



COMMUNITY LIVING GUELPH WELLINGTON STRATEGIC PLAN 2011 TO 2013

Environmental Scan Report

SUPPORT

INSPIRE

ENRICH



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Management and Planning Consultants

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1 INTRODUCTION

Community Living Guelph Wellington was founded in 1955 and has a fifty-six year history of providing supports and services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and their families in the communities in which they live. The organization has evolved significantly from its early years provides supports and services within the City of Guelph and the County of Wellington.

The organization has successfully transitioned from the era of institutions and the notions of mental retardation, to a world of inclusion, acceptance, citizenship and community living for the people it supports. It provides a wide range of support activities involving group and independent residential options, employment supports, day programs and ARC Industries in Guelph. The organization has grown significantly over the years and is an important member of the broader Community Living movement across Ontario.

Over the years, the organization has developed some longer term planning processes, including a Vision, and Mission. In the fall of 2010, the Board of Directors and the Executive Director identified an opportunity to undertake a new Strategic Plan for Community Living Guelph Wellington. This initiative, using an external facilitator, was launched in late December 2010. The work program for the strategic planning process includes three phases: an Environmental Scan Report, Strategic Planning Workshop, and finalization of the Strategic Plan for the 2011 to 2013 period.

This document represents the Environmental Scan Report that will be utilized as one of the key resource components to the strategic planning workshop to be held in February 2011. The Environmental Scan Report had been based on over seventeen stakeholder focus groups and interviews, documents review, trends analysis, services and financial profile and related inputs. It also contains a series of conclusions and strategic themes that will allow the strategic planning workshop to transition from the Environmental Scan to the development of the Strategic Plan.

2 OPERATIONS PROFILE

2.1 SERVICES AND LOCATIONS

Table 1 profiles the 2007 / 2008 to 2009 / 2010 supports and services profile for the organization. In 2007 / 2008, 629 individuals participated in the six support categories. The largest categories involved life skills, involving one in five people served, ARC involved just over one in five people served, and residential services which involved one in four. In total, there were 381 unique individuals. By 2009 / 2010, the number of contacts had increased by twelve to 641, and the number of unique individuals by seventeen to almost 400. The proportionality of the distribution across the six support areas was relatively the same in order of magnitude, though respite had shown some growth. In terms of hours of support, they have grown from just over 358,000 hours in 2007 / 2008 to 367,000 hours in 2009 / 2010, an increase of nearly 8,900 hours per year.

Table 1
2007/2008 to 2009/2010 Supports Profiles

	2007/2008				2008/2009				2009/2010				Individual change	Hours change
	Individuals		Hours		Individuals		Hours		Individuals		Hours			
Residential	131	20.8	44,811	12.5	138	22.0	46,794	12.7	141	22.0	48,901	13.3	+10	+4,090
ARC	143	22.7	181,363	50.6	136	21.7	175,936	47.9	140	21.8	172,544	47.0	-3	-8,819
SEP	74	11.8	2,077	0.6	70	11.1	1,997	0.5	76	11.9	2,625	0.7	+2	+548
SIL	110	17.5	15,328	4.3	116	18.5	14,201	3.9	112	17.5	14,156	3.9	+2	-1,172
Life Skills	154	24.5	114,685	32.0	148	23.6	128,302	34.9	149	23.2	128,864	35.1	-5	+14,179
Respite	17	2.7	169	0.0	20	3.2	212	0.1	23	3.6	233	0.1	+6	+64
TOTAL	629	100.0	358,433	100.0	628	100.0	367,442	100.0	641	100.0	367,323	100.0	+12	+8,890
Individuals	381				383				398				+17	
SIL & Life SKILLS Combined	264				264				261				-3	
ARC & SEP Combined	217				206				216				-1	

The programmatic data indicates incremental growth for the organization through the three year period, with some 641 participants in the six program areas, involving nearly 400 individuals.

Table 2 profiles the facilities of CLGW. In total, thirty-five venues are operated by the organization, of which thirty are owned and five are rented. The distribution covers the total geographic service area, with twenty-two in Guelph and thirteen in Wellington County. The vast majority of facilities are residences involving twenty-seven homes or 77.1% of all the facility locations. Day programs are undertaken at seven venues, of which three are in Guelph and four are in Wellington County.

**Table 2
Facilities Profile**

Type	#	Status		Location	
		Own	Rent	Guelph	Wellington
Residence	27	24	3	19	18
Enhanced SIL	1		1		1
Day Programs	7	6	1	3	4
TOTAL	35	30	5	22	13

The supports services and facilities profile indicates the scope of the organization in terms of the diversity of supports, the scale of physical assets and locations and the incremental growth of the organization on a year to year basis in terms of the number of people supported.

2.2 STAFFING

Table 3 profiles the December 2010 staffing complement for Community Living Guelph Wellington. In total, there were 485 staff, of which 93.8% were involved with direct supports delivery. Some 5% of staff were involved with management and supervisory roles, and 1.2% in administration.

**Table 3
December 2010 Staffing Complement**

	#	% of Category	% of Total
Frontline			
Full Time	214	47.0	44.2
Part Time	140	30.8	28.8
Relief	101	22.2	20.8
TOTAL	455	100.0	93.8
Management			
Supervisors	16	66.7	3.4
Support Managers	3	12.5	0.6
Administration Managers	2	8.3	0.4
Directors	3	12.5	0.6
TOTAL	24	100.0	5.0
Administration	6	100.0	1.2
TOTAL	485		100.0

For the frontline, 47.0% were full time, 30.8% part time and 22.2% relief. The frontline staff status is always a significant consideration for Community Living Associations because of the full time / part time mix. Part time staff tend to have a more significant turnover rate which creates retention and continuity challenges for the organization, but more importantly, for the people supported. They develop attachments with the staff, and then the staff turnover as the part time people are using these positions as stepping stones for their careers in nursing, policing, etc.; are looking for fulltime work or advancement; or

have other considerations that shape their tenure within these positions. CLGW has an interesting mix of frontline staff, where they are moving towards 50% of the frontline staff being full time. This tends to be higher than some other similar associations.

The organization has approximately twenty-four managerial and supervisory staff which constitutes 5% of the staffing complement. Sixteen of these individuals are at the supervisory level, five are in managerial roles and three are directors. This is a limited array of supervisory and management positions, supervising 455 frontline staff and six administrative staff.

Table 4 profiles the 2007 to 2010 financial performance results for the organization.

**Table 4
2007 to 2010 Community Living Guelph-Wellington Financial Profile**

	2007		2008		2009		2010		% change
	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	
Province	11,328,044	89.6	12,373,501	89.7	12,938,218	89.1	14,177,160	89.6	25.1
Sales and User Fees	1,264,566	10.0	1,360,997	9.9	1,510,680	10.4	1,550,764	9.8	
Fundraising and Donations	47,891	0.4	61,359	0.4	75,938	0.5	89,343	0.6	86.6
TOTAL REVENUES	12,640,501	100.0	13,795,857	100.0	14,524,836	100.0	15,817,267	100.0	25.1
Expenses									
Staffing and Training	9,129,327	72.3	10,374,480	75.4	11,149,893	77.0	11,894,921	75.4	30.3
Travel	73,972	0.6	66,386	0.5	65,443	0.5	72,823	0.5	VAR
Program	985,967	7.8	1,019,404	7.4	1,119,342	7.7	1,425,596	9.0	44.6
Purchased Services	135,784	1.1	330,553	2.4	313,720	2.2	462,021	2.9	240.3
Promotion/Advertising	15,609	0.1	9,356	0.1	17,701	0.1	5,788	0.0	-62.9
Occupancy Costs	2,258,859	17.9	1,935,019	14.1	1,786,778	12.3	1,869,107	11.8	-17.3
Fundraising Costs	29,131	0.2	18,619	0.1	31,801	0.2	55,553	0.4	90.7
TOTAL EXPENSES	12,628,649	100.0	13,753,817	100.0	14,484,678	100.0	15,785,809	100.0	25.1
Net Position +/-	11,852		42,040		40,158		31,458	37.8	
Net Funding/Donations	18,760	39.2	42,740	69.1	44,137	58.1	33,790	37.8	80.1

The following perspectives emerged from the information:

- Revenues have grown by 25.1% over the four year period, with expenses growing at a similar rate, with the organization now in the \$16 million a year order of magnitude range. The organization has had consistent surpluses the last three years, \$30,000 to \$40,000;
- The province is the principal funder of the organization, reaching virtually 90% of total revenues, with sales and user fees constituting almost 10% of income;

- Fundraising and donations have consistently increased from year to year, in 2010 reaching approximately \$90,000 or .6% of total revenues;
- Expenses reflect a social service organization, being approximately 75% for staff and staff related costs. Occupancy costs represent approximately 12% of the cost structure and programs 9%. Staffing and facilities reflect almost 90% of the cost structure. Fundraising costs have grown by 86.6% over the four years in terms of revenues and 8.1% related to net funding / donations. Fundraising costs have increased in 2009 and again in 2010.

The financial data indicates the organization is a transfer payment agency of the province which provides the dominant revenue for operations. Staffing is the dominant cost centre which is typical of Community Living and aligned organizations.

2.3 DOCUMENTS REVIEW

2.3.1 Introduction

A series of planning and assessment documents have been completed by CLGW in the last number of years that can provide input and perspective on programs and services from a strategic perspective. The following material provides summaries from these documents.

2.3.2 Feasibility Planning Document July 2010

The intent of this report was to assess the opportunities to provide comprehensive supports for persons aging with developmental disabilities through a Community Residential Housing Model that offers Day Programs, a Community Residential Group Home and Independent Apartment Living. Aging is a significant phenomenon within the service population. As life expectancies advance and aging occurs, different program, support and related needs are evolving.

