

# North West Scarborough Local Immigration Partnership

## Community Summit #3 - Minutes

**Date:** January 11<sup>th</sup> 2011

**Location:** Scarborough Hospital Auditorium (General Campus) – 3050 Lawrence Ave.

**Time:** 5:30pm – 8:00pm

### **Attendees:**

#### Partner Agencies

Waheeda Rahman (The Scarborough Hospital), Margaret Wong (YMCA), Jorge Silvestri (MNLCT), Stephanie Yin (Aisling), Oleg Valin (EMYS – ISAP), Aleem Sufi (ACSA – ISAP), Neelu Nagi (TESS)

#### Child Minders

Ana M. Ruano (Supervisor), Ting Shi (Assistant)

#### Volunteers

Furhana Nahid, K. Hameed, Yasmin Naz, Priti Patel, Jing, Mila, Ananadarajan Arulampalam

#### Newcomer Community Participants

Jancy Noel, Cornel Ritchil, Yumma Nabi, Yunfen Chen, Kaiguo Chen, Shihe Lai, HuaKai Luo, Mr. Yang, Saimei Su, Mr. Su, Ms. Xiao, Fuyun Zhang, Mr. Zhao, Jingqing Zhou, Dali Jiang, Wensuo Duan, Guilan Cheng, Timothy Chan, Nancy, Pingping, Jing He, Mr. Long, Richard Wang, James Ji, Mei Du, Yongqin Li, P. Yi, Thanuja Muttu, Srinithethan Bala, S. Thalayasingham, M. Churiyasrichandar, C. Pathmakantha, Mr. Samipkumar Patel, Kiritkumar Patel, Nilkanth Patel, Thanasiri Muthulingam, Jeyanthy Balasingam, Patnam Thevamanohararajah, T. Rasendran, D. Patel, Maityi, Kefon Mehta, Purul Melihi, Bhatti Muhammad, Mr. Abdullah, Balachandran Nallathamby, Perampalam Pathmanathan, Puwaneswan Pathmanathan, Vasanthy S, Vijaya Rajan, Seema Javad, Akbur Jamshid, Sasi Kathir, S. Balasingham, Nila Ananthavathan

#### NWS LIP Staff

Hanifa Kassam – Manager of Settlement & Newcomer Services

Mani Mahadeva – Project Manager

Rezwan Karim – Community Outreach Worker

Michelle Davis – Project Administrator

Lucy Xiaohong Ren – Animator/ Translator

Sri Thangarajah – Animator/ Translator

Muneer Ahmed Jam – Animator

Welcome and Overview

**Mani welcomes all participants and introduces the LIP Management Team, facilitator Danny Nashman, and Translators for the evening, Lucy Ren (Chinese) and Sri Thangarajah (Tamil)**

### Project Brief

The **North West Scarborough Local Immigration Partnership (LIP)** aims to establish a comprehensive Settlement Strategy with community stakeholders, services providers and residents from the North West Scarborough neighbourhoods. Through the coordinated work of this partnership, a collaborative settlement strategy that includes solutions for successful social and economic integration of immigrants of North Scarborough region has been developed.

It is envisioned that the Partnership will be a dynamic collaboration of community stakeholders from many sectors, including immigrant service providers, the business sector, youth and adult services, employment, health, government and educational institutions.

**Danny the facilitator welcomes the participants and introduces the presentation and topics/agenda for the evening**

**Danny reviews the previous work of the LIP and its past process (please refer to PowerPoint slide “Where We Have Come to Date...”)**

6:10 Reviewing the Implementation Plan

**Danny runs through the Core Strategies for Enhancing the Newcomer Experience in NWS (refer to PowerPoint slides) which are the priorities of the LIP Strategy and the Priority Areas the Community Chose at the Last Summit. He then introduces the exercise for the participants to review the strategies from the last Community Summit in November 2010.**

6:30 Individual Review the Strategies and Activities

**Working alone, the participant’s review the community prioritized strategies and are asked to reflect on the following:**

- What questions come to mind
- Which activities are most important to us?
- Is there anything that should be added or deleted?

