

Comparing (looking for differences and similarities) Cost and Service Use Across Individualized and Traditional Funding Options Through Community Living British Columbia

Note: We have tried to make this summary as easy to understand as possible. Some complicated words have been left in the summary, with quick definitions in (*italicized brackets*) to help people learn new words.

If you need help understanding the material, please ask someone to help you. You can also contact the Centre for Inclusion and Citizenship if you have more questions.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) is the provincial crown agency mandated (*given permission*) under the *Community Living Authority Act*, to deliver supports and services to adults with developmental disabilities and their families in British Columbia. Since its start in 2005, CLBC has developed many different funding mechanisms (*ways of doing things*) to deliver supports and services including four models of individualized funding (IF). There has been a lot of research on IF. There has been very little research on:

- The cost of IF and the way IF is used, and how this compares (*is similar or different*) with traditional (block) funding, and

- The different ways IF is organized and provided.

The purpose of this study was to find and take a close look at what services are used, the cost of these services, and the different ways services are paid for (*funded*) within Community Living BC. The reasons for taking a closer look were to:

- Give a picture of the different ways similar services are offered under different types of funding;
- Figure out whether there were large/noticeable differences in the cost of supports when different ways funding (*money*) are used for similar services (e.g., is there a difference in cost between housing that is paid for by block funding versus IF?);
- Figure out whether there are patterns to the way people use services depending on the way funding is provided (e.g., do people who get block funding use day programs more than people who get IF?); and
- Take a close look at important demographic variables (e.g., age, men/women, community) that are connected with each of these.

This study uses descriptive statistics (*numbers that describe something*) and secondary data analysis (*looking at number collected by someone else*) to look at the way services are used and the cost of four IF methods. Also, this study can help us understand how the use and cost of IF methods is different or the same as the use and cost of block funding offered by CLBC. The results of the study show us that IF costs are generally lower or similar to traditional methods (e.g., block funding). However, there are some differences in cost across the 4 different IF modes. The results also

show some inconsistency (*differences, dissimilarities*) in different areas of the province and in the needs of people using the services.

What is Community Living BC?

Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) is a provincial crown agency mandated under (*directed by*)the *Community Living Authority Act* to deliver supports and services to adults with developmental disabilities and their families in British Columbia. Through CLBC individuals and families have traditional block-funded services and many Individualized Funding (IF) options. These options include direct funded respite, direct funding, host agency funding, and microboard funding [for more information about these options, please see the below section].

What is Individualized Funding?

At its start, the way CLBC was structured (*put together*) made large changes in the way service funding is accessed (*given or used*) by families and individuals in British Columbia. CLBC funds (*pays for*) supports and services through many different ways which follow one of three methods:

- a. Traditional block funding, where contracts are made with approved agencies to deliver a set amount of service(s);
- b. Contracts made directly with individual home share providers; and
- c. Funding organized through a variety of IF options. IF has been developed as a way to provide individuals and families with flexible, person-centred, self-directed payment options for supports and services.

Individuals and families have several IF options through CLBC.

1. **Direct Funding** allows the individual, family or their representative(s) to receive(*get*) funding directly to get and organize agreed upon supports.
2. **Host Agency Funding** sees IF directed through an agency selected by the individual or family. The agency then supports the individual and/or their family or representative to use and manage their funds for agreed upon supports.
3. **Microboard Funding** allows the microboard, an incorporated (*registered with the government*) entity (*group*), to receive and manage the funding. In this option, the individual requiring support and their network are the members of the board, and the board's only purpose is to support that one person.
4. **Direct funded respite**(as with direct funding above but money is used only for respite).

In order to access (*get*) services, an individual must have a formal assessment by a registered professional (e.g., psychologist, which determines if the individual is eligible. Once a person is eligible, an assessment of the individual's disability-related needs and support preferences (*likes/dislikes*) is conducted. The *Guide to Support Allocation* (GSA) is the tool used by CLBC to figure out the level of support an individual needs. The level of supports range from level one (smallest amount) to level five (largest amount). Also, 'flags' are used to give extra information by highlighting specific risks, such as medical or behavioural issues. The flags range from 0-5, with five being the highest risk.

How was the study designed?

This study involves a statistical analysis (*using numbers*) of cost and use of community living programs in British Columbia within and across the five funding modes. The study's quantitative data analysis used descriptive statistics (*numbers that describe something*), as well as advanced analysis to look at a number of different relationships between types of services and other factors (e.g., area of the province, age, etc).

