

North West Scarborough Local Immigration Partnership

Planning Session # 4 - Meeting Minutes

Review the Process and Develop Strategies

Date: June 22nd, 2010

Location: 39 Highbrook Drive - Highbrook Learning Centre

Attendees: Patrick Au (Chinese Family Services of Ontario), Mei Tin Lee (CICS), Hanna Cabaj (TCDSB), Frank Chu (TCDSB), Freba Shahsamand (MCI), Jorge Silvestri (MNLCT), Malsan Gananendran (ANC - SLAM), Monika Payseur (CIC), Aleem Sufi (ISAP), Priti Patel (ISAP), Kamal Mollah (ACSA), Selina Aivaliotis (CIC), Hakima Yusufi (AAO), Cyleta Sealy-Gibson (Glendower – Resident), Christine Okonkwo-MacKenzie (Toronto Public Health), Lee Soda (ACSA), Timothy Chan (ACSA/Faith Hope Love Ministry), Sulekha Sathi (Toronto Public Library), Layla Harrison (ACCESS Employment), Helen Yang (YMCA Newcomer Info. Ctr.), Ralph Gain (YouthLink), Cynthia DuMont (WSNCC), Mani Mahadeva (NWS LIP), Rezwan Karim (NWS LIP), Michelle Davis (NWS LIP)

1. Welcoming and Self Introduction

Mani explains the name change of LIP to encompass the geographic area of our catchment area

2. Objective of the Planning meeting, Review the Process and Path Forward

Mani goes over the past business of the LIP and Danny shares what direction the LIP will be going towards and how their linked to the past work already done

Partnership Council Planning and Capacity Building Session #1 – February 11

- Creating a Vision for The Ideal Newcomer Experience We Want to Create
- What do we wish to see in North West Scarborough as a result of LIP project
- How do we optimize our efforts to enhance the newcomer experience in this neighborhood?
– work towards ideal situation and not problem solving
- Decided to consult the Community - Interviewing different stakeholders

Neighborhood Research - February /March

- LIP animators interviewed 97 individuals consisting of:
 - Newcomers – (Landed immigrants/ refugees/ youths)
 - Residents
 - Faith-based groups/ resident associations
 - Settlement agencies
 - Educators & Employers
 - Housing providers and others
- Questions asked:
 - What works best for newcomers?
 - What are the wishes of newcomers?

Re-Grouping the Partnership Council Planning Session #2 to Consolidate Data – March 30

- Reviewed the findings of stakeholders interviews

- Participants shared Newcomer stories from interviews
- Identified topics we wanted to explore more deeply at the Community Summit
 - How do we find a way to integrate service provision even more to generate the one-stop-shop experience?
 - How do we support the community to support community?
 - How do we engage newcomers in designing services?
 - How do we provide right info, right time, and right place in holistic way?
 - How do we know that we're providing the best services?
 - How do we raise the bar of all of our services to the level of best? /How do we locate the quality best practices in each of our services?

Community Summit – April 6

- Who Was There:
 - Agencies and Service Providers
 - Local Residents / Newcomers to Canada
- What We Did:
 - Explored Stories and Ideas from the Stakeholder Interviews
 - Created a Vision for the Future – What Would an Ideal Newcomer Experience Look Like
 - Identified High Level Themes to Explore in Our Settlement Strategy
- What is Working Best Today for Newcomers:
 - Access to language classes - ESL and LINC program
 - Multi-services in one location
 - Services are Welcoming – building relationships, informal connecting
 - Some of the employment programs are helpful – Mentorship program, placement opportunities
 - Childcare programs – happy to see children are well cared for
 - Transportation system - Convenient traveling by TTC, Free tokens provided by some programs
 - Community supports newcomers – faith groups, ethnic communities/ youth groups
 - Government assistance - welfare, disability benefit, education loan, subsidized housing
- What We Are Wishing For (themes from interviews)
 - **Make the Immigration Process- Easier, Faster** (Less wait time)
 - **Improve Access to Information** – Help newcomers find the information they need at the right place and time
 - **Ensure newcomers are involved in designing services**
 - **Support to enable the community help newcomers**
 - **Integrate Settlement Services**
 - All the services available in one place / Fewer referrals/ Improved services
 - Provide the right information at the right time tailored to the need of the newcomer
 - **Ensure services are available at point of need** – some mobile services, coordination among the service providers
 - **Assessing credentials – improve the system** – building awareness
 - **Employment** – better connections with business, employers for mentorship/ placement
 - **Access to Education** (post secondary) – making it more accessible
 - **Support to families** – parenting, seniors support
 - **Affordable Housing**

