



BC ASSOCIATION *of*
SOCIAL WORKERS

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June 3, 2015

Office of the BC Ombudsperson
PO Box 9039 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC
V8W 9A5

Attn: Kim Carter - info@bcombudsperson.ca
Ombudsperson for the Province of British Columbia

Dear Ms. Carter;

Re: Access denied: Shut out of BC's welfare system
A complaint by BC Public Interest Advocacy Centre

I am writing on behalf of the BC Association of Social Workers in support of the systemic complaint submitted to your office by the BC Public Interest Advocacy Centre (BCPIAC) representing nine non-profit advocacy and social service agencies.

The complaint sets out the failure of the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (MSDSI) to provide timely and appropriate services due to centralization of services, increased use of technology, and office closures. Our Association is aware of some of the barriers these changes have created for people applying for income assistance and we therefore support the complaint. As an example, our office has received concerns from BCASW social workers who have noted that the current MSDSI system is seriously affecting seniors residing in long-term and residential care.

Further we support BCPIAC's request for your office to investigate and report on the barriers to accessing Ministry services set out in this complaint, and to provide recommendations to address the gap between service delivery design and the needs of the users of the income assistance system.

We hope that your office will launch the investigation and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Michael Crawford
President
BC Association of Social Workers

MC/me

cc. Lobat Sadrehashemi - Lobat@bcpiac.com
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