Some of the key perspectives provided were as follows:

- There are potentially 1,219 developmentally disabled clients in the area, of which 773 live in Guelph. It is estimated that 464 of these live at home with their families and friends as care-givers. There are potentially 2,400 people currently living in the community that could require residential services in the near future;
- 155 of the 773 residents in Guelph are over the age of fifty and 72% are receiving residential services. Some 28% reside at home with a family member, 53 live in group homes and 32 people are involved with the SIL program.

The report identifies that there is demand at all levels of residential supports for aging people with developmental disabilities in the Guelph-Wellington Region.

The preferred support model identified various residential strategies, as well as potential for more day programs, including for people who do not live in residential settings. The report also indicated that the preferred option for CLGW could involve the development of a new group home for fifteen residents and apartments where people could rent units and live independently. Such a model could optimize the functioning of the aging senior with developmental disabilities and provide an effective setting to live within.

Also identified in the potential strategies, was to partner with a long term care agency and to access supports that could be provided by the Community Care Access Centre.

The goals for the new residential space included:

- Space that encourages and supports the optimum level of engagement with life;
- Answers people's opportunities to realize their future of wellbeing; choice, control, ability to establish and pursue personal goals, family and community integration, etc.;
- Space to provide residential opportunities for privacy and community living;
- Space that is homelike and encourages residents to engage and be responsible for their activities and daily living;
- Space where residents will reside until they die or do not benefit from the household experience.

The report goes on to identify a series of design elements, financial considerations and next steps.

2.3.3 ARC Capital Industries

In the last two years, CLGW has commissioned two studies for ARC Industries in Guelph and Wellington. The first is entitled **Retail Plan for ARC Industries** undertaken in 2009 and **Marketing Strategy Proposal: 2010 for ARC Industries**. Both of these studies were completed by the Department of Marketing and Consumer Studies at the University of Guelph.

2.3.3.a) Retail Plan ARC Industries

The Executive Summary for this report identifies that historically the organization has worked with a 130 companies over the years. However, the number of companies engaged with has been reduced to ninety, which in turn has decreased the amount of in-house work available to the trainees.

The report summarizes the following strategies:

- The opening of a second distribution channel, involving the Guelph Farmers Market;

- The introduction of lower priced product items;
- A broader line-up of products, involving wooden items suitable for household purchaser gifts priced in the \$5.00 to \$150.00 range;
- The updating of the current ARC website and brochure, and the use of newspaper articles and press releases to create greater awareness as well as a grand opening and ongoing store operations.

The report also recommends an evaluation of results is required on six and nine months and yearly basis to assess whether the extra work for the employees, targeted sales and awareness from the general public was being achieved.

The report indicated a potential opportunity to move into retail-based sales through the low cost market environment. It identifies that there is little or no marketing support in terms of advertising, campaigns or promotions to support the newly developed retail store. In its research work, the authors undertook a survey at the Farmers Market that identified reasonable prospects for a retail store and increased sales.

The two main problems identified for this venture were the lack of awareness of the retail outlet and more work to keep trainees busy. The two key opportunities identified were to be located in a supportive community location and the ability to differentiate ARC from other competitors.

A budget was identified indicating that the Farmers Market could achieve approximately a \$650 profit on retail sales of \$10,000 in year one. The Farmers Market and the retail location collectively, could achieve approximately a \$1,075 profit on retail sales of \$21,500.

2.3.3.b) ARC Industries Marketing Strategy Proposal: 2010

The Executive Summary identifies that the problems addressed in the report were online presence, brand consistency and administrative organization. It is stated that these challenges extend to all components of the ARC Industries and need to be addressed in order for the non-profit venture to continue to provide vocational work for the individuals involved.

The report provides various sections on new research, historical analysis and other inputs that led to marketing strategies that involved:

- Identification and development of key stakeholder relationships;
- Pursuing a market segmentation strategy;
- Identifying key target markets;
- Positioning the organization in its messaging so that the rationale is clear;

- Product safety and tactics;
- A quality strategy, which is to continue high-quality product development and to improve customer service.

The report identifies four vehicles for communication that would include:

- A new website;
- Redesigned brochure;
- E-newsletter;
- Guelph Chamber of Commerce Breakfast Speech.

The report also provides an extensive array of materials on an overall creative strategy with logos, layouts and other key elements.

A marketing budget of \$9,900 is identified for 2010 to 2011, and \$7,500 in 2011 to 2012 for various elements involving website, brochure and miscellaneous activities.

2.3.4 Board of Directors Manual

Community Living Guelph Wellington has a comprehensive Director's Manual to support the governance function and Director activities at the Board level. The document contains a Constitution and Bylaws; roles and responsibilities; the Board of Director's listing; programs of the Association, OASIS and CLO materials, Standards of Performance for Community Living; and a glossary of terms and abbreviations.

The document is comprehensive in providing both orientation and continuing information for Board members. It provides an outline of the committees of the Board, which involve:

- Executive;
- Resources;
- Nominating, Bylaws and Constitution;
- Quality Monitoring;
- Child/Youth Advocacy.

There is also a terms of office and accountability profile provided.

The document provides an excellent resource to Board members in multiple dimensions. A major effort has gone into the development of the document and in ensuring the key materials are accessible in support of Board member development and their governance participation.

Also provided were two other ad hoc committee profiles:

- Senior Services Ad Hoc Committee;
- Day Services Ad Hoc Committee.

These committees have been established to support specific initiatives, such as the Feasibility Planning Document for Seniors for an aging population, and a second committee in regards to the ARC Industry Reports.

3 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

On February 14th and 15th 2011, seventeen focus groups were held with stakeholders of Community Living Guelph Wellington. Sessions included self-advocates, parents, direct support staff, coordinators, administrative staff, senior management, volunteers and partners. One interview with a partner was also undertaken.

The following material summarizes the key points that emerged from the consultation by stakeholder category.

3.2 SELF-ADVOCATES

Two focus groups of self-advocates, one in Fergus and one in Guelph, were undertaken involving a total of eighteen individuals.

Strengths

- Work / employment opportunities, both within Community Living and in the community;
- Being with friends, enjoying oneself and having fun;
- The organization listens to you and tries to help you;
- The ability to live a more independent life and in your own space;
- Staff are often nice and considerate;
- People supported are not judged but are accepted;
- A place to go during the day and stay active within a variety of programs;
- Can find out more about what is going on in the community and participate;
- Some of the activities, such as swimming, woodworking, painting, etc.;
- The People for People organization is very good;
- The special events that are held are popular and fun;
- There is good backup and support;
- ARC Industries allows people to work and build different things;
- The day programs are in good spaces;
- Everyone is treated equally;

- The Life Skills Programs, such as cooking that is available.

Concerns / Issues / Weaknesses

- People supported don't get paid appropriately in the workshops;
- When the equipment is broken and needs to be fixed;
- Some of the people supported get angry and this impacts other people;
- Some people supported make fun of other people who are supported which creates tensions;
- A few people are blind and need more help;
- Would like to see more variety in the day programs;
- Some believe there is favoritism where some people supported can do what they want and others can't;
- Need lockers at Fergus like in Guelph.

Future Perspectives

- Full time job in an area that they are interested in;
- Living on their own in the SIL Program;
- More income to live more independently;
- Out of ARC and into community jobs, and able to pay for basic needs;
- A new building in Mount Forest;
- Learning more;
- Increased ODSP funding;
- Getting married.

3.3 PARENTS

Four parent focus groups were completed, one in Fergus and three in Guelph involving over thirty individuals.

Strengths

- The organization is strong and is running well;
- Community Living assists the people supported very well and maintains their independence;
- Staff are a team and on the same page;
- ARC Industries is an excellent program and facility;
- The integration into the community is wonderful;
- VON Services support transportation in some areas;

- The transportation provided in group homes is excellent;
- The organization is facilitating employment at various locations;
- The parents feel listened to and staff are receptive;
- Staff are great, dedicated, caring and compassionate. They provide unique care;
- The long term staff who are dedicated and experienced;
- The organization is able to deal with a broad range of challenges and service needs which are complex;
- The Association works well with families, the small group homes in the communities work well and the residents are more accepted in their communities;
- The properties are looked after well;
- Communications are generally good in terms of getting back to the home and with the high schools;
- There is a lot of innovation and new ideas that come forward, with other Community Livings coming to Guelph to assess ideas;
- A strong management team;
- The caregivers will call families and report on and indicate what has transpired;
- Very effective at problem-solving and in building pathways;
- The organization has raised significant funds in the community;
- A lot of collaboration within and around the organization;
- The organization knows the people they support and work with them on a personal and client-centered basis;
- Always open to new ideas, will try things out of the box;
- Empower the people they serve;
- Use resources flexibly;
- Respite care when it is available is excellent;
- Really a community within a community, with some good partnerships, such as Torch Light.

