

Saskatchewan
Ministry of the Economy

Canada-Saskatchewan Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities (LMAPD)

2013-14 Annual Report

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1. Introduction

The Canada-Saskatchewan Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities (LMAPD) provides Saskatchewan with approximately \$10.8 million annually for delivery of programs and services to ensure persons with disabilities have the opportunity for training, education and employment.

The LMAPD is targeted to Saskatchewan individuals aged 16 and over whom, because of a disability, require extraordinary supports to prepare for, obtain or maintain employment.

Applications can be made by any:

- individual adult who, because of a disability, requires specialized supports in order to prepare for, obtain and/or maintain employment;
- Community-Based Organizations who conduct assessments or provides disability-specific career and employment services; or,
- employers who require specialized support to hire an individual with a disability.

The Ministry of the Economy was responsible for the administrative obligations outlined in the LMAPD on behalf of Saskatchewan in 2013-14. However, in addition to the LMAPD programs and services which were delivered by the Ministry of the Economy and third party service providers (including post-secondary institutions, businesses and community-based organizations) the Ministries of Health, Advanced Education and Government Relations utilized LMAPD funding to deliver programming relative to their respective mandates.

2. Objectives

The overarching goal of the LMAPD is to improve the employment outcomes of persons with disabilities. To attain this goal, the following objectives were pursued:

- Enhancing the employability of persons with disabilities by addressing disability-related barriers;
- Increasing the employment opportunities available to persons with disabilities, by better addressing employer needs, and encouraging employers to remove barriers faced by persons with disabilities; and
- Demonstrating the best possible results for Canadians on these investments as evidenced by enhanced employability and increased labour market participation of persons with disabilities.

3. Programs and Services

3.1 Advanced Education

The Ministry of Advanced Education provides income support to students attending post-secondary programs (if student-loan eligible).

Saskatchewan Student Grant

This grant supplements the Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Persons with permanent Disabilities by up to \$2,000 per academic year and is intended to help cover the costs of accommodation, tuition, and books.

Approximately 1,000 individuals received supports under the Saskatchewan Student Grant in 2013-14.

3.2 Government Relations

Transit Assistance for People with Disabilities Program (TAPD)

This program provides financial assistance to municipalities who offer paratransit services for persons with disabilities.

Paratransit provides a critical link for passengers across the province that use the service to get to work, school, medical appointments, and a wide range of other daily activities. Passengers may have physical or mental disabilities, and they may use wheelchairs or ambulatory.

The program is operated according to Part IV of *The Municipal Grants Regulations*, which provides the framework for program eligibility, outlines the grant calculation formula, and describes standards of operation and participant responsibilities.

Seventy-nine communities receive TAPD funding in the province including five new eligible municipalities that were selected to join the program in 2013-14.

Participating municipalities are responsible for determining their own paratransit service operating arrangements. They make decisions with respect to such things as hours of operation, passenger eligibility criteria, fee structure and service providers.

Results:

- In 2013-14, 76,772 individuals received paratransit services.

3.3 Health

Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living Program (SAIL)

This program provides aids and devices for people with disabilities as required in order to maintain or pursue employment. Benefits of the program include specialized medical equipment, lifts or ramps for home and vehicle access, and prosthetic and orthotic devices.

Alcohol and Drug Services

Saskatchewan Health, through the Regional Health Authorities, provides a range of addiction recovery services aimed at promoting healthy living without chemical dependency, including individual and family counselling, detoxification programs and vocational counselling.

For people with substance addictions, these services provide an opportunity to gain knowledge, skills and on-going supports to participate in society including obtaining, maintaining and regaining employment.

Mental Health Services

A range of general mental health services is available from Saskatchewan Regional Health Authorities, such as crisis intervention, case management and individual and group counselling.

A range of vocational services are also available such as pre-employment training in daily living skills, job search training, and supervised work experience.

3.4 Economy

Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities Program (EAPD)

EAPD provides funding for programs as well as goods and services that are required to help individuals attain and/or maintain employment. Clients receive assistance to address the impact of their disabilities on their career development. Supports vary depending on the impact of disability on the six stages of career development, also known as the employability dimensions: (1) stabilization and work readiness; (2) career exploration and decision making; (3) skill enhancement; (4) job search and job finding; (5) job maintenance; and (6) career growth.

The type and level of disability-related support is determined and negotiated on a case by case basis, through consultation with career, vocational or school counselors. Categories of assistance provided under EAPD are as follows:

Assessments

Program funding is used to provide access to assessments that assist with career planning. These assessments include activities such as psycho-educational assessments, vocational evaluations, and work placement assessments. These types of interventions are used in a variety of ways. Some help to determine the impact of disability, while others help to identify an individual's best skills and abilities and his/her corresponding career options. Assessments can also help to identify accommodation needs in educational placements or the workplace.