Partnership Council Planning Session #3 to decide focus areas – April 16

- Reviewed what works best for newcomers and what they wish for the future
- Discussed the ideas to improve pre-arrival, arrival and post-arrival newcomer experience
- Identified other stakeholders to be included in our Council
- Areas for Action and Innovations were identified

Teams (Clusters) Work on Areas of Innovation and Action - March – Present

Improving the Initial Welcome and Information Gathering Process

- Pre-arrival package – services at home country before landing in Canada
- Arrival comprehensive package and services at airport – referral to welcome centre/settlement services in their area of settlement
- Welcoming centers – many welcome centers in the neighbourhood

Enabling the Community to Play a Valuable and Coordinated Role in Settlement

- Initial support to newcomers by community organizations
- Referral and other support to access newcomer services
- Welcoming newcomers and neighborhood gatherings

Making Services and Support More Effective

- Customizing the Support and Services Provided + Continuum of service to serve multiplicity of needs
- Building capacity in all those who are in touch with newcomers to better assess needs and provide appropriate coaching, guidance and advice
- Enhancing programs (JSW, LINC, Employment etc.) so that they better meet the diverse needs of newcomers
- To adopt a model based on coordination of services and where possible, appropriate integration

New working groups Established:

- Team 1: Welcome and Access to information
This team will review, analyse and make recommendations to improve pre-arrival and arrival welcome package and information, improve existing welcome centers, identify more welcoming centers and the role of resident and faith-based groups in welcoming newcomers.
- Team 2: Community Engagement in Settlement
This team will analyze how community groups (resident groups and faith-based groups) help newcomers, by building their capacity through training and networking.
- Team 3: Making Services and Support more Effective
Some of the key focus areas of this team include recommending service integration, establishing one-stop-shopping, capacity building of grass-roots organizations and other stakeholders, and enhancing tailor-made programs.

Consolidate Team (Cluster) Outcomes and Develop Strategies - June 22 – Planning Session #4

3. Project Objectives and Goals of Three Teams

LIP conducted:

- Two meetings with each team
- Two Steering Committee meetings
- Seven Focus group discussions with community groups were conducted
- Four Focus group discussions with settlement service agencies were conducted
- One on one meetings with partnership council members were conducted

As a result LIP has:

- Defined goal statement for each team/ cluster
- Identified objectives and outputs

Project Expectation

- To improve access to and coordination of immigrant integration services
- To improve labour market outcomes for immigrants.
- To strengthening local awareness and capacity to successfully integrate immigrants

Team 1 Objective:

- To recommend newcomer-friendly information package and recommend local initiatives to establish community welcome centres
- To promote community awareness and training on already available newcomer services

Outputs:

- Suggestions to improve existing information package

- Identify the possible welcome centres by the local initiatives
- Assess the capacity of residents - based institutions to support newcomers
- Identify types of training/awareness raising initiatives needed to enhance capacity of the community groups
- Recommend a platform for newcomers and residents to provide on-going constructive feedback

Team 2 Objectives:

- To recommend capacity development of community groups that support newcomers for initial set off
- To identify potential partnership models to ensure that better service is given to newcomers
- To support community groups to initiate networking with settlement services

Outputs:

- Identify existing capacity of the community groups
- Identify what roles community groups would like to play in helping newcomers
- Identify training needed to enhance the capacity of the community groups
- Identify settlement organizations already working or are willing to work with community groups
- Building the capacity of settlement service organizations
- Identify one or more partnership models
- Get community groups to work closely with settlement services

Team 3 Objectives:

- To identify potential areas to forge partnerships among settlement agencies and other service providers
- To propose a partnership mechanism that works with the community and faith groups to support newcomers effectively
- To recommend interventions to establish centres for multiple services and satellite services for better delivery (not clear on what your trying to say here)
- To suggest strategies that enhance coordination among settlement services and employers

Outputs:

- Identify availability of different newcomers services in the project area
- Identify the gaps in those services
- Training needs of frontline staff and community groups identified
- Partnership Council members identify the service gaps and areas of collaboration
- Partnership Council identifies settlement agencies who are willing to partner and/or to work with community groups
- One or more partnership models identified
- Potential locations to establish 'Centres for Multiple services' identified
- Prospective employers are identified by the council members
- Mentors in various professional fields are identified to connect with newcomers
- Better network established to provide more professional volunteer opportunities

4. Strategies to Achieve Team Objectives (Group Work)

Taking Our Work to the Next Level – Council Input

- Review specific questions to help move the 3 areas of focus forward
- Choose one of the 3 input groups to work in
- Break into three focus groups
- Groups share a short summary of conversation

Group 1 Questions & Feedback:

Getting Information Out

- How do you get information out to potential clients? And how effective are those methods?

