

Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley

Strategic Plan, 2023-2026



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Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley

A strategic plan is essential for the purposeful direction of an organization. Within a strategic plan are the aspirations of its stakeholders and the levels and types of services provided to the people it supports. The following strategic plan emphasizes the importance of focusing on people's unique abilities, their choice in decision making and having autonomy over their aspirations. The agency recognizes it must provide services that centre around a person as opposed to those persons conforming to structures within the agency. Structural and cultural flexibility through the integration of support within our surrounding communities are prerequisites to ensure, "all persons live in a state of dignity, share in all elements of living in the community and have the opportunity to participate effectively."

Traditionally, the use of strategic plans has been the exclusive domain of governance boards and senior leadership teams. The strategic plan must be viewed as an active and guiding resource that provides both a philosophical foundation for Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley (CLUOV) as well as a *road map* for broadening and deepening the experiences of the people we support. Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley has a strong history of providing person-directed support. The strategic plan acknowledges the agency's history and its dedicated staff while moving the organization to new levels of exemplary and responsive service.

Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley's strategic plan gives direction to the continued development of the organization's structure, its culture, its use of technology, the operation of its human resources and its support teams. It is important to recognize that an organization and its culture are living and growing entities and that quality of supports is tied to the capacity of its employees. Continuously developing all employees and the further establishing of a learning culture is essential to Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley's future success. By doing so, the strategic plan must have a direct presence within meetings, during performance evaluations and throughout onboarding of new employees. It must

be understood by all employees at every level of the agency in order to create alignment of practices.

It should also be clear to everyone involved with Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley that our growth requires a recognition of continuous improvement and a deep desire to explore and share new and innovative practices, and the provision of excellent service to those we support.

It is evident from consultations with stakeholders and in the completion of related questionnaires that Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley has an unyielding commitment to person-centered practices, a dedicated staff and a very capable and visionary leadership team. Together with a supportive board, it is clear that CLUOV is well positioned to address the challenges confronting organizations in the Developmental Services sector.

Guiding Philosophy

From a person-directed approach, Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley is committed to the following:

- The focus is entirely on the person, never the system. It is all about how I as a unique individual want to live my life, how I am being supported to reach my goals, ensuring I have the right amount of support that we ensure the concept of “Nothing about me without me” is followed and that “Community is sought as a first resort”. Listening to what I have to say, facilitating opportunities and experiences that enable me to make informed choices and recognizing that while I may need to depend on support, it is provided with Respect for my dignity, and considers individual autonomy including the freedom to make one’s own choices. I am empowered through my strengths and bolstered by your support.

- System resources are considered after the person's dreams, interests and gifts have been discovered and only in relationship to how those resources can be used to support people in achieving their dreams and contributing their gifts

Methodology

In building the strategic plan, significant emphasis was placed on consultation with Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley's Board, its leadership team, employees, those supported and families. In each of these respective consultations, there were opportunities for open dialogue and for the submission of responses to questions posed at meetings. There were also extensive and enlightening discussions with Executive Director, Tina Williams, who provided context with respect to the agency's past as well as insights into the agency's current challenges and opportunities.

Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley's board was consulted on October 27th, 2021 and the agency's senior leadership team was consulted on October 5th. Meetings with staff took place on January 27th, 2022 and consultation meetings with people supported and families, December 13th & January 27th, 2022. The analysis of all feedback and related documents were weighted, analyzed and were accordingly themed to ensure that *all* voices were recognized. Further consideration was given both to best practices in the areas of organizational development and to emerging practices within the Developmental Services sector. The Strategic Plan was drafted beginning with an examination of the existing values, mission and vision statements in comparison to the feedback provided and documents received in preparation for the creation of the following strategic plan.

Finally, the strategic plan considers the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services' (MCCSS) framework for change within the developmental services sector. It will be necessary for organizations in the sector to create

pertinent changes in order to become and remain successful within this new environment.

Sector Analysis and External Factors

In June, 2021, the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) announced the *Journey to Belonging: Choice and Inclusion*, its framework for a long-term vision for developmental services in Ontario, “where people with developmental disabilities are supported to fully participate in their communities and live fulfilling lives”. See <https://www.ontario.ca/page/journey-belonging-choice-and-inclusion>.

