

Needs assessment report
for the *Improving the Economic Prosperity of Women*
***in the Care-Giving Field* project**

New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity

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The New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity wishes to acknowledge the contribution of its project advisory committee members in preparing this report:

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New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity

The New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity is a group of individuals and organizations that educates and advocates for the adoption and the implementation of adequate legislation in order to achieve pay equity for all workers in both the public and private sectors.

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This Needs Analysis Report is the first stage of the *Improving the Economic Prosperity of Women in the Care-Giving Field* project. Our objective is to advance the economic prosperity of women employed in the private care-giving sector in New Brunswick

This project is funded through Status of Women Canada's Women's Program.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity has been working with women in the care-giving sector for many years. Our research demonstrated that these jobs are not paid as much as male-dominated jobs of the same value. Consequently, improving their economic prosperity became one of our priorities. This Needs Analysis Report is the first stage of our *Improving the Economic Prosperity of Women in the Care-Giving Field* project.

The private care-giving sector in New Brunswick

Across the province, there are approximately 10,000 workers, the vast majority of whom are women, employed in private-sector care-giving services. They work in agencies of varying size, some non-profit and some for-profit. The services are financed to various degrees by the Department of Social Development.

Our project focuses on the following service: Adult Developmental Activities, Programs and Training (ADAPT) Agencies, Family support services, Home support services, Special care homes, Community Residences, Memory Care Homes and Generalist Care Homes.

Wages in the care-giving sector

Women constitute the vast majority of the workforce in the care-giving sector. Most of these workers are classified into two National Occupation Classification (NOC): NOC 4212: Social and community service workers and NOC 4412: Home support workers, housekeepers and related occupations.

The figures from Statistics Canada's 2011 National Household Survey for each category show that care-giving is a predominantly female job and that the wages are very low.

NOC 4212	Employees	Average Employment Income
Total	2925	\$24 852
Male	660	\$24 595
Female	2260	\$24 928

NOC 4412	Employees	Average Employment Income
Total	4940	\$14 479
Male	225	\$20 391
Female	4710	\$14 191

These low wages considerably impact on the economic prosperity of women who pay for the necessary education and training in the care-giving field but are faced with low wages in the labour market when they remain in this same field.

Education and training

Some workers do get a college education in order to work in these fields. However, a college education is not required for some occupations.

Weekly wages are almost the same the year women and men graduate from college, but research shows that gender wage disparity begins within the first two years in the workplace. One may see a correlation between women's fields of study and their lower wages.

College education should lead to the same advantages for women and men. While most get the same pay for the same work, women working in the care-giving sector do not get the same pay for the same level of education, responsibility, effort and working conditions as college-educated men working in predominantly male jobs.

The undervaluing of traditional female occupations

The undervaluation of traditional female occupations is deeply rooted in our society. Women working in the care-giving field fall victims of this historical undervaluation of traditional female jobs

Contribution to the social infrastructure and economy

The low wages of women working in the private-care sector does impact their economic prosperity. Considering that the sector represents approximately 10 000 workers, we can argue that their low wages also impacts their local economies considering that these women do not have any purchasing power.

Consultations

We did consult some women who work in the private care-giving field. All women love their work, they are very proud of what they do and they feel like they are making a difference in peoples' lives. They also affirm that they are providing an essential service for their clients.

The working conditions in the care-giving field are generally very demanding physically and mentally and require critical and analytical thinking. All workers express that their wages were too low and many need a second job or even a third job in order to meet the basic life necessities. Workers express concerns that the low wages are the reason why the workforce is in decline.

Conclusion

Women constitute the vast majority of the workforce in the private care-giving field and their wages do not match the qualifications, responsibilities, effort and working conditions required for the work they perform. Their low wage does have an impact on their economic prosperity.

Now that we have a clear picture of their situation, we can move forward with finding concrete solutions for their human right to equal pay for work of equal value respected, and therefore, improve their economic prosperity for not only their personal benefit, but also to benefit their families and their communities

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Introduction

The New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity is a bilingual organization founded in 2001. For the past 15 years, we've been educating and advocating for the adoption and the implementation of adequate legislation in order to achieve pay equity for all workers in both the public and private sectors.

The majority of New Brunswick women may not get a fair wage because they perform jobs that are predominantly done by women, jobs that are often undervalued and underpaid. As a result, NB women earned 88.8 cents an hour per dollar earned by men in 2015 (i.e., on average \$20.18 vs \$22.72). It is estimated that about 80% of this wage gap is attributable to discrimination.¹ Our goal is to eliminate wage discrimination in New Brunswick.

Pay Equity, equal pay for work of equal or comparable value, is a fundamental human right that has been recognized since 1951 when The Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (also called Convention 100), was adopted by the International Labour Organization and ratified by Canada in 1972.

The Coalition has been working with women in the care-giving sector for many years because its members repeatedly expressed concern for the economic prosperity of the care-giving workers community. Our research demonstrated that these jobs are not paid as much as male-dominated jobs of the same value. Consequently, improving their economic prosperity became one of our priorities. In 2014, the Coalition, with our partners, submitted a proposal for funding to Status of Women Canada so we could further our research and find concrete solutions to this inequality.

Our partners in our project understand and agree that jobs that are traditionally and predominantly held by women should be paid according to their worth. The initial partners of our project were:

- New Brunswick Community College (NBCC): It places specific importance on reaching out to the underrepresented groups and providing supports for their success while studying at NBCC. They track and measure graduate employment across their six campuses and although the number of female students is almost equal to the number of males, there continues to be a disparity between wage earnings and career paths.
- Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB): The CCNB is engaged at promoting and ensuring wage equity and gender equality with their employees as well as with their students throughout their 5 campuses. For wage equity, they promote pay equity amongst their graduates and for graduate placement, as well as offer equal pay in non-traditional job positions for their employees. For gender equality, the CCNB makes sure that their gender equality ratio is maintained continuously and promotes scholarships in their non-traditional trades programs to encourage women to undertake careers in male-dominated fields, and vice-versa.

