

**Report to the Board, Community Living Ontario
June 2020
Family Engagement Steering Committee**

Two major recent activities of the Family Engagement Steering Committee have been heavily impacted by the ongoing global pandemic.

The Committee is overseeing a 2 year federally funded project exploring how to support and promote family engagement in a way that improves peoples' lives. This project is in its second of the 2 years and has been providing some interesting and deep insights as well as ongoing challenges regarding just what family engagement is and what roles paid supporters might be able to play. There has been some valuable struggling and learning to date. The areas currently involved in this project are Community Living Mississauga, Rygiel Supports for Community Living and Brockville & District Association for Community Involvement. We had been meeting regularly by conference call with representatives from each project along with Committee members but with the current COVID 19 crisis the project has understandably been on somewhat of a hiatus.

The Committee is overseeing and helping to steer another Social Value and Inclusion family workshop series. The series typically includes several sections over a series of weekend family gatherings:

- A Vision for Families: Social Value and Inclusion for People with Disabilities
- Deepening the Vision of Social Value and Inclusion
- Analyzing Services and/or Supports
- Sharing and Celebrating Vision and Inclusion

Fortunately, we were able to begin the series with a face-to-face gathering on a weekend before the pandemic struck. Our second gathering was conducted through a Zoom meeting and we were pleased that it worked out well. There were some positives in that families did not need to travel and could attend in the comfort of their own homes. Most of our committee members were able to attend and were able to contribute to the learning by sharing their life experiences with the newly enrolled families. Much credit goes to the workshop leader, Darcy Elks, who along with our Linda White, have been working at making the course material friendly to online use and accessibility. Much planning continues to go on to make this series meaningful and thought provoking for all involved given the lack of opportunities for face-to-face gatherings and the inability to visit various service sites.

Respectfully submitted by Maureen Roy, board representative