During the next eight to ten years, MCCSS will embark on a plan for the future that focuses on people and how they can belong in their communities and live meaningful lives through person-centered and person-directed approaches.

The following principles will help guide the Ministry’s reform agenda:

- **People receive support based on their needs** - Greater equity through individualized funding and budgets tied to people’s assessed needs.
- **Services build on the strengths of people and supports provided by families, support networks and communities** - Supports complement services available in the community and are culturally appropriate to reflect the needs of Indigenous people, Francophones and diversity within our communities, while also reflecting regional differences across the province.
- **Supports are person-directed and flexible** - People have more control over directing and managing their funding and supports.
- **Supports are proactive and responsive to people’s changing needs across the course of their lives** - Greater focus on early intervention and prevention for people, with supports that are better integrated with other sectors.
- **Services are driven by evidence, outcomes and continuous improvement** - More emphasis on outcomes and quality services that are responsive to feedback from people using them.
- **Services and supports promote health, well-being and safety** - Services promote positive health and wellness outcomes and a high quality and meaningful life experience. Supports help address systemic barriers (for example, discrimination, racism, ableism) that prevent people from accessing supports and fully participating in their communities.
- **System is sustainable** - Improving the ability of developmental services to help people now and into the future.

Key commitments related to the, *Journey to Belonging: Choice and Inclusion* are premised on three themes:

1. Putting people first
2. Improving service experience
3. Improving quality and accountability

Please see Appendix I for the *Journey to Belonging's* related action items and specifically Appendix II for Key excerpts that have informed the development of this Strategic Plan

Given the proposed changes to the sector in the coming years, it is necessary for Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley to:

- Define and assess service excellence related to all areas of service delivery with supporting qualitative and empirical metrics that inform and support decision making
- Understand and assess the “lived experience of those supported” in conjunction with service excellence measures to continuously triangulate and strengthen practices that can be shared within the agency and across the sector
- Strengthen the “employee experience”
- Continue to build Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley’s reputation as a model of best practices that are aligned with the organization’s values, vision and mission
- Continue to augment government funding with alternative and innovative revenue sources and through community partnerships that address shared community needs.

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Guiding Principles

In response to consultations with stakeholders and through the completion of questionnaires, the following themes were explored and are further representative of CLUOV’s values, vision and mission. Together, they should guide the implementation of the strategic plan.

<p>Respect and Dignity</p>	<p>“Respect is more than the absence of negative comments or actions. Respect is demonstrated in how we interact with people. Interactions that promote respect do not draw undue attention to a person’s disability, diagnosis or condition. We refer to people as people, without the additional description of a disability, diagnosis or condition, or their role in the service delivery system. Rather than promoting the potentially stigmatizing nature of these terms, we are one “people”, joined by our humanness, not separated by our differences (CQL).</p> <p>Supports emphasize and capitalize on people’s capabilities and are provided in the greater community, not segregated settings. Respect means listening and responding to people’s needs with the same promptness and urgency that anyone would expect. Organizations listen to people and respond respectfully. People are positively regarded and all our interactions with them reflect respect.”</p>
<p>Service Excellence</p>	<p>speaks to the importance of achieving and maintaining the highest standards of performance in the delivery of person-centered services through continuous evaluation and reflection within a culture of continuous learning and the development of innovative practices. Service excellence requires that attention is paid to both our processes and desired outcomes through self, team and agency- wide evaluation of our work through the lens of our <i>Core values</i>, our <i>Mission</i> and our <i>Vision statements</i> and that ensure dignity and respect and promote citizenship for all people being supported.</p>
<p>Teamwork</p>	<p>is at the centre of everything we undertake. In order to have a meaningful impact in all aspects of our work it is necessary to maintain clear communication, to honour commitments, to have high expectations and to serve one another with the highest levels of mutual accountability.</p>
<p>Wellness</p>	<p>means more than the ensuring avoidance of harm. Wellness begins with a genuine belief in inclusiveness through which our emotional, physical and psychological needs are recognized and nurtured. Safety enables each of us to live, work and spend time in settings that meet our needs while enabling each of us to grow, connect and learn with a consideration of the dignity of risk.</p>

Values, Mission and Vision Statements

Our Vision

“That all persons live in a state of dignity, share in all elements of living in the community and have the opportunity to participate effectively.”

Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley envisions a society where all rights, both legal and human, are afforded every citizen without discrimination, and, where every person is supported in their efforts to become participating, respected members of society.

The fulfillment of this vision will have ensured that all people are welcomed and supported in their community:

- That all community services are available to every citizen;
- That people can aspire to and have the opportunity to work towards a career of their choice, real work for real pay, and fair recognition of accomplishment;
- That people have the opportunity to retire and enjoy the lifestyle and activities of their own choosing;
- That, as adults, people choose where, how and with whom they live;
- That children live in nurturing and supportive family-like environments and enjoy the benefits of family life;
- That children attend their regular neighbourhood school in age appropriate classes with their peers, from pre-school through to post-secondary;
- That educational programs are challenging and tailored to the individuals.

Because of the quality of our lives is so dependent upon how, when, where and with whom we are free to live, love, learn, work and spend our personal time, fulfillment of our community responsibilities will have ensured that people are free and have the necessary empowerment to enable them to:

- Enjoy, develop and maintain whatever relationships they find meaningful;
- Make choices/decisions in self-defined terms from a wide range of options;
- Receive appropriate support when desired.
-

Our Mission

To foster the development of welcoming communities through:

- Providing supports and services based on each person's uniqueness and self-determination so they may enjoy safe, secure, and rewarding lives
- Enriching community life by developing community capacity and partnerships.
- Opportunities for stakeholders to learn and take leadership
- Promoting and celebrating diversity through public education and promotion of inclusion and community living
- Leadership in human rights advocacy
- Eliminating physical, attitudinal and societal barriers to full citizenship

Our Values and Commitments

While moving towards accomplishing these areas, Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley will adhere to these values. The organization's implementation strategies will look to augment funding sources and enhance partnerships and commitments:

1. Ensure the concepts "exploring options "and" informed choice" are the basis for decision-making by individuals supported by CLUOV.
2. Reinforce a clear understanding that CLUOV will not support segregated initiatives and activities and ensure our focus is on individualization and inclusivity.
3. Investigate partnerships and collaborations with local and regional organizations as the first option for change. We believe together we are better!
4. Research and introduce new revenue streams including base funding, fees-for-service, grants and fundraising.

Key Drivers

Strategic plans are most effective when they have larger and overarching drivers that move goals and strategies forward. It was evident through consultations and an examination of the Journey to Belonging that for Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley will be well served to:

1. Define and deliver Service Excellence in all aspects of its work in partnership wherever possible
2. Become an employer of choice

In order to realize these drivers, five related goals were identified:

1. Service Excellence
2. Employee Experience
3. Organizational Excellence
4. Business Practices and Communication
5. Board Governance

Alignment of Strategic Goals and Operational Strategies

In order to create meaningful change, strategic goals serve to connect the organization's values, mission and vision statements with actionable items that advance the former. It is important to note that goals drive the aforementioned through strategies and the latter cannot be goals in and of themselves. For example, technology is a strategy and cannot be a goal without its connection to CLUOV's values, mission and vision. Strategic goals and operational strategies must meet further criteria. They must be:

- Capable of serving different and multiple functions across CLUOV that are aligned with its values, mission and vision
- Identifiable with supporting actions by employees across every level of the agency
- Measurable and regularly reviewed by senior management and their teams along with the board to determine progress and required changes
- Used as a basis for the evaluation of teams and tied to coaching, performance assessment and succession planning

With a focus on the Key Drivers of Service Excellence and becoming an Employer of Choice, the following strategic goals and operational strategies will strengthen Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley's abilities to deliver high quality services, to develop staff and to meaningfully assess continuous improvement.

Service Excellence

A central question requiring reflection and action is, *“How do we know if what we are doing through our work is having a meaningful impact?”* In the absence of being able to meaningfully respond to this question, it is unlikely that we will be able to advance our practices or to align them with our values, vision or mission. Service excellence must be viewed through a person-centered/directed lens which will appear differently for teams and consumers.

