

# LEARNING IN

Strategic Plan  
2020-2023



lcads  
One person at a time.

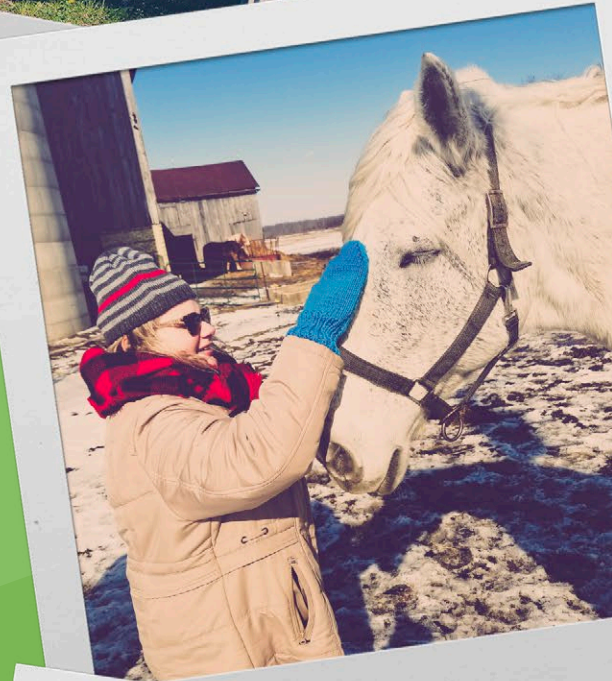
# With Thanks

Lambton County Developmental Services' new strategic plan is shaped by the perspectives of many valued stakeholders: persons whom we support and their families, volunteers, community partners, funders, employees, Board of Directors, and members of management and Senior Leadership.

Thank you for generously sharing your time, enthusiasm, and ideas with us.

We have listened and reflected on what you have said. We hope you see how your collective shared wisdom has influenced our decision-making about LCDS' future.

**Thank you.**





# Table of Contents

Message from LCDS’ Executive Director and Board President .....	<b>4</b>
LCDS’ Vision, Mission, and Values .....	<b>5</b>
Our Strategic Priorities for 2020-2023 .....	<b>6</b>
Priority: Organizational Vitality .....	<b>7</b>
Priority: Service Excellence .....	<b>9</b>
Priority: Collaboration .....	<b>11</b>
Priority: Financial Sustainability .....	<b>13</b>
How we Developed our New Strategic Plan .....	<b>15</b>
Celebrating our Past as we Build our Future .....	<b>16</b>

# Message from LCDS' Executive Director and Board President

Dear friends,

LCDS' future is full of opportunity. In the next three years, we will become a stronger organization that works with others and serves with distinction in providing responsive, flexible supports and services. We will do this by focusing on the interdependent priorities of culture, financial sustainability, service excellence, and collaboration, amplifying our organizational health and capacity to serve.

These priorities lean into and reinforce one another. Our complex environment is one of constant change, competing needs, limited resources, and systemic challenge. LCDS is positioning itself to 'get ahead of the curve' and lead. Through this strategic plan, we are charting our course and directing our future. We have chosen these four priorities with a keen eye to how we will make a difference in the lives of the individuals we support, their families, our employees, volunteers, partners, and wider system. We know there are areas in which we are doing well as an organization, and areas where we must do better. We are committed to becoming a stronger and healthier LCDS so that those with whom we work – in whatever role or capacity — will be better because of their experience with us. It's a bold assurance, and one we undertake with pride.

Embedded in our organizational DNA is the beating heart of servant leadership that empowers persons with developmental disabilities to live their dreams. Through our planning, we affirmed: the uniqueness and dignity of all persons; each individual has value, freedom, choice, and gifts and abilities to share; relationships have the power to change lives; working together supports the common good and can make good more common; our work is fundamentally not about us, but about the persons we support; the importance of one person at a time.

We conclude our planning with an abiding sense of gratitude and hope for the future. Thank you to all who shared their ideas. This new plan builds on your feedback and is better because of your contributions.

We honour our past as we grow into our future. We are excited to build that future together. Please join us in this important work as we write the next chapter in LCDS' story and build inclusive communities for all.

Sincerely,



**Nick Salaris**  
Executive Director



**Frank Huybers**  
Board President

# LCDS' Vision, Mission, and Values

Vision, mission, and values are fundamental elements of an organization, naming:

- The organization's desired future state, the difference it will make (vision)
- What the organization will do to bring that vision to life (mission)
- The timeless, non-negotiable principles that guide its decisions and actions to fulfill its mission and achieve its vision (values).

