



York South-Weston Local Immigration Partnership

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE SETTLEMENT SYSTEM IN YORK SOUTH-WESTON

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is the result of a team effort by the consulting team of Joan Roberts (Joan Roberts Consulting) Charlotte Young (Envision Synergy) and Ben Poynton (Herne Company). Each of us played various roles in the process of making the consultations and planning events happen within a tight budget and even tighter time frame.

We could not have done it without the close cooperation and amazing contribution of the YSW LIP Council and its workgroups. Without the community engagement workgroup we would not have been able to recruit over 100 newcomers to our first town hall. All the workgroups provided input into the research questions and recruited participants for focus groups and interviews. It was a great example of what a collaborative effort can do.

THE PROJECT:

The York South–Weston Local Immigration Partnership (YSWLIP) is comprised of 24 settlement, employment, language training and social service organizations serving immigrants in the York South-Weston community. Faith and labour representatives also contribute to the partnership.

The project’s objectives:

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

In May of 2010 the YSWLIP received funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada to consult with service providers, employers and newcomers in the local catchment area in order to identify possibilities for collective and systemic improvements to the delivery system.

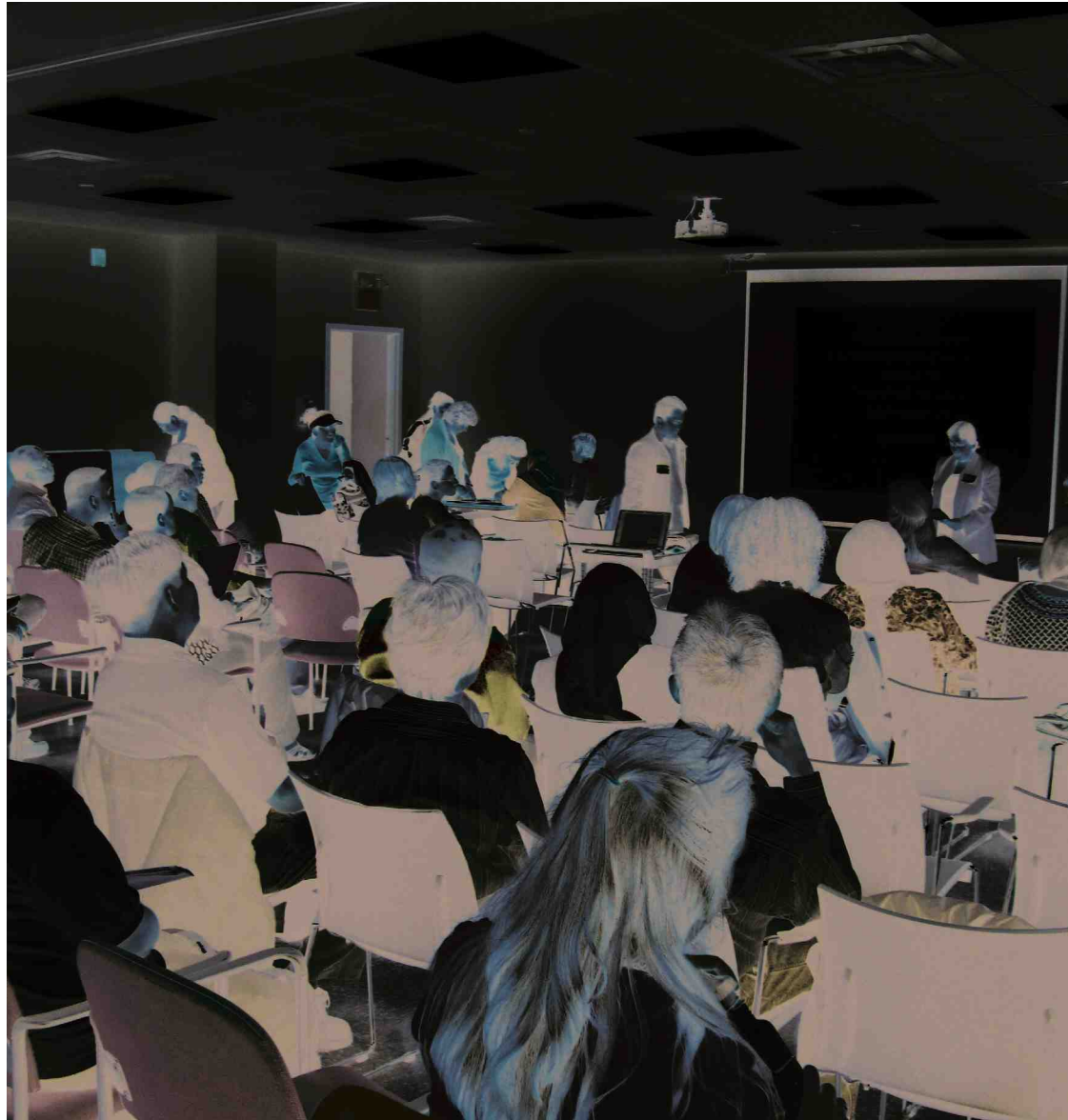
INTRODUCTION

The YSW LIP Strategic Plan is the result of the research conducted over the summer of 2010 into the barriers to effective settlement and integration for newcomers as well to gather feedback on service delivery for newcomers and seek suggestions for improvements to services delivery that could be implemented in the York South-Weston area. The Strategic