¹ Ather H. Akbar, Department of Economics Saint Mary's University Halifax, NS, The Gender Wage Gap in New Brunswick, 2004

In addition, the development and fulfillment of the Acadian francophone community is a high priority.

- Human Services Coalition of New Brunswick: It has been working to address the issues facing this group of workers for more than a decade. Their three main focus are: i) that there be standardized training and education programs and qualifications for certification of all human services practitioners; ii) that remuneration match training, experience and responsibility and that there be improvement in wages and benefits; iii) that a regulatory body for human services practitioners be established with supporting legislation that entails a defined scope of practice and standards of practice.
- Women's Equality Branch (WEB): Its mandate is to promote gender equality and reduce systemic discrimination, to provide advice and support women's issues to the Minister responsible for Women's Equality as well as to departments of government, and to coordinate the implementation of the government's actions and initiatives in the areas of women's personal, economic and social security. To help enhance women's economic equality in New Brunswick, the Branch works to build awareness, enhance capacity and provide policy support on women's equality, promote gender-based analysis in policies and programs; promote pay equity practices, develop strategies to advance women in leadership and decision-making positions, and assist and provide support for employers to reduce the wage gap.
- Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation (ESIC): Its mandate is to develop, oversee, coordinate and implement strategic initiatives and plans to reduce poverty and assist thousands of New Brunswickers to become more self-sufficient. "As part of *Overcoming Poverty Together 2*", ESIC is working with partners to explore the concept of a living wage, consider the creation of comprehensive pay equity legislation, promote inclusion in the workplace and support flexible work place conditions to generate opportunities for people with barriers to employment and/or unique work practices and availability.

The Department of Social Development has been participating in the advisory committee since the first meeting. They provide a range of personal supports, services for individuals who, because of long term functional limitations, need assistance to function as independently as possible. The objective is to provide appropriate services at the appropriate time and in the appropriate place within the overall continuum of care. As such, Social Development must continue to work with the human service sector around issues such as recruitment, retention and training that will support a sustainable and qualified human service workforce.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) has also joined the project advisory committee. CUPE is committed to improving the wages, benefits and working conditions and upholding the rights of workers in publicly funded and government-mandated caring services, including nursing homes, hospitals and child protection. CUPE represents some of New Brunswick's undervalued community care services workers in home support services, adult community residences, youth group homes and transition houses.

This Needs Assessment Report is the first stage of our project. The first part of the report gives us an overview of the care-giving sector in New Brunswick, the second part gives us an overview of wages, the third part gives an overview of the education and training needed

to work in the sector. The report also outlines other initiatives and research that is currently being done on the sector, how traditional female occupations are undervalued and the potential for the care-giving sector to contribute to the social and economic infrastructure in our province. The final section of this report outlines the consultations with women who work in the sector.

1. Care-giving sector in New Brunswick

Across the province, there are approximately 10,000 workers, the vast majority of whom are women, employed in private-sector care-giving services. They work in agencies of varying size, some non-profit and some for-profit. The services are financed to various degrees by the government.

The provincial government gives a set rate to the agencies providing the services to clients of the Department of Social Development. With that money, the agencies must cover all costs associated with providing the service, from their employees' wages, to the cost of insurance, food, electricity, etc. It should be noted that these services are considered to be extended health care services and thus not included under the Canada Health Act.

For the purpose of our project, we will focus on the sectors that fall under the responsibility and are funded by the New Brunswick Government's Department of Social Development. These sectors are:

- **Adult Developmental Activities, Programs and Training (ADAPT) Agencies:** Agencies provide services to adults aged nineteen (19) to sixty four (64) in a centre or a community based setting. The purpose of Adult Developmental Activities, Programs and Training is to focus on the development and provision of valued activities and training, encourage appropriate behavior, respect of daily schedules, social habits and all other expectations placed on an adult and provide a variety of activities that give the day a normative adult rhythm that meets the therapeutic, occupational, and developmental needs of the participants.
- **Family support services:** Family support for children with disabilities, child protection and family enhancement.
- **Home support services:** Home Support Services are provided to adults and seniors living in their own homes. Those who are eligible for services under the Long Term Care or Disability Support Programs receive funding from the government. These services provide support to individuals and families in the areas of personal care, activities of daily living and home management. The goal of Home Support Services is to promote, maintain, strengthen or restore the wellbeing of individuals living at home and/or the ability of families to provide support to individuals.
- **Special care homes:** These homes provide care and supervision services to clients who may require some assistance or supervision with mobility. The residents may require more individualized assistance/supervision with personal care and activities of daily living. Residents participate but may require prompting, guidance and/or assistance throughout the activity. The residents may require professional health

care but it can be provided through office visits, clinics or home visits. There is the presence of a care/service provider on a 24 hour basis, as well as supervision, assistance and performance of personal care and activities of daily living. Homes should provide access to age appropriate and skill related activities. Some interventions require complexity in skills and knowledge concerning personal care, behaviour management, appropriate responses in various situations, recognition of deterioration in health (physical/mental) status.

- **Community Residences:** These homes provide care and supervision services to adults with disabilities (19 to 65) who have higher care needs. Residents of these homes have a physical or mental health condition or functional limitation and require supervision/care on a 24-hour basis. They may participate in personal care or activities of daily living but require prompting, guidance, and assistance throughout the activity or someone else to perform the activity. Professional care/supervision related to physical/mental health condition may be required periodically. The residents require provision and/or access to activities appropriate for age and skill level. Interventions require specialized knowledge and skills.
- **Memory Care Homes:** These homes provide care and supervision services to seniors who exhibit the maladaptive behaviors associated with a moderate to severe dementia and who require a high level of care but who have no complex medical needs requiring 24 hour per day on-site nursing care/supervision.
- **Generalist Care Homes (demonstration project):** A new service, these homes provide care and supervision services to seniors or adults with a disability who are physically frail, have high care needs and may suffer from a dementia but who do not exhibit the maladaptive behaviors associated with a moderate to severe dementia and who do not require access to 24 hour, on-site nursing care/supervision.