Collecting meaningful data that informs our successes and that identifies areas requiring change can be challenging but, it is necessary in order to continuously improve.

Strategic Goal

Define and assess service excellence related to all areas of service delivery with supporting qualitative and quantitative measures that inform and support decision making, communication, processes and workloads through which CLUOV will be the service provider of choice.

Operational Strategies

1. Define criteria to determine service excellence with respect to operational processes and service delivery that are aligned with Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley’s values, vision and mission. Criteria should include responsiveness, communication, follow through, use of technology. This process could begin with discussions about what the highest quality of service would look like within the organization and could result in a continuum/scorecard with which to assess service excellence. We currently use several matrix that we can compare data year over year. Our gold standard to measure quality of life and service excellence is through using Personal Outcome Measures.
2. Evaluate all operational and service delivery processes using existing practices and comparators and making best use of system and technology options.
3. Identify areas that can be enhanced and create project plans and timelines.
4. Establish a set of processes for assessing excellence and service delivery annually and document ongoing growth.

5. Mentor, coach and develop employees around continuous improvement, service excellence and advocacy of full inclusion.

Service Excellence Quality of Life

Whereas service delivery expectations can be quantified, taught and assessed, quality of life measures are subjective to each person supported. Therefore, it is necessary to separate the objective and subjective during assessment and re-examine them in relation to one another to determine best practices that will inform both individualized and organizational actions.

Strategic Goal

Understand and assess the experience of people who receive support in conjunction with service excellence measures to continuously strengthen practices that can be shared within the agency and across the sector.

Operational Strategies

1. Utilize a combination of personal outcome measures/quality of life indicators and story-telling to assess all areas of the lived experience of those supported
2. Identify criteria for person-centered planning documents and audit best practices.
3. Develop processes for the use of person-centered approaches and provide additional training to direct support staff that includes harm reduction, positive approaches and considers a holistic lens
4. Utilize software to create electronic templates that can be accessed by a remote workforce and that significantly reduces/eliminates the use of paper
5. Promote inclusion throughout the community and celebrate the leadership of community partners who support citizenship
6. Utilize adaptive management practices and corresponding data to make course corrections to operational strategies

Employee Experience

The lived experience of those supported and the employee experience are inextricably linked and are fundamental to achieving service excellence. Employees in all organizations are fatigued from the pandemic and there are heightened levels of attrition across the sector. Many employees in organizations in all sectors are re-

evaluating their life's priorities and in many instances are looking for meaningful, purpose-driven careers.

Strategic Goal

Highlight the "employee experience" in order to strengthen engagement and further promote service excellence.

Operational Strategies

1. Continue employee engagement surveys annually, conduct stay and exit interviews and develop a subsequent action plan
2. Emphasize professional development for all staff that prepares employees for future positions
3. Develop a plan to enhance engagement and performance management
4. Establish a formal recognition program for staff and process for monitoring of informal feedback and recognition
6. Resume activities outside of work with employees
7. Invest in education around Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
8. Direct supervision to be tracked, increased, individualized Developing measurements to ensure consistency across teams
9. Reduce reactive supports and increase proactive planning
10. Adhere to effective communication practices related to receiving, processing, transferring and responding to information and correspondence

Organizational Excellence

The quality of any organization cannot exceed the capacity of its employees. In order to deliver service excellence, it is necessary to build employees' capacity across the agency and to ensure both high expectations and equal levels of accountability. Moving from a team and department model in which silos exist and knowledge gaps are created between those who work with the people we support, between community partners and between internal functions have resulted in missed opportunities.

Organizational excellence requires that all employees, at all levels view themselves as leaders, capable of achieving meaningful impacts through their work and in coordination with others.

The use of technology and new communication methods will need to be reinforced with strategies that enable us, for internal and external purposes, to explain our areas of expertise, our successes as well as growth areas.

An organization has its own distinct culture as do teams within it. If we are to achieve service excellence, there must be tangible and ongoing efforts to create a culture in which employees learn, reflect and share knowledge and practices. Employees must genuinely feel connected to the agency and their own growth and development which in turn, enhances levels of service. Our high expectations must be recognized through formal and informal recognition initiatives. It is through energies spent on creating a learning culture that we will be able to expand our capacity for the delivery of person-centered services.

In constructing strategic goals around the theme of Organizational Excellence, the following areas were deemed most relevant based on feedback from stakeholders.

Strategic Goal

For all stakeholders to have a meaningful impact, it is necessary that they must view themselves as leaders. Continue to establish a learning culture which is essential to service excellence, to employee engagement and growth, recruitment and retention.

Operational Strategies

1. Provide Leadership training to management team and aspiring supervisors
2. Increase employee capacity around the use of technology to support a mobile workforce
3. Instill a growth mindset in all learning activities
4. Embed organizational learning within the HR department in order to coordinate delivery, qualify and record employee growth through an interactive online platform
5. Establish processes established for knowledge transfer and adaptive management that promote the essence of learning
6. Invest in Leadership development and Succession planning

Business Practices and Communication

As an agency, CLUOV aspires to have a growing presence. Given the realities described in the Sector Analysis and to serve as an effective conduit for the people we support, we must give clear consideration to the enhancement of business practices and connections across the community and ongoing communication.

Strategic Goal

Develop broader and deeper relationships with community partners, service providers, agencies and employers that will compliment our mission and eliminate the duplication of services. Expand partnerships, foster community engagement and celebrate as our vision is adopted by those partners in order to enhance the reputation of the agency, people supported and initiatives.

Operational Strategies

1. Provide guidance for community partners to create inclusive environments and ensure that barriers to access are addressed
2. Community as a first resort. Ensure that services provided within the community are utilized rather than accessing or recreating unique or segregated services
3. Expect all employees to understand and exemplify “Community as a first resort”
4. Engage families of individuals who may choose to utilize CLUOV’s services
5. Give focus to relationships with existing and prospective employers
6. Reduce reliance on government influence through continued administration of Passport funding, fee for service, offering employment support, and person-centered planning to individuals who are not affiliated with CLUOV
7. Explore partnerships to pursue grants on behalf of CLUOV (e.g., fee for service, alternative revenue sources)
8. Build partnerships with service providers who have complimentary support

9. Increase social media presence and two-way communication of information to and from community resources and supported individual

As an agency, CLUOV aspires to provide leadership, engage with like minded agencies and share best practices. Our strategic plan is complemented by the resolution presented to and passed by Community Living Ontario

Resolution as presented by CLUOV on behalf of From Presence to Citizenship

“Whereas people who have intellectual disabilities continue to be marginalized due to a lack of equitable access to typical housing options and support to live as included and valued citizens.

And whereas the government resources necessary to support these typical community choices is either not available or tied to segregated, congregate settings in numbers that are not reflective of the surrounding community.

Therefore, be it resolved that Community Living Ontario shall champion the right of people who have an intellectual disability to:

- Live in a home of their own as a tenant or owner, either by themselves, with family, or with a person or people of their choosing;
- Have the supports they need to be successful in said home, and;
- Live in housing and neighbourhoods where the ratio of people with intellectual disabilities to other citizens is representative of the community at large”

Strategic Goal

Develop a strategy to assist the organization to respond to both the capital costs and the need to realign and reduce property ownership due to:

- a. aging infrastructure*
- b. changing needs of the people supported*
- c. our commitment and philosophy of individualized supports*
- d. partnerships with existing property owners, landlords and builders*

Operational Strategies

1. Continue to decrease the amount of housing stock and ownership by the organization and move towards developing housing partnerships with local entrepreneurs, municipalities and the County of Renfrew
2. Explore rental options that eliminate maintenance of owned property
3. Continue to engage with people we support to determine their unique interest in living arrangements
4. Utilize Smart home technology to promote increased levels of independence and compliment human resources

Governance

The Board of Directors of Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley is comprised of volunteers who give their time to ensure the optimal functioning of the organization. The Board has three roles - leadership, oversight and managing itself.

Strategic Goal

Improve the capacity of the Board of Directors to govern CLUOV, with special focus on recruitment and representing the organization and its commitments in the broader community.

Operational Strategies

Attention to governance, and a commitment to continue to improve, while remaining true to the values of the organization is vital to the effective working of the Board.

1. Improve the recruitment, orientation and training of Board members
 1. Enhance Board recruitment in terms of attracting people with a range of backgrounds and skills
 2. Improve the orientation and training of Board members, including related to:
 - i. The role of Board members as ambassadors and advocates to instill the philosophy of inclusion.
 - ii. The key principles of the organization such as self-advocacy

2. Ensure the philosophy, role and principles are taken into account in discussion, decision-making and other actions of the Board
3. Develop a succession plan for Board members, including related to Officer positions. (e.g. President)
4. Undertake an advocacy role on pressing concerns such as housing, income and administrative efficiencies
5. Fulfill the Board role of promoting the organization and raising its profile (see Direction 4) Prepare to transition to the new Not-for-Profit Corporations Act
6. Complete actions identified during Board training held in the fall of 2014, such as by-law revisions, Board policy development and the creation and use of a governance manual
7. Enhance the profile of the Board with staff

Appendix I

Excerpt from Journey to Belonging, Reform Plan: key commitments

[Journey to Belonging: Choice and Inclusion | ontario.ca](http://www.ontario.ca)

1. Putting people first

- Support people to pursue their goals through better planning and coordination across key sectors and programs
- Support individuals, families and support networks to make connections, get peer support and find information
- Address people's emerging needs and help prevent crises through early interventions and service coordination approaches

A new funding model focused on people

- Promote greater fairness and equity by providing funding based on people's assessed needs
- Give people more flexibility, choice and control by introducing options to direct their own supports
- Increase transparency for people and providers by allocating funding using an evidence-based funding model
- Provide people clear guidelines on the services and supports to be funded by the ministry
- Support people and agencies to adopt a new funding model

2. Improve service experience

- Improve the application process for people by making it simpler and easier to access
- Providing timely and clear information to reduce uncertainty for people and allow them to plan for their future

Improving how people's support needs are assessed

- Review different approaches to the application and intake process that are more responsive to people's circumstances, support needs and the service they are looking for
- Make it easier for people to understand the link between their assessed needs and funding and supports
- Improve how people's needs are re-assessed as things change in their lives and how supports may be adjusted based on those changes

Adopting best practices and supporting innovation

- Provide a platform that allows the sector to share best practices so ideas can be scaled-up and adopted across the province, including innovative technologies to support people to live more independently

Supporting technology and digital delivery

- Implement more convenient service options for people such as online forms, virtual delivery and self-serve options
- Use digital platforms to provide information and resources to people and families

Improve quality and accountability

- Support continuous improvement in services for people by introducing a performance measurement approach across the province over the next two years
- Help people better understand and choose quality services through a transparent quality framework
- Promote healthy competition among providers and reward innovators

Planning for a skilled workforce

- Support a skilled, diverse and professional workforce to help people participate meaningfully in their communities and live good lives
- Collaborate with the sector to develop a long-term workforce strategy so that people and their families have access to high-quality support staff

Appendix 2

It is evident that Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley is considerably further ahead of other organizations in its development as a person-directed organization and in areas highlighted by MCCSS.

Key excerpts from the *Journey to Belonging: Choice and Inclusion* have informed the strategic plan. These include:

- People have more control over directing and managing their funding and supports
- More emphasis on outcomes and quality services that are responsive to feedback from people using them
- Increase transparency for people and providers by allocating funding using an evidence-based funding model
- Provide people clear guidelines on the services and supports to be funded by the ministry
- Improving the ability of developmental services to help people now and into the future
- Increase transparency for people and providers by allocating funding using an evidence-based
- Support people and agencies to adopt a new funding model
- Provide a platform that allows the sector to share best practices so ideas can be scaled-up and adopted across the province, including innovative technologies to support people to live more independently
- Implement more convenient service options for people such as online forms, virtual delivery and self-serve options
- Use digital platforms to provide information and resources to people and families
- Support continuous improvement in services for people by introducing a performance measurement approach across the province over the next two years
- Help people better understand and choose quality services through a transparent quality framework
- Promote healthy competition among providers and reward innovators