



Independent Living

- **Independent Living (IL) Movement** began with the establishment of the Berkeley Centre for Independent Living, a consumer-controlled, self-help centre in 1972
- Was originally conceived to support people with physical disabilities to attend post-secondary education opportunities - Expanded to support people in all aspects of their lives including services to live in the community
- By the late 1970's, pilot programs were funded in Ontario to provide support services enabling people with physical disabilities to live in their own homes in the community
- The national organization for the Independent Living movement in Canada is Independent Living Canada www.ilcanada.ca representing 27 Independent Living Resource Centres (ILRCs) in Canada (Consumer Controlled/Consumer Driven), of which 11 are in Ontario

History of Attendant Services in Ontario

- 6 attendant service demonstration projects established in the late 1970s to provide adults with physical disabilities with on-site support services in social housing buildings (referred to as Support Service Living Units – SSLUs)
- First order-in-council (OIC) provided in 1980 for a disabled adult who was not able to access attendant services in order to live in the community and go to work
- Program Policy released (Support Services) early 1980's

- Attendant outreach program developed in 1983 to address: increased demands for services; service options outside of social housing
- Mid 1980s - significant expansions of both SSLU and attendant Outreach
- Late 1980s – further expansion of SSLU’s facilitated by development of social housing, and social initiative “*Decade of the Disabled*”
- Direct Funding Pilot Project implemented in 1994
- Comprehensive Supportive Housing Policy replaces Support Services (SSLU) program policy – 1994 giving clear direction to all SH providers for service eligibility/priority and scope of service
- Attendant Outreach Services Policy 1996 replaces 1983 guidelines
- Direct Funding Pilot Project evaluation completed in 1997 – full program funding and commitment to expand to 700 participants made
- 2007/08 – Accountability for attendant services programs assumed by LHINS – Direct Funding program retained by MOHLTC

Independent Living Principles

- Those who know best the needs of people with disabilities and how to meet those needs are the people with disabilities themselves;
- The needs can be met most effectively by programs which provide a variety of services, rather than having to go to several different agencies for services;
- People with disabilities should be as integrated as possible into the community with supports enabling people to pursue their individual goals

Independent Living principles also include:

- Consumer-centered service delivery approach;
- Service/care plans based on the consumers self-identified service needs;
- Services are available 24/7, 365 days a year;

- Services meet basic and fundamental needs – assistance is provided with getting up, dressing, bathing, eating, breathing, communicating;
- Services are considered non-medical as they are to assist with daily living activities even though we provide assistance with ventilator and tracheotomy care, catheterizations, g-tube eating, etc.

The intent of attendant services is to:

- assist people with physical disabilities to pursue a participatory life style and live independently;
- assist people with physical disabilities in maintaining paid employment and/or pursue adult education programs to obtain a degree/certificate/diploma;
- prevent the need for premature admission to a chronic care, long-term care or other facility;
- enable people with physical disabilities, where possible, to leave institutional facilities;
- assist/support family members in providing support.

