



LOCKED OUT OF LIFE NO MORE

Equality, Dignity, and Belonging: Building a Better System for People with Disabilities in Manitoba

“It took the bravery of two young Manitobans to speak up, then it took a decade to get here,” said IAS Steering Committee Chair David Kron. “Let’s not take a decade to finish the job and do what is absolutely right and correct.”

For Immediate Release

Winnipeg, June 16, 2026 – A major new report released today delivers an unflinching assessment of Manitoba’s adult disability services and a clear call to action. *Equality, Dignity, and Belonging: Building a Better System for People with Disabilities in Manitoba* is the culmination of the Integrated Adult Services (IAS) Pilot Project. The project is a precedent-setting initiative rooted in the human rights complaints of two Manitobans.

In 2016, Amelia Hampton and Tyson Sylvester placed the Government of Manitoba and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) on notice. They filed human rights complaints alleging the services they received and those provided to adults living with disabilities in Manitoba were discriminatory and did not meet their needs. After the Manitoba Human Rights Commission (MHRC) found sufficient evidence of discrimination to warrant a public hearing of the complaints, a settlement was reached between Amelia, Tyson, MHRC, the provincial government, and the WRHA. The settlement required the creation of the IAS Pilot Project, which aimed to test a new model for delivering support services to adults with disabilities. The findings of the IAS Pilot Project, which concluded in the fall of 2025, are telling.

The *Equality, Dignity, and Belonging: Building a Better System for People with Disabilities in Manitoba* final report was authored by a Project Steering Committee made up of individuals with lived experience, community representatives, the Manitoba Human Rights Commission, and government representatives from Manitoba Families, Manitoba Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care, and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority.

“The Report clearly outlines the changes the Manitoba Government must make to ensure the rights of all adult Manitobans living with disabilities are met,” said IAS Steering Committee Chair David Kron. “This report shows that simply changing or tinkering existing policies is not an option. The system needs to be completely rebuilt.”

Under the IAS project, data was collected from 33 participants over the course of a year and a half in a new service delivery model which was person centred and geared to timely service co-ordination. One where people over the age of 18 could work, visit with friends without days or weeks of pre-planning, have homecare assistance in the community, all things that allowed participants to live life as all Manitobans do, without the restrictions of current legislation and policy.

Yet these freedoms are far from the norm. For many youths with disabilities in the community, this level of independence remains out of reach once they age out of the school system. Imagine graduating from high school only to have all the supports you relied on for success, stripped away. Imagine your friend or cousin calling to meet for coffee later in the day, but you can’t go because transportation must be arranged in advance. That is the reality for many of the community’s youth immediately after celebrating high school graduation or turning 18.

“I had a choice when I graduated. Live at home with my mom and a maximum of 55 hours of homecare or move to a senior care home,” said Tyson Sylvester. “Living on my own as an intelligent, employable adult wasn’t an option. How does that respect my rights as a human being?” added Tyson.

“We wish Amelia was here to see the impact her determination is having, just as she hoped,” said Charlene Hamel-Hampton. “As parents, we worried constantly about our daughter’s future, now we are here to carry on her legacy.”

With the release of this report, there is no doubt on how and why the system must be overhauled. The full list of 13 recommendations addresses everything from the need to create a whole new system with different eligibility criteria to better service coordination, transportation, equipment, and community living supports.

One size does not fit all when it comes to supporting adults living with disabilities in Manitoba. The province must establish a new needs-based system which focuses support on each individual’s specific life circumstances. The new system must be compliant with human rights law and principles. There must be no exceptions, including for First Nations people living on or off reserve.

As part of the human rights settlement and the launch of the IAS Pilot Project, the Manitoba Government and Winnipeg Regional Health Authority committed to making best efforts to implement the recommendations flowing from the report and to respond to the report’s findings within six months of it being made public.

The full report is available at [Locked Out of Life](#) along with more on Tyson and Amelia's journey to bring about change.

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