Individual Accommodations at School and Work

Students, job seekers and workers can pursue individualized support through their local Labour Market Services office or through partnering organizations, such as schools, training providers and agencies that specialize in supported employment services.

EAPD funding is provided to regional colleges, universities, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology, the Gabriel Dumont Technical Institute, the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology, and the Apprenticeship, Trade and Certification Commission. This funding allows these institutions to administer timely and flexible support to students and apprentices who need disability-related support to succeed in their program of study.

Examples of the type of supports that may be provided to students are: flashing fire alarms; short-term individual tutors; note takers; interpreters and special (adapted) equipment. The funding also supports accommodations for approved students with disabilities to write General Equivalency Diploma (GED) Tests.

Funds are also used to purchase a wide range of disability specific goods and services that allow individuals to participate in mainstream employment. Funding may be used to determine disability-related needs in the classroom or on the job, or to help the individual determine a career path that best fits his/her skills, abilities and interests. Employment supports may include things like job coaching, career exploration, interpreters, specialized or adaptive equipment, specialized transportation, work-based assessment, training on the job, and transition planning and supported employment.

Specialized Programs and Services

Service agreements with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and training institutions are used to support career development and develop the employability of individuals with disabilities.

Specialized services include:

- Support to build stability and work readiness, including guidance with housing, child care, transportation, health and social services, work readiness training, developing action plans, identifying appropriate community services/supports;
 - Career exploration and decision making, including career counselling to identify skills, interests and abilities and suitable vocational opportunities;
 - Specialized basic education and adult upgrading, academic skill development and life skills for adults with disabilities;
 - Work assessment/placement and work experience services;
 - Opportunities to develop pre-employment skills (e.g., personal management, workplace communication, rights and obligations, an understanding of labour market trends, employment requirements and standards, etc.);
 - Job searching;
 - Mentoring, job coaching and job maintenance services;
 - Support to employers in order to identify opportunities for work assessments and jobs, market potential candidates, and to support sustainable employment;
 - Information sessions on workplace diversity for employers and supervisors;
- Monitor and report client progress and provide follow-up services as required.

Provincial Training Allowance

In addition to the income support provided by Advanced Education mentioned earlier, the Ministry of the Economy provides income support to learners through the Provincial Training Allowance. This program provides income support for individuals (including individuals with disabilities) who are in adult education/training programs for which Canada and Saskatchewan Student Loans are not available. The Provincial Training Allowance supports open access for adults involved in these programs.

Adult Basic Education (ABE) at Public Education Centres

This program provides education/training programs and services for adults (including adults with disabilities) who left the K-12 system without completing grade 12.

ABE provides a wide range of opportunities to gain academic and other skills that are required for successful/meaningful attachment to the labour force.

Results:

- In 2013-14 a total of 1,048 individuals received services.

Demographic profile

The profile of EAPD participants from the 2014 survey indicates:

- Participants in EAPD programming represent males (48%) and females (52%) almost equally.
- The average age of participants is about 34 years. However, the fact that 60% report that they are 34 years of age or younger likely accounts for some of why 76% do not report having any dependents.
- Although 21% self-identify as being Aboriginal, just 4% report that their first language is an Aboriginal language. Most speak English (88%) as their first language.

Disability profile

In 2014, the profile of participants' disabilities is as follows:

- 48% of participants report that their disability is learning-related, 19% cite physical, 18% cite psychiatric/mental illness, and 14% cite developmental disability.
- Overall, 76% of participants completed their program, which is unchanged from 2013 (76%). Propensity to complete the program was unrelated to participants' gender, age, or the severity of their disability, as completion rates ranged from 72% to 79% among various demographic groups.
- Among all respondents, the most commonly-stated reason for taking a program was to find a job (26%). Other commonly-mentioned reasons include furthering education (18%), learning job finding skills (17%), and getting additional experience or knowledge (10%). The reasons for taking the program are similar regardless of whether participants did or did not complete the program.
- Among the 21% of participants who did not complete the program, the main reason for not completing was because the program is still in progress (32%); which is similar to what was heard in 2013, when 25% said the program was still in progress.