Results of the analysis offer a picture of use, costs, and demographic circumstances (*e.g., age, gender, location, etc*) that are connected to the use of individually funded services in British Columbia. Specifically, the data collected described:

- Types of service people receive
- Levels of funding for services
- Number of people receiving services
- Funding mode usage (*type of funding method used*)
- Information about the people receiving service: gender, location, age, level of need as per the Guide to Support Allocation (GSA) and the number of flags.

With combined data on the costs of block-funded services, comparisons (*looking at differences and similarities*) can be made within and across the different modes of funding services. This allows for an analysis and recommendations for further policy goals (*goals about rules and plans*), and the research and system needs to experience the benefits (*good things*) that different ways of funding can bring.

Results

The study explored many different questions to provide a picture of how IF is being used, by whom, and at what cost. The key findings of the study answered the following questions:

- Who is using IF in BC? What ages are using IF the most? What is the level of need and the level of risk of those who are using IF the most?
- Are there differences in the use of IF by region (*area of the province*)?
- What services are being used by IF methods?
- Are there differences in the costs of using different IF or block funded modes?

Who is using IF?

The results show some differences in the use of IF modes by age, level of need, and level of complex (*complicated*) risk involved with user’s lives. Below are the basic findings showing the main differences. These are explained in writing and with the tables, below. There was some data that was missing for participants so there are some differences in the sample sizes.

Age

In each of the IF modes the 19-30 year old¹ group made up most of the users. In all modes, the older the user the less likely they were to use IF.

Table 1 (below) shows the number of users in each of the IF modes by age.

Table 1: - All IF Modes by Age

Age in Years	<i>n</i> (number of people)	%
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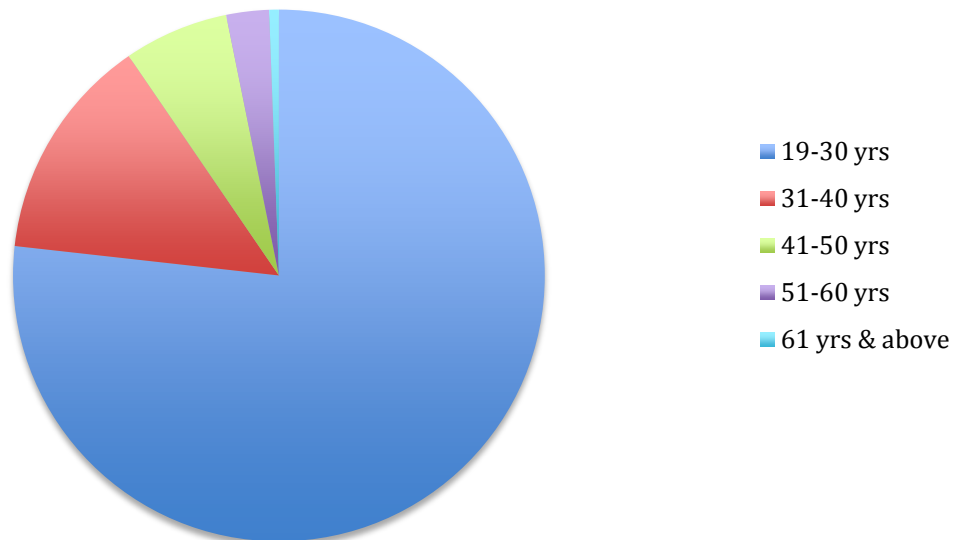
¹ Individuals under 19 years of age get funding (money) and supports through a different system.

<i>Direct Funded Respite (N²=848)</i>		
19-30 years	651	76.8
31-40 years	116	13.7
41-50 years	54	6.4
51-60 years	22	2.6
61 years & above	5	0.6
TOTAL	848	100
<i>Direct Funding (N=101)</i>		
19-30 years	82	81.2
31-40 years	10	9.9
41 years and above	9	8.9
TOTAL	101	100
<i>Host Agency Funding (N=100)</i>		
19-30 years	63	63.0
31-40 years	23	23.0
41-50 years	9	9.0
51 years & above	5	5.0
TOTAL	100	100
<i>Microboard Funding (N=262)</i>		
19-30 years	156	59.5
31-40 years	68	26.0
41-50 years	17	6.5
51-60 years	18	6.9
61 years & above	3	1.1
TOTAL	262	100