The tables in Appendix A provide further details of the sector including the number of agencies, employees, the education and training required and the funding structure between the provincial government and the agencies providing the service.

Nursing Homes in New Brunswick are also part of the private sector but they will not be included in this project. Workers in nursing homes across the province have much better wages, benefits and pensions than their counterparts in the sectors mentioned above. Most of these workers are represented by various locals of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). These locals have joined together to form the New Brunswick Council of Nursing Home Unions (NBCNHU). Together they represent more than 4000 workers across the province. They are able to negotiate directly with their employers, the New Brunswick Association of Nursing Homes Inc. and the provincial government.

New Brunswick demographics show that our population is aging at a fast pace. A report by the Premier's Panel on Seniors released in 2012, shows that 16% of New Brunswickers are over the age of 65, which is slightly higher than the national average and that Statistics Canada forecasts the province's population will age faster than the rest of Canada².

² Living Healthy, Aging Well, A Report by the Premier's Panel on Seniors, October 2012

Therefore, the demand for care-giving services will increase in the years to come. The Panel also identifies 10 core goals for a comprehensive vision of aging in New Brunswick, one of which is the creation of a coordinated and seamless continuum of care that provides vulnerable older adults and their families with options to live and die in a dignified, respectful manner while experiencing a high standard of care.

On June 15, 2016, the New Brunswick Auditor General released a Report in which she dedicated a chapter to the situation of nursing homes in the province. The Auditor General described the future need for nursing home beds and, using data from Statistics Canada's population projections report, estimated that the proportion of New Brunswick population aged 65 years and older will go from 19.4% in 2016 to 29.4% in 2036.³

2. Wages in the care-giving sector

Women constitute the vast majority of the workforce in the care-giving sector. Most of these workers are classified into two National Occupation Classification (NOC)⁴.

1) NOC 4212: Social and community service workers
Social and community service workers administer and implement a variety of social assistance programs and community services, and assist clients to deal with personal and social problems. They are employed by social service and government agencies, mental health agencies, group homes, shelters, substance abuse centres, school boards, correctional facilities and other establishments. The completion of a college or university program in social work, child and youth care, psychology or other social science or health-related discipline is usually required for this type of employment.

2) NOC 4412: Home support workers, housekeepers and related occupations
Home support workers provide personal care and companionship for seniors, persons with disabilities and convalescent clients. Care is provided within the client's residence, in which the home support worker may also reside. They are employed by home care and support agencies, private households, or they may be self-employed. Housekeepers perform housekeeping and other home management duties in private households and other non-institutional, residential settings.

The figures from Statistics Canada's 2011 National Household Survey for each category show that care-giving is a predominantly female job. While social and community service female workers earn slightly more than their male colleagues (\$333), female home support workers and housekeepers earn in average \$6200 less than men in the same job classification⁵. It should be noted that the classification 4212 includes social workers that work for the provincial government and correctional facilities which inflates the average employment income.

³ Auditor General of New Brunswick, Report 2016-Volume 1

⁴ <http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/QuickSearch.aspx?val65=4412>

⁵ Statistics Canada 2011 National Household Survey, Table 99-014-x2011042, Total Work Activity in 2010

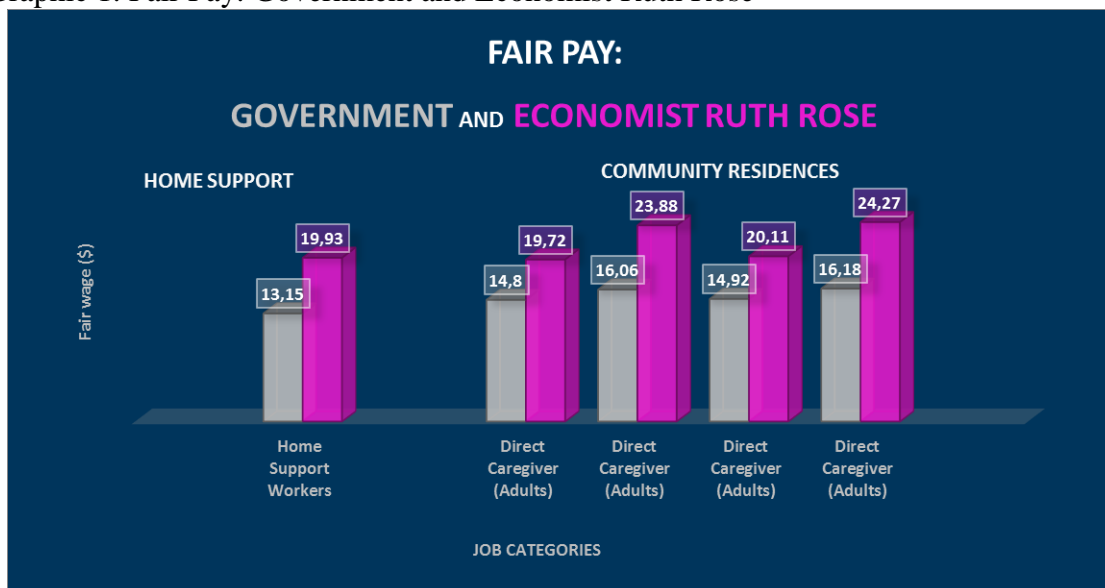
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In 2009, the New Brunswick provincial government announced that five groups from the private sector will receive pay equity adjustments: childcare workers, home support workers, nursing home workers, transition home worker and community residence workers. The process included an extensive job description for each sector. Results were published in 2012 and 2014 but were quite low.

Research by economist Ruth Rose shows that in New Brunswick, many care-giving jobs - where women tend to concentrate - are underpaid compared to more typically male jobs that have the same value in terms of qualifications, responsibilities, effort and working conditions. Her research shows that in 2012, equitable wages for home support workers would have been \$19.93 compared to the \$13.15 calculated by the government; and equitable wages for caregivers in adult community residences would have been \$19.72 compared to \$14.80 (see graphic 1 below).⁶

Graphic 1. Fair Pay: Government and Economist Ruth Rose



⁶ Ruth Rose, Pay Equity in Care-Giving Services in New Brunswick, October 2014.