Plan itself includes a vision, principles and values and then goals and strategies for an integrated service delivery system. The plan itself is illustrated on one page in graphic form. Appendix A provides the background thinking and decision-making that resulted in the chosen course of action for the system as a whole and the steps of service delivery. The steps for service delivery identified for this exercise include outreach, intake, assessment, referral, service delivery, and monitoring, evaluation, and client exit.

Further to this strategic plan is a document that develops the strategic plan into an action plan. That action plan document is meant to be read in conjunction with this document.

As with the Action Plan, the capability to bring about the changes incorporated in the plans lies with the YSW LIP and its funders.





YSW LIP MEMBERS

YSW LIP COUNCIL MEMBER ORGANIZATION	MEETING REPRESENTATIVE (AS OF DEC -10)
Social Planning Toronto	Yasmin Haq-Khan <i>Co-chair</i>
YES: Youth Employment Services	Jayne Simpson <i>Co-chair</i>
Access Alliance Multi-cultural Health and Community Services	Julie Mehrad
Broad African Resource Centre	Peter Ozemoyah
City of Toronto	Melody Brown
Community Action Resource Centre	Marion Newrick
COSTI	Ed Kothiringer
For Youth Initiative	Lynn Liao
Islamic Social Services & Resources Association	Shazia Bashir
Learning Enrichment Foundation	Pamela Richardson
Midaynta	Mohamed Tabit
Northwood Neighbourhood Services	Azaria Wolday
North York Community House	Noemi Garcia
Ontario Multi-faith Council	Imam Abdul Hai Patel
Oromo Canadian Community Association	Aberra Makonnen
Toronto District School Board	Bobby Nikmard
Toronto Employment & Social Services	Mary Catherine Hudakoc
Toronto Public Health	Dulce Gaspar
Toronto Public Library	Ewa Piatkowski
Unison Health and Community Services (formerly York Community Services)	Kam Lau
Vietnamese Women's Association	Kim Phong Nguyen
York Hispanic Centre	Carmen Miloslavich
York West Active Living Centre	Suzette Teixeira

