



Disability Rights Coalition of Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia Disability Rights are Human Rights

Web: www.disabilityrightscoalitionns.ca

June 10, 2026

Court-Ordered Human Rights Remedy Is Creating Change — With More Work Ahead

Halifax, Nova Scotia — For Immediate Release

After decades of advocacy and, for some, a lifetime of being confined in institutional settings, Nova Scotians with disabilities are reclaiming their rightful place in community. Since the Nova Scotia Human Rights Remedy was implemented in 2023, more than 300 people have moved from institutions into homes of their own choosing - the largest deinstitutionalization effort in 30 years.

As the Province releases its [third Annual Progress Report](#) today regarding its implementation of the Remedy, the Disability Rights Coalition (DRC) welcomes this progress and the growing number of people exercising greater choice and control over where and how they live. Yet for the more than 550 people who remain institutionalized, every day of waiting is one day too long.

The Remedy is expected to result in one of the most significant transformations of disability supports in Canada, creating a framework that ensures people with disabilities can exercise their right to live a good life in community. As implementation moves forward, accountability and urgency must match the promise of transformation.

The Remedy Belongs to ALL Nova Scotians

- Nova Scotia has the highest disability rate of any province or territory in Canada, with 37.8% of residents aged 15 and older living with one or more disabilities.
- The Remedy is founded on the right of people with disabilities to live fully included in community with the supports they need to thrive.
- The Remedy aligns with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and international best practices.

Three years into implementation, meaningful change is beginning to take shape. People are beginning to make choices about where they live, who supports them, and how they participate in community, some for the first time. These outcomes demonstrate what is possible when human rights principles are put into practice.

At the same time, the Province remains behind on several mandatory timelines and deliverables, putting the Remedy's effectiveness—and people's rights—at risk. While the DRC is encouraged by stories of people gaining greater choice and independence, these successes do not lessen the Province's responsibility to meet its court-ordered obligations. Significant work remains to ensure the transformation reaches everyone as intended.

Response to the Province's Year 3 Annual Report

- The DRC welcomes the Province's partnership with Dalhousie University to strengthen Allied Health education and training. Building system capacity is important, but these supports must be available across Nova Scotia and accessible to people transitioning from institutions today.
- The Province [remains significantly behind its target](#) for moving people from institutions into community. After three years of implementation, fewer than half of the individuals who were

scheduled to leave segregated institutions and move into community by this stage of the Remedy have made that transition.

- Progress for adults under 65 in long-term care has been limited. Approximately 440 younger adults with disabilities remain in nursing homes, while only a small number have moved into community since implementation began.
- The Remedy requires action across all of government, not just within one Department. Housing, health, education, labour, and transportation systems, for example, must work together to support community living and inclusion.
- Delays related to individualized funding backbone and workforce shortages have affected progress and must be addressed by the Province with urgency, transparency, and corrective action.
- The DRC remains committed to continued collaboration with the Province on policy reform to ensure policies align with a human rights framework and support the long-term success and lasting impact of the Remedy for generations to come.

A Shared Obligation to Get This Right

Kim Long, Spokesperson and Vice-Chair of the DRC Board, stated:

“The Province has laid important groundwork, and we are beginning to see what is possible when people are supported to live in community with dignity and choice. But the Remedy requires the full engagement of all of government — not just one department — and a shared commitment to a human rights approach across all systems. There is still much collaborative work ahead. If accountability, investment, and cross-government leadership remain strong, this transformation can deliver on its promise for current and future generations.”

Leta Jarvis, Spokesperson and Director of the DRC Board, shared:

“For years, I didn’t get to decide where I lived or who helped me. Being in an institution took away my freedom and my voice. Now, things are starting to change, and that gives me hope. But people are still waiting. We need the government to move faster so no one has to spend more years stuck in a place that doesn’t feel like home.”

Background: The Remedy and the DRC

The Disability Rights Coalition (DRC) represents persons with disabilities in Nova Scotia’s landmark human rights case addressing systemic discrimination in disability supports.

In 2021, the Court of Appeal confirmed that Nova Scotia’s disability support system resulted in ongoing discrimination. The Province and the DRC subsequently developed a comprehensive Remedy, which became a binding Order of a Board of Inquiry of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission.

The Remedy requires the Province to end systemic discrimination by April 2028, close outdated institutions, and ensure people with disabilities have access to individualized, community-based supports. These obligations became legally binding in June 2023 and were publicly acknowledged through the [Premier’s apology](#) later that year.

The DRC remains committed to collaboration, transparency, and accountability, and to ensuring the Province fulfills both the letter and spirit of the court-ordered Remedy.

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