

The Saskatchewan provincial election will be held on April 4, 2016. The following questions have been prepared to help you think of issues to discuss when candidates come to your home or when you have the opportunity to ask questions at a candidate's forum in your area.

## EDUCATION

- Q: What would your party do to support Educational Assistants in the classroom? : SACL is hearing from families across the province that there is inadequate access to EA's (Educational Assistants) and that this is causing challenges for all students.
- Q: What would your party do to help people with intellectual disabilities have the opportunity for post-secondary education in local colleges and universities? :

## DISABILITY STRATEGY

- Q: What is your party's position on the Disability Strategy? : The Disability Strategy can be found at: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/family-and-social-support/people-with-disabilities/saskatchewan-disability-strategy>
- Q: What concrete steps would your party undertake to implement the recommendations of the Disability Strategy? :

## PERSON-CENTERED

- Q: What does the phrase "person-centered" mean to you? : The SACL believes that all supports and services for people with disabilities should be person-centered.
- Q: How would you ensure that services for people with intellectual disabilities are person-centered? :

## EMPLOYMENT

- Q: What would your party do to encourage the participation of people with intellectual disabilities in the labour market? : 75% of people with intellectual disabilities are unemployed. We know that flexible working arrangements benefit people with intellectual disabilities and employers. Flexibility might include working less than 40 hours/week or putting in place the proper supports such as a job coach.
- Q: What would your party do to promote employment opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities within government? :

## SAID

Q: If elected would your party increase the monthly earnings exemption?

Q: Would your party average earnings of SAID beneficiaries over a 6 – 12 month period?

Q: What does your party see as a 'socially acceptable' income for SAID beneficiaries?

The earnings exemption allowed under SAID is currently \$200/month. SACL knows many individuals who work only seasonally which means that they may lose a significant portion of their salary for the small amount of time they can work each year.

## TRANSPORTATION

Q: Would you increase the transportation benefit within SAID to allow people with disabilities more control and flexibility in securing transportation when they need it?

Q: If elected, how would your government better support the transportation needs of people with intellectual disabilities?

Challenges that people with intellectual disabilities face when accessing transportation include: the need to book one week in advance for accessible transportation, the lack of accessible transportation in rural areas, and negative experiences on the regular transit system

## SUPPORTING FAMILIES

Q: Are you aware that Stats Can reports have shown that families who have children with disabilities have a lower income?

Q: Do you know why this happens? A: Families often have to have one parent at home for fulltime caregiving.

Q: How will your party support the families of individuals with intellectual disabilities – children or adult – to succeed in employment and personally?

The families of people with intellectual disabilities often have lower incomes and are single income households, experience lower levels of workplace advancement, and experience higher rates of divorce and separation rates.

## RESPIRE

Q: What will your party do for families needing respite on a monthly basis?

Q: Will your party support the development of a provincial respite registry or Program?

## HOUSING

- Q: Will you support affordable housing development that looks at the needs and goals for all people with intellectual disabilities?
- Q: If elected, would your government work with SACL to develop more suitable, affordable housing options for people with intellectual disabilities?
- Q: If elected would your government support independent living supports for people who do not currently qualify for existing residential programming?

Many people with intellectual disabilities struggle to find and afford suitable housing. If housing is secured, many people with intellectual disabilities struggle to retain it because of a lack of access to independent living supports that might make tenancy successful. There are many people who live with intellectual disabilities who do not qualify for residential services such as those provided by Community Living Service Delivery.

## QUALIFICATION FOR SERVICES

- Q: If elected, how would your party address the eligibility criteria (IQ and age based service cut offs) for people with intellectual disabilities who require services but currently do not qualify?

In order for individuals with an intellectual disability to qualify for residential and daytime supports from Community Living Service Delivery (CLSD) they must have an IQ of 70 or lower. The IQ rule limits access to CLSD funded agency supports such as group homes, day programs, and independent living programs. As well, the cause of the disability must have been present before the age of 18 eliminating, for example, individuals who live with acquired brain injuries from qualifying for services from CLSD.

SACL believes that access to supports should be based on the individual's assessed needs, and the impact of disability, not IQ or age.