VISION

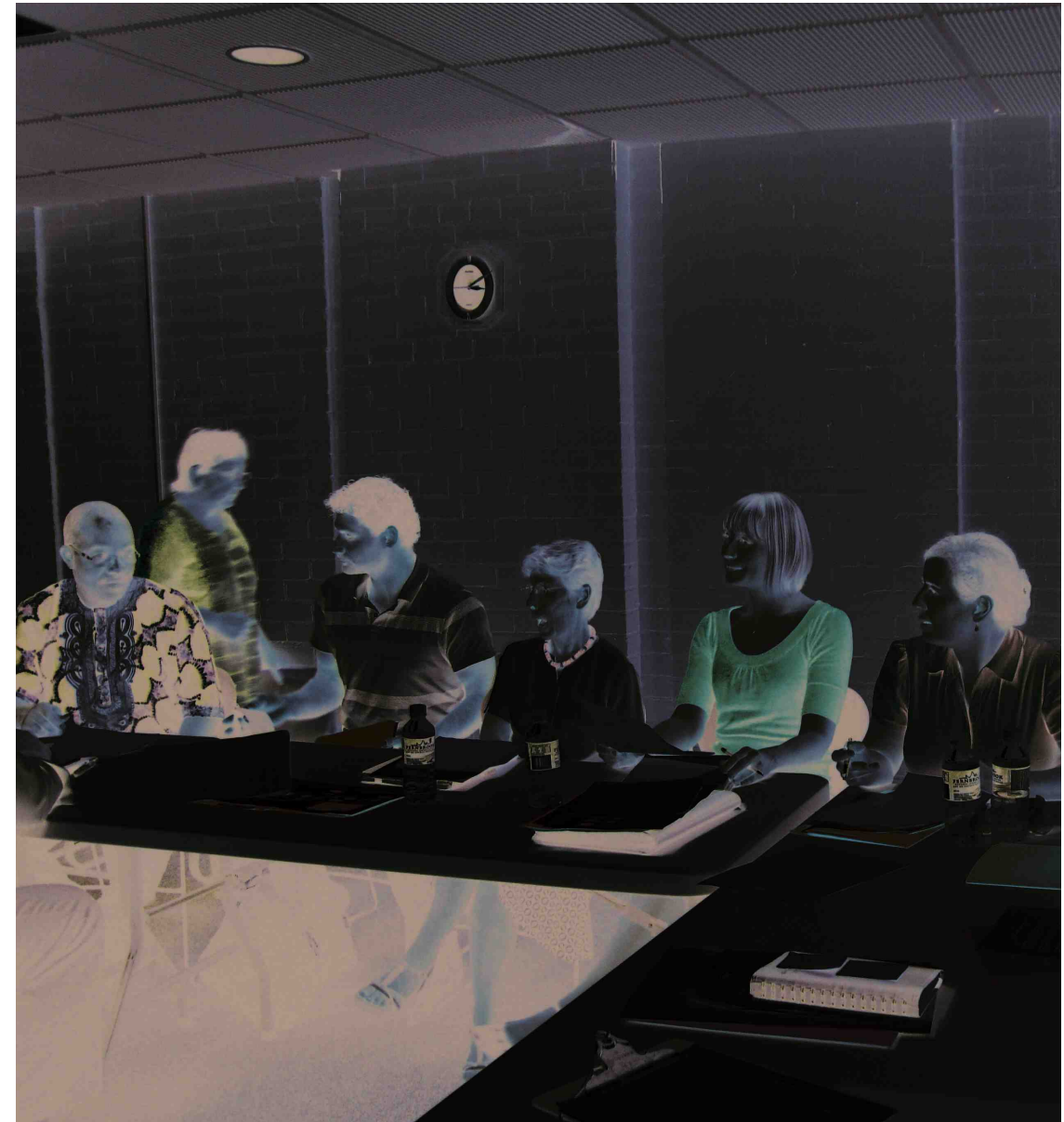
Newcomers to Canada living in York South-Weston are able to quickly and easily settle into Canadian society and thrive as engaged members of the community, by obtaining services that address their needs.

Newcomers learn about available services through effective and relevant outreach that begins at their point of entry, and is available through up-to-date media sources. Eligibility criteria have been expanded and are flexible. Intake steps are simple. Clients are engaged in the assessment process, which is timely, and results in a clear plan of action. Clients know why they are referred to other agencies and obtain the services they need through a well-networked set of agencies. Clients receive the services they need and these services build on the strengths the clients already have. Clients are satisfied with the services they receive, and the Partnership tracks this level of satisfaction over time.

PRINCIPLES/VALUES

The Partnership Council aspires to adhere to the following principles or values in providing services to newcomers. The services we provide to newcomers are:

- Focused on the specific needs of the client
- Trustworthy, non-judgmental, compassionate and caring
- Respectful (of confidentiality and of the person)
- Simple to follow
- Physically and culturally accessible
- Culturally sensitive (available in their language, at their pace, and with minimum jargon; professionals are approachable)
- Comprehensive and universal (not just promoting one's own services)
- Build on the strengths that newcomers offer Canada

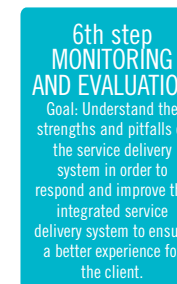
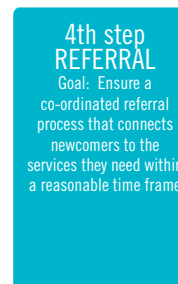
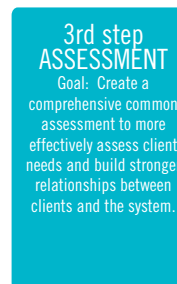
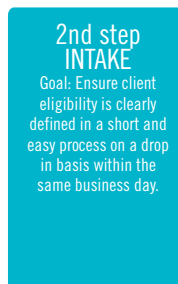