This discrepancy considerably impacts on the economic prosperity of women who pay for the necessary education and training in the care-giving field but are faced with low wages in the labour market when they remain in this same field.

On February 25, 2016, the Department of Social Development announced that the provincial government would be investing more in the care-giving human services sector. The investment included \$10 million to increase the per diems to special care homes and memory care homes, and generalist care homes the hourly rate paid to family support agencies and the grants to Adult Developmental Activities, Programs and Training (ADAPT) agencies. These increases allow for a \$1 per hour wage raise for these workers plus 15% for mandatory employer costs. The increase came into effect on April 1, 2016. While this increase is very important, it is still far from pay equity levels.

Some people promote redirecting women to predominantly male fields in order to increase their economic prosperity. While no one disputes increasing women's opportunities and participation in all sectors, it will not bring economic prosperity to the many women who still enter care-giving fields.

Some may argue that if women leave these fields, wages will increase (because of the law of supply and demand), but there is already a high turnover in these fields and the wages remain very low. Clearly a concerted effort is needed to improve wages in this sector.

The Research Centre on Aging at the *Université de Moncton* is currently conducting research on agencies offering home support services to seniors in New Brunswick. The research centre surveyed agencies' administrators who did confirm that about 89% of their employees are women. Furthermore, about 69% of the administrators who did participate in the survey confirmed that their employees earned between \$10,31 and \$15 an hour.⁷

3. Education and training

Some workers do get a college education in order to work in these fields. However, a college education is not required for some occupations. To be considered to have the minimal training requirements for a qualified home support service worker, Home Support Workers must have completed either the Human Services Program provided by New Brunswick Community College or a similar program approved by the Social Development provincial consultant.⁸ Home support workers must also hold an up-to-date certificate in CPR and First Aid and be 19 years of age or older.

Candidates seeking employment in an adult residential facility must have taken one of the following training programs if they want to provide direct care to residents in special care homes, community residences, memory care homes or generalist care homes:

⁷ Thériault, D., & Dupuis-Blanchard, S. (2016). *Exploration de la planification future et de la gestion des services pour le maintien à domicile des personnes âgées au Nouveau-Brunswick*. Centre d'études du vieillissement – Université de Moncton.

⁸ Home Support Services Standards, 2011

- Home Support Worker Program,
- Special Care Home Worker Program,
- Health Care Aid Program,
- Human Services Program, or
- Practical Nurse Program

Weekly wages are almost the same the year women and men graduate from college, but research shows that gender wage disparity begins within the first two years in the workplace. According to the New Brunswick Community College Three-Year Graduate Follow-Up Survey: 2013 Survey of 2009-2010 Graduates, "[a] difference in the wages earned by male and female graduates continues to exist. In 2011, female graduates employed full-time in the reference week had an average salary of \$639.87, which was 99.6% of the male average weekly salary of \$642.44. In 2013, the average weekly salary for females employed full-time in the reference week was \$708.74, 83% of the male salary of \$857.49. The gender wage gap for this group of graduates has increased over the 2011-2013 study period" (pp. 32-33).

One may see a correlation between women's fields of study and their lower wages. Many female graduates work in human services. The Survey of 2012 New Brunswick Community College Graduates reports that the employed 2012 female graduates most commonly worked in the health care and social assistance industry (44%) while employed male graduates most commonly worked in the construction industry (22%) (2013).

College education should lead to the same advantages for women and men. While most get the same pay for the same work, women working in the care-giving sector do not get the same pay for the same level of education, responsibility, effort and working conditions as college-educated men working in predominantly male jobs.

4. Recent initiatives and research

The Human Services Coalition of New Brunswick was formed over a decade ago to advance the cause of human service practitioners and their employing agencies. Members are the Association of New Brunswick Family Support Provider Agencies Inc. (ANBFSPA), New Brunswick Association of Residential Agencies (NBARA), New Brunswick Association of Supported Services & Employment (NBASSE), and New Brunswick Special Care Home Association (NBSCHA), the New Brunswick Home Support Association (NBHSA) and the Association francophone des établissements de soins spéciaux du Nouveau-Brunswick (AFESNB). Together, they represent a sector employing approximately 5000 human service workers.

They have done extensive research over the years and among the main findings of a report prepared in March 2011, it specified that: "Both employees and employers agree that human services workers employed by agencies that provide services on behalf of the Province of New Brunswick are not appropriately compensated. Low wages are identified as a barrier to both the recruitment and the retention of workers. This is the single most important concern related to the working conditions of human service workers. Many employers report that if there is no immediate attention to this problem they may no longer

be able to provide services due to the lack of qualified staff. Many employers and employees expressed feelings of frustration and despair that this well-documented problem has not received appropriate attention.”⁹

Following that report, government officials and stakeholders formed a steering committee to address the recommendations. A recent report produced by the steering committee speaks of the different services offered, the relationship between government and the service delivery agencies, employment criteria, and the working conditions of workers. One of its recommendations is “That remuneration match training, experience, and responsibility and that there be improvement in wages and benefits for human service practitioners including such benefits as sick leave, travel expenses, etc.”¹⁰

A recent report¹¹ prepared for the Human Service Coalition compared existing remuneration and benefit packages, job descriptions and job titles for human service practitioners in four different work situations in New Brunswick with their counterparts in Nova Scotia, Ontario and Manitoba. This report shows that in Nova Scotia, a human service practitioner, known as a continuing care assistant, have a mandated minimum salary of \$17, 62 an hour. This report also compiled a list of certified training programs offered for these practitioners and a list of training providers. The report also developed an outline of potential positions/classifications in New Brunswick and a map for movement from entry-level positions to senior level positions as a basis for career paths across the sector. The report recommended: “that there be standardized training and education programs based upon a common core curriculum and qualifications for certification of all human services practitioners, that remuneration match training, experience and responsibility and that there be improvement in wages and benefits for human service practitioners including such benefits as sick leave, travel expenses, etc., that a regulatory body for human services practitioners be established with supporting legislation that entails a defined scope of practice and standards of practice to which accredited human service practitioners and their employing agencies are to adhere, and that is to include a code of ethical conduct for practitioners.”¹²

In 2014, the provincial government launched the Home First strategy, a three-year strategy that will help seniors in New Brunswick maintain their independence and remain in their homes and communities for as long as possible. One of the pillars of the strategy, appropriate supports and care, aims to provide services in a person-centred manner by both formal and informal caregivers who are supported to meet the needs of seniors. One of the goals is: “to develop and implement a human service model for senior care workers. Senior care workers are instrumental in supporting and caring for seniors. In order to provide

⁹ Human Service Workers A Report Regarding their Working Conditions, Prepared for ANBFSWA, March 2011.

¹⁰ Human Service Practitioners and their Future Employment in their Various Support Roles in New Brunswick Social and Protective Services, Collaborative Group Process Report Articulation of a Service Delivery Model, March 2012.

¹¹ Review of the Labour Market Situation of Human Services Practitioners of New Brunswick, prepared for Human Services Coalition of New Brunswick by Calhoun Research & Development, February 2016

¹² *ibid*

quality services, senior care workers must have the knowledge and competencies necessary to care for our seniors. The Department of Social Development will support the improvement of training programs to increase the skill levels of senior care workers in both homes and residential facilities. The training will include how to best serve seniors with high care needs and will be based on the philosophy of providing flexible person-centred support. Social Development will also assist in the completion of a Joint Human Services Review with all the sectors who have senior care workers. This will establish standards for job competencies, training and curriculum, and career progression across the long-term care continuum. This will improve recruitment and retention of an appropriately skilled workforce to care for seniors.”¹³

The provincial government also formed the Council on Aging in 2015 with the mandate to guide the development of an aging strategy to address both short-term (1-3 years) sustainability and long-term (10 or more years) transformational change. One of the topics the Council will be reporting on is the role of care givers and the care workforce. The first report of the Council on Aging should be ready in 2016.

In September 2016, the Canadian Union of Public Employees will launch a campaign in New Brunswick for workers in home support, group homes and transition houses. The campaign will focus on recognizing the value of these services, integrating them in the public system, improving working conditions and wages and standardizing quality and accessibility for users.

5. The undervaluing of traditional female occupations

The undervaluation of traditional female occupations is deeply rooted in our society. This historical undervaluation comes from the assumption that “women’s work” such as caring, cooking, cleaning, etc. requires no formal level of skills and will be performed out of compassion. Furthermore, it is perceived that the work performed by women outside the home is only to supplement family income, and therefore, does not require decent wages.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has conducted research into the social norms and stereotypical perceptions regarding men and women, family life, family responsibilities, and work life and determined that the general root causes are social, economic, cultural and historical. The 2004 Federal Pay Equity Task Force report used this well documented research and highlighted that the perception of female characteristics has a negative effect on the value of women’s work. The Task Force also quoted research by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1998 that determined that “The greater the similarity between jobs and the work partly carried out free of charge in the home, the greater the devaluation.”¹⁴

Women working in the care-giving field fall victims of this historical undervaluation of traditional female jobs: there is a social expectation that care-giving work is “women’s

¹³ Province of New Brunswick, Home First, June 2015, pages 15-16

¹⁴ Pay Equity Task Force Final Report 2004, Pay Equity: A New Approach to a Fundamental Right, ISBN 0-662-34045-0

work” and will be performed at a low wage by compassion, a false perception that it does not contribute to the economy as well as the misconception that it requires less skills, responsibilities and effort and that the working conditions are easy.

6. Contribution to the social infrastructure and economy

The low wages of women working in the private-care sector does impact their economic prosperity. Considering that the sector represents approximately 10 000 workers, we can argue that their low wages also impacts their local economies considering that these women do not have any purchasing power.

Research shows that: “The higher female incomes resulting from a program aimed at removing wage discrimination can result in an increase in a variety of taxes including income tax, sales tax, property tax, etc.”¹⁵. Increasing their economic prosperity and increasing their wages would inevitably go back into the regional and provincial economy.

Women in other predominantly female jobs, such as nurses and teachers, have been able to demonstrate the value of their work and now benefit from much more economic prosperity than their predecessors. How can care givers do the same?

Furthermore, if care-giving workers have much better economic perspectives in other provinces, why not in New Brunswick? How can the skills and responsibilities required for their work be acknowledged here? How can their support to the economic participation of New Brunswick families be recognized as a contribution to the province's social infrastructure?

A first step in recognizing the contribution of women working in the care-giving field to the province was the Opportunities Summit for the Health and Aging Sector Today held on March 16, 2016 in Miramichi. The summit focused on what healthy aging looks like in New Brunswick, the opportunities for economic growth within that area and how to leverage existing advantages in this sector.

7. Consultations

Hearing directly from women who work in the private care-giving field is vital not only to get their perspective on the barriers and solutions to their economic prosperity, but to also understand the value of their work and their working conditions.

The Prosperity Project Coordinator, Anne Robichaud, contacted 30 women working in the field. Access to the workers was very difficult. Most of these workers, because of their low wages, have no other choice but to work two or three jobs to cover just their basic necessities. Nonetheless, the project coordinator was able to interview, via telephone and in person, women who work in ADAPT agencies, family support services, home support

¹⁵ Ather H. Akbar, Department of Economics Saint Mary's University Halifax, NS, The Gender Wage Gap in New Brunswick, 2004, page 27

services and special care homes. She talked to both anglophone and francophone women living and working in the Northern and Southern regions of the province.

7.1 Value of the work

All contacted women love their work, they are very proud of what they do and they feel like they are making a difference in peoples' lives. They also affirm that they are providing an essential service for their clients.

"I am very proud of my work and I know that I am making a difference in children's lives."

"We provide an essential service; a lot of our clients would be institutionalized if we were not here."

"I love my job and would not work anywhere else. I am very proud when I see my clients being able to function independently in society."

"My client wants to stay home, if I was not here for her, she would be in the hospital."

Most workers felt very valued by their employer and therefore are very loyal to the employer and will not work anywhere else. They also feel very valued by their clients and the families.

Although some workers feel they are not valued by the government, they also feel that the recent \$1 per hour wage increase is acknowledgement of the essential service they do provide.

"The government does not appreciate the work that we do and they get away with not paying, so why should they pay more?"

"I don't think the government even know we exist"

"The recent \$1 raise was a wonderful recognition of our work"

"The \$1 raise gave me self-esteem to continue working, for the first time, I felt the government valued our work."

Some workers felt very valued by the public in general while others thought that the public could not appreciate the work they do because of a lack of knowledge of the services.

"We live in a small community, we are very active on social media and we do a lot of fun fundraising events. We are well known and well liked and the community is very supportive."

"The public does not appreciate the work that we do because a lack of understanding and knowledge of the service. There is a big misinformation and misconception of our work."

"Women, in general, are not valued in workplaces, not just in this field."

7.2 Working conditions and wages

The working conditions in the care-giving field are generally very demanding physically and mentally and require critical and analytical thinking.

“Our work is very physical, many of our clients are in wheelchairs and we need to lift them many times daily.”

“My client is elderly; she can’t walk and is bedridden. I need to move her several times a day.”

“The work is very physically and mentally challenging, we have clients in wheelchairs, we need to change adult diapers, provide health care, give medication and insulin.”

“We need to take care of medical emergencies; we can’t make any errors.”

“We get very attached to our residents and when one passes away, it’s very hard on us, it’s like losing a member of your family.”

« The work is very physical and we can’t afford to go to the massage therapist or physio therapists. Many workers get over tired and become depressed.”

“In my work in child protection, I need to continuously write reports for government and be a witness in court.”

Workers in the care-giving field require post-secondary training, continuous upgrading of skills, such as CPR, they also require criminal record checks.

“To work in child protection, we need a minimum of 2 years of university or we need to have completed the Human Service program at New Brunswick Community College.”

“We need a Human Services Counselling degree or the equivalent.”

“We need to update our CPR yearly, our employer pays for the training but we are not paid for the day. We either take the training on our day off or lose pay.”

All workers express that their wages were too low and many need a second job or even a third job in order to meet the basic life necessities. The majority of workers do get benefits which are paid for in half by the employer. Workers express concerns that the low wages are the reason why the workforce is in decline.

“I have been working in this field for 25 years and with the recent \$1/hour raise, I make \$11,25 an hour. For the responsibility and effort of the job, I should be making at least \$18 an hour.”

“I have no disposable income and the wages were never adjusted to inflation and now we are too far behind to catch up.”

“With the recent \$1 an hour raise, we now make \$12 an hour. There is no pay scale and no matter the years of experience, we all make \$12 an hour. The wage is not enough for the work we do on a daily basis. ”

“Someone can make more money working at Tim Horton’s than me who has been working here for 17 years.”

“I need to wait until pay day to do groceries and I always wonder if I will have enough money to provide nutritional food for my children.”

“A lot of workers here need to have a second job.”

“We struggle to find new staff because of low wages. The new generation won’t accept the same working conditions as the older generation.”

“There is a lack of staff because of the low wages. Many workers don’t stay here for very long because as soon as they get a better paying job, they leave.”

“This field will remain a female dominated field because of the low wages. No man wants to work at these wages.”

Some workers also express health and safety concerns, especially when working alone or when working with mentally challenged people.

“There is always a big physical security risk when I go into my clients’ homes.”

“We need male staff to work in the centre because we have a lot of mentally challenged people. Sometimes they are hard to handle or become aggressive, but men don’t want to work here because of the pay.”

7.3 Solutions

Workers had various solutions to improve their economic prosperity ranging from lobbying the members of the Legislative Assembly to obtaining professional status.

“We need to have a para-professional status by legislation.”

“The government should give more money to the owner to increase our wages, or the owner should simply give the keys to the government.”

“Politicians only come here before the election to get our vote. Workers should have a meeting with him after the election to explain what we do and our working conditions.”

7.4 Media Reports

Workers also speak out about their lack of economic prosperity in the media, stating that their work is not valued nor paid enough:

- A community residence worker confirms that many staff are working two or three jobs to make ends meet and the demands of the job are complex and stressful.¹⁶
- A home support worker explains that her wage does not recognize her worth nor does it value her contribution to society. She further explains that she needs a second job to manage.¹⁷
- A home support worker explains how she went to NBCC to receive training and is making less than \$22 000. She loves her job but cannot make ends meet.¹⁸
- An article explains that the average age of those who work in the care sector is 53 and they make just above minimum wage. A special care home worker also states that she loves her job but she can't make a career and she is not paid enough. She is forced to leave her job and return to school.¹⁹
- A special home care worker explains that she has to prepare meals for the 20 residents and only makes minimum wage. Another worker explains that she needs three jobs to make ends meet. The only reason she and her colleagues are staying is because they are attached to the residents.²⁰
- A Radio-Canada story highlights that a special home care worker makes \$12 an hour including the recent \$1 increase. She can only pay her rent and food. She can't own a car and can't afford to do any activities. Another worker explains that she loves her job, but as a single mother with two children, it's impossible to make ends meet. The reporter further explains how the residents value the work of the employees, how hard they work and how they don't want to see them leave their jobs.²¹

Conclusion

This Needs Assessment report demonstrates that women constitute the vast majority of the workforce in the private care-giving field in New Brunswick, that their wages do not match the qualifications, responsibilities, effort and working conditions required for the work they perform and that their low wage does have an impact on their economic prosperity.

The undervaluation of traditional female occupations is deeply rooted in our society. Consequently, this has also led to these jobs being underpaid and women working in the private care-giving sector have been victims of this fact.