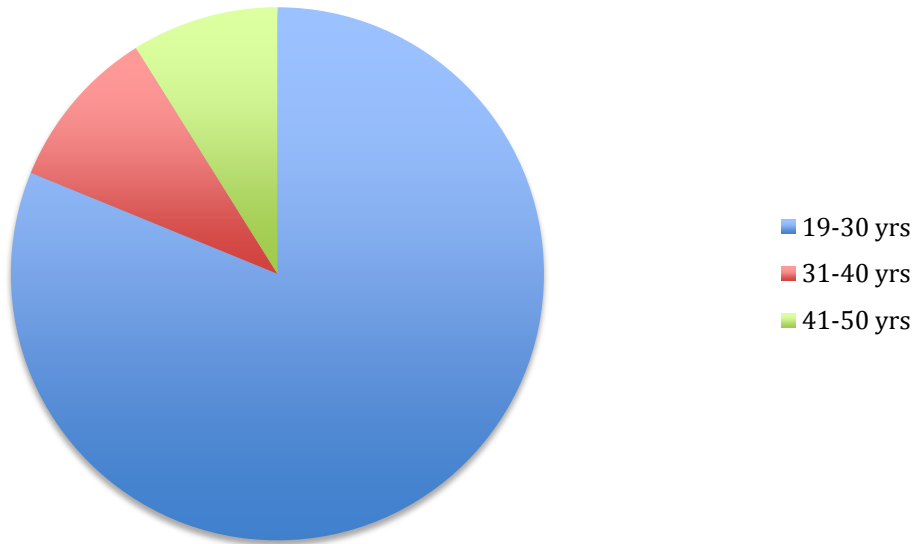
Figures 1: All IF Modes by Age

² "N" means number of people included.

Direct Funded Respite (N=848)



Direct Funding (N=101)



Host Agency Funding (N=100)



Microboard Funding (N=262)



Level of Need and Risk – Guide to Support Allocation (GSA) and flags

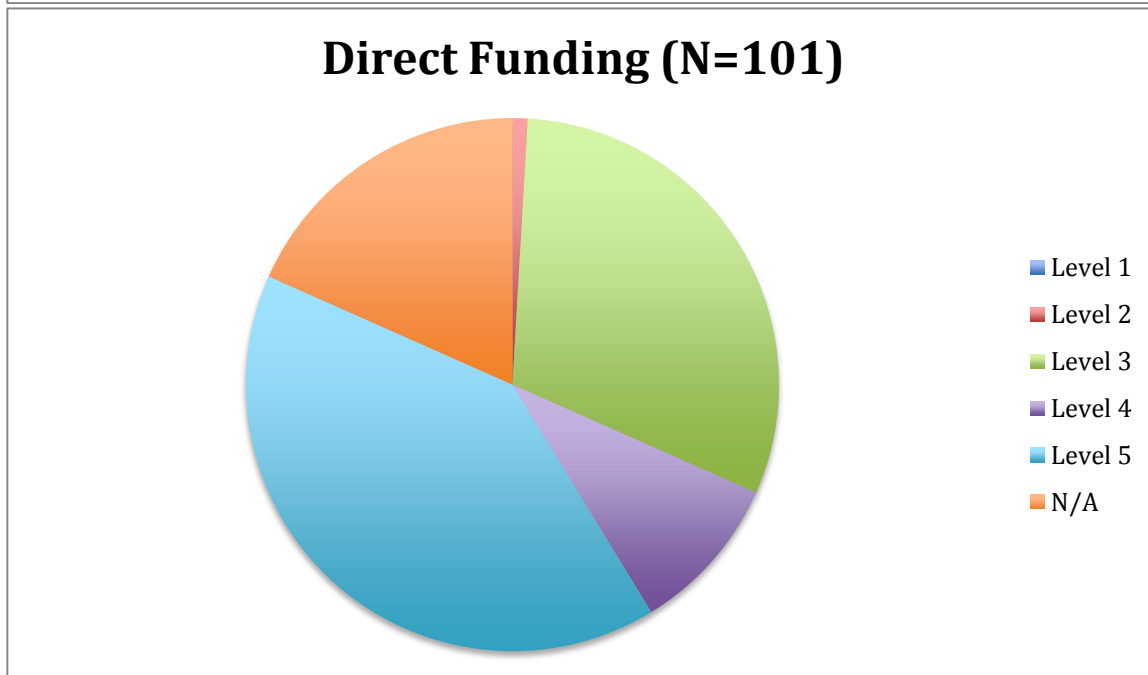
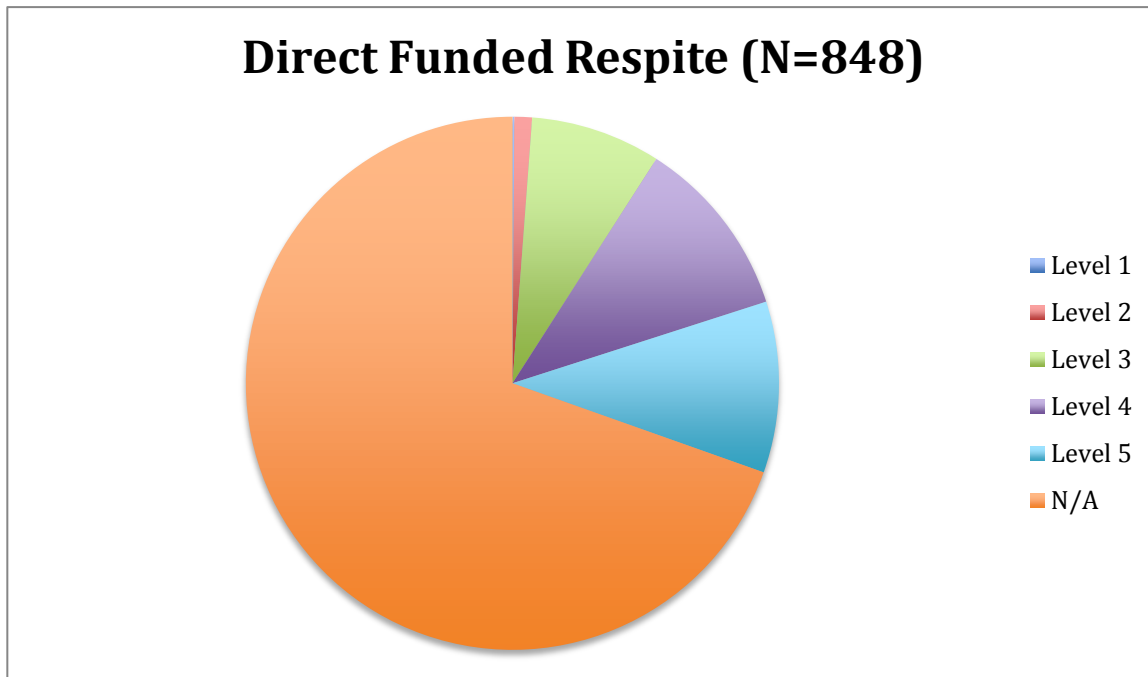
Analyzing (*looking closely at*) the use across GSA levels resulted in some important things to note. Generally speaking, there was a general positive correlation between GSA level and usage of IF funding methods. This means that more people with high GSA scores used IF funding methods than those with low GSA scores. The

