

## AMSSA Working Group Meeting Minutes: Vulnerable Populations Working Group – June 04, 2014

Minutes prepared by: Sabrina Ziegler, AMSSA

Facilitated by: Alex Kang, AMSSA

Agenda Item	Discussion	Actions & Documentation
<b>Overview of Agenda &amp; Goals of the Meeting</b>	The agenda is confirmed.	
<b>Overview of Committees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The working group will review and approve the meeting minutes before AMSSA posts them on the Settlement Net message board.</li> <li>The message boards will be used as a medium for SPOs to access the information for the seven working groups. AMSSA will post information, tools, and resources related to the working group on Settlement Net. Settlement Net users will be able to share additional resources pertaining to the working groups.</li> <li>AMSSA will provide a summary of the key recommendations of each working group to the BC SPO Settlement Program Advisory Group. The key recommendations will then be presented to the BC Settlement Program Planning Committee.</li> </ul>	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AMSSA will send the list of BC Settlement Program Advisory Group to the working group's members.</li> <li>AMSSA will send the minutes to working group members for review and approval.</li> </ul> <p>Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committees Communication Plan</li> <li>BC SPO SPAG Membership List</li> </ul>
<b>Overview of Terms of Reference</b>	TORs are confirmed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AMSSA will send TORs to the Vulnerable Populations Working Group once finalized.</li> </ul> <p><b>Documentation:</b> TORs</p>
<b>Roundtable Discussion</b>  In the first two months of CIC funding, what successes have you experienced?	<p><u>Funding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPOs that received provincial top-up funding for non-eligible clients were able to continue with programming without client disruption; transition was almost invisible to clients as a result of the top up funding. For other organizations that did not receive this funding the transition has been more difficult as clients who would be an ineligible client for their agency are seeking continued support and access to services. Referrals are not always a viable option due to many different factors such as e.g. location, or specialized service required.</li> <li>With the transition to CIC funding service providers noted that service delivery has become more strategic and that time management and data entry has become key requirements.</li> <li>With new contracts, organizations have the ability to build relationships with other organizations, however with the introduction of iCARE the data management of these collaborations needs to be reassessed.</li> <li>iCARE and the current client reporting mechanisms do not accurately capture the progress that a client achieves.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b> Create mentorship and/or exchange opportunities between small rural agencies and larger agencies that are more experienced to help navigate, share experiences and best practices</p> <p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> Discuss how to support CIC-ineligible clients after Provincial top-up funding has ended.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> Designating a primary CIC Settlement Officer for organizations that have more than one CA would help to streamline communications between SPOs and</p>

	<p><u>Program Delivery</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program delivery during the transition occurred for the most part without disruption of services to clients. Staff, however are still learning and adapting to the new process and the time constraints of data entry into iCARE.</li> <li>• Greater consistency and flexibility is required when offering group services to allow for a more targeted needs-based approach.</li> <li>• A vulnerable population is a broad group and each needs different specialized services that is unique to their vulnerability, thus the replication of programs is not always possible.</li> </ul>	<p>CIC.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 4:</b> Generate list of telephone number of contacts in different government agencies who have the ability to answer the questions of Settlement providers (i.e. Contact list to share among sector.)</p> <p><b>Recommendation 5:</b> List settlement resources available (e.g. resource pages centralizing all relevant information.)</p> <p><b>Recommendation 6:</b> Improve the response time of the iCARE reporting platform.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 7:</b> Allow reporting to be more flexible to capture accurately a client's progress.</p>
<p>Can you identify key trends in your programs/client needs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to affordable housing has been a growing concern for many clients. A move in location would not give them access to the same level of client support as not all programs are available in all regions.</li> <li>• Securing affordable food is another rising concern for many clients.</li> <li>• Service gaps and trends identified are interrelated. Vulnerable clients are having difficulties accessing mainstream services as these do not meet the client's existing needs and are not culturally or linguistically appropriate for that client.</li> <li>• Access to mental health services, particularly for children and youth is a key concern to service providers; knowledge of the services and the wait times need to be able to centralized and accessible.</li> <li>• The increased number of GAR clients within a short time-frame in certain locations has challenged the capacity to provide appropriate services to these clients.</li> <li>• A lack of support from family is highly noticeable in many vulnerable clients; there is friction in understanding the role of a parent in a Canadian context.</li> <li>• A lack of employment training specifically for vulnerable populations; many would like to enter the workforce but would need additional support to do so.</li> <li>• Refugee clients report that their sponsors reach the time limit to support them, however the client still needs that support and the options available to them are not known.</li> <li>• As the regional capacity for serving vulnerable populations varies, more online services to inform and train staff are needed particularly for smaller centres.</li> <li>• Better coordination is needed for the usage of interpretation services in hospitals to keep staff wait time while assisting clients to a minimum.</li> <li>• Provide staff with a greater understanding of mental health services available and also support for staff to personally cope with working with clients affected by trauma.</li> <li>• The approach to supporting victims of domestic violence needs to be more culturally appropriate to ensure full understanding