These intersecting elements steer an organization toward the future it most deeply desires. As part of our strategic planning, LCDS renewed and refreshed these elements:

**Vision:** **Inclusive Communities ~ Innovative Leaders**

**Mission:** **Empowering people with developmental disabilities**

**Values:** **Care:** We express our care by honouring the dignity and uniqueness of each person. We engage others with courtesy, respect, and kindness as we champion equity, empowerment, and self-determination.

**Connection:** We intentionally cultivate relationships, demonstrating inclusion, equality, and citizenship.

**Excellence:** We provide exceptional professional services and supports. We are accountable and transparent, and continually learn and adapt.

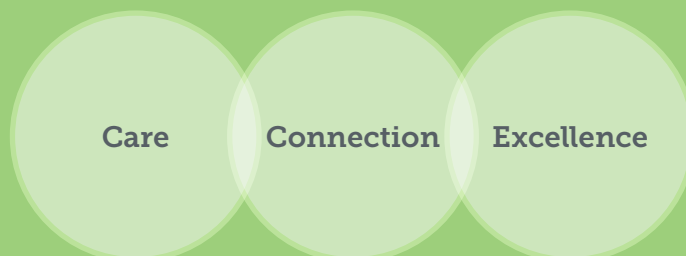
# Our Strategic Priorities for 2020-2023

LCDS' new strategic plan identifies the priorities, goals, and strategies that will help us build inclusive communities and innovative leaders. Our decisions were informed by what we heard from employees, persons supported and their families, community partners, funders, members of management, Senior Leadership, and Board of Directors. In the next three years, we will focus our time, talent, and resources on:

- Organizational Vitality
- Service Excellence
- Collaboration
- Financial Sustainability



**Inclusive communities ~ Innovative leaders**



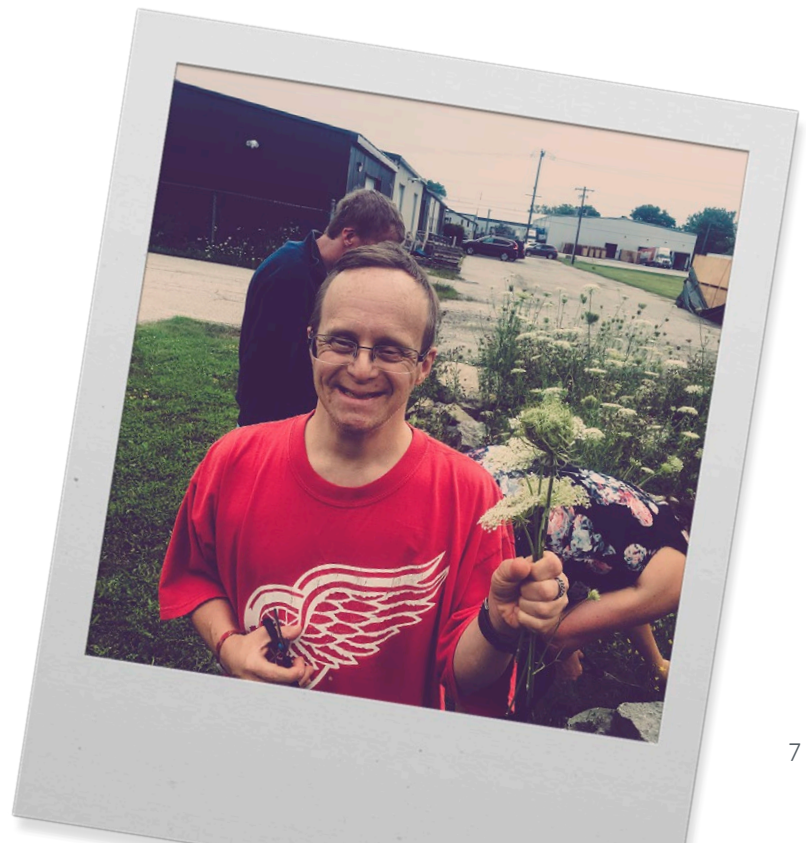
## **PRIORITY** Organizational Vitality

### **Our Goal**

A healthy, vibrant organization with a stable, skilled, and engaged workforce.

### **Our Strategies**

1. Strengthen employee engagement, trust, and team cohesion
2. Optimize our organizational structure
3. Develop clear, consistent communication processes
4. Support ongoing professional development, training, and education
5. Deepen our ‘bench strength’ through succession planning and talent management



## Our Impact

The work we do is highly rewarding, and often difficult. It takes commitment, patience, compassion, skills, and a sense of fun. Our employees have these admirable qualities. We want to encourage their passion and attract dedicated future employees to join us in this important work. We need people who live our values, are enthusiastic, skilled, and ready to serve. We want to attract, retain, and support high-performing, highly engaged employees.