analysis suggests that IF modes were more common among people with higher levels of disability-related need. **Table 2** (below) shows the number of users of all of the IF modes by GSA.

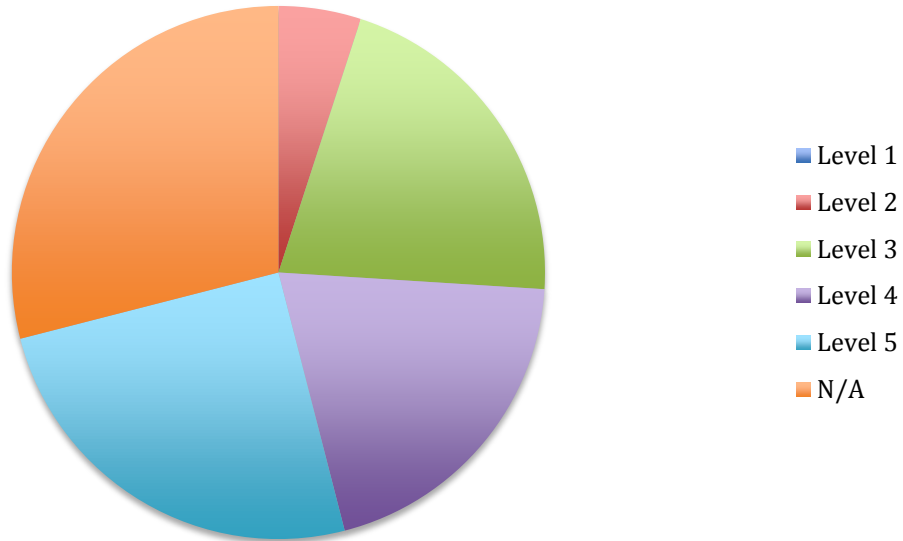
Table 2: All IF modes by Guide to Support Allocation (GSA)

GSA Levels	<i>n</i> <i>(number of people)</i>	%
Direct Funded Respite (N=848*)		
Level 1	1	0.1
Level 2	9	1.1
Level 3	67	7.9
Level 4	93	11.0
Level 5	88	10.4
N/A(<i>not applicable</i>)	590	69.6
TOTAL	848	100
Direct Funding (N=101)		
Level 2	2	2.0
Level 3	9	8.9
Level 4	21	20.8
Level 5	29	28.7
N/A	40	39.6
TOTAL	101	100
Host Agency (N=100)		
Level 2	5	5.0
Level 3	21	21.0
Level 4	20	20.0
Level 5	25	25.0
N/A	29	29.0
TOTAL	100	100
Microboard Funding (N=262)		
Level 2	1	0.4
Level 3	8	3.1
Level 4	25	9.5
Level 5	27	10.3
N/A	201	76.7
TOTAL	262	100