¹⁶ Daily Gleaner, Residential care workers want pay equity report, December 12, 2013, p. A.5

¹⁷ Telegraph Journal, Hasten Pay Equity for home-care workers, February 19, 2014

¹⁸ Telegraph Journal, Home care workers require higher wages, April 2, 2014, page A.6

¹⁹ Daily Gleaner, Care workers, counsellors lament low wages, August 20, 2014, page A.4

²⁰ Radio-Canada, Les foyers de soins spéciaux du N.-B. peinent à garder leurs employés, December 3, 2015

²¹ Radio-Canada, Foyers de soins spéciaux au N.-B. : les salaires toujours jugés insuffisants, June 8, 2016.

Now that we have a clear picture of their situation, we can move forward with finding concrete solutions for their human right to equal pay for work of equal value to be respected, and therefore, improve their economic prosperity for not only their personal benefit, but also to benefit their families and their communities.

Appendix A: Tables of the care-giving sector

References for Appendix A

*Denotes figures from Review of the Labour Market Situation of Human Services Practitioners of New Brunswick, prepared for Human Services Coalition of New Brunswick, Final Report, Prepared by Sue Calhoun of Calhoun Research & Development, February 2016

** Ruth Rose, Pay Equity in Care-Giving Services in New Brunswick, October 2014.

***Provincial Collective Agreement between New Brunswick Council of Nursing Home Unions and New Brunswick Association of Nursing Home Inc. October 16, 2012 – October 15, 2016, Schedule D, Wage Grid, Page 43

**** Auditor General of New Brunswick, Report 2016-Volume 1

*****Information provided by the New Brunswick Department of Social Development.

ADAPT Agencies

Service Description	Agencies	Clients	Employees	Average Wage	Nova Scotia	Educational Standard	Funding structure
agencies provide services to adults aged nineteen (19) to sixty four (64) in a centre or a community based setting. The purpose of Adult Developmental Activities, Programs and Training is to focus on the development and provision of valued activities and training, encourage appropriate behavior, respect of daily schedules, social habits and all other expectations placed on an adult and provide a variety of activities that give the day a normative adult rhythm that meets the therapeutic, occupational, and developmental needs of the participants*****	38 agencies*	916 adults*	1000*	Average: \$13.56 /hour. Range: \$12 to \$16.32 (after 10 years*	In Nova Scotia, the primary human service practitioner is a continuing care assistant. They are certified by the completion of a Continuing Care Assistant program and provincial examination. They have a standardized mandated minimum salary of \$17, 62 an hour.*	Standards: Human Service Diploma or High School Diploma, plus continued education. Agencies may hire new employees without the necessary qualifications when 1) reasonable efforts to hire qualified employees are unsuccessful and/or 2) training plans show how employees will meet the qualifications within a specified period of time.*****	ADAPT seats are funded through grants without additional costs to participants. As standard rate of \$33 per day has been set for the purchase of additional seats. In place since 2003*****

Family support services

Service Description	Agencies	Clients	Employees	Average Wage	Educational Standard	Funding structure
Family Support for Children with Disabilities, Child Protection and Family Enhancement*****	36 private agencies (private and non-profit)*		1000*	Average: \$12.28. Range: \$10.50 to \$13.75*	Standards: Must possess a postsecondary level certificate, recognized by a community college, with a specialization in a special needs/human services program. The service provider agency must ensure that any Family Support Worker employed by the agency on the date of approval of these standards must have successfully worked in the field for five years, if they do not meet the above requirement. Any employees hired after that date must meet the training requirement.*****	\$18/hour In place since May 2007*

Home support services

Services Description	Agencies	Clients	Employees	Average Wage	Research by Ruth Rose 2012**	Educational Standard	Funding structure
Home Support Services are provided to adults and seniors living in their own homes who are eligible for services under the Long Term Care or Disability Support Programs. These services provide support to individuals and families in the areas of personal care, activities of daily living and home management. The goal of Home Support Services is to promote, maintain, strengthen or restore the wellbeing of individuals living at home and/or the ability of families to provide support to individuals.*****	Social Development has contacts with 56 Home Support agencies*. The current contracts expire on September 30, 2016. *****	8,500 adults or seniors; approximately 4,500 are seniors*	4000*	Pay-equity mandated: \$13:40 as of April 2016. Range reported by agencies for direct wages: \$11-13.40*	\$19.93	Standards: Completion of the Personal Support Worker Training Program provided by NBCC or a similar program approved by the SD provincial consultant. *****	Agencies receive \$18.78 per hour with the stipulation that employees receive, as a minimum, \$13.40 per hour. A financial assessment is completed and the client may be responsible to pay a portion of this cost.*****

Special care homes

Services Description	Agencies	Clients	Employees	Average Wage	Educational Standard	Funding structure
<p>These homes provide care and supervision services to clients who may require some assistance or supervision with mobility. The residents may require more individualized assistance/supervision with personal care and activities of daily living. Residents participate but may require prompting, guidance and/or assistance throughout the activity. The residents may require professional health care but it can be provided through office visits, clinics or home visits. There is the presence of a care/service provider on a 24 hour basis, as well as supervision, assistance and performance of personal care and activities of daily living. Homes should provide access to age appropriate and skill related activities. Some interventions require complexity in skills and knowledge concerning personal care, behaviour management, appropriate responses in various situations, recognition of deterioration in health (physical/mental) status.*****</p>	<p>430 homes in NB*</p>	<p>6,300 of whom 4,400 are seniors*</p>	<p>3500*</p>	<p>Was approximately \$11.00 prior to \$10 million dollar investment by province April 1/16 to increase wages by \$1.00/hour plus an additional 15% for mandatory employer costs.*****</p>	<p>Standards: Staff providing direct care to residents must have one of the following training: Home Support Worker Program, Special Care Home Worker Program, Health Care Aid Program, Human Services Program, or Practical Nurse Program; or a similar program approved by the DSD provincial consultant. Operators must try to fill positions with qualified employees at time of hiring. Casual or relief care workers must have as a minimum a grade 12 education.*****</p>	<p>These homes are funded by Social Development at \$80.70 per day (\$2454.63 per month). Clients are required to pay up to \$77 per day and Social Development covers whatever portion the individual cannot pay of the \$77 (based on their income). The remaining \$3.70 per day (to make up the \$80.70 per diem) is paid by to support the wage increase effective April 1, 2016.*****</p>