Like many organizations, we are expected to 'do more with less'. We recognize the inherent paradox of limited resources and increasing needs. The jobs we do often involve long hours, capped pay, and complex responsibilities. This increases the risk of employee turnover and burnout in a dynamic work environment where the people we support often seek consistency and stable relationships.

We are strengthening LCDS within a complicated ecosystem with competing elements. We will invest in the development of our people by enhancing employee engagement and team cohesion and supporting employee training. Bolstering our organizational structure and processes helps to clarify our operations and become more effective and efficient. Deepening our bench strength supports us to develop leaders for today and tomorrow. We are leaning in; because the stronger LCDS is, the better we can affect change in the lives of the people we support, the better partner we will be for families, funders, allies, other agencies, and employees, and the more likely we can achieve our vision. At LCDS, we are in this together.



## **PRIORITY** Service Excellence

### **Our Goal**

Person-directed, responsive, and supportive quality services.

### **Our Strategies**

1. Assess current services and delivery models
2. Explore and evaluate alternative services and delivery models
3. Explore and evaluate social enterprise opportunities
4. Leverage technology and other innovative supports



## Our Impact

We want to raise the bar on person-centred and person-directed supports. We are taking a critical look at how we do what we do, identifying community needs (e.g., social inclusion supports, housing, transportation, and employment), and exploring innovations, opportunities, and partnerships to bridge these gaps.

Doing what we do in new ways enhances our ability to offer flexible, person-centred, person-directed services. We are better able to support persons where they are now, helping them grow and develop at all stages of life, one person at a time. Social enterprise contributes to the community through needed services and expands opportunities for LCDS' members through social engagement, inclusion, and employment. Technology increases individuals' independence, helps vulnerable persons foster relationships, modernizes services, and generates efficiencies.

Innovation in any and all of these areas opens new and re-imagined pathways, programs, and services. As we creatively develop new ideas and leading practices, individuals will experience greater inclusion, self-direction, engagement, stronger relationships, and responsiveness in all areas of their lives.

It would be easy for 'service excellence' to be jargon: great words to say but largely un-lived. We know there is much to do, especially as the needs of individuals evolve and our operational environment changes. At LCDS, we commit to being our best so the individuals we support receive the best services. We can and will do better.

We will provide person-centred supports marked by care, compassion, responsiveness, and professionalism. By innovating, evaluating, partnering as community and sector leaders, and leveraging technology, we ensure those whom we support receive more need-fulfilling, efficient, accessible, and inclusive services. Through our service excellence, individuals will receive the right services at the right time to best achieve their life goals. For us, service excellence is not simply jargon; it is our commitment.

## **PRIORITY** Collaboration

### **Our Goal**

Nurture existing relationships and cultivate new partnerships

### **Our Strategies**

1. Deepen our existing partnerships and collaborations
2. Build relationships with potential partners, supporters, and allies
3. Develop community outreach strategies



## Our Impact

Collaboration and relationships are central to who we are, what we do, and how we do it. It is how we lean in. Developing new and stronger relationships motivates us to seek out, create, and leverage opportunities for connection. In so doing, we harness the strengths of many, break down siloes, and build capacity within LCDS and in our partner organizations. Working with traditional and innovative sectors and allies produces original ideas for program delivery, generates efficiencies, and leads to more effective and responsive person-centred supports and services.

Internal collaboration and relationship-building will help us work more cohesively and harness the breadth and depth of our skills and strengths. Tapping into the experiences and expertise of our employees expands knowledge across LCDS, supports cross-functional teams, sparks leading-edge solutions, builds working relationships, and cultivates leadership.

At the root of relationship is the essential element of knowing others and being known. We build trust through relationship - whether working with a new partner to support social inclusion; sharing resources with a long-standing community ally to generate efficiencies and provide fantastic service; or working side by side with a co-worker to comprehensively support individuals. The more we know and are known in our community and across our organization, the more effectively we can respond to the needs of the community, partners, individuals, families, employees, and the wider system.

In bringing together the efforts, knowledge, resources, and expertise of many toward a shared vision, we will achieve a collective impact greater than the sum of our parts: building inclusive, diverse communities where individuals are invited, included, and belong as active, participating citizens.

## **PRIORITY** Financial Sustainability

### **Our Goal**

Efficiently and responsibly use existing funds, and develop new funding sources

### **Our Strategies**

1. Generate efficiencies through ongoing monitoring and evaluation of operational resources
2. Diversify LCDS' revenue streams
3. Support financial transparency through timely and accurate communications



## Our Impact

Our focus on financial sustainability will better position LCDS to support individuals with excellence, both now and in the future. By efficiently using the resources entrusted to us, we will proactively enhance and evolve the services we offer.