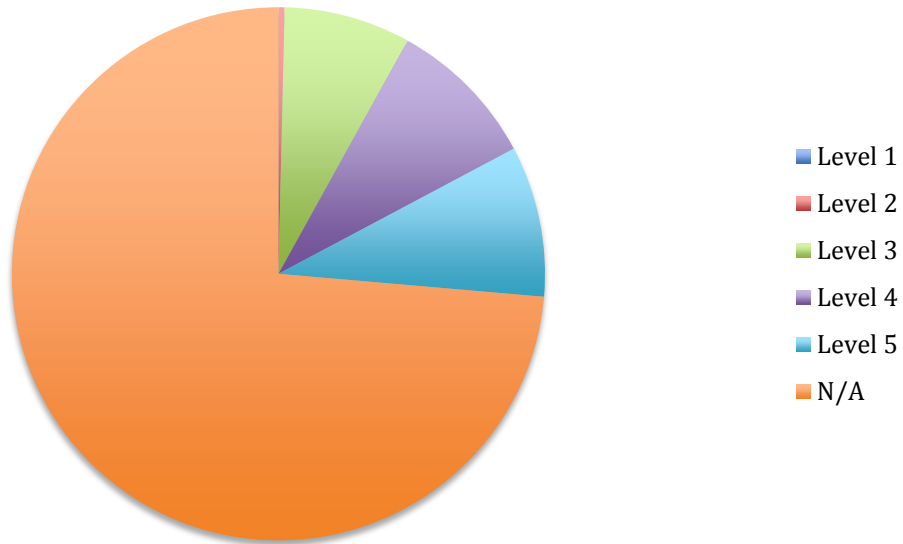
Figures 2: All IF modes by Guide to Support Allocation (GSA)



Host Agency (N=100)



Microboard Funding (N=262)



The average cost across core funding modalities (*the main way funding is provided*) by GSA level was less regular/dependable. For example, there is a large jump in funding levels between levels 3 and 4 under direct funding. And when we look at host agency funding, this large increase does not occur until level 5. There are also differences in the amount of funding by mode. For example for GSA level 4, funding

ranged from \$12,209.14 under host agency to \$50,661.70 under microboards. **Table 3**(below) shows the difference in costs under the four IFmodes by GSA levels as a measure of support needs.

Table 3: All IF Modes - Funding Allocated by GSA Levels (numbers in brackets are the standard deviations which tell us how spread out the numbers are)

GSA Levels	Direct Funded Respite (N=848)	Direct Funding (N=101)	Host Agency (N=100)	Microboards (N=262)
Level 1	\$2,799.96			
Level 2	\$2,800.41 (\$3.13)	\$10,746.61 (\$6,804.83)	\$5,351.28 (\$5,598.19)	\$11,547.00 (\$13,916.71)
Level 3	\$3,837.14 (\$3,819.15)	\$9,074.94 (\$7,861.18)	\$7,291.88 (\$7,633.50)	\$18,293.59 (\$9,696.80)
Level 4	\$4,021.74 (\$2,647.19)	\$21,103.89 (\$17,370.89)	\$12,209.14 (\$13,540.32)	\$50,661.70 (\$54,163.81)
Level 5	\$5,530.74 (\$7,318.90)	\$26,022.34 (\$24,174.90)	\$27,371.64 (\$55,502.59)	\$42,274.74 (\$38,356.85)
N/A	\$3,280.33 (\$1,688.14)	\$18,353.91 (\$20,321.66)	\$14,092.41 (\$13,771.21)	\$53,927.76 (\$49,398.05)

