

LOST IN TRANSITION

Findings & recommendations

November 2025

Adults with developmental disabilities have been lost in transition and are spending years languishing in hospital due to a lack of appropriate supportive living options and services, and barriers to inter-sectoral collaboration.

No matter how compassionate and caring staff within a hospital may be, a hospital is not a home.

Read more about Ontario Ombudsman Paul Dubé's key findings and recommendations:

Lack of resources

- Chronic shortage of suitable supportive living options
- Long wait lists
- Difficulty matching individuals with complex needs to the right services
- Challenges finding and retaining qualified staff

Key recommendations

- Joint forum organized by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services for proactive system planning
- Capital planning and funding to develop community infrastructure
- Work with developmental services sector on recruitment and retention

Lack of collaboration

- No formal network for integrating supports across the health and developmental services sectors
- Limited or unreliable access to developmental supports while in hospital

Key recommendations

- Integrated approach and care framework for delivering services and supports across sectors
- Ensure access to developmental services in hospital, and clinical supports during and after transition to the community
- Structured mechanism to improve communication between sectors about individuals with developmental disabilities living in hospital

Lack of transparency and reliable data

- Limited information about developmental services, supportive living options, and wait times makes it difficult for agencies and hospitals to make transition plans
- Inability to monitor trends or assess efforts to reduce and prevent these kinds of hospitalizations

Key recommendations

- Annually publish information such as:
 - wait list numbers
 - potential wait times
 - how many people are served by each type of ministry-funded supportive living option
- Collect and share accurate, timely information about these kinds of hospitalizations

Limited French-language capacity

- Exacerbates communication barriers for Francophone individuals, prolongs hospital stays, and makes it harder to find suitable supportive housing in the community

Key recommendation

- Increase the availability of French-speaking clinical and service agency staff

The Ministries of Health and Children, Community and Social Services accepted all recommendations and will be reporting to the Ombudsman regularly on their implementation.

Complete report and
recommendations here:

