A WORKING AGREEMENT BETWEEN

DIACONAL MINISTRIES CANADA (DMC) AND DISABILITY CONCERNS (DC)

**Introduction**

The ministries of DMC and DC have many areas of overlap with regard to people in church or the community in Canada who have disabilities:

* Identifying and engaging gifts/resources in church and community to provide needed supports for people affected by disability
* Calling churches to engage persons with disabilities in congregational life so that their abilities may be fully utilized in service for God and others
* Identifying and developing activities of engagement by the church against injustices experienced by people with disabilities

**Goal of Collaboration**

DMC and DC covenant to work togetherwith deacons and with peoplewho have disabilities in churches and communities in order to strengthen their overlapping ministry (*as introduced*) in our churches and communities.

**Vision for Collaboration**

Communities and churches will be enriched and strengthened by the inclusion, the diversity and the gifts of people with disabilities. This in turn will contribute to the spiritual, social, emotional, and physical well-being of persons/families with disabilities.

**Strategies for Collaboration**

1. ***Communication***

* Communication between the DC and DMC staff will take place as appropriate/necessary, with each taking responsibility to communicate with its respective board/committee.
* Communications to our churches will be coordinated/shared when subjects are pertinent and relevant to each other’s ministry
* DC and DMC will participate together, when deemed appropriate/helpful, in learning activities and equipping events that relate to caring, compassion, justice, and advocacy.

***2****.* ***Disability ministry resources***

* All Diaconal Ministry Developers(DMDs) and DMC staff receive a copy of the *Inclusion Handbook*.
* DMDs and DC will promote the *Inclusion Handbook* in churches.
* DC and DMC will place disability ministry materials on their respective websites and ensure that there are web links to each other’s resources.
* DC will provide resources as needed to DMDs and individual churches for ministry with people affected by disability.

***3****.* ***Diaconal Ministry Developers (DMDs)***

* DMC staff will invite DC to meet with DMDs for the purpose of providing basic orientation, at least once every other year.
* DMC will encourage DMDs to promote ministry with people who have disabilities in their visits to churches and diaconates.
* DC will be available to DMDs for support and ideas for walking alongside people/families affected by disability
* DMDs will encourage deacons to invite Church Disability Advocates to attend their meeting at least once a year.

***4. Disability Advocates***

* Regional and Church Disability Advocates will be encouraged to be available to local diaconates to assist individuals who require multifaceted assistance.
* Church Disability Advocates will be encouraged to meet once a year with deacons to share concerns and identify resources and ways to assist people with disabilities in their midst.
* Disability Concerns will gather data that can be used for walking alongside persons with disabilities in the different provinces.
* Regional and Church Disability Advocates will be encouraged when feasible to advocate with people who have disabilities and their families.

***5. Workshop Presentations on Ministry with People Affected by Disability***

* DMC and DC will encourage organizers of equipping events (e.g. Days of Encouragement) to schedule presentations related to people with disabilities.

**Implementation and Review**

Representatives of DC and DMC will meet at least once a year to share stories and strategies for implementation of this agreement. This agreement will be reviewed by DMC and DC every two years.