Concerns / Issues / Weaknesses

- No in-home supports when the person is living with their parents;
- The rural areas are harder to integrate and transportation is a major constraint and issue;
- Staff turnover effects the people supported who often develop strong relationships with their caregiver;
- The wait lists for the residences are long and frustrating;

- An aging population of people supported and their parents. New programs and directions need to be established to respond to this trend;
- Autism, dual diagnosis, Alzheimer's, dementia and other needs are emerging at greater levels;
- No real strategy around how Long Term Care will integrate with this sector;
- Confusion as to why a person's whole paycheck is taken when they live in a residence;
- A sense that payments and fees / charges are variable across the system, and people do not understand them. "We" need more information;
- Concerned their family members will have to pay more for services in the future which will put a strain on families;
- Staff training needs to be more specialized as the population changes / ages;
- Greater advocacy needed for increased funding for this sector;
- A parental divide exists between those parents who have been through the school system with services and older parents who have not and are more focused on who will take care of their adult child once they pass on;
- A sense that government has little respect for this sector and the people involved in it;
- Too much variability in ensuring the people supported are accountable for their actions, such as stealing or behavioural issues;
- Need more funding for staff wages and compensation to retain and attract good staff;
- Expectations are unreasonable for some of the people supported, with only three days of support per week;
- Too many of the supports seem to be Monday to Friday based and not on weekends;
- Some of the houses are poorly designed and are not accessible for wheelchairs relative to doors, grades in the backyard, etc.;
- School programs stop at age eighteen / twenty-one and more day programs are needed. Need more creative and broader partnerships to bring more day services into play;
- Older parents are tired and worried they cannot support their children adequately as they age;
- Could more recipe books be provided in the homes and food quality enhanced;
- ODSP is a challenging area in terms of value and loss of dollars;
- Very little is offered for younger people in terms of social groups and getting out and about. The Sunset Club is not age appropriate for some people;
- Increasing need for respite care, possibly on a weeklong basis;
- Services look like they are starting to be rationed, such as three days a week at ARC;
- Need to generate more quality, meaningful work for ARC, to get more young people involved in production;

- An aging staff and succession perspectives need to be implemented;
- Likely an increasing number of people supported who have more complex needs and are struggling;
- Increasing need to develop a strong Mission, and ensure it is known and then to be able to manage the demands;
- Need to be increasingly creative and to use the available funding more innovatively;
- Some concerns with the in-City transportation system and the ability to effectively use it for the people supported;
- The resident fit in some of the homes, where some are older and others are younger and complications arise;
- A huge change for a person supported to go directly into a group home from their parent's home. There should be a transitional group home.
- A lot of in-home stresses with those who have mental health challenges, etc., and there is no extra staffing or flexibility to respond to crises or short term situations;
- There is very limited support for employment in the community;
- Communication concerns about how parents find out about what is available, staffing changes, etc. Need to consider using more social media;
- There is a lack of residential options for changing lifestyles and expectations.

Future Perspectives

- More programming overall and more specialized programming;
- Staff will need new skill sets and training, particularly in terms of an aging population and more medically-based conditions;
- Need to ensure that the budgets reflect an aging population and changing needs;
- Providing services to transitional youth, which is a major gap in responding to the different perspectives of younger parents;
- Increased use of social entrepreneurship initiatives;
- How to manage demand within increased waiting lists, overcoming the implications of flat-lined and / or reduced government funding, and how to increase financial resources;
- Dealing more effectively with autism and mental health service requirements;
- How to tailor the organization to meet the more diverse needs and capacities of the people supported;
- Creating greater employment opportunities which is what many people want, including retaining job developers;

- Use the student capacities in the high schools and Conestoga College, along with people from the seniors centre;
- Development of parent to parent support / mentoring groups.

3.4 DIRECT SERVICE STAFF

Six focus groups were held with direct service staff, two in Fergus and four in Guelph. A total of forty-seven (47) direct service staff participated in these focus groups.

Strengths

- The quality of care that is provided which is above and beyond; The people supported are treated very well;
- The strong facilities, particularly the gymnasium and the new buildings;
- The activities that get the people supported into the community on a regular basis;
- The strong presence of Community Living Guelph-Wellington in the community;
- The ability to accommodate a lot of different needs;
- A caring staff who are well trained and committed;
- The organization has been good at getting material and equipment, and has a good maintenance staff person;
- Employ staff who have a broad range of backgrounds and educations;
- The donations of furniture and other items that support the SIL Program;
- Teams get together to work on challenges and are open minded;
- Staff rally around each other and support one another;
- Some social groups have been started and are growing;
- The people supported seem to be happy, having fun and are learning;
- In some of the homes, the parents are very appreciative;
- A generally good ratio of staff to people supported;
- The organization is not as structured as it use to be, and now has more flexibility. People are involved in decisions, resulting in an improved quality of life and being person-centered;
- The Breakfast Club at ARC;
- If staff- person supported relationship doesn't work, changes are made;
- Management is open to suggestions;
- The general health of people supported is improving and staff stay on top of that;
- Staff take a wholistic view of the person supported and their needs;
- The locations are safe for the people supported;

- Day programs have grown, more are being developed and there is strong socialization;
- A growing number of opportunities for people supported to volunteer or get jobs;
- SLEP and SIL are good programs for people who fit;
- Provide around the clock care and help families when someone has health issues or is in the hospital;
- Strong staff training, especially for mandatory items;
- Families are invited to be involved.

Concerns / Issues/ Weaknesses

- Need more intensive training on current and emerging needs around autism, aging / geriatrics, mental health and other specific areas that are becoming more prevalent;
- SIL needs more relief and depth for coverage, as well as specialized training;
- With an aging population, more of the residences should be single floor / bungalows to overcome stairways;
- With the senior population growing, need a strategy as to how to keep people in their homes with supports, palliative care, etc.;
- The homes need to be updated and nursing capacity may need to be introduced;
- The long wait lists for access to services;
- The increasing incidence of Alzheimer's, dementia and decline in mental capacities will need to be addressed;
- The resident mix in the residences is often problematic, e.g.: one older person with three younger people, etc. There needs to be a reconsideration of the fit in the homes between the residents, especially since these are their homes;
- Transportation services, particularly in the rural areas, are weak and are a major constraint;
- An assessment of financial situations needs to be made in terms of how decisions are made on individual people supported, which can be confusing and unequal. Are there ways to reduce waste, such in terms of new homes, vans, etc.;
- Improved respite was widely asked for and is needed. Should a respite group home be established and week long respite instituted;
- Need greater unity between front line and management in terms of the consistency of interpretations, recognition, etc.;
- Consistently do not get all the information required on a new person coming into a residence. This creates significant challenges and needs to be taken more seriously;

- A significant gap for transitional youth as they move from school to the community. Parents are very frustrated with the loss of services and they have expectations that Community Living is going to deliver more than they can;
- Increasing need for nurse / nurse practitioner supports relative to training, advisory and a host of other activities to support mental health, dual diagnosis, health and other conditions;
- Facility maintenance has more resources in Guelph but is more costly. It also takes a lot longer in Guelph to get repairs completed. A lot of hoops to going through. Seems to require a lot of decisions to get something done;
- Need to be more sharing of information between group home staff and day program staff with respect to what is going on in the lives of people being supported.
- The staff ratios are different at Holody Home and additional supports are required there and with SIL;
- Frequency of staff meetings should be increased in order to garner greater information flow, supports, awareness, etc.;
- A sense that some of SIL clients should not be in SIL as they do not have the capacities necessary. Are we moving too fast in putting people into independent living environments?
- Medication services are a challenge. There are a lot of disruptions and distractions in a house when these are being undertaken that can create challenges. Medications should be dispersed from the same place / source;
- MCSS needs a major wake-up call on what is happening with the people supported and the transitions that are occurring in terms of autism, waiting lists, training, etc., and provide adequate funding;
- Staff rarely use their half hour break due to staffing levels. There should be two people for a home at all times for safety.
- Need more specialized services in Wellington County and Guelph for autism, dual diagnosis, Alzheimer's, mental health, etc.;
- Seniors do not want to stay at home and also do not want eight hours of continuous programming or work. They want to retire and this should be accommodated;
- Gaining affordable units for SIL supported people is a real challenge and they often end up in low cost housing;
- The recruitment of staff should focus more on experience than education to bring more of the practical skills that are needed;
- Maybe trying to be all things to all people without the resources to undertake that;
- Inequities exist in that some parents have money and their children receive more services and opportunities in the same house where other people receive less;

- Expectations of staff and staff availability need to be more aligned. The constant growth in responsibilities is not sustainable;
- People are moved between houses for inappropriate reasons, which is unfair;
- Need to recruit person-centered planners like other Community Living organizations to bring greater focus to this strategy and process;
- The north area of Wellington is more isolated, has no public transportation and has outgrown some of its buildings;
- Trellis / Guelph General Hospital are often resistant to supporting CLGW people and lack acceptance in a crisis. CLGW needs to advocate for these people in the medical community;
- Some doctors will not undertake annual physicals and are not accepting of the people supported;
- Upon turning 21, a person is out of programs which is not the way this occurs in Elmira and some other areas;
- Is ARC turning into a place where people are taken out of their houses and simply parked doing colouring and other low skill activities;
- A major increase in young people is anticipated and this will put pressures on the organization;
- Due to the aging of the service population, they need more time for medical issues, move slower, etc., and this has to be taken into account in staff allocations and programming;
- Need improved communications to support the teams and the work of the front line staff;
- Staff should be more involved in transitioning people supported into homes, programs, the community, etc.;
- What is the future of ARC and the funds that were spent on facility in light of the broader strategic changes occurring;
- Would the Board of Directors benefit from more training on inclusion and the involvement of some younger parents.

Future Perspectives

- The baby boomers are living longer and will create tremendous pressure for health care services which could impact funding availability for Developmental Services;
- Increased use of technology and digital supports for mobility, voice activation, etc.;
- Inflation will impact food, energy and other costs of the Association and those people living independently. Will this result in larger group homes?
- Will funding decrease due to deficits and other provincial priorities?
- Will there be fewer staff per home to cut costs, resulting more in a 'warehousing' program framework?