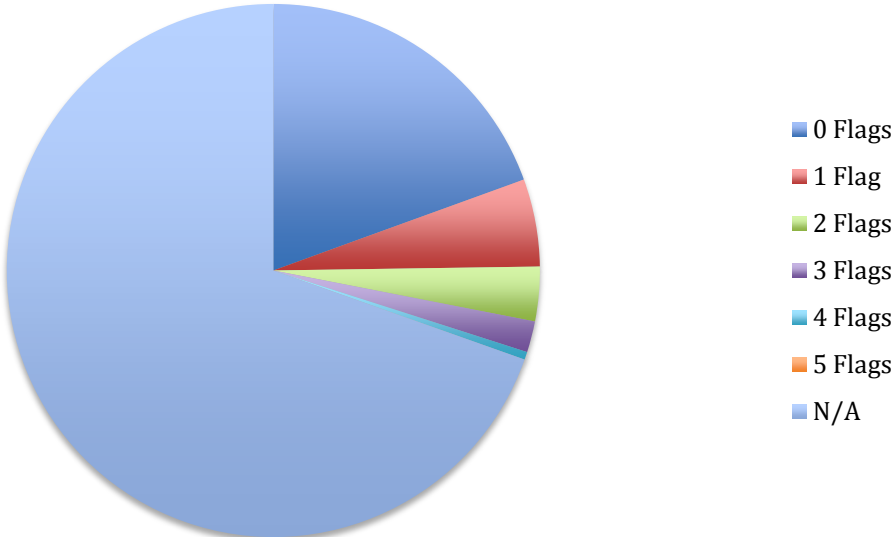
There was a general negative trend in use with regards to flags. This means that the fewer flags associated with an individual, the more likely they were to use IF funding methods. However, since the flag system was used to show specific risk factors or concerns rather than general need, there would not be the same expectation of consistency with flags as with GSA levels. **Table 4**(below) shows the number of users per flag number in each IF mode.

Table 4: All IF modes by Flags

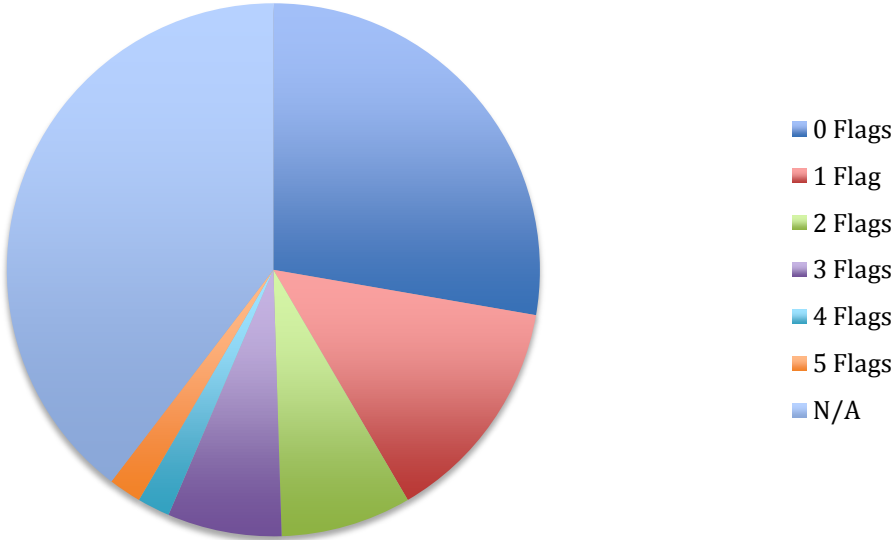
Number of Flags	<i>n</i> <i>(number of people)</i>	%
Direct Funded Respite (N=848*)		
0	165	19.5
1	45	5.3
2	28	3.3
3	16	1.9
4	4	0.5
N/A(not applicable)	590	69.6
TOTAL	848	100
Direct Funding (N=101)		
0	28	27.7
1	14	13.9
2	8	7.9
3	7	6.9
4	2	2.0
5	2	2.0
N/A	40	39.6
TOTAL	101	100
Host Agency (N=100)		
0	48	48.0
1	8	8.0
2	11	11.0
3	4	4.0
N/A	29	29.0
TOTAL	100	100
Microboard Funding (N=262)		
0	28	10.7
1	8	3.1
2	10	3.8
3	12	4.6
4	1	0.4
5	2	0.8
N/A	201	76.7
TOTAL	262	100

Figures 4: All IF modes by Flags

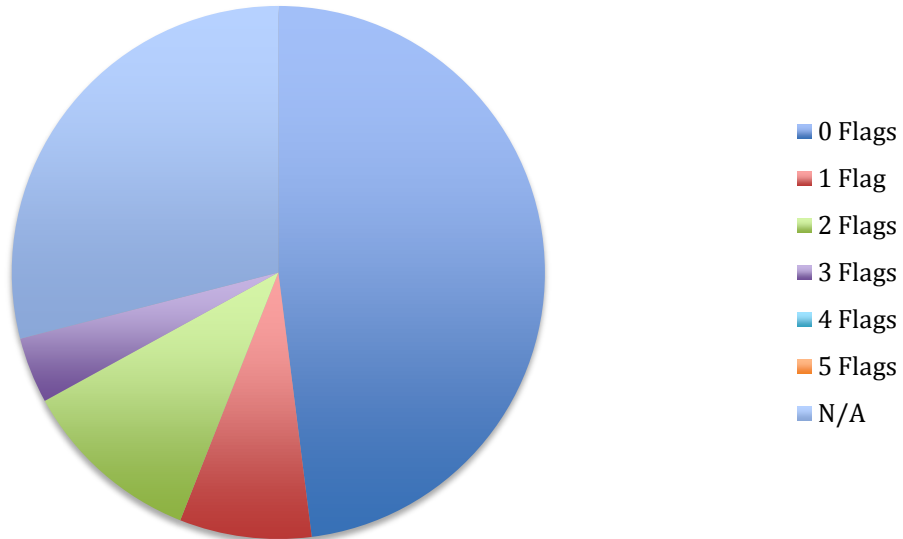
Direct Funded Respite (N=848)



