



**June 30 2026**

**The Honourable Nahanni Fontaine**

Minister of Families  
Minister Responsible for Accessibility  
357 Legislative Building  
450 Broadway  
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

**The Honourable Uzoma Asagwara**

Minister of Health, Seniors, and Long-Term Care  
302 Legislative Building  
450 Broadway  
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Dear Honourable Ministers,

We are writing today in support of all recommendations arising from the Integrated Adult Services (IAS) Pilot Project. The Final Report *“Equality, Dignity and Belonging: Building a Better System for People with Disabilities in Manitoba”* clearly demonstrates the urgent need to overhaul Manitoba’s Disability Support System to ensure Manitobans living with complex disabilities can fully enjoy their rights and freedoms and participate in community life on an equal basis with others.

The IAS Pilot Project began officially in April 2023 as a response to human rights complaints filed by Manitobans Tyson Sylvester and Amelia Hampton. In November 2022, in a news release officially launching the IAS project, the province agreed its treatment of Manitobans living with complex disabilities had to be reviewed and, the Progressive Conservative Health Minister at that time, Audrey Gordon, said, “We look forward to working together with government, community partners, and health-care providers on this project to ensure Manitobans with disabilities have access to the supports and services they need.”

Now, those much-needed supports and services have been identified through the IAS Pilot Project, and **it is time to get to work.**

The report outlines several systemic barriers impeding the person-centred, flexible, and intensive case management system needed to meaningfully improve the lives of people living with disabilities across the province including:

- **Eligibility gaps:** IQ-based or diagnostic criteria for adult disability services exclude many people with significant and similar needs;
- **Inadequate income supports:** Benefit levels do not keep pace with the real cost of disability such as accessible housing, transportation, para-health services, and medical or adaptive equipment;
- **Rural service deserts:** People outside Winnipeg face enormous distances, inaccessible transportation, and near-absent local services;
- **Fragmented, siloed services:** Departments and organizations operating independently force individuals to navigate a system that was not designed with them in mind and that punishes those without strong family supports;
- **Family caregiver crisis:** Aging parents carry enormous, unsupported caregiving loads;
- **Lack of a provincial disability advocate:** Participants consistently called for a publicly funded, independent advocate that is arms-length from service provision and government alike.

As a response to these systemic issues, the Report provides several key recommendations outlining how to move forward in transforming Manitoba's disability services delivery system to properly support Manitoba adults with complex disability related needs. These include:

- Manitoba should Replace Diagnosis Based Eligibility with Needs Based Eligibility;
- Manitoba should Ensure Continuity of Supports Across the Lifespan;
- Manitoba should establish a Province-wide One Door Navigation and Cross Department Coordination;
- Manitoba should provide Adequate and Dignified Disability Income; and
- Manitoba should create Flexible, Person Controlled, Portable Funding for adults with disabilities.

The path forward must be to create a brand-new Disability Support System. This is the report's core recommendation. The implementation of all recommendations found in the report is necessary to truly be responsive to the needs of people with complex disabilities and their lived experience. The new system must be needs-based and responsive to individual needs. It must also align with Manitoba's *Human Rights Code*, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and the *United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

We, the undersigned, call on the Manitoba Government to begin work immediately to implement all the recommendations found in the *"Equality, Dignity and Belonging: Building a Better System for People with Disabilities in Manitoba"*. We also call on the government to respond with its intentions within 6 months of receiving this letter.

Sincerely,