



Voice of Newcomers

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Wrap-Up Council meeting for the Current Scarborough LIP's Structure

Joint Scarborough LIP Council Meeting



On March 22nd 2012 all four Scarborough Local Immigration Partnerships held a joint Council meeting at the Mid-Scarborough Hub, 2660 Eglinton Ave. East in Scarborough. The topics of discussion were to review the process of all four LIP projects, achievements, and outcomes; present the new Scarborough LIP structure; a roundtable discussion focused on identifying future priorities; the opportunities and challenges that may emerge from the new LIP structure; the effective measures that will need to be in place; how member organizations can become more involved; and what best practices can be adopted by the new LIP structure.

The meeting started with opening remarks from Warden Woods Community Centre Executive Director, Ginelle Skerritt, and a brief LIP background was given

by Lee Soda, Interim Executive Director of ACSA. Then there were presentations from each Scarborough LIP Initiative: Eglinton East-Kennedy Park LIP, Southwest Scarborough LIP, Northwest Scarborough LIP, and the South Scarborough LIP; were each presented their common priorities, past achievements and major outcomes.

Also the latest information on the new Scarborough regional LIP structure was presented to joint Council members. Lisa Loong, Regional Director for Catholic Crosscultural Services (CCS), which is also the lead agency for the new LIP structure, gave this presentation. She informed partners that CCS is still negotiating funding with CIC. However the future working structures of dividing Toronto into four regions for the new fiscal year will start April 1st 2012. A new unique feature of the new structure is that in addition to the Partnership Council, which mainly consisted of service providers, a New Immigrant Council (newcomer residents) will work in collaboration with the Partnership Council. The new structures will also form a Steering Committee made up of all members from the different councils, act as a governing committee, but not the

Final NWS LIP Meetings & Events	2
Complete List of NWS LIP Partners and Acknowledgements	4



major decision maker. That will be the responsibility of the Partnership Council. The theme of the new structure will be to assist all of Scarborough not just signal communities or neighbourhoods, as in the past structures.

Partners then were asked to participate in a roundtable discussion on the priorities, best practises, and activities to proceed with in the new structure. Some of the common areas for the future LIP to focus on discussed were:

- Health
- Social integration - language, culture shock, community focus
- Advocacy - empowering local communities
- Capacity building of front line workers
- Including communities that are not currently involved in

Final NWS LIP Meetings & Events

any Scarborough LIP (Ex: Malvern)

- Website
- Resident Engagement

Manjeet Dhiman, Senior Director, Services and Business Development of ACCES Employment gave the closing remarks. Overall this meeting intended to give partners an overview of the past work of Scarborough LIP's, maintain momentum for the new structure, and identify key focus areas to assist in the transition into the new LIP structure.

Despite the positive feedback received from members in their anticipation for the next phase of LIP's, they also expressed concerns for the future. Questions of what their roles and responsibilities will be, if local initiatives will be lost, and uncertainties of exactly how long will Toronto LIP's be funded arose. Many of these questions will not be answered until the new structure is actually in place, so time will tell.

Management Committee Meeting

The LIP Management Committee meeting was held in January 17 at Agincourt Community Service Association at 4155 Sheppard Avenue East. The members reviewed the centre guideline and provided their valuable feedback and suggested to make these documents available through NWS LIP website, share with partner organization, uploading to settlement.org/wiki and pass it on to the new Scarborough LIP to

continuously promote it. Members also reviewed the draft guideline on common Scams and Fraud and made suggestions to promote this material as a reference guide by the front line workers of the newcomer service organizations.

Lee Soda, ACSA's Interim Executive Director updated the Management Committee about the proposed changes in the LIP structure that will be effective from April 2012. The key features of the CIC proposed structure are as follows:

- 4 LIP's for 4 areas within Toronto - (West, Central North, Central South and East)
- Each LIP will get \$400,000 for one year and will consist of 4 core staff members.
- Catholic Cross Services is going to lead (decided by the group) the East region LIP (Scarborough LIP)
- New structure allows for new research that has not been conducted in the past.
- New structure includes Partnership Council and an Immigrant Council (working side by side)
- Structure will take on a purchase of service approach, where Catholic Cross Cultural Services (CCS) will hold the funds and the other agencies will work off them
- The new LIP structure will also attempt to capture some of the neighbourhoods which currently are not covered by LIP, such as Malvern

The NWS LIP organized a meeting with its resident members on January 19th 2012. The purpose of the meeting was to share and get feedback on the resource materials developed by different Working Committees

such as report on newcomer Scams and Fraud, centre guideline and report on outreach methods. Residents also recommended continuing some of the important activities through the new LIP structure. The suggestions made by the residents include:

- Enhance opportunities for professional networking including volunteer and placement opportunities
- Organize Job fair or information fair on selected topics such as mental health
- Continue programs for newcomer seniors such as healthy living, recreation, seniors' rights, civic awareness etc that help them to integrate better in the Canadian society
- English conversation circle (practice groups) for newcomer seniors
- Continue the NWS LIP website that contains valuable resources such as the service directory, updates on community events, and the practise of sending bi-weekly informative emails with links to website updates.

Working Committee Meetings

NWS LIP conducted five Working Committee meetings in the last week of January and two meetings in the later part of February. In each Working Committee meeting held in January the discussion was focused to review some of the resource materials and identify activities that needs to be taken forward by the amalgamated new LIP structure.