Community Residences

Services Description	Agencies	Clients	Employees	Average Wage	Research by Ruth Rose 2012**	Educational Standard	Funding structure
<p>These homes provide care and supervision services to adults with disabilities (19 to 65) who have higher care needs. Residents of these homes have a physical or mental health condition or functional limitation and require supervision/care on a 24 hour basis. They may participate in personal care or activities of daily living but requires prompting, guidance, and assistance throughout the activity or someone else to perform the activity. Professional care/supervision related to physical/mental health condition may be required periodically. The residents require provision and/or access to activities appropriate for age and skill level. Interventions require specialized knowledge and skills.*****</p>	72 facilities*	500 adults*	900*	<p>Pay Equity mandated \$14.80 as of April 1, 2016. Average reported by agencies interviewed: \$11.58/hour; Range: \$10.30 - \$17.*</p>	<p>Direct Caregiver: \$19.72</p> <p>Supervisor/ Direct Caregiver (Adults) \$ 23.88</p> <p>Direct Caregiver (Child) \$ 20.11</p> <p>Supervisor/ Direct Caregiver (Child) \$24.27</p>	<p>Standards: Staff providing direct care to residents must have one of the following training: Home Support Worker Program, Special Care Home Worker Program, Health Care Aid Program, Human Services Program, or Practical Nurse Program; or a similar program approved by the DSD provincial consultant. Operators must try to fill positions with qualified employees at time of hiring. Casual or relief care workers must have as a minimum a grade 12 education. *****</p>	<p>These homes are funded by Social Development at \$123.17/154.56 per day (\$3746.42/4701.20) depending on the individuals level of care. Social Development covers whatever portion the individual cannot pay (based on their income).</p> <p>Pay Equity is provided in addition to the regular monthly rate through a monthly invoicing process.*****</p>

Memory Care Homes

Services Description	Agencies	Clients	Employees	Average Wage	Educational Standard	Funding structure
<p>These homes provide care and supervision services to seniors who exhibit the maladaptive behaviors associated with a moderate to severe dementia and who require a high level of care but who have no complex medical needs requiring 24 hour per day on-site nursing care/supervision. *****</p>	20*****	274 seniors *****	Unknown	<p>Wages would be approximately the same as special care homes (\$11 per hour). prior to \$10 million investment by province April 1/16 to increase wages by \$1.00/hour plus an additional 15% for mandatory employer costs. *****</p>	<p>Standards: Staff providing direct care to residents must have one of the following training: Home Support Worker Program, Special Care Home Worker Program, Health Care Aid Program, Human Services Program, or Practical Nurse Program; or a similar program approved by the DSD provincial consultant. Operators must try to fill positions with qualified employees at time of hiring. In addition, at least one staff member must be a registered nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN).</p> <p>Casual or relief care workers must have as a minimum a grade 12 education.*****</p>	<p>These homes are funded by Social Development at \$127.42 per day (\$3875.69 per month). Clients are required to pay up to \$83 per day and Social Development covers whatever portion the individual cannot pay of the \$83 (based on their income).</p> <p>The remaining \$.6.25 per day (to make up the \$127.42 per diem) is paid by to support the wage increase effective April 1, 2016.*****</p>

The Generalist Care Homes (Demonstration Project)

Service Description	Agencies	Clients	Employees	Average Wage	Educational Standard	Funding structure
<p>These homes provide care and supervision services to seniors or adults with a disability who are physically frail, have high care needs and may suffer from a dementia but who do not exhibit the maladaptive behaviors associated with a moderate to severe dementia and who do not require access to 24 hour, on-site nursing care/supervision. *****</p>	<p>7*****</p>	<p>76 adults and seniors*****</p>	<p>unknown</p>	<p>Wages would be approximately the same as special care homes (\$11 per hour). prior to \$10M investment by province April 1/16 to increase wages by \$1.00/hour plus an additional 15% for mandatory employer costs. *****</p>	<p>Standards: Staff providing direct care to residents must have one of the following training: Home Support Worker Program, Special Care Home Worker Program, Health Care Aid Program, Human Services Program, or Practical Nurse Program; or a similar program approved by the DSD provincial consultant. Operators must try to fill positions with qualified employees at time of hiring. In addition, at least one staff member must be a registered nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN). Casual or relief care workers must have as a minimum a grade 12 education.*****</p>	<p>These homes are funded by Social Development at \$127.42 per day (\$3875.69 per month). Clients are required to pay up to \$83 per day and Social Development covers whatever portion the individual cannot pay of the \$83 (based on their income). The remaining \$.6.25 per day (to make up the \$127.42 per diem) is paid by to support the wage increase effective April 1, 2016.*****</p>

Nursing Homes

Service Description	Agencies	Clients	Employees	Average Wage	Educational Standard	Funding structure
<p>Nursing home services are intended for individuals who are medically stable and who need nursing care. Services in nursing homes emphasize the resident's physical, social and psychological independence. These services include resident care, resident support, plant and maintenance and general administration. Nursing homes are staff with registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, resident attendants, dieticians, personnel in laundry, kitchen, activation, rehabilitation, maintenance and administration.*****</p>	<p>There are 66 Nursing Homes*****</p>	<p>4587 beds</p>	<p>4400</p>	<p>Resident Attendant: \$19.73 - \$21.24 As of April 16, 2016***</p>		<p>All nursing homes are funded by a per diem based on the number of beds in their facility, and they receive payments from residents for their cost of care. Budgets and per diems are established annually and paid by the Department of Social Development. Any unusual or unexpected expenses by the non-profit nursing homes are also covered by the Department of Social Development *****</p>