- Outreach to other clients, e.g., Meals on Wheels
- Share information
- There is always need for outreach
- Share information in partnership meetings on different programs
- Networking
- Referrals from different agencies
- Outreach to institutions/organizations - Organizations can pass on information downward to their clients
- Attend LINC classes, make presentations, distribute brochures
- Advertise in local newspapers
- Outreach
 - Malls
 - Libraries
 - Schools
- Get-together meetings with residents through community events
- Door to door distribution of flyers/brochures
- Word of mouth
- Online experience sharing - Settlement.org, Facebook groups
- Presentations to social service organization, schools, fairs
- How do you use community groups to get your message out or promote referrals?
 - Programs with specific ethnic groups
 - Visit residents
 - Program for Seniors
 - Find volunteers in various communities
- What other vehicles should we be using to share information and get the messages out (ex: Welcoming centers)
 - Capacity building of information providers (Settlement Workers, Counselors)
 - Community engagement
 - Volunteer training
 - Satisfied client (word of mouth)
 - Community Ambassador
 - Sensitized Community Leaders
 - Recognize/acknowledge the community groups - Under valued
 - Build up trust in the communities

Group 2 Questions & Feedback:

Engaging and Enabling Community Groups

- What do we do best as service providers to engage the community groups in our areas to play in providing useful information and welcoming to newcomers?
 - Robust outreach styles – go to community centres – go to where they are at – parks, childcare centres, malls, etc.
 - Meet basic needs
 - Physically accompanying people to get them oriented with the neighbourhood
 - Active listening – helping each other
- What do we wish we could do even better to engage local groups?
 - Reduce barriers – risks barriers (ex. Can't transport people)
 - After hours availability when people need it the most - 'beyond the 9-5'
 - Relationships with Community Groups – building trust to solidify partnerships
 - Build on strengths within the community – already established community groups
- What training or development might community groups need to play this role? What role could your agency play in providing this support?
 - Volunteer training
 - Open space for residents
 - In house training within agencies for volunteers to work on the off hours
 - Backup system to meet everyone's needs
 - Overcome rules/liability

- Community groups are already involved – need to be recognized, partnered with – show appreciation of local groups – ‘you depend on us to get the word out but we do not feel valued or supported’
- Value of community development – value of building a trusting relationship in different communities – we need to advocate for funding to have the ability to partner with residents on a consistent basis

Group 3 Questions & Feedback:

Opportunities for Partnerships

- What partnerships are you currently engaged in that are making the most difference for newcomers today?
 - We have formal and informal partnerships to compliment the main services that we provide
 - Some don't directly serve the client but they do make our work better / increase our expertise
- As you reflect on our work over the last few months, what obvious opportunity for partnership in service delivery do you see that would make the most difference for newcomers?
 - Work toward providing accurate and relevant information, enhancing the knowledge and expertise
 - Staff mutually supporting the other agency's staff to provide better service
- Which types of partnerships should we recommend pursuing as part of this plan to improve mentorship, employment, housing, health or other key needs?
 - All partnerships should be pursued in these sectors
 - Places for clients to create their own networks to pursue the accomplishment of their goals
 - One dial in number for referral – e.g. 211
- In your experience, what does it take to form partnerships between agencies? What steps would need to be followed? What obstacles would need to be overcome?
 - Open and willingness – give and take
 - Leave ego at the door

5. Next Steps

Task for Teams (Clusters):

- Submit rationale, work plan and budget for extension
- Changes in meeting schedule
- Conduct focus group and/or small group discussions
- Continue development of draft strategy
- Next Steering Committee meeting in September 2010 (date pending)
- Next Partnership Council meeting in October 2010 (date pending)
- Reorganize working group during the extended period

Changes in Meeting Schedule

- Team meetings for July and August **only**, will be postponed
- Project management team will meet Council members individually and/or in small groups to receive inputs and feedback
- Next Team (Cluster) meetings will resume in the last week of September 2010

Working Groups beyond October 2010

- Cluster members will review sector specific recommendations and finalize strategies to enhance successful integration of newcomers

6. Important Reminders & Adjourn Meeting

Next Scheduled Team Meetings

Team 1: June 29th 2010, 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto (2600 Birchmount Rd.)

Team 2: June 28th, 10:00am – 12:00pm, ANC Steeles/L'Amoreaux (331 Glendower Circuit)

Team 3: July 8th, 2010 9:30am – 11:30am at CICS (2330 Midland Ave.)

Please visit the new North West Scarborough LIP website!

NSW LIP Website: <http://www.nwslip.com>

User Name: lipadmin

Password: e345dAefv (will be changed, waiting for confirmation from Brian)