Vision for the Service Delivery System Serving Newcomers in York South-Weston;

- Thriving newcomers
- Services to meet needs
- Fast easy settlement

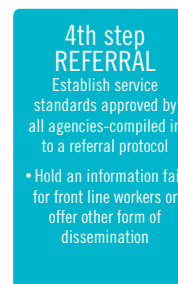
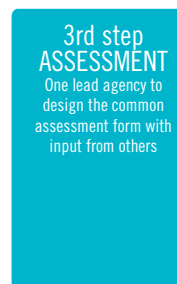
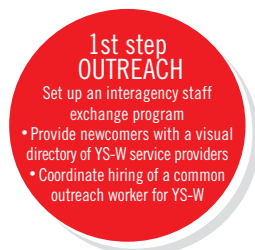
Goals: FOR THE WHOLE SYSTEM

1. Confirm the level of agency commitment to an integrated service delivery system
2. Determine the most appropriate service delivery system, based on the commitment
3. Develop a governance framework to build the capacity and sustainability to implement the service delivery plan




Strategies: FOR THE WHOLE SYSTEM

- Develop a communications and engagement strategy for the service delivery model
- Develop a governance strategy using a capacity approach



 The **OVAL** indicates both the starting point and the ending point of the process steps.

 The **BOX** represents an individual step or activity in the process.

APPENDIX A: WHOLE SYSTEM

Issues from the research

- Serving a client in their language is a critical decision point for referral
- Others expressed disappointment with the system, feeling that service providers are only after their statistics and report that they know people are leaving Canada after obtaining citizenship to find better opportunity in other countries.
- Direct service delivery depends on service mix of agency-social -health-legal-training-housing
- We need a system to help our clients
- Newcomers also complained about the cost of settlement and the red tape they have to go through.
- ½ agencies did outreach
- Newcomers said they are looking for basic need services such as housing, food, and health. They are also looking for education, career services and help with the immigration process.
- The current funding framework has created an organizational culture clash between caring and accountability which exists within and internal to the agencies.
- When agencies share clients workers get clients to fill out consent to information forms (sometimes up to 20 x)
- The system is broader than individual organizations
- Boundaries are permeable
- We need one stop shopping with all agencies’ services under one roof
- “That is not good they should have all the information”
- Agencies are dependent throughout the process of service provision on other agencies and organizations to meet their client needs.
- We have a bottleneck at intake-“we receive everybody”

Goal(s)¹:

1. Confirm the level of agency commitment to the integrated service delivery plan
2. Determine most appropriate service delivery system, based on the commitment expressed
3. Develop a governance framework which leads Council to build capacity and sustainability to implement the service delivery plan.

¹ based on community-partnership level, rather than about serving our clients

Options for achieving goals:

OPTIONS	PROS	CONS
1. Have a communication/ dissemination piece to all potential players	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gets buy in • Increases chances of success • Broadens profile of work to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apathy, resistance • Requires time and resources which may not be available
2. Communication and dissemination piece on service delivery models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop more realistic plan • Committed players with clear roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could become politically charged • Serve as reality check of actual commitment
3. Build organizational capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases capacity of council • Prevents conflict • Creates an infrastructure for work plan to evolve • Provides leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming • Needs resources • Surfaces conflict • Partner fatigue

Priority Strategies:

- Develop a communication and engagement strategy for the service delivery model
- Develop a governance strategy using a capacity approach

STEP 1: OUTREACH

Issues from the research

- ½ agencies did outreach
- Respondents reported that their sources of information are quite diverse. News media (e.g. Newspapers, television), the internet, informal networks (e.g. friends and family), professionals (e.g. lawyers, healthcare professionals), and social service organizations (e.g. YMCA) were all widely reported as areas for information.
- Agency marketing efforts fails to make use of the informal networks that newcomers are so reliant upon.
- Newcomers also seem to depend to a larger extent on informal social connections such as friends, family and community leaders. A desire was reported to tap into this resource so that newcomers can be better served. This is important because should a friend recommend the wrong agency or state that the agency does things that it doesn't, then the potential client may have to wait longer for the service they require.