This priority is more than mere dollars and cents. It is about what we can do to support individuals as they need to be supported, when they need to be supported, and how they need to be supported. Sustainability is not simply about effectively using what we have. It is also about growing our resources and returning this investment for the good of the individuals we support, their families, and our communities.

LCDS will diversify our revenue streams and monitor operations to optimally use our resources. Efficient, effective stewardship will guide us. We want our stakeholders to know we are a solid, fiscally responsible investment. We will engage our local communities by intentionally developing relationships, raising our profile, and demonstrating value for dollars. We want families seeking services to call on LCDS first. We want more people in our community to know who, what, and why we do what we do. We will become the organization of choice for persons engaged in philanthropic efforts, whether by donating their time, money, or other resources to positively impact the lives of persons with developmental disabilities and move toward more inclusive communities.

Our commitment to strong financial stewardship is more than a promise of accountability and transparency. It is a commitment to serve with integrity, ethics, respect, and distinction.

# How We Developed Our New Strategic Plan

In developing this strategic plan, we were intentional to hear the wisdom of many stakeholders: persons supported and their families, community partners, funders, and members of our employees, Board of Directors, management, and Senior Leadership teams.

This new plan renews and refreshes our vision, mission, and values, and names the priorities and goals we will focus on in the next three years. Our collaborative planning process included four key phases:



## Engage

Through focus groups, interviews, and online surveys, we met with 179 people from different areas of LCDS' operations. Participants shared their views on developmental services and the organization. These insights informed our decision-making about LCDS' future.

## Plan

Reflecting on what stakeholders had to say, members of LCDS' Board, Senior Leadership, and managers met for two days of planning retreats. They refreshed the organization's vision, mission, and values, and identified the goals we will work toward in the next three years.

## Write

Having identified the paths forward, LCDS developed these decisions and ideas into this new strategic plan.

## Launch

It's time to shift into action, and we are primed and ready to go. LCDS is launching this strategic plan with pride, and diligently working to achieve our goals. As we move forward, we will evaluate and communicate our progress, sharing our successes, challenges, learnings and insights as we create more inclusive communities and innovative leaders.

## Celebrating Our Past as We Build Our Future

**LCDS is 65 years young!** We started in 1955 when a group of parents whose children had developmental disabilities came together dreaming of a life without limitation for their loved ones. What began as a grassroots movement of dreamers and dreams has grown into a solid organization that supports more than 200 people and families and employs about 300 employees across Lambton County. Sixty-five years on, the inspiration of our founders continues to guide our work through our housing supports, community participation, empowering employment, educational opportunities, and respite services.

Through our supports and services, we recognize the inherent value, dignity, and worth of each person whatever their situation or ability. We respect that each person's life and path are unique, and each person has different needs. How we support people cannot be a 'cookie cutter' response, but one that recognizes, accepts, honours, and works with the individual. Our support of persons with developmental disabilities is servant leadership: focused not on ourselves, but on the individual's quality of life, path, hopes, goals, and inclusion.

At LCDS, when we talk about *quality of life*, we talk about having a life that is meaningful. It reflects satisfaction with the aspects of life that person finds important. It means having the freedom to choose and a richness of opportunities to choose from. Through our work, we strive to cultivate opportunities, freedom, and quality of life for the persons we support.

People don't just live in their environments; we participate in them. Being connected to *community* increases our sense of belonging and creates true citizenship. Belonging is of paramount importance, for "when you get to a place where you understand that love and belonging, your worthiness, is a birthright and not something you have to earn, anything is possible." ~ Brené Brown.

All people, including people with developmental disabilities, need quality of life and belonging. By being attentive to a person's quality of life and co-creating a sense of belonging, we reduce the need to label people, seeing individuals not for *what* they do but for *who* they are as they live their lives in their homes and communities. It is how we create change — for everyone.



At LCDS, a key solution that supports opportunities for choice, empowerment, inclusion, and citizenship is the development of a Life Plan — identified actions and goals that help the people we support be in control of their destiny. Each person supported shares their dreams, sets goals and makes choices about how to achieve them. A person’s Life Plan is their — and our — road map to their desired future. It helps us know how to best support that individual, one person at a time. In that way, we support each person in ways that are empowering for them and lean into our founding principles. We look forward to building the legacy entrusted to us through this strategic plan, and through our relationships with the individuals, families, employees, allies, and communities of LCDS.



Facilitated by:



[platinumleadership.com](http://platinumleadership.com)



339 Centre Street, Petrolia, ON NoN 1R0 • 519-882-0933 • [lcdspetrolia.ca](http://lcdspetrolia.ca)