- An substantial increase in autism is being diagnosed and what services will be available for these people;
- The people supported will continue to age and grow older and new medical conditions will develop. The notion of retirement will need to be considered, as well as the impact of dual diagnosis, mental health, Alzheimer's, dementia, etc.;
- Transitional aged youth will become an increasing challenge due to the expectation gaps of parents and what is available for their adult children;
- Will more specialized residential facilities be developed around ages, medical conditions, respite, etc.;
- Will need more outreach programs to bring more people into the community. Wait lists will get longer and more pressure will be applied to find solutions;
- Staff is aging and succession, training and development will become increasingly important;
- Should staff move around between homes more frequently to stay fresh?
- Greater need for non-mandatory training, especially in specialized service areas;
- Should the organization get involved in child and youth services, and form a supports continuum framework across all ages;
- There will be lots of uncertainty in the future due to funding, numbers, aging and other perspectives;
- There will be an increasing need to support medication allocations and treatments in the residences;
- Increased interest in and new forms of independent living could emerge;
- Expectations for an increasing diversity and range of adult day services;
- Potential growth in the cultural diversity of the community / society and the need for outreach to multi-cultural communities;
- The impact of individualized funding could challenge the organization and increase competition;
- The October 2011 election and what impact this will have on funding, policies and related perspectives within the Developmental Services sector;
- A need to do more networking and partnering across multiple dimensions and sectors;
- Increased pressure on fundraising activities to cover operational expenses;
- Growing interest in people supported to be married and possibly have children which will create new types of support requirements;
- Accreditation, the changing educational perspectives of the DSW and other diploma programs;
- The potential for more family interventions and more people in crisis, could impact roles, services and skills;

- More multi-tasking requirements, and possibly a need for different types of staff skills than have historically been required.

3.5 ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Six members of the administrative team participated in this focus group.

Strengths

- Long term, loyal and experienced staff who are a committed and dedicated group;
- Increasing exposure in the community and the level of community support. The organization is respected;
- The broad array of supports provided to the people supported in terms of recreation, vacations, financial, medical, legal, educational, etc;
- A strong Mission Statement that focuses the organization;
- The organization is trusted as stewards of public funding;
- Community Living rises to the challenge of individual cases, particularly tougher cases;
- The senior managers are strong and experienced;
- Good relationships with the Ministry;
- Administrative costs are low at 6% of the budget;
- Strong fundraising capability, as evidenced by the ARC \$2.5 million capital campaign;
- A strong Board of Directors who are committed;
- An excellent benefits plan for the staff;
- The increasing IT capability of the organization, including staffing;
- More quality people are coming to the agency to work.

Concerns / Issues / Weaknesses

- A gap / confusion between the front line and administrative staff as to what the administrative team staff are doing, why they need certain things and the requirements relative to reporting, audits, etc.;
- Communications and lack of shared information which creates challenges across the agency;
- Need to look at doing things differently. Can't accept the status quo to keep people stimulated in their work;
- A lack of dollars for infrastructure and training. Knowledge is vital and needs to be invested in;
- Some people wear too many hats which fragments positions and creates confusion. There are few single accountabilities;

- The gap in computer skills needs to be overcome. Many of the administrative systems are computer-based and everybody cannot interact appropriately. As a result, some operate on a paper basis, some use paper then input and others input directly. There needs to be skills development to overcome this gap which is potentially age related;
- There is lack of time for and delegation of certain responsibilities to get things done;
- The administrative staff need updates and other information in order to complete their various tasks. They need to be brought into the communications loop. The information needs to move up and down the organization more effectively;
- There is an increasing complexity in the people who are supported which will require increased training, skills and funding;
- Need stronger human resource evaluation systems. Staff are being held accountable and the structure is less hierarchical;
- There needs to be respect for all people on the staff team as all have important functions;
- The long waiting lists and the wait times which frustrates parents. Also, how to determine who goes into what home and the selection process;
- The declining / low membership compared to the number of families who are receiving supports;
- The need for contemporary considerations around fragrant free operating environments, increase environmental responsibility, etc.;
- Some concerns that this strategic planning process will not lead to any specific initiatives or changes.

Future Perspective

- Managing the increasing demand for supports in an underfunded environment;
- Increasing numbers of school to community people who will require supports;
- The need for more creative and expanded programming to meet more diverse support needs and expectations;
- Increased staff training to meet aging, dementia, Alzheimer's, palliative care and other needs as the people supported grow older;
- Staff succession planning, turnover management and other perspectives associated with an aging staff, including a comprehensive HR Policy that integrates with the core competencies that are emerging provincially and how this could change recruitment;
- The potential implications and impacts of individualized funding which could create more confusion, competition and challenges;
- The need to create innovative partnerships and capacities within and outside the organization;

- Increased training on technology will be vital.

3.6 COORDINATORS

Two Coordinator focus groups were held involving fifteen (15) individuals.

Strengths

- A progressive organization with quality training. It is ahead of a lot of other Community Livings;
- Work hard in developing options and a quality of life for the people supported;
- The homes are in good condition and safe;
- Sound management team and a strong working environment where people work together, and are creative and innovative within a supportive environment;
- Staff have longevity, continuity and are knowledgeable, and they are also caring and support team processes;
- Well known in the community as fund raisers, facilitators of change, etc.;
- Good foundation of policies and procedures and a strong Board;
- Flexible in responding to different ages and needs of the people supported;
- The Strategic Plan and its application have been and will be a good resource for the organization;
- Strong day supports across the County;
- One of the few organizations that didn't close their ARC, and development of a gym and other resources;
- The ability to take on very challenging situations and operate within a supportive team framework, being open and flexible;
- Network well with other community agencies;
- Strong growth in employees which has been steady and controlled;
- A good senior leadership team, with open-door policies and listening capacities;
- A good attitude across the organization;

- The human face of the organization is strong, people laugh, are excited and facilitate change;
- Doing an excellent job in meeting the Mission of the organization and being accountable to the people supported;
- Focus on meeting the needs of the people supported and not fitting them into the program, that is being person-centred;
- Many new homes and good facilities and vehicles that are well maintained;
- Good staff ratios;
- Great community involvement and support, with good social opportunities and employment for those supported;
- CLGW covers the whole County;
- Fiscally creative and responsible;
- Growing IT capability and improved health and safety practices;
- Excellent employee benefits;
- Low staff turnover for both full time and part time.

Concerns / Issues / Weaknesses

- Technology and the lack of contemporary capacity, training and utilization;
- Archival systems which are a real gap in terms of files and having them at one location;
- Some miscommunication and gaps with Human Resources which needs to be overcome;
- Administration doesn't always realize the impacts that they have on the frontlines. Their needs to be greater coordination and integration. As a result, work cohesion is not at the level it needs to be;
- Administration needs to be more integrated and work as a team, as does the whole organization within constantly changing environments;
- Greater consistency of policy and procedure interpretations are required across the organization;
- There is some north / south divide that can create issues;

- Transportation for the people supported is a major constraint and the fleet needs to be increased;
- Too many parents who have issues / complaints tend to be able to create change at the expense of other people supported. There needs to be greater consistency in policy interpretation, fairness, etc.;
- There are training gaps in terms of the aging population in regards to dementia, palliative care, autism, mental health etc., with some increased need for SIL clients who are living independently;
- There is a lack of respite options / opportunities, especially on week days and on a full week basis;
- In the north area, staff are always travelling, there is no secretarial supports and they are expected to do their own administrative work;
- The day programs need to be reviewed as to consistency, access, creativity and people having a choice as to whether to go or not;
- In the SIL program, there are medication issues and a need for increased training due to some of the gaps that are occurring;
- It takes a lot of time and effort to get a new staff person trained and up to speed;
- There are some gaps in the Erin and Drayton area in terms of services availability;
- Wait lists for residential services are long and only emergency cases are taken. Community Living becomes the rescuers as others have pushed back;
- The Passport program has created some people with funding and some without which results in some bumping on wait lists and other inequities;
- The coordinators' role for people supported is always expanding and becomes challenging to implement everybody's ideas;
- Aging facilities need more maintenance capacity, preferably in-house, along with a preventative maintenance program;
- More resident staff involvement in staffing plans and the transferring of people amongst residences is needed to improve fits;
- Some volunteers want more training and could provide more supports if they had access to training;

- Mandatory training is good but the training needs to go well beyond what is currently occurring. This is a growing area of need;
- Need to upgrade the qualification requirements for some positions, especially in light of the core competencies initiative. Need more specialized backgrounds in terms of nursing, recreation, palliative care, tube feeding, etc.;
- Need greater variety of social clubs, parent to parent supports and other perspectives on a social level. Music, pet and other types of therapy should also be considered;
- When a decision is made, it should be expressed to everybody and the rationales given. It would be better that if choices were given to coordinators where possible to better manage the frontline;
- Very few management meetings and a sense of disconnection can occur;
- Longevity is generally seen as a good thing, but also can create staleness. Need programs to inspire people to continually remain fresh and motivated;
- The low membership levels within the organization and their decline. Need enhanced communication systems in terms of the newsletter being out more regularly, with more zip and examples. It needs a facelift;
- Need better access to information on the people supported, as the files sometimes from other agencies come after the fact. Better assessments are also needed;
- There should be more emphasis on experience than education when recruiting staff. Also, alignment with core competencies will be needed;
- New residential facilities should be one floor to support the aging population and have garages and vans, along with being fully accessible;
- At ARC, people don't work enough hours. A full day's work should be more realistic as they are being trained to move into the community;
- More and more work is being displaced to the coordinators in terms of property management, training, etc.;
- Improved maintenance is desirable, especially in terms of the timelines and in-house resources.