Goal:

Newcomers make informed choices about services

Options for achieving goals

OPTIONS	PROS	CONS
Visual clues/directory available to newcomers (ex., map on a t-shirt) map of YSW providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy access and • Increase awareness of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost • Keeping directory updated • Directory must be available in many languages
Agencies exchange info	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for greater accuracy of referral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information overload • May not reach those who need information
Unified outreach funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less competition among agencies • Better meets needs of clients • More cooperative work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time constraints
Service provider fair (combined with interagency exchange and agencies exchange information).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially more accurate referrals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time • Resources • Large enough space
Set up inter agency exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater knowledge • Better cultural awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union issues • Staff turnover • Value of staff investment • Learning curve

Priority Strategies

- Set up interagency staff exchange program
- Provide newcomers with a visual directory of YSW providers

STEP 2: INTAKE

Issues from the research

Barriers with eligibility and booking appointments.

Goal:

Short, easy, clearly defined process available the same day, on a drop-in basis

Options for achieving goals

OPTIONS	PROS	CONS
Standardized intake (form) process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective Minimal cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Length time of intake May need additional staffing Turnoff for clients
No collaboration on intake form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No extra work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doesn't solve anything
Web based database for agencies to use with intake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time saver for everyone Less forms for clients/ duplication of info Better service coordination Enhanced security systems available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money and maintenance No funder support Client confidentiality could be compromised Agencies can't guarantee safety of information Lack of ownership of information Costly
Agency discussion of best practices for intake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inexpensive All working in a positive manner to serve clients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting requirements Less accountability Contrary to contribution agreements with funders

Priority Strategies:

- Agencies discuss best practices for intake
- Explore the value of a web-based database for intake

STEP 3: ASSESSMENT

Issues from the research

- Newcomers said they are looking for basic need services such as housing, food, and health. They are also looking for education, career services and help with the immigration process.
- 2-3 agencies use a standard assessment form

Goal:

Create a comprehensive common assessment to more effectively assess client needs and build stronger relationships between clients and the system

Options for achieving goals

OPTIONS	PROS	CONS
Design common assessment process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comfort level Trust Build relationship Spend longer time with each client Becomes easier to make referrals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different needs for different agencies Adds work time and responsibility to the process
Each client has a clear and prioritized plan of action that the client is able to understand and execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timely Clear information is empowering for client Focuses on client's needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Client might not agree with plan

Priority Strategies:

- 1 agency designs a common assessment form and other agencies offer feedback

STEP 4: REFERRAL

Issues from the research

- Newcomers said they are looking for basic need services such as housing, food, and health. They are also looking for education, career services and help with the immigration process.
- Serving a client in their language is a critical decision point for referral
- “Sometimes we go but sometimes we don’t because we don’t know the exact location.”
- Service providers make a lot of referrals
- “We don’t go”
- When faced with being referred or having to go to other agencies participants reported frustration at the number of visits!
- “Clients hold us accountable for other agencies performance!”
- “That is not good they should have all the information”
- There are no feedback loops re accountability or evaluation between referring agencies

Goal:

Coordinated referral to connect clients to needed services in timely manner

Priority issues

- Language barriers
- Expect all services under 1 roof
- Integrity of referral
- Distance transport location

Options for achieving goals

OPTIONS	PROS	CONS
Database for translation i.e., Language line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcomes language barrier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different policies at different agencies
Educate the client on the system (i.e., The process of referring)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If clients know the system, can make informed decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client resistance
Hold info fair for frontline workers or other form of info dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most outreach workers good knowledge of activities in the community already 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will organize/lead? • Might not reach newcomers that we need to reach
Offer transportation assistance (e.g., Like west side shuttle)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures integrity of referral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost liability and insurance
Follow up after referral (action step); (may belong in monitor/evaluate/client exit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assurance that service provided • Service can continue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time • Willingness of client to follow through • Currently follow up is not recognized by funder as work time
Create coordination mechanism among service providers (belongs in referral)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information becomes readily available to service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in developing partnerships
Work with other groups to seek resources for the clients (belong in referral, not intake)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients needs get met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming for multiple agencies to be spending time w/1 client (which agency gets the credit for working with the client)

Priority Strategies

- Establish service standards for a referral protocol approved by all agencies
- Information fair for front line workers or offer other form of information dissemination

STEP 5: SERVICE DELIVERY

Issues from the research

- Direct service delivery depends on service mix of agency-social -health-legal-training-housing
- Participants reported requesting services such as gaining a passport, SIN and bank statements, along with advice on claiming taxes.
- Optimistically participants hoped that for good service delivery –quick, accurate, in the appropriate language, with many types of service, delivered with empathy, equality and fairness.
- **2 out of the 9 agencies have staff with this language (scenario 3). Others have volunteer translators. Some agencies have policies that do not permit using volunteers.
- Agencies prioritize paying customers
- **When faced with being referred or having to go to other agencies participants reported frustration at the number of visits!
- Further inflexibility was found in the times service were open in relation to the times clients were working. This also prevented these clients from accessing certain services.