WC 1: Access to information and services reviewed report on

outreach methods and the 2nd draft of the guideline on common scams and fraud. They also suggested reviewing the websites of each of the Scarborough LIPs to come up with a recommendation for the next LIP structure what are the features and contents should be carried forward.

WC 2: Employment education and Training opined that sector specific job fair might be an effective approach to connect job seekers with the real employers. They also suggested piloting the Scams and fraud training with ESL or LINC students.

WC 3: Health and Wellness suggested working with Scarborough Hospital to develop a resource guide on health services and to explore the possibility of conducting a round table discussion with the agencies working on mental health issues

WC 4: Community Engagement and Social Inclusion recommended some of the activities for the next LIP structure to focus on such as Joint website and enhanced communications, connect with local neighbourhood networks and associations and ensure Community participation and engagement at different stages

WC 5: Family Settlement and Legal Support suggested conducting further research to acquire more information for the identified services that are under served in Scarborough such as LGBTQ communities and people living with disabilities and HIV/AIDS. Members also recommended continuing training and education programs for the community members.

WC 1 met again in late February and reviewed each of the LIP

website and prepared a common recommendation for the next LIP structure regarding what features and contents to be continued. WC 5 also had a meeting in late February that mainly reviewed the 3rd draft of the report on Common Scams and fraud.

Partnership Council Meeting

On February 14th 2012 the NWS LIP held its fifth Partnership Council meeting at Highbrook Learning Centre, 39 Highbrook Drive. The topics of discussion were to review the projects activities, share the achievements and outcomes; explain the new Scarborough LIP structure and discuss the things to be carried over into the new structure.

The implementation phase of NWS LIP started in April 2011 and the first year will end on March 2012. During this period LIP focus areas and action points were:

- Improving welcoming and information gathering process
- Enable the community to play a role in settlement
- Making services delivery and support more effective

The key achievements made by the Partnership Council were:

- Inter-agency relationship improved
- Interactive Website is in place
- Online service directory is in place
- Centre guideline for service providers
- Report on effective outreach methods
- Report on common scams and fraud
- Community survey tools

In last one year of implementation phase, NWS LIP Council members identified some key strengths and challenges which were:

Strengths

- Enhanced networking, collaboration, information and resource sharing among members
- Community engagement
- Residents able to receive information directly and disseminate them
- Using the website as a major form of communications and to notify of community events and opportunities for service providers

Challenges

- Issues with multiple meetings, use of time, and better meeting scheduling
- Missing areas of importance – Ex: LGBTQ, people with disabilities, and other marginalized or under-represented groups
- More opportunities to collaborate
- Better prioritization of activities

Partnership Council members also suggested transferring the following resources to the next LIP structure for a continuation:

- Online Services Directory
- NWS LIP Website
- Service Standard Guideline for service providers
- Reports on Scams & Fraud
- Effective outreach methods

Newcomer Residents Civic Literacy Training

The NWS LIP in collaboration with Civic Awareness Project (CAP) of Agincourt Community Services Association (ACSA) conducted a civic literacy training program in February at Agincourt Library. Rezwan Karim, the NWS LIP Partnership Coordinator provided a civic literacy primer on how decisions are made at different

levels of government and how constituents can participate in the process to 22 newcomer residents those live in Northwest Scarborough. Participants learned about the different levels of government in Canada and how decisions are made at each level. In addition, participants learned the importance of getting their voices heard throughout the decision making process and steps that they can take to get their voices heard and participate at each stage of this process.

Complete List of NWS LIP Partners

Member Organizations

ACCES Employment

Aisling Discoveries Child and Family Centre

Agincourt Community Services Association (ACSA)

Arab Community Centre of Toronto (ACCT)

Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT)

Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)

Carefirst Seniors and Community Services Association

Catholic Cross Cultural Services (CCS)

Canadian Tamil Youth Development (CANTYD)

Centre for Information and Community Services (CICS)

Chinese Family Services of Ontario

City of Toronto

East Metro Youth Services (EMYS)

Elizabeth Fry Toronto

Hong Fook Mental Health Association

Medix College

Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto (MNLCT)

Operation Springboard

Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services (PICS)

Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities (SCHC)

Scarborough Housing Help Centre (SHHC)

Seneca College

Toronto Employment & Social Services (TESS) – Scarborough North

Settlement Assistance and Family Support Services (SAFSS)

The Scarborough Hospital (TSH)

The Tamil Eelam Society of Canada (TESOC)

Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) - Continuing Education Department

Toronto District School Board (TDSB)

Toronto Park, Forestry and Recreation

Toronto Police Service (TPS)

Toronto Public Health (TPH)

Toronto Public Library (TPL)

TransCare Community Support Services

VPI inc.

West Scarborough Neighbourhood Community Centre

YMCA Newcomer Information Centre

(Scarborough, Milner)

Youthlink

Resource Partners

Action for Neighbourhood Change – Steeles/L'Amoreaux (ANC S/L'Am)

Community Resource Connection Toronto (CRCT)

Correctional Services of Canada

George Brown College

Muslim Welfare Centre

Steeles L'Amoreaux Youth Empowerment (SLYE) Network

The Salvation Army – Agincourt Community Church

West Scarborough Community Legal Services

Recognitions to:

Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)

Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC)

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