy Association of Canada (07 3 504)

The Association recommends that financial assistance be provided to families for renovations and/or additions to their homes to accomodate wheelchairs, lifts, ramps, elevators, stairglides, ground floor bathrooms, in the form of:

- low or no interest loans
- income tax relief on the purchase of building materials and services pertaining to renovations.

Belleville - Adaptation Survey (Ontario)

Of all those surveyed, only 15.5% were aware of the Ontario Home Renewal Program which could have assisted with renovations.

The presentation stressed that a program which allows for modifications of accomodations is essential. This program should also have a person who would provide design, financial, and other expertise to disabled persons.

The traditional health care model through its delivery of services, especially rehabilitation services, informs persons with disabilities of ways to modify and rennovate their accomodations. Unfortunately many disabled persons are not linked to these service delivery programs and as a result other methods of transmitting information should be found. The creation of a new program could be underutilized during the introductory period.

One method which may gain acceptance is the creation of pilot projects on a regional basis which would have the effect of increasing user awareness. Input and involvement from organizations of disabled persons must occur.

It is hoped that the regional CMHC offices will become fully committed to these principals and assist disabled persons in overcoming the paper burden. Some other possible solutions which appeared in the briefs are presented below.

6.2 Coordination of Home Modifications

Waterloo Regional Social Resources Council (Ontario)

There is a need for a Coordinator who would be responsible for presenting plans and suggestions regarding architectural modifications in present homes, obtaining cost estimates, arranging for grants or loans, and finally supervising the work to be done.

Ruth Weight (Ontario)

"Perhaps some of these persons could return to their homes, if there was someone - from the government? - to show them how to remodel their houses. Financial assistance here might be cheaper than a prolonged stay in an institution. Whatever the arrangements, husbands and wives should not be separated. Home care should be available".

British Columbia Coalition of the Disabled

The Coalition recommends that a coordinator available through an established organization such as CMHC to develop housing for the handicapped in the form of group homes and cooperatives.

Mrs. M. Lilian Braithwaite (Ontario)

"Lack of a person or organization to turn to for advice as to what adjustments need to be done to enable someone to remain in his/her home (such as myself)".

There is a need for a branch within CMHC which would assist persons with disabilities to effect the necessary home modifications that are required. They must be experienced and available to be consultants and managers for the planing of rennovations which are required.

Those who made presentations or submitted briefs suggested that a responsible body be created to address their concerns. The author recommends that CMHC assume responsibility for the integration of appropriate accommodation and personal support care services and that this combined function be recognized as the most appropriate expression of the needs which persons with a disability have.

6.3 Building code as condition of loan guarantee or funding

Canadian Rehabilitation Council
for the Disabled (Ontario)

The Council suggests that Supplement no. 5 become mandatory and enforced in all housing developments receiving CMHC grants or loans.

Prince Edward Island Council for the Disabled

The Council also recommends that supplement no. 5 be adhered to in all housing developments which receive CMHC loans or grants.

Ontario's March of Dimes, Kitchener - Waterloo

The March of Dimes recommends that CMHC "refuse grants and loans to those projects which fail to incorporate features for all users which ensure primary accessibility to and general mobility within".

Canadian Association on Gerontology (Manitoba)

The brief submitted by the Association and the presentation made to the Committee recommended that Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation specify, in design guidelines, that a variety of living spaces should be provided in all federally funded or insured multiple occupancy structures.

Ontario Federation for the Physically Handicapped

This group felt that there was a need for "universal" barrier-free design standards in a mandatory National Building Code.

6.4 Federal/Provincial Cost Sharing

Society for Crippled Children and Adults of Manitoba

The Society recommends that federal monetary incentives be used to encourage other jurisdictions to set up the mechanism which would lead to the development of an independent life style including options such as:

- support services,
- choice of accommodations,

in addition the incentive would

- educate the housing industry,
- provide research and demonstrate the viability of projects
- convince consumer service agencies and government departments to fund demonstration project similar to those in Manitoba,

- lead to the development of effective methods which would implement standards for barrier free designs, and
- lead to the development of group homes for multiply handicapped persons.

Ontario Federation for the Physically Handicapped

The Federation urges the Federal and Provincial Governments to establish firm agreements leading to the provision of cost shared home support services and building renovations. This would allow aging and disabled persons to remain in their homes and communities.

Canadian Physio-Therapy Association (Ontario)

The Association recommends that the Federal Government provide tied economic incentives to Provincial Governments in order to encourage persons with a disability to move out of an insitiutional environment.