Future Perspectives

- An increasing number of higher complex needs people to be supported;
- The aging phenomena will continue which will increase the incidence of dementia, Alzheimer's, etc., which will influence the type of houses, training, etc.;
- Aging parents and the expectations divide between younger and older parents;
- The increasing need for technology and specialized training;
- The potential impacts of centralized bargaining on work practices, etc.;
- The impact individualized funding may have on how things work, competition, etc.;
- The increasing incidence of autism and the demand for services, and how these services will be delivered by Community Living and / or others;
- How to assess the value day programs delivery and how they will compete / work within the Passport model;
- Increased respite services in the City and the County with appropriate supports;
- Need to advocate and fundraise for increased funding;
- Developing a greater array of community services, and accessibility to these services;
- What will Community Living's role be in the mental health area;
- How to effectively manage change in a high change environment with limited funding, technology, etc.;
- Potential for longer waiting lists and more parent and community frustration.
- The implications of the central intake / placement entity in terms of where the people come from, be housed, etc.;
- Need to develop more employment opportunities in the community.

3.7 VOLUNTEERS

Six volunteers participated in this focus group.

Strengths

- The positive way clients are treated;
- A very dedicated staff who undertake a lot of extra-curricular activities;
- Excellent one on one supports and staff know the clients;
- Excellent rapport between workers and clients;
- The ARC facility with a gym and work areas is a big asset;
- Bringing students and people together in specialized programs in the community;
- The dignity provided to a group of disadvantaged people;
- The integration levels in the community, such as with employment;
- The energy of staff that brings out the best in the people supported, staff and volunteers;
- Staff training and professionalism;
- The friendship groups and Breakfast Club;
- The group homes are of good quality and nice places.

Concerns / Issues / Weaknesses

- Increased team work amongst staff is required. Some are not as active as others. There are scheduling issues and they need to work together more;
- The budget constraints and the impacts on services and supports;
- The visibility of the organization in the community needs to grow;
- Need to get people supported into the community more, and have the community use ARC and its gym at a greater level;
- Concern over how to keep the levels of services in tough budgetary times;

- At a management level, need more of a business model / strategy to increase contracts and the business activities within ARC. Doesn't appear to be a strategy for contracts;
- The location of ARC and the offices are not visible or known to very many people. CMHC and Trellis have shared spaced downtown which may be more efficient in their delivery. Should consider volunteer sites downtown to facilitate access, especially amongst students?
- The lengthy waiting list and the frustrations that emerge;
- Increased advocacy is needed on multiple fronts;
- Funding is siloed, and the overall system needs to change. There are a lot of agencies, some are top heavy, too many experts in some cases. The whole system needs to be reconsidered, greater coordination and focus on the people supported;
- Society is focused on economic growth, but they also need to focus on those that are less capable;
- Need a viable business case to attract more corporate funding.

Future Perspectives

- Some new clients will be / are more technologically capable and computer literate;
- Fewer volunteers may be available in the future due to changes in societal values;
- Future looks difficult due to the waiting lists, funding constraints, etc.;
- Increasing immigration and numbers of new Canadians. How will CLGW access these communities?
- More people will be sicker but live longer, and will have aging conditions that will need to be responded to;
- There could be fewer people to support the same number of clients in the organization;
- Social entrepreneurship / fee for service, community employment and other programs may need to be considered;
- Will need to be more virtual and integrated in services planning, development and delivery.

Partners

Nine representatives of various partnering organizations across the Guelph and Wellington community participated in this focus group.

Strengths

- A very collaborative organization;
- Make things work well and get things done;
- Service as many people as possible;
- They know well the people they support and who they are;
- Very client-centred;
- They go and find out what works and work together with others;
- Receptive / open to new ideas if they are a good fit;
- Work well in the system and are committed to a systems approach;
- Try to do things differently and think out of the box;
- They empower the people they serve;
- They are leaders in the service sector and many people come to them for ideas;
- Have good facilities, fundraise well and are client-focused;
- They use resources in a flexible way, move funds around as needed;
- They have a strong team management, and all the management are good to talk to.

Concerns / Issues / Weaknesses

- An aging staff and succession is a growing consideration;
- More respite options are needed;
- They are experiencing more difficult clients, with complex conditions that are increasingly challenging to the organization's staff;

- The aging service population is changing residential and day support requirements;
- The long wait lists and the frustration;
- Per capita funding for Developmental Services is lower in Guelph – Wellington than in other areas which increases the pressure on the organization;
- Don't tell their story very well in terms of what they do and what they have achieved;
- The increasing medical requirement of the people supported, dementia, dual diagnosis, medical fragility, etc.;
- The gap that is forming with transitional aged youth going from the school into the community;
- They have embraced the idea that everyone should live in the community, but not everybody can. May need different models;
- A certain tension in regards to the ARC building. Does it support inclusion or congregate service? What is the CLGW Mission about in this regard, and how do they manage the variable demands?
- An increasing need to be more creative and to share processes and resources to develop innovative solutions;
- Have they become building focused because buildings are easy to fill?
- Funding is moving towards more shared programs, and they can't handle everyone who requires support;

Future Perspectives

- The application entity and what it will mean as to the types of people who will be placed in residences;
- A changing funding model and how the funds will be 'carved' up for various applications. Likely less dollars and the implications of the Passport Program / individualized funding;
- Potential for strong tensions between regionalized and localized processes and approaches for fixed boundary organizations like Community Living;
- How parents navigate the system will become increasingly challenging and could affect fundraising;

- How to market Community Living locally when more and more decisions will be made out of area;
- Who will take on the planning and the accountabilities as more activities become centralized? A potential need to reposition the organization as funding and priorities change. May need to be more of a multi-service provider;
- What is the municipal role in recreation for fee assistance and subsidized bus passes?
- Can the YMCA be a bigger partner;
- Mental Health will become a more serious component of the overall service niches, which along with other changes, will create greater specialization and potential need for more specialized groups homes;
- The generational divide will need to be managed between younger and older parents who have different expectations and experiences;
- Where should autism rest relative to a local agency? Should it be within Community Living or its own agency?
- Privatization may enter into the field on a stronger level, resulting in greater competition for resources;
- Accountability will become more mainstream and a stronger expectation of funders and the community;
- Fee for Service programs may need to be an option and considered;
- Individualized funding will have an impact on staff, could result in more contracting of staff and change the balance of the type of staff and their affinity for the organization which currently is positive. This could result in less stability;
- Families seem to want different and more residential options, 24/7 care, etc.; Other parents want in-house supports to sustain their adult child in their home longer. Multi-generational supports would be required in these households;
- Before taking on regionalization, need to make sure that their own backyard is well positioned as a first step in terms of being fair, accessible and equitable;
- How will the LTC facilities respond to and accept people who are supported or will a different stream of supports emerge?

- Parents will need to be stronger advocates for their transitional youth compared to aged parents who had a different advocacy profile and timeframe;
- Social entrepreneurship is emerging as a trend and a theme, that is to operate businesses that generate net income;
- Overcoming the resistance of Long Term Care facilities to take the people supported due to behaviours and lack of training and understanding. Also, who will be responsible for alzheimer's?
- The sector will likely receive no more funding, and this will be a significant challenge on many fronts;
- There is significantly shifting parameters in terms of the Transformation Agenda, new program envelopes, etc.;
- Regional approaches, greater specialization and being more responsible to consumer demand are emerging;
- Institutions may re-emerge but they will be totally different and based on the value of the individual;
- The work force could become less stable for many reasons, i.e.: retirements, wages, etc.;
- Will MCYS and MCSS merge or be placed in different ministries and change the whole policy framework and relationship for CLGW?

3.8 SENIOR MANAGERS

Six senior managers participated in this focus group.

Strengths

- Responsive to community needs;
- Community looks to Community Living for a lot of activities and supports;
- The organization goes up and beyond what it needs to do and what others do. It is a step up;
- A flexible and creative organizational culture that does not say no;
- A very experienced, committed, compassionate and caring staff;
- Highly respected in the community as an accountable agency that is fiscally responsible;

- Good rapport with the Ministry and across the provincial level;
- Strong community support in fundraising as evidenced by the \$2.5 million capital campaign;
- Staff are strongly committed and participate in the fundraising events;
- Focus is on people, being person-centered and respecting everyone;
- A long term, dedicated staff;
- Make every effort to use more fulltime staff than part time staff in order to have more positive retention and staff commitment;
- Low administrative costs;
- Do the best we can for the large and diverse geographical area;
- Inspections are always in compliance, and all legislation is met. These elements are taken seriously;
- Work well with the union;
- Good on-call support system;
- Managers back each other up;
- Board is an important strength;
- Good self-advocates group that is well supported;
- Fairly well connected with most families and know the people supported personally;
- Good facilities and some are unique, such as the gymnasium;
- Still have a sense of humour and always doing good things all the time;
- Culture of caring permeates throughout the organization.