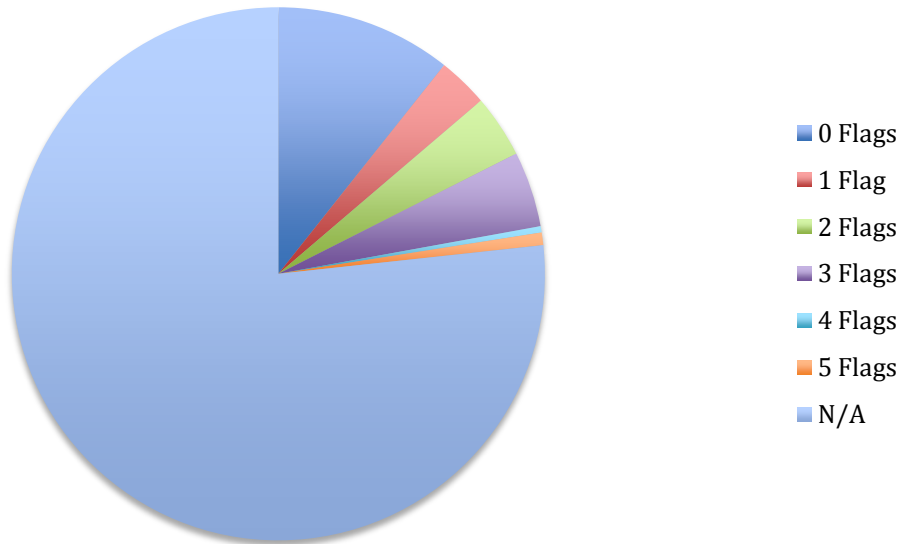
Direct Funding (N=101)



Host Agency (N=100)



Microboard Funding (N=262)



Are there differences in the use of IF by region(*area of the province*)?

Some of the data suggests that there are regional preferences (*likes and dislikes in different areas of the province*) in IF modes. For example, there was no host agency use in the North or Simon Fraser regions (*areas*), but a much higher use of host agency

in the South Island and Central and Upper Island regions. Similarly, microboards were used more frequently in the Central and Upper Island and Vancouver Coastal regions.

Table 5 (below) shows the number of users of each IF mode by region (*area of the province*).

Table 5: Number of users of IF modes by Region

Region	Direct Funded Respite	Direct Funding	Host Agency Funding	Microboard Funding
Central & Upper Island	98	8	26	49
Kootenay	46	7	5	3
North	68	7	-	21
North Okanagan – Shuswap	53	3	13	8
Simon Fraser	66	11	-	32
South Central Okanagan	63	7	4	22
South Island	63	17	34	22
Surrey Delta	99	15	1	26
Thompson Cariboo	57	3	7	20
Upper Fraser	96	4	5	17
Vancouver Coastal	139	19	5	42
TOTAL	848	101	100	262

There were a lot of differences by region in the average cost of direct funded respite. The cost ranged from a low of \$3,143.10 in the Kootenay region (area) to a high of \$4,258.56 in the Upper Fraser.

