



County of Simcoe
Social and Community Services
Children & Community Services
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MINUTES

MEETING DATE: 11/21/2012

MEETING TIME: 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: L. D'Ambrosio (Best Start-County of Simcoe, S. Lee (Local Immigration Partnership), S. Plewes (NSMLHI), Y. Skybin (YMCA), S. Varughese (Catholic Family Services), G. Webster (OPP-Central Region), L. Westcott (Green Haven Shelter for Women, R. Wisken (LIP), I. Pozgaj (MIIO), R. Griffiths (MIION), L. Douglas (LIP, recording secretary)

SUBJECT: Human Services Sub-council Meeting

1) Welcome

The Chair welcomed members, and members introduced themselves.

2) Business Arising from Notes of Meeting of October 4, 2012

Terms of Reference – The Terms of Reference were circulated for comment. No comments were received at this time. Further feedback can be sent to Robyn Wisken. The Terms of Reference will be formalized as presented if no further comments are received.

3) Presentation on Portal (Irena Pozgaj, MIIO Program Coordinator)

I. Pozgaj, MIIO Coordinator, provided an overview of the website which will serve as the central point of access for newcomers to Simcoe County. The goals of the portal, feedback from the community including community information sessions and LIP sub-councils, best practices review, literature review, sustainability planning, launch date, content development, use of tools such as videos, widgets, visual identifiers, multilingual messages, 5 sections (living, working, doing business, learning and connecting), examples from other portals' living sections, and partnerships with IT Department and 211 were presented. Feedback was welcomed.

Comments included:

- Consider French Language Act requirements for employers
- Link to French language portal
 - Add sentence in French to the link
- Where does health fit in? – doesn't stand out in those 5 categories
 - Health care is a key draw for immigrants
 - Link to LHIN health services portal – nsmhealthline.ca
- Is there anything missing in living section from examples?
 - Emergency services, including outreach, different policing agencies –City, OPP - can be confusing to newcomer
- Early intervention services - where to place? → education or living or language → child care fits well with living; can be in 2 sections; term "special needs" – keep language consistent such as early intervention services (include a brief description to clarify for the newcomer);

- Avoid administrative language
- Be specific about what each section covers
- Use Best Start Service mapping tool as reference
- For acronyms, add feature that displays full name when cursor placed over acronym
- Links to associations (S. Varughese will forward list to Irena)
- OPP has multi-cultural photos of police force that could be used on portal.

I. Pozgaj will draft some ideas from today's meeting and present content at the next meeting. Members were agreeable to this.

S. Plewes demonstrated the newly launched health services portal – <http://nsmhealthline.ca/> that covers health services, health careers, health news, health events, and health library in 6 specific areas within North Simcoe Muskoka. The portal can be linked to the NSM site. County of Simcoe GIS is mapping health and social services.

4) Working Groups Update

Best Practices

G. Webster reported on the first meeting of the working group on a best practices conference. Members of the working group include: G. Webster, B. Saniga; D. Woods, along with L. D'Ambrosio and S. Varughese who will be joining the working group at its next meeting. Discussion at the first meeting focused on the following:

Purpose:

- raise awareness among providers about the barriers faced by newcomers to Simcoe County and identify ways to overcome them
- Help create attitudinal change that makes community more welcoming.

Audience

- **Open up beyond Human Services sector &** promote through the LIP Sub-councils

Structure

- Gather best practices from each of the LIP sub-councils as well as businesses and select 3 to present during the event
- Create a best practices bazaar/display area where participants can browse, gather materials, etc.

Tentative Agenda:

- **AM:** Journeys of 2-3 immigrants - emphasizing the country and culture they came from, what they left behind, what services and people were the most helpful, and reasons for settling in Simcoe County
- **PM:** presentations from 3 different sectors that have gone the extra mile in welcoming newcomers: how they came to understand a newcomer need, changes made in their services, results for newcomers and their organization, lessons learned, and recommendations
- **End the day:** survey each participant on one thing they will do differently as a result of this event.
- **Provide an ethnically diverse luncheon**

When: Fall 2013

Where: Barrie or Midhurst

Other:

- Develop template to circulate to community, i.e. call for proposals to present; display booths, ethnically diverse foods

- include speaker
- Funding – LIP may be able to secure funding

Working group on Language Translation/Interpretation:

Y. Skybin reported that numbers are few in this working group, and more engagement is required to move forward with this priority.

Accordingly, the following recommendations were made:

- Address this priority at the sub-council level instead of a working group level at this time
- Add as an agenda item to sub-council meetings
- possible move to a working group level if so determined by the sub-council
- S. Plewes suggested Ernie Vaillancourt, LHIN French Language Services coordinator, for working group if reconvened.
- Service mapping of translation/interpretation – develop a survey which could be distributed by 211 to the community providers to identify what services exist in the different organizations. Members agreed to move forward with the survey or a “feedback form”.
- Proposal for funding of translation services could be made to United Way

5) Review of Community Settlement Strategy - Readiness Theme

Copies of the Community Settlement Strategy were distributed at the meeting. The Settlement Strategy and in particular the Readiness piece could serve as a guide to the Sub-council to move forward with goals and then into the Inspire piece. The link to the Community Settlement Strategy is:

http://www.simcoe.ca/ws_cos/groups/public/@pub-cos-ccs/documents/web_content/wscos_012893.pdf

and to the themed video played at the launch:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsITZCemzzE&feature=BFa&list=UUttQnNK9H8pW71JGdimflzA> .

6) Other Business

S. Varughese provided an overview of Catholic Family Services Diversity Committee – including its mission of understanding internal barriers to order to better assist clients, building awareness and a sense of community – what can they offer; provide a welcoming environment and projecting rights and equality of diversity. A diversity board is hung in the lobby that includes postings of a multicultural calendar, festivals, important dates; national day recognitions; new organizations in or close to Simcoe County (i.e. My House). There are plans to have guest speakers and the sharing of personal stories as education pieces.

7) Next Meeting Date

The next 3 meeting dates were set as follows:

- January 10, 2013
- February 21, 2013
- March 21, 2013

All 3 meetings will take place from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. at the County of Simcoe Administration Centre.

The agenda will include the content at the next meeting for feedback.