**Community Prioritized Strategies:**

# 1: Provide pre-arrival settlement services and information for newcomers before they migrate to Canada.

# 5: Provide more “one stop shopping” for newcomer services. (Newcomer service centers provide multiple services out of one location through co-location and resource sharing among service providers)

# 7: Increase access to professional volunteer opportunities, training and employment support for newcomers in North West Scarborough.

# 9: Increase access to language training programs and provide settlement services in multiple languages

#11: Improve access to health services (physical and mental health)

#12: Improve services for housing and other basic needs

**Danny then divides participants into six groups. Each group chooses a strategy recommendation and reviews the proposed activities. In the groups, individuals are to share their ideas and create a presentation regarding the following questions:**

1. Which of activities in the plan are most important to us?
2. Is there anything that should be added or deleted?
3. Do you have any other questions about this strategy?

6:50 Group presentations and open discussion

**Danny reconvenes all the groups for presentations of the summarized feedback of all six groups.**

### **Group 1 Feedback: Pre-Arrival Settlement Services**

- Notify those who are qualified where to find information on the internet – available in different languages – different web sites to explore
- Customs’ policies are made available in different languages – what to bring and not to bring
- Housing services information – where to find for temporary settlement
- Live person is available to answer question and tell status of application- Applicant in Canada can talk to an agent
- Information package received before application
- Airport brochure – can take home
- Current information ON LINE – make sure information is accurate and up dated regularly

### **Group 2 Feedback: One-Stop Shopping**

- One stop centers open weekends and after hours
- Have enough staffing for case management
- Credential assessment is difficult – make it easier – let settlement agencies do credential assessment and have it recognized by government –currently few institutes are assigned to do the assessment and since they are overloaded it takes significantly longer time. Settlement agencies do not have qualified professionals to do the assessment and certification. However, settlement agencies could help facilitate the process

### **Group 3 Feedback: Volunteer Training and Employment**

- Create more opportunities for volunteers
- More newcomer co-op positions. Expand it to more private companies
- Volunteer experience should be relevant to the professional background/interest (sometimes the experiences are not applicable to an individuals' field of interest)
- Government to provide enough training to help individuals work in their field (same field experience even as a volunteer)

### **Group 4 Feedback: Language Training**

- Language training program should provide a chance for students to practice
- English language teachers should be able to speak the language of most of the students (so they can ask questions in their native language) – However, other groups said that it will affect the chance of learning the language faster as students will tend to talk in their first language. It was proposed that language instructors should have good understand about the cultures of the students in the class.
- Other organizations (like hospitals) should be able to provide translation services for newcomers – at present two major hospitals in Scarborough have Chinese and Tamil translators.
- Need information in different languages at community centre, library etc. / connect with volunteer / give training / part time job – long term goal - education and employment
- Divide group into multicultural groups to encourage people to talk English
- Senior group – provide a teacher that speaks in both languages
- Focus on practical real time experience conversation
- English handbook in both languages with pictures/ diagrams – that can work on English outside the classroom
- Volunteer organization provide training to applicants – offer help with application and police check

### **Group 5 Feedback: Health**

- Improve access – interpreters, who to call for what in hospital, how to find doctors etc.
- Medical coverage for first 3 months
- Awareness of mental health issues – teach people about it (depression and stress)
- Support and awareness for new mothers and seniors

### **Group 6 Feedback: Housing and Basic Needs**

- Housing should be provided as soon as possible – eliminate or reduce waiting lists
- More affordable housing designated for newcomers
- Reduce housing waiting periods
- Provide furniture

- Healthy environment - ensure inspections and follow-up
- Provide newcomers with information on affordable housing faster and educate them on their tenants rights

7:20 Rank the activities based on envisaged results

**Individually the participants were asked to rank the activities identified, rating them from 1 to 5 (1 = not important, 5 = very important), and hand in the results**

**Results:** (Please see the appendix for the rating by community members)

7.30 Overview of the Implementation Phase

**Mani explains the next phase of the LIP Implementation plan (please see PowerPoint slide “Overview of the Implementation Phase”)**

7:40 Partnership Council member agencies brief their activities supporting newcomers

**Due to time constraints the Partnership Council members in attendance were unable make their brief presentations but participants were given written materials on member organizations. Some member organizations were also able to briefly talk to participants after the Summit one-on-one.**

7.50 Feedback about the Community Summit

At the end of the Summit a one page evaluation questionnaire was distributed among the participants to get their feedback. Following are the key feedback:

- Participants highly appreciated that there was interpretation service available in Chinese and Tamil languages which enabled them to actively participate in the discussion and express their opinion
- Summit should be organized at least twice a year in the future
- Decisions taken by the Council should be implemented as soon as possible
- Many of the participants showed interest to get involved in the LIP process

**Mani thanked all contributors: Scarborough Hospital, Danny Nashman, Partnership Council Organizations, and all newcomer participants**

8:00 Close

Appendix:

## North West Scarborough Local Immigration Partnership Implementation Plan

### Rating the Activities by Community Members at the Summit – Jan 2011

Strategies and Activities	Rank
<b># 1: Provide pre-arrival settlement services and information for newcomers before they migrate to Canada.</b>	
▪ Federal and Provincial governments enhance easy access to newcomer information before arrival in their first language.	6
▪ Explore opportunities for government partnering with settlement service organizations in Toronto to provide orientation sessions (before arrival)	7
<b># 2: Provide more “one stop shopping” for newcomer services. (Newcomer service centers provide multiple services out of one location)</b>	
▪ Begin collaborative planning among newcomer service providers in North West Scarborough to enable one stop shopping	1
▪ Identify resource and capacity building requirements and mobilize funding and resources to help create one stop service centres	2
<b># 3: Increase access to professional volunteer opportunities, training and employment support for newcomers in North West Scarborough.</b>	
▪ Encourage employment service organizations to expand networking with leading recruiting agencies and employers in Scarborough and Toronto	19
▪ Increase opportunity for the newcomers to acquire volunteering or internships in their professional field faster	18
▪ Increase pool of mentors who have expertise in varying professional fields to help newcomers	22
▪ Provide better skills development training to match with labour market requirement	25
▪ Enhance awareness and support newcomers with professional accreditation process	28
<b># 4: Increase access to language training programs and provide settlement services in multiple languages</b>	
▪ Explore opportunities to have English language training centres located at easily accessible location	27
▪ Streamline language classes and be flexible with eligibility criteria to provide opportunity to all immigrants to improve (official) language skills	5
▪ Explore the possibilities to streamline child minding support for all the language training programs and provide daycare support or provide subsidy for daycare expenses	16
▪ Increase availability of language training in the work place	3
▪ Establish a pool of interpreters/ translators to serve across different sectors	8
▪ Explore the opportunities for sponsorship in training volunteer interpreters to obtain a formal, professional interpreter/ translator qualification	21
<b>#5: Improve access to health services (physical and mental health)</b>	
▪ Explore the opportunity to form forum or consortium for health service providers to	24

coordinate services and collectively address common issues	
▪ Promote coordination among health service providers and settlement service providers to enhance improved health care service for newcomers	13
▪ Improve access to general health and mental health services at hospitals, doctor officers and health centres by expanding existing programs and educating newcomers of services available	10
▪ Facilitate training and capacity building of all the newcomer settlement workers on health and mental health	14
▪ Improve accessibility to community education on healthy lifestyle	15
<b>#6: Improve services for housing and other basic needs</b>	
▪ Create a team to educate newcomers on tenants rights and responsibilities and advocate with authorities to enhance access affordable housing faster	9
▪ Educate newcomers about healthy living conditions and their rights and responsibilities	23
▪ Explore opportunities to form a coalition to enhance better food, furniture and clothing delivery of services to the people in need	26
▪ Identify effective tools to outreach to the private sector for sponsorship and donations to increase services to the need people	17
▪ Support newcomers to adapt to new living environment through education and awareness	20
▪ Educate newcomers on their environmental responsibilities	12
▪ Educate newcomers on financial system and income management	11
▪ Educate newcomers on their role in promoting community safety	4