Table 6: Direct Funded Respite - Funding by Region

Region(N=848)	Mean(average)	SD(standard deviation)	Minimum	Maximum	Total Cost
					\$3,081,211.05
Central & Upper Island (n ³ =98)	\$3,663.42	\$2,125.34	\$2,796.00	\$16,296.00	\$359,015.40
Kootenay (n=46)	\$3,143.10	\$1,306.97	\$657.60	\$6,000.00	\$144,582.50
North (n=68)	\$3,706.10	\$4,667.51	\$2,266.68	\$38,916.00	\$252,015.12
North Okanagan–Shuswap (n=53)	\$3,673.59	\$2,431.74	\$2,799.96	\$15,411.96	\$194,700.50
Simon Fraser (n=66)	\$3,289.43	\$2,478.62	\$1,423.31	\$22,145.76	\$217,102.19
South Central Okanagan (n=63)	\$3,640.22	\$1,856.54	\$699.99	\$13,392.00	\$229,333.80
South Island (n=63)	\$3,256.95	\$1,145.53	\$447.96	\$6,000.00	\$205,188.12
Surrey Delta (n=99)	\$3,992.41	\$4,570.24	\$180.00	\$35,400.00	\$395,248.78
Thompson Cariboo (n=57)	\$4,143.48	\$678.44	\$2,266.80	\$44,842.80	\$236,178.24
Upper Fraser (n=96)	\$4,258.56	\$3,595.98	\$2,266.68	\$27,300.00	\$408,821.68
Vancouver Coastal (n=139)	\$3,158.45	\$1,135.21	\$1,141.92	\$11,356.00	\$439,024.72

What services are being used and are there differences in the costs across IF modes and in comparison to block funding modes?

All of the IF modes provided a wide range of services, with respite and community based services having a high frequency across types. **Table 7**(below) shows the number of services in each service type by IF mode. Table 7 also shows the average amount of funding provided for each type of service under each of the IF modes as well as under block funding. Overall, two core IF methods (host agency and direct funding)

³ 'n' means number of people.

have lower costs than block funded services in all service areas, with the exception of community based supports and employment. For community based supports and employment, direct funding is slightly higher than block funded services. These specific, non-residential services vary widely in terms of staffing ratios. It is not possible to determine whether the cost savings under block funded contracts can be explained by putting more people together in day programs.

Table 7: All Funding Modes - Funding Allocated by Service (number in brackets indicate standard deviation)

Services	Direct Funding (N=101)	Host Agency Data (N=100)	Microboards (N=262)	Block Funded
Outreach Support	\$12,549.59 (\$5,783.7)	\$10,489.96 (\$5,811.55)	\$55,434.63 (\$37,650.74)	\$25,700.00
Cluster Living			\$37,331.88 (\$5,888.62)	\$51,300.00
Direct Home Sharing				\$27,600.00
Agency Coordinated Home Sharing				\$38,700.00
Home Sharing	\$30,029.94 (\$23,229.33)	\$29,472.78 (\$11,889.88)	\$43,852.20 (\$35,777.15)	\$32,200.00
Live in Support	\$39,706.94 (\$29,447.45)	\$17,176.95 (\$4,381.59)	\$70,968.80 (\$59,916.36)	\$48,700.00
Staffed residential			\$135,205.41 (\$68,085.76)	\$110,000.00
Employment	\$13,880.84 (\$9,007.12)	\$4,202.80 (\$3,955.27)	\$14,427.00 (\$9,041.07)	\$13,600.00

Skill Development / Individual Services	\$19,663.61 (\$12,050.90)	\$20,727.51 (\$12,745.43)	\$57,284.85 (\$51,986.49)	\$23,200.00
		\$21,115.32	\$43,841.14 (\$23,760.75)	
Community Based	\$23,250.04 (\$21,272.16)	\$34,237.51 (\$57,627.78)	\$42,741.68 (\$29,289.28)	\$18,900.00
Home Based			\$40,476.20 (\$20,064.66)	\$29,700.00
Contracted Respite			\$14,958.76 (\$20,695.31)	\$5,000.00
Behavioral	\$3,708.00		\$5,562.00	\$5,000.00
Psychological				\$5,000.00
Homemaker	\$19,453.54 (\$13,273.45)		\$25,636.00 (\$18,556.99)	\$5,000.00

With respect to microboards, the study shows a higher cost for this mode compared to both IF funding modalities and block funded services. There are some possible explanations (*reasons*) for this difference, and microboard funding should therefore not be mistakenly seen as necessarily more expensive. With the data available, there were a greater number of high cost contracts and more individuals with higher GSA and flag levels under microboards than in other funding modes. However, this does not seem to explain the consistency or level of differences in cost. A further explanation may be that microboards have generally been in place longer than the IF modes and contracts were arranged at a time when more resources were available. Another possible explanation (*reasons*) may be simply that the presence of a microboard may indicate a greater ability to advocate effectively (*successfully*). It should also be noted that this study

cannot assess (*judge/evaluate*) the value added by a microboard, which may to some degree give a good reason for the difference in cost.

Conclusion

The current study supports the view that IF methods can cover almost all services supported by CLBC at a cost mostly equal to, or lower than, traditional block funded services. From a cost perspective, both direct payments and host agency modes of IF would seem to offer the most economical (*inexpensive*) options; however, microboards may offer equal or better value for money when other things are considered (e.g., building relationships and community connections, ongoing network support and ability to support persons with complicated support needs).