Canadian Paraplegic Association (Ontario)

The Association urges that the Federal Government to consider increasing financial aid for the provision of support services (through Federal/Provincial cost sharing programs) such that the severely physically disabled would be able to live in their own homes wherever possible.

Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded
Prince Edward Island Division

This association recommends that the Federal government strengthen the progressive role of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation in financing and/or subsidizing community-based residential accomodations for all handicapped Canadians.

Disabled consumers of legislation and government goods and services are well aware of these jurisdictional problems facing both Federal and Provincial Governments. They continue to hope for more interaction and cooperation. At this time strong leadership is required if these new initiative are to be enacted. It would require determination by CMHC that its role should be enhanced and that it is the most appropriate agency to address these real needs. Such a change in direction would satisfy some of the aspirations of Canadians who are disabled.

7. PROVINCIAL FAILURE

Denyse Handle (Ontario)

Pro-Life Magazine entitled The Uncertified Human

She states "...whereas provincial governments will pay for the institutional care of a handicapped child, they will frequently not pay for renovation or services or equipment that would make it possible to keep the child at home".

The verbal testimony of many who made spontaneous presentations contained many references to inequities between provinces and the general indifference of governments towards persons with disabilities.

Many persons who made presentations reiterated the belief that strict conditions should be attached to block funding and that at present there was general misuse by the provinces of these Federal funds. The lack of precision inherent in the present agreements leaves many - not just those persons who are disabled - in a quandary.

8. CMHC SOCIAL HOUSING POLICY INITIATIVES

8.1 Criticism of CMHC

There is clearly a problem of recognition, by consumers and the general public, as to what CMHC does in the field of housing for persons with disabilities.

Peter D. Saubolle (Quebec)

"I am disappointed in the lack of Public Housing for all Poor and Needy Canadians. I draw to your attention in particular, to CMHC who with all their resources have abandoned their participation in public housing. In fact, they have been actively engaged in selling off their housing units, thus leaving poor Canadians in a precarious predicament. Naturally, the disabled and handicapped suffer the most because they cannot work and are the most vulnerable to abuse.

Disabled people are defenseless people."

Oxford Regional Centre (Ontario)

"Currently, the CMHC rules that elevator equipped buildings require easy access to public areas, but not in the apartment themselves." It was felt that perhaps these rules should be reviewed.

8.2 CMHC leadership and coordination

Canadian Association of Rehabilitation Personnel (Ontario)

The Association wishes to ensure that there is coordination between CMHC, Health and Welfare Canada and the Provincial Social Services agencies. These three Ministries should consider the establishment a joint liaison committee to develop a housing and home support services policy and plan housing strategies for the future.

City of Halifax, Social Planning Council (Nova Scotia)

The city of Halifax feels that "Better coordination of programs between Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Health and Welfare, Canada" is required.

Canadian Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled (Ontario)

The Council also emphasizes the need for joint coordination between CMHC, Health and Welfare and Provincial Social Services.

CMHC is in the business of providing accomodations for all Canadians including those who happen to be disabled. Coordination and leadership in all areas of planning for this service is required to develop accomodations for persons with a disability and should be centralized into one arm of government. This author feels that it should be within CMHC.

8.3 National Policy

Manitoba Association of Social Workers

This association feels that the "Federal government can take the lead in establishing national policies on accessible public transportation, housing..."

and that there was

"...a range of integrated housing alternatives in the community to meet various needs".

Saskatchewan Coordinating Council on Social Planning

The Social Planning Council recommends that "a comprehensive social housing policy be developed that includes the recognition that housing and the provision of special services are required by various groups within society".

Futhermore, they recommend

"that more financial resources be made available for housing and related services 'and' ensure continuance, (of these programs)..even during periods of economic turmoil".

Canadian Association on Gerontology (Manitoba)

In their brief the Association states that Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation should evaluate the rental and housing construction industry across Canada. The purpose of this evaluation would be to determine if, under existing CMHC programs, the provinces and the private sector are providing sufficient numbers of barrier free accomodations to meet the needs of the aging/disabled population.

8.4 Conclusion

From the briefs and submissions it is clear that persons with a disability do have difficulties in obtaining accomodations and support services in order that they can live along side other Canadians. The inter-relationship between personal support, community support services and appropriate barrier free useable accomodations is clearly not understood by those in society who are traditionally asked to provide these services.

The author feels that the time has come for CMHC to assume a leadership role - or barring that - at least assume responsibility for the development of a comprehensive accommodation policy ecompassing the requirements of persons with a disability.