

Media Release

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Community Living Essex County Secures Funds to Evaluate its Revitalized Employment Services

Provincial Investment in Local Solutions Driving Change in Essex County

Community Living Essex County has received \$27,400 from Ontario's Local Poverty Reduction Fund to support an independent evaluation conducted by University of Windsor researchers of its award winning, modern and innovative employment service, Career Compass. The grant, funded by the Government of Ontario and administered by its agency the Ontario Trillium Foundation, is helping Community Living Essex County support people with disabilities across Essex County.

"Ontario is investing in programs that will measurably improve the lives of those most affected by poverty. With this funding, Community Living Essex County will help us learn more about the impact their innovative employment service, Career Compass, has on the lives of people with intellectual disabilities. In turn, this will help government, communities and all of our partners design and deliver more effective programs to combat poverty as we continue making Ontario the best place to call home." –Peter Milczyn, Minister of Housing, Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy

A detailed evaluation was completed to explore the impact on increasing social inclusion and income security for people with intellectual disabilities. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected and analyzed by researchers. Interviews and questionnaires were completed with employees receiving employment services, employers and co-workers to assess the impact of the Career Compass model. Working in partnership with Community Living Windsor, Workforce Windsor/Essex and the Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN), the findings collected will contribute to a body of knowledge that will support poverty reduction programs across the province.

Fighting poverty is part of the Government of Ontario's plan to create jobs, grow the economy and help people in their everyday lives. Through the Local Poverty Reduction Fund, Ontario is helping to break the cycle of poverty for children and youth, increase employment and income security and end homelessness in Ontario.

"We will document proven strategies that move people with disabilities toward meaningful employment within a diverse and inclusive workplace. This research will demonstrate the real shift occurring for people with disabilities; that is, a shift away from unemployment, isolation and poverty to a real career, inclusion and income security," states Nancy Wallace-Gero, Executive Director of Community Living Essex County.