Program Outcomes

Among those who completed an EAPD program, results show the following:

- About 37% received a certificate, diploma, or degree upon completion, which is down slightly from 2013 (43%). The majority of those who received a credential received a certificate of completion (65%). The 2013 survey found a similar proportion receiving a certificate, diploma, or degree upon completion, but more respondents received a certificate of completion (75%).
- About 3 in 4 felt that they were prepared to find a job after completing the program, including 40% who said they were very prepared. These results are very similar to 2013.
- About 2 in 3 report that completion of the program had at least some impact on securing their current employment (among those who completed the program and were employed at the time of the survey), with 44% reporting that it had a great deal of impact. These results are similar to 2013.

Differences between early leavers and completers

Comparing responses for early leavers and completers indicates the following:

- Overall, a similar proportion of early leavers (72%) took the program to improve or gain skills compared to those who completed the program (76%). These percentages were higher in 2014 for both early leavers (62%) and completers (65%) compared to 2013.
- Early leavers report a lower level of satisfaction with the program overall. Overall, 9 in 10 completers were satisfied with the program, compared to about 8 in 10 early leavers. However, in both cases, the proportion of those who were satisfied with their program was up from 2013.
- Although early leavers show slightly lower levels of overall satisfaction, among those who can rate their outcomes, early leavers and completers have very similar ratings of four outcomes (relevance to finding a job, help finding a job, ability to get a job, and ability to get good paying job). In 2013, there were marked differences between completers and early leavers, but in 2014 these differences were virtually negated by large increases in satisfaction with outcomes among early leavers.
- About 7 in 10 early leavers said the program was valuable in helping them find a job (43% very valuable) compared to 8 in 10 completers (51% very valuable).
- Completing the program does not appear to have an impact on taking further programming, as 24% of completers have taken or are taking additional programs, while 25% of early leavers report the same.

Current Employment

- The employment rate (defined as the number of respondents who are currently employed divided by the total number of respondents who are currently employed or looking for employment) is 60%, which is down from 66% in 2013. The difference is largely due to a drop in the employment rate of completers from 70% in 2013 to 62% in 2014. Early leavers saw a rise in employment from 46% to 53%.
- Among all participants who are currently employed, the majority of those who are employed have one job (90%), and half (46%) have been at their job for longer than 12 months. On average, program participants work about 26 hours per week at their main job and have an average hourly wage of \$12.32. These results (including income, which has not been adjusted for inflation) are almost identical to 2013.
- Among those who were unemployed and not looking for work, their disability does not appear to be the primary consideration for not working, as just 36% of those who are unemployed and not looking for work say it is because of an illness or disability (33% in 2013). The main reason given is that they are going to or plan to go to school (37%).

Impact of disability on employment

- About 6 in 10 say their disability affects their ability to work; however, there are major differences between employment groups. For instance, 15% of those who are unemployed and not looking for work say that because of their disability they can't do any job. This compares to 1% of those who are employed and 2% of those who are unemployed and looking for work.
- About 1 in 3 say their disability affects how much they can work. Similar to the 2013 survey, results show that those who are unemployed and not looking for work (17%) are much more

likely than those who are employed (1%) or unemployed and looking for work (3%) to say that because of their disability they cannot work at all.

- When asked how their disability affects their ability to work, the most common impacts are cognitive rather than physical. For instance, many mention such cognitively-related impacts as trouble learning, thinking or understanding (18%), trouble concentrating (9%), or trouble reading or writing (6%). Another common impact is social or mental impacts, such as trouble with social interactions (7%), emotional issues (5%), or trouble dealing with stress or anxiety (5%).

Conclusions

Generally, the EAPD program appears to have a positive impact on participants. Over 9 in 10 program participants were satisfied with the program overall, including (94%) of program completers and 84% of early leavers. Satisfaction appears to be increasing over time, particularly for early leavers, as the 2013 survey indicated only 73% were satisfied with the program. The potential impact of the program can also be shown with employment rates among both program completers (62%) and early leavers (53%). Early leavers have improved their employment situation over time, compared to the 46% employment rate found in the 2013 survey.

Results also indicate that a main reason for not working or not seeking work appears to be related to participants' perceptions of their disability. Those who are unemployed are more likely than those who are employed to say their disability affects the jobs they can do or the amount they can work. However, there was very little difference in the severity of disabilities among completers and early leavers, indicating that program completion does not appear to be driven by the severity of participants' disability.

5.0 Expenditures for 2013-14

Ministry	Provincial Contribution	Government of Canada Contribution	Total Expenditures
Economy	\$10,953,312	\$6,331,000	\$17,284,312
Health	\$23,131,467	\$4,321,000	\$27,452,467
Government Relations	\$305,672	\$200,608	\$506,280
Advanced Education	\$19,452	\$0.00	\$19,452
Total	\$34,409,903	\$10,852,608	\$45,262,511