**Priority issue

Goal:

Newcomers get beneficial services that are timely, relevant, culturally appropriate and professional

Options for achieving goals

OPTIONS	PROS	CONS
Advocacy as a collective to address eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint pre-existing groups for a larger collective (e.g., Social planning) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost to join • Some agencies may not be permitted to join • Individual members might not be able to advocate outside of agency’s policy • May put smaller agencies at risk of losing funding • Time consuming

OPTIONS	PROS	CONS
Info sharing at agencies and through fairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good opportunity to learn about other agencies • Networking, build strong partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time
Research (data gathering) to support advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds knowledge for each agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming
One stop shopping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hubs are good way to provide all services • Better referral • Addresses confidentiality • Whole system in one place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition between agencies -- which agency chosen (hubs would have all the power) • May conflict with agency policies (e.g., Niche program)
Itinerant services (promote more)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps contribute to outreach • Able to provide services for clients with limited ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation • Expect “Cadillac” services
More service coordination (follow up with referral agency and client)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes will improve • Improves client satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None identified
Better train staff to deliver services and everything else	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff development • Clients get up to date information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming • Funds • Possible staffing issues
Not enough language specific staff-advocate for increased funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -See #1 option above • Clients receive services in own language • If volunteers available, this addresses cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide services • Prolong process of learning english • -Some agencies cannot permit volunteer translators for confidentiality issues
Have ED groups work on volunteer and privacy issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systemic issue is resolved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See cons from option 8 • Front line staff know best to address the issues
Create protocols and service bridging among existing service agencies to ensure newcomer needs and socio-cultural demands are met in a timely and professional manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients access services faster • Seamless service delivery • Quality of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service guarantees • Conflict with funders agreements • Predictability • Time

Priority Strategies

- Enhance information sharing for better service coordination and effective service delivery
- Collectively advocate to increase funding and address client eligibility issues

STEP 6: MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND CLIENT EXIT

Issues from the research

- No tracking or monitoring protocol in most agencies (exception employment services)
- Others expressed disappointment with the system, feeling that service providers are only after their statistics and report that they know people are leaving Canada after obtaining citizenship to find better opportunity in other countries.
- Although some participants reported that there was a requirement for follow-up with clients there was no, one clear approach to tracking a client's progress "post-agency".
- *"Clients hold us accountable for other agencies performance!"*
- Non-profit service providers also reported as being important in newcomers' experiences as well as events like job fairs. Participants reported that through contact with the service delivery system is how they learned about services leading to positive experiences.
- There are no feedback loops re accountability or evaluation between referring agencies
- Agencies prioritize paying customers
- 2 agencies undertake a client satisfaction survey (done by students)
- Happens informally if client reappears
- Client often becomes a volunteer to maintain ties!

Goal:

Understand the strengths and pitfalls of the service delivery system in order to respond and improve the integrated service delivery system to ensure a better experience for the client

Options for achieving goals

OPTIONS	PROS	CONS
Cluster services (agencies that share clients) and share evaluation forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily shared • Less forms for newcomers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited • Some agencies unable to collect info, with FOI
Ensure referral agency is equipped to deal with the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More appropriate • Reduced shuffling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time periods short • Staff turnover
Let client know if they are not satisfied with service at referred to agency they should come back	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients have options • Feedback enables agency to provide better service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming • Client may not be willing to go to other agencies
Inform referred to agency about dissatisfaction of the client	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist agency to make needed changes • Allow agency to clarify service • Allow updating of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes may not be possible • Time consuming
Develop an evaluation protocol/strategy to enable agencies to measure client satisfaction with integrated service delivery system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All agencies working from same page • Known to all newcomers • Sharing knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming • Could conflict with internal procedures • Staff and resource limitations

Priority Strategies

- Shared evaluation forms for similar services
- Evaluation strategy/protocol to track and monitor client satisfaction