

Working Committee # 5: Family Settlement and Legal Support – Meeting Minutes

Date: January 26th, 2012

Time: 2:30pm – 4:30pm

Attendees: Wael Homaidan (ACCT), Mei Tin Lee (CICS), Yvonne Ma (CFSO), Jing He (Resident), Frank Chu (TCDSB), Gary Gomez (TPS), Mani Mahadeva (NWS LIP), Rezwan Karim (NWS LIP), Michelle Davis (NWS LIP)

- Welcoming and Objective of the meeting
- Review Progress:

Update of inventories about service providers in northwest Scarborough

- Purpose was to identify the services available in Scarborough to better inform organizations and assist them in making better referrals, work in collaboration and forge partnerships.
- Also to acquire the best practices among service providers, especially in regards to sharing resources
- The compiled document will be passed to the new LIP structure which will be helpful to identify effective co-location models and information about different services

Community education and training

- Due to a lack of responses from organizations, sourced education and training opportunities were not used to their fullest potential
- Some of the barriers found were lack of resources, limited time available, limited promotion of training opportunities
- Lunch and learn sessions would be a good alternative to build staff capacity
- Another barrier found with training, specifically with accessing language classes were:
 - that the training or informational sessions need to be in concert with the curriculum and language comprehension of students to be relevant
 - teachers need to have a detail outline of the type of training or information session that will be conducted

Connect with food banks and other basic services

- There were attempts to connect with food banks and interconnect them

- There were some barriers:
 - Some smaller food banks do not want to conform to larger ones (mainly donor food banks) set criteria
 - Most food banks have their own funding source and space of work and showed little interest in being a part of bigger food bank networks

Network with legal service providers

- Information was collected and some were approached to join the LIP, however they declined but have offered their expertise to the NWS LIP if needed
- LIP will post all reports and documents at the NWS LIP website and the settlementatwork.org wiki

Survey on Service accessibility

- Research had been conducted, but not enough information was collected especially demographic data.
- Some identified services that are under served in Scarborough were LGBTQ communities and people living with disabilities and HIV/AIDS

Support to conduct awareness sessions on Community Safety and Common Scams

- The draft report on common scams and fraud has been completed
- In the process of finalizing the document with the input of the LIP Council members and the Systemic Issues and Social Change committee for the Inter-LIP
- There will be piloting of information sessions conducted in language classes
- At the moment TPS is offering similar training for staff members and residents. The TPS is willing to conduct sessions for newcomer groups if any organization has a request.

Future direction of the LIP project

- Current structure will collapsed and there will be only 4 LIP's (East, West, Central North, and Central South) Toronto wide, not including the City-Wide LIP ran by City of Toronto
- Each LIP will receive \$400,000 for 4 Coordinators
- Scarborough (East region) will be led by Catholic Cross Cultural as agreed by the all current Scarborough LIP's
- The new LIP working structure will consist of a Partnership Council and an Immigrant Council
- No word on if there will be working groups that are more focused on a sector or topic. This will be decided once the new structure is in place in April 2012
- All the Scarborough LIP's will conduct a meeting in March, either the 20th or 22nd to debrief all Scarborough LIP council members of what has taken place and the next steps going forward

Proposed activities and recommendations for next year (under new LIP structure)

- Share service directory with future LIP
- Maintain websites or obtain funding to create a new website that preserves the work done through the previous LIP's
- Sourced training and education for the community will be transferred to the new LIP structure as they will be more in touch with the newcomer community through their Immigrant Council
- Additional work on acquiring more information on LGBTQ and people with disabilities will be proposed to be carried out through the new LIP structure
- NWS LIPs' document on scams and fraud will need the support of the new LIP structure to make it a tool that can be used to conduct information sessions and promote it among member organizations
- Another task that could be taken up by the new LIP could be to figure out how to reach and engage newcomers or immigrants that are isolated in their own communities (hesitant to integrate into Canadian society)
- Another untapped community that needs to be accessed are mothers that want to learn English after their children have reached school age
- Other educational programs and training identified for the new LIP to carry out for both organizations' staff and the community, like housing, legal services, community safety, etc.
- Ways to preserve the local connections and work accomplished by the individual LIP's and ensure work has not been done in vain

Wrap Up

- The next WC #5 meeting will take place February 22nd, 2012, from 2:30pm - 4:30pm at 42 Division (Community Room) - 242 Milner Ave.