



News Release

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Pilot Program Aims to Close Gaps in Services and Care For Adults With Disability-Related Needs

The Manitoba government is collaborating with persons with disabilities, the Manitoba Human Rights Commission and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) on a pilot program in response to complaints from two individuals related to the rights of adults with disabilities. The pilot initiative is the result of a settlement with Tyson Sylvester and Amelia Hampton, and will involve a provision of more holistic services and care to 30 adults with complex disability-related needs.

“Our government recognizes there are gaps in care that must be addressed to ensure that Manitobans with disabilities do not experience barriers to receiving the best care possible,” said Families Minister Rochelle Squires. “We are pleased to take this step to support a more inclusive system.”

“Manitoba’s health-care system strives to be responsive and inclusive,” said acting Health and Seniors Care Minister Kelvin Goertzen. “This pilot project is an opportunity to ensure we are achieving those goals and better meeting the needs of Manitobans.”

In 2016, Sylvester and Hampton filed human rights complaints alleging that gaps in the provision of services and supports to adult Manitobans with disabilities, particularly those with complex disability-related needs, create systemic barriers to equality. To address the complaints, Sylvester and Hampton, the provincial government and the WRHA, in conjunction with the Manitoba Human Rights Commission, agreed to the launch of the pilot program.

“I am very excited to participate in this pilot project, and I am hopeful that it will benefit many others,” said Sylvester. “This has been a long time coming.”

“I am going to make a big game change for the system,” said Hampton.

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An independent researcher will be contracted to prepare a report and recommendations relating to the gaps and barriers in services provided to Manitobans with disabilities, especially those with complex disabilities. The Manitoba government and the WRHA have committed to best efforts in implementing recommendations that flow from the pilot program, which is expected to be up and running within six months.

“We believe that this pilot project is an important step forward in advancing the equality rights of adult Manitobans with disabilities,” said Karen Sharma, acting executive director, Manitoba Human Rights Commission. “We look forward to working together with community partners, the government of Manitoba and health-care providers to ensure that Manitobans with disabilities have access to the supports and services they need to live life in dignity and rights.”

A steering committee will oversee the pilot project. Persons with lived experience and family members of persons with lived experience will comprise at least one-third of the committee.

Additionally, at least one independent academic expert will assist the committee with its work and an independent evaluator will assess the pilot program. The evaluator’s report will be made public.

“Providing safe, high-quality, accessible care is central to what we do, and we are excited about this opportunity to better ensure our services meet the needs of adults with disabilities,” said Mike Nader, president and CEO, WRHA.

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The Province of Manitoba is distributing this news release on behalf of the government of Manitoba, Tyson Sylvester, Amelia Hampton, the Manitoba Human Rights Commission and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority.

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