Concerns / Issues / Weaknesses

- There is a small management / administrative team within the organizational that has to implement many new programs and initiatives without any increased resources;

- The growth in programs and geography has resulted in increased workloads for the coordinators. The coordinators are getting bogged down on maintenance and other program issues that result in them having less time to fulfill their mandates. They can't use their skills as best as they could;
- Funding is going up but not adequately;
- The wait lists are long and frustrating. A strategy is needed to determine how to address them;
- More training funds are needed beyond the mandatory training related to specialized training, such as choking and swallowing or dementia;
- As staff age, the lifting and transferring of people supported becomes an increasing challenge;
- Maintaining consistency over a large geography is a challenge, especially in a world of constant changes;
- Communication needs to be better at all levels and better use of technology is needed to somehow overcome information overload, 24/7 operating and wide geographic requirements;
- A lot of frontline staff don't use computers which results in technology gaps, especially as technology becomes more prominent and central to work tasks;
- Some areas still work too much in silos;
- Some geographic isolation occurs, especially around day and employment programs outside of Guelph;
- Often feel like in a reaction mode and being driven by Ministry prerogatives;
- The community at large does not have the resources for mental health or other supports which creates services gaps;
- The aging population supported will require a transition to bungalows, different types of day programs, retirement services and more access to different resources within the community, such as nursing, senior centres, etc.;
- More complex cases will require more staff training and specialized skills development;
- Within Human Resources, need more resource as workforce grows and training becomes more prominent in order to reduce silos and bring greater integration;
- The volunteer program should be reviewed;

- Adult respite needs to be expanded and a model designed;
- Transportation is a constraint and needs to be overcome to create consistency and equity;
- Guelph-Wellington receives the second lowest per capital revenue in the Central West Region which needs to be corrected;
- How do you engage members more effectively is a growing consideration.

Future Perspectives

- New service delivery models are emerging, such as new day services, new accommodation / residential options, individualized funding and other parameters that could change the environment in which Community Living works in terms of competition, positioning, staff skill requirements, etc.;
- Some fifty-seven students are graduating in the next few years from secondary schools, and parents want fulltime respite and other supports. How will these needs be met based on current funding and other perspectives? The school to community gap is likely to widen;
- New parents have different expectations because of what services and supports they've received within the school system. Older parents have different expectations in terms of how their adult children will be cared for as they age and pass on;
- The agency may be substantially different in the future due to the degree of changes that are coming;
- The aging service population will require different types of support and long term care services and staff will need to have different training and experiences for dementia, dual diagnosis, Alzheimer's, etc.;
- May need to bring in nursing positions to provide aging and medical-specific services;
- Expect more Ministry interventions, reporting requirements, etc. that will increase compliance costs and requirements;
- Community Livings and other organizations may have to consolidate some services, or mergers may need to be considered;
- Staff recruitment will be influenced in the future by the provincial core competencies initiative;
- The aging workforce will demand increased training / new skills, succession strategies, etc.;

- Incidence of more complex people supported will grow with dual diagnosis, mental health, medication and other requirements;
- Better integration amongst community service providers will be required;
- Growth in rural services in the north and the east need to be considered due to waiting lists;
- Technology applications will need to increase substantially, both in terms of services delivery and operational productivity gains, such as virtual meetings;
- Should consider the establishment of a Right's Committee.

4 Strategic Trends

The following points provide a brief discussion on some of the key trends influencing the work and the future of Community Living Guelph Wellington (CLGW).

4.1 EVIDENCE-BASED / EVIDENCE-INFORMED

Over the last number of years, there has been an increasing emphasis, particularly by government, foundations and other funders, to move service delivery agencies to evidence-based or evidence-informed practices. These practices are designed to define and articulate through research and measurement, the positive impacts and benefits the programs and services provided are having on the target audiences, of services providers.

Evidence-based approaches are intended to enhance the quality of the services so that the outcomes realized are identifiable, beneficial and reflect the levels of human and financial investments being made.

It is anticipated, that the expectations around and the sophistication of evidence-based models and approaches will continue to grow extensively. Service providing agencies need to not only be prepared to integrate such practices within their operations on a comprehensive basis, but also to either develop or acquire the capacities necessary to build on these requirements. CLGW has developed some capacities in this area which creates both a potential platform for the organization in responding to these expectations and in enriching its programming.

4.2 ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

For the last ten years, and more particularly the last five years, government, the community, funders and others, have been placing increasing emphasis on the accountability movement, which governance is a major component. The accountability movement is generally seen as an organization being not only fully compliant with the laws and regulations under which it operates, but that it is an effective steward of the resources it is provided, has a clear focus on its purpose, articulates and achieves defined outcomes and brings continuing value-added services to the people served and the community or communities in which it operates.

The governance component of accountability has become an intensive consideration over the last five years by government funders due to a number of challenges that organizations have realized and an increasing concern that there needs to be clear roles and accountabilities for the Board of Directors and for management. The governance model organizations selected have been increasingly moving towards policy-based governance whereby there are clear accountability envelopes for the Board and

management. The Board has one employee and the Board establishes priorities and directions through Board policies and assesses compliance and performance through defined monitoring reports.

Having an effective governance model is now an evident expectation of funders and is an area of organizational development that is drawing increasing public scrutiny. Organizations, particularly not-for-profit organizations, need to not only ensure that they have a functioning and effective governance model, but need to regularly review the model to ensure that it achieves the primary responsibilities and accountabilities that are not articulated in legislation and regulation, but are also aligned with the expectations and requirements of funders, donors and the community.

4.3 POPULATION AGE PROFILES

It has long been known, that Canada is experiencing, particularly in its urban environments, an ageing population driven by the “Boomer” generations which is currently approximately 49 to 64 years of age. This generation constitutes approximately 30% to 32% of the population in Ontario.

Also over the same period, particularly since the late 1960s, the birth rate in Canada has declined dramatically to the point that natural population replacement is not achievable. The birth rate stands at approximately 1.5 children per female adult when the replacement rate is approximately 2.2. The birth rate has declined annually for over three decades, but did have a marginal increase in 2006. As a result, three major trends have evolved:

- Federal government policy focusing on increased immigration to the country to offset population losses;
- In the last ten years, the children’s age cohorts have stabilized or marginally declined in absolute numbers in some regions, but have a decline absolutely relative to their proportion of the total population;
- Social policy is increasingly focusing on public health / health care as the “Boomer” generation ages and their health requirements become an increasingly important focus to this generation.

The aging trend has resulted in the youth age cohorts stabilizing in absolute numbers but not necessarily declining in some areas. However, their proportionality within the population is declining. This is a significant change, particularly related to social policy development that for decades after the 1950s focused on youth at a young age and then as young adults with significant investments in elementary and secondary schools, post-secondary school institutions, community recreation and many other sectors. However, the change in population mix has resulted in a significant increase and the drawing of resources towards public health which is an older aged population priority

The ageing phenomenon of the population will continue well into the 2020s and beyond, and will continue to impact public policy and financial investments, particularly related to public health.

4.4 THE CHANGING FACE OF CANADA

Canada has identified that it requires 350,000 net new immigrants per year in order to sustain a population of approximately 33 million to 34 million. Government policy has developed a variety of programs to attract immigrants from around the world, which has been a historical development strategy for the country.

What has uniquely changed in the last two decades, and particularly through the late 1990s to today, has been the ever-increasing targets for immigration, now 250,000 to 300,000 a year, as well as the source of immigration. Historically, new immigrants to Canada came from northern Europe, followed by Eastern Europe. These were the founding ethno-cultural groups for the country and throughout its development into the 1950s.

Today, some 70% to 80% of the new immigrants come from Africa, the Middle East, the Far East and South America. These are non-traditional sources for which Canada has had limited cultural integration experience. Also, many of the immigrants coming to Canada have differing ethno-cultural, religious and life experiences that are not as aligned with the Canadian experience as for previous generations and employment. This profile of immigration has created significant settlement challenges that are both typical and unique. Typical challenges would be in the areas of language, family development, education, engagement and related elements. Some of the newer considerations involve different cultural values, religious systems that are not well known or understood in Canada or cultural practices that are not aligned with Canadian expectations and traditions. This mix of challenges results in the need to become more knowledgeable of the immigrant experiences for which some have had horrendous backgrounds related to violence, wars, torture, etc.

With the continuing growth in immigration and the challenges that such a policy has, service providing agencies need to become more aware of, sensitive to and capable in responding to the needs of these populations as they move into day-to-day Canadian life.

Increasing the organization's capacity to effectively work with and respond to the needs of the changing ethno-cultural population will be a continuing and growing success factor in the future.

4.5 RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

The levels of investment in research continue to grow around the world. As a result, there is a continuing stream of new information on techniques, methods, approaches and strategies in the delivery of social and community services. Much of the new information can often refute or overwhelm previous practices. An organization's ability to source, assess, certify and integrate credible research results into its practices

is an important success factor. Organizations are continually being assessed by funders, people supported and their families, and the community, along with professional accreditation and other bodies, relative to their ability to source and assimilate best practices, new research and to bring the very best methods and approaches to the front line for the people being supported.

In concert with research are the significant day-to-day changes that evolve in the world of technology. Technology covers many domains, communications, operations, service delivery techniques, accountability and reporting requirements, etc. An organization's ability to not just acquire technology, but to train its staff and stakeholders to use it to its capacity and to sustain continuing investments as technology changes significantly on a regular basis, is another key success factor.

Technology requires ongoing investment in hardware, software, change management, training and evaluation. CLGW has moved into the area of technology, but like many similar organizations, is challenged relative to the sustainability, growth and cost of technology within multiple dimensions of the organization.

Medical technology is also changing operating environments significantly. Everything from the ability to sustain life longer in increasing complex situations to improving selected medical outcomes for people with developmental challenges results in a constantly changing operating environment, as well as changing parent and family expectations.

4.6 FUNDING TRENDS

One of the most significant trends of the last five to ten years has been the government's gravitation towards an increased proportion of funding being project-based. That is, funding is provided based on a specific target, need or project and does not necessarily represent core funding. Project funding often also comes without administrative dollars, as the funder's assumption is that the current administrative infrastructure can support another initiative.

In the education system, funding has moved to a ten envelope model which has significantly increased the prescription of how funds can be used to the point that certain envelopes cannot have surplus funds moved to other envelopes, and other constraints. Recently, some Children's Mental Health Centres have been told that there will be increasing scrutiny of line by line variances within their budgets and financial statements resulting in the need for certain approvals of variances and the movement of funds between lines.

The trend towards the increased targeting of funds, often for needs which have high public profiles and with fairly narrow windows, is increasing, along with the prescriptions around how funds can be utilized and the accountability for the use of the funds. One example of some magnitude has been the emergence of autism as a stand alone service area.

The key trends around funding reflect ever-shifting priorities, increasing expectations around accountability and reporting, more targeted investments in specific outcomes, and possible reductions in core funding.

Beyond government strategies for funding support, is the fact that the economy is in a downturn and this may create revenue issues for Ontario and other funders for the next two to five years. Such revenue pressures could result in funding being reduced and not aligning with rates of inflation or other impacts.

Looking forward over the next three years, there may be few major funding opportunities through provincial dollars. CLGW may be fortunate to achieve cost of living increases. There may be some opportunity to access private fundraising, however it may take greater strategic thinking, positioning and investment, and likely more risk-taking than traditionally has occurred in order to sustain the organization at current levels of service.

4.7 RATIONALIZATION / COMPETITION/CONSOLIDATION

CLGW operates in increasingly competitive markets with other providers at various levels of intensity. There are also continuing pressures toward service rationalization and integration. Within the next five years, there will be a large scale turnover of senior staff retiring. All of these factors, plus financial challenges, constitute possible pressure points toward mergers and / or services consolidation. Some examples of consolidations are emerging for Children's Mental Health Services in Elgin, Middlesex and Oxford Counties and for thirteen Children's Aid Societies in Eastern Ontario.

4.8 ALTERNATIVE INCOME AND FUNDRAISING / SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

An almost universal trend today is that organizations need to actively give consideration and effort to sourcing alternative sources of income. This can be via grants and projects, fundraising, the introduction of fee paying services, sourcing foundation and corporate support, establishing endowments, social entrepreneurship and other types of activities. .

Government funders, as well as funders such as United Way and other bodies, openly indicate to organizations that they need to look for partners, be more collaborative, source alternative income and undertake other strategies, as these funders alone cannot support the needs at the level of request being made of them.

One of the fastest growing sectors of the not-for-profit sector is fund development. It is increasingly becoming more sophisticated, competitive and resourced-based. Large organizations, such as universities and hospitals, have large staff teams with significant budgets in support of alternative revenue generation. Many not-for-profit organizations in the children's services and other sectors have actively established foundations, fund development teams, marketing and communication resources and other capacities that collectively support an increased focus on and capacity in broadening revenue generation.

What must be noted within this trend is that increasingly alternative funding is needed for not just projects, new research, new programs, bricks and mortar, equipment and related capital or one-time costs, but also to fund and build operating capacity within core budgets. The evolution of organizations and the ability to remain current and establish the capacities necessary in high change environments, is putting increasing emphasis on the need for fund development and alternative revenue generating strategies and capacities.

Two areas that are receiving increased alternative funding attention are fee for services programs and social entrepreneurial activities. The latter one involves the production and selling of products produced by clients / people supported similar to ARC Industries.

4.9 PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Since the mid-1980s, there has been a growing emphasis on partnerships and collaboration as a means to increase resources, capacity and services. The initial expectation was that there was duplication on one hand, and on the other hand, an ability to work collaboratively would result in synergies that would increase capacity and improve outcomes.

In more recent times, there has been growing emphasis on partnerships, collaboration, and a universal expectation to implement such strategies by agencies. In fact, many United Way, Trillium Foundation and other granting bodies require partnership identification on their grant application forms.

However, there is still continuing identification of silos, working independently and sometimes using partnerships and collaboration more as a strategy to source funds than a primary service implementation approach. Many organizations are suspicious of partnerships and collaboration, wanting to be more defensive about sustaining their own organizations. Others have embraced and pursued these strategies actively. There have been examples of significant success and there have been examples of where things have not worked out.

Partnerships and collaboration require a change in organizational mentality, an orientation towards risk-taking and collective decision-making and moving out of the traditional framework of the organization. Partnerships and collaboration also often falter over financial situations, differences in organizational cultures, a lack of empathy for each other's organizations and other factors.

However, partnerships and collaboration will continue to grow in importance, are an expectation of funders and the community and will need to evolve to higher levels of sophistication and implementation. In many focus groups with parents and community individuals, it is often cited that they really do not know who, or do they particularly care who the service deliverer is. What is important to them first is that they get the best services on a timely basis that they need for their children and family.

CLGW has forged and is involved in partnerships. It has worked with other agencies on projects. In the future, partnerships and collaboration will likely continue be a growing part of how it undertakes its service delivery and organizational development approaches.

Partnerships can involve many components of service delivery. These include the potential sharing of facilities and staff, joint marketing and communications, shared research and other initiatives. Often times the ability for both organizations to provide funding and staffing is a key consideration. Also, partnerships tend to work best when organizations can actively overcome gaps or challenges that other organizations have, and collectively the two can offer an enriched opportunity within the same resource package.

4.10 LOSS OF AFFINITY

Another emerging trend within society is the reduction in affinity that people have with institutions, suppliers and others. This is particularly notable amongst younger generations and expressed in the emerging perspective of “what have you done for me today.” The impact of this trend can alter traditional and counted-on relationships that have existed historically and with which parties the relationship had significant comfort. Also, amongst younger populations, the relationship perspectives are uniquely different. They look for greater value, the newest trends or technology, or what is given the greatest focus in popular culture and communications. Some examples are the continuing changing of mobile telephone contracts, not always for price, but simply for applications and look.

Other indicators of changing relationships, is how customers switch banks and insurance companies; the changing membership profiles at golf courses and clubs where people are looking for packages rather than single venues; and deterioration perspectives about government, education, community service providers and others who engage with the public.

For CLGW, affinity is strong amongst the people supported, families, partners and staff. However, increasingly affinity, or an organization’s value to its stakeholders and its credibility, can erode, often based on factors out of its control. This trend has human resources implications related to how long staff stay and whether the organization is giving them what they need to remain engaged. This may be similar for volunteers. For people supported they want solutions built around their needs, access, convenience, etc. They can shift their loyalties quickly if new opportunities or better “deals” emerge.

One factor that could influence Community Living organizations in this regard is the move towards individualized funding. For this trend, people supported and their families will have the ability to choose some of their suppliers of service. Their decision will be based on both their needs and expectations, as well as the affinity they have for the service provider. Potentially, Community Livings may need to give increased consideration to “customer relations” and marketing activities.

4.11 VOLUNTEERISM

Volunteerism has long been a mainstay of many community service providers. There has been substantive activity by the volunteers in program development and delivery. However, significant changes are occurring around volunteerism.

The first trend that is noticeable, is that people seem to have less time for volunteerism or interest in such activity. Often today, it is not that difficult to recruit volunteers for a project with a defined time period but it is often much more difficult to get a commitment on a longitudinal-basis, such as sitting on a Board or to be involved in an on-going program. This reflects more of the “short attention span” that people have and their desire to get in and out and not necessarily to make longer term commitments.

Also affecting volunteerism, is the increasing scrutiny and red tape associated with volunteers. The need for police checks, the negative press stories about a few volunteers, the expectations of volunteers to be able to do what staff do, and in many cases, the lack of recognition and value for volunteers. As a result, program and operational volunteers tend to be harder to find but still represent a significant and valued resource for any community-based organization.

4.12 COMMUNITY LIVING ENVIRONMENT

There are several other key trends that have and continue to influence some Community Living organizations in Ontario. The first is the sometimes evident differences in perspectives between younger parents with adult children who need support, often in their twenties to forties, and older parents who have aging adult children who are moving towards retirement. The first group has evolved from an environment where their children have received expanded services from the pre-school and education systems and have expectations that their children, whether emerging or already out of the education system, will have access to services beyond what earlier generations of parents might have expected or were engaged with. This includes employment, day, independent living and a host of other program perspectives. The older age generation of parents is often more focused on who will take care of their children once they become too old or pass on. They tend to have more focus on sustainability and retirement and maybe less of a focus on developing new programs, services and directions. For some Community Livings, this divide has split their memberships and parent groups, causing concerns such as in London, South Huron and others. These differences in perspectives reflect a generational change that can evolve when lifelong support relationships evolve.

Another possible trend that could impact Community Living organizations in Ontario, is related to government financial supports, in whole or in part, flowing to the person being supported and their family versus potentially going directly to a Community Living organization as currently occurs. This changing framework has been discussed for many years, there has been several pilot venues and continues to be part of the government policy direction. Depending on the scale of this transition and how it is implemented, this could result in Community Living organizations needing to become more market focused in terms of identifying perspective people to be supported, developing and delivering services that

they are prepared to purchase and may also result in increased competition as other service providers consider this service area a possible revenue source, or individuals / entrepreneurs decide to enter into such a market-based environment, similar to what's happened to Family Counselling Services in Ontario.

This transition may be longer term. It does not appear at this time that it will involve the residential services area, but could involve day programs, employment and related service areas. Strategically, Community Living Guelph Wellington will need to consider the potential opportunities and challenges that such a transition could mean for the organization, the people it currently supports and future people requiring supports, related to the organizational skills, communications, design and services that CLGW will need to address.

A third trend involves the second generation effort to aggregate various Developmental Services organizations into a single labour negotiating strategy relative to the next round of collective agreements is emerging. As per the last round of negotiations, the influence of the Premier's Office on such negotiations could be a factor in achieving a settlement. This trend is also becoming evident in education and other public and transfer payment sectors.

The trend towards sector-based agreements would have impacts on CLGW in terms of how negotiations are undertaken, more generic agreement requirements to meet the needs of all the agencies that may be aggregated into an agreement and other factors. CLGW has enjoyed positive labour-management relationships and has achieved working agreements. However, the ability to influence these labour agreement outcomes may be reduced if broader-based collective agreement negotiating strategies emerge. This could have some effect on CLGW, from budgets, to position descriptions, to work rules, etc.

The degree of impact that this strategy could have is uncertain but has some potential to be a strategic consideration.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND STRATEGIC THEMES

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

The following material summarizes the strengths, weaknesses and future perspectives, along with the other information, that has emerged within the Environmental Scan activities.

Organizational and Services Profile

- Incremental growth related to the number of people supported, now reaching 641 participants in six programs, involving nearly 400 individuals;
- Some thirty-five facilities spread across the City of Guelph and the County of Wellington;
- 485 staff of which 455 are direct support staff. The full time to part time ratio for direct support staff is higher than in most similar organizations reflecting an effort to focus on full time staffing;
- Have gravitated to nearly a \$16 million a year organization, with 90% of the funds received from the province. Small surpluses have been realized in recent years;
- Fundraising approaches \$90,000 a year;
- Recent research initiatives have involved commercial retail opportunities for ARC Capital Industries, as well as seniors services;
- Key strategic trends that are influencing the operating environment are evidenced-based / evidenced informed funder requirements, increased emphasis on accountability and governance, aging and multi-cultural demographic transitions, increased research and technology implications, funding trends moving more to project-based and less administration, social services consolidation, increasing emphasis on social entrepreneurship, along with partnerships, loss of affinity and changing volunteer perspectives;
- Changes within the Community Living operating environment involve increasing focus on individualized funding, moving to a regional placement entity and centralized collective agreements;

Strengths

- A long standing, well run organization;
- A caring, committed, experienced and responsive staff team;
- An organizational culture that focuses on getting things done, taking on the some of the most challenging people who need supports, working well as a team and high levels of listening and commitment;
- New and excellent facilities, such as the ARC Industry building and the gymnasium which is unique;
- Good partnerships in the community, along with strong community supports, such as the capital campaign;
- The presence of some employment opportunities in the community;
- Good parental support, and staff being receptive to parental ideas;
- Strong leadership and innovation by Community Living Guelph Wellington, which draws other people to come and see what they are doing;
- A strong management team;
- Relatively good communication with families;
- Strong collaboration within and around the organization;
- The organization knows the people it supports by name and person, and empowers the people they serve;
- Good use of resources, fiscal accountability and flexibility;
- Excellent quality of care and go beyond the norm;
- Excellent staff benefits;
- Staff take a holistic view of the people supported, locations are safe and the people supported seem happy;
- The day programs have grown, more are being developed and there is strong socialization;

- Technology is advancing though it has a ways to go;
- A progressive, innovative and thinking out of the box organization;
- Services are provided across the County and the City;
- Good mandatory training opportunities;
- The Mission of the organization is well supported;
- Excellent ratio of full time to part time staff, with low staff turnover.

Concerns / Issues / Weaknesses

- Transportation is a significant constraint, particularly in the rural areas;
- The waiting lists are long and frustrating;
- Maintenance of facilities is a challenge, particularly in Guelph;
- Some confusion amongst parents involving payments and fees / charges that seem to be variable across the system;
- The aging service population that will have different types of the needs in the future, such as Long Term Care. Is the organization ready for increased dementia, Alzheimer's, medical and other requirements;
- Increasing incidence of autism, mental health, dual diagnosis and related issues that will need to be addressed;
- A growing parental divide amongst younger parents who have had services and expect opportunities for their transitional aged youth, compared to older parents who are looking for long term solutions after they pass on;
- Funding has not kept up with the demand levels, or the increasing complexity of an aging service population;
- May need to consider supports that are less Monday to Friday and more seven days a week;
- ODSP is a challenge in terms of the amount of funds a person supported receives, and the impact of pay cheques they receive for working;
- Some services are starting to be rationed due to funding constraints;

- An aging staff. Succession will need to be a growing consideration, particularly at senior leadership roles;
- Confusion between administration and direct support staff on a number of reporting, audited and related functions;
- Concerns over the quality of resident fits within the homes, how residential placements are made and some of the inequities that exist around funding, parental support, etc.;
- Better supports are required for people who are transitioning from a family home into a group home, and in regards to employment services;
- Some communication concerns on multiple levels across the organization, in terms of staff to staff, interdepartmental, etc.;
- Some inconsistencies in policy interpretations and decision-making that creates challenges for frontline staff, including information on new residents that does not come on a timely basis;
- For some, there is a lack of residential options;
- Staff ratio challenges at Holody Home and within SIL, along with staffing levels in the homes;
- Recruitment of staff may need to focus more on experience than on education, though new skill sets will also be required due to the aging service population;
- Growing expectations that there should be more employment and day program opportunities in the community;
- Is it time for person-centered planners like other Community Living organizations have, as well as job developers for employment;
- The medical and Long Term Care community do not seem to accept the people supported on a fair and equitable basis;
- Is ARC turning into a place where people come and undertake mostly low level activities;
- Concerns that there is not a business model for ARC relative to attracting more diverse, stronger and more plentiful contracts;
- What is the future of ARC in an operating environment that is placing more emphasis on community inclusion?
- The need for human resources, technology and other policies and investments, including training;

- Declining and low memberships is occurring;
- Technology is not at the levels necessary, as well as training beyond mandatory components needs to significantly increase;
- Some of the new residential facilities are not as accessible, in terms of doorways, back yard slopes, etc., as they will need to be for an aging population;
- What will be the impacts of collective centralized bargaining, the new placement entity and other regionalized or broader services on an organization that has fixed geographic boundaries;
- Some unique differences between County and City needs, as well as service levels and requirements;
- The small management and administrative team results in significant challenges in undertaking, planning and assessing new initiatives. Also, more and more of the implementation work is falling on a fixed number of coordinators which is creating workload challenges;
- Some fifty-seven students will be graduating from area high schools that will be expecting services. How is this going to be responded to?
- Some increasing concerns over medication dispensing practices, the need for nursing supports and increased medical requirements.

Future Perspectives

- Potential for government priorities to continue to transition more towards an aging population, health care and education, which could reduce or flat-line funding to this sector;
- The implications of individualized funding on the organization in terms of different organizational skill sets, competition, funding, etc.;
- The need for greater and broader partnerships with the community and region, such as with the YMCA, Trellis, specialized service providers and others;
- How will mental health, autism, dual diagnosis and other services be dealt with in Community Living Guelph Wellington;
- Expectations that the parental generational divide will grow and create two distinct spheres of service / audiences;
- Will there be increased privatization of services in this sector;

- There will be growing requirements for accountability, reporting, compliance and related perspectives that will absorb staff time and resources;
- Will fee for service, social entrepreneurship and other types of revenue generating activities become more important? As well, will fundraising have to start covering operating costs?
- Changing perspectives on residential options, 24/7 care and in-home supports exists;
- May need more of the residential facilities to be bungalows for an aging population;
- Trying to assess and determine what the Long Term Care, retirement and related policies, programs and supports and integration will be for aging people supported;
- The workforce could become less stable, more contract / part time-based, and group homes could become larger based on funding constraints;
- A need for growth in rural services in north and east areas in Wellington due to waiting lists;
- What will be the implications of changes to MCYS and the MCSS in terms of their role, ministerial integration, etc.;
- The agency may be substantially different in the future due to the degree of changes that are coming into the operating environment, funding challenges, etc. May need to change the model;
- A sense that increased nursing and other types of skill sets may need to be brought into / partnered by the organization relative to an aging and more medically complex service population, some with challenging behavioural concerns;
- Will consolidation, mergers and other strategies become more apparent and needed within the operating environment due to financial constraints;
- Technology applications, both in terms of operational productivity and supports services will become an increasing perspective for the organization. Also, many of the people supported coming out of the school system will have increased technology capacities that could require changes in how supports are delivered.

5.2 STRATEGIC THEMES

The following strategic themes emerged from the Environmental Scan Report:

- An aging service population that could have significant impacts on organizational and staff skills, program requirements, retirement services and Long Term Care perspectives;

- Increasing medical behavioural and other conditions that will require staff training, program development and partnering related to autism, dual diagnosis, dementia, Alzheimer's, mental health, etc.;
- The changing operating environment in terms of government priorities; potential funding impacts; regionalization of key activities, such as residential placement; centralized collective bargaining; etc.;
- The potential for individualized funding and services, overtime, to change the operating environment in terms of organizational skills, increased competition, new program and service preferences, etc.;
- The need to consider enhanced partnerships (local and regional), integration and collaborations; as well as a possible perspective to assess organizational consolidation and joint ventures more extensively;
- Increased emphasis on specialized staff training; the development and application of technology; enhancing physical plant repairs and maintenance; as well potential to gravitate to more bungalow type residential facilities;
- Overcoming transportation constraints, and how to extend more services into the rural area;
- The need for advocacy initiatives to bring parity in funding to Guelph-Wellington and to achieve increased funding for an aging service population that has different requirements and more complex needs;
- Sustaining and growing the positive organizational culture, and effectively utilizing the skills and capacities of all the staff and volunteers. How to position CLGW for a different future at all levels?
- Improving staff and organizational communications, function / unit integration, position work / role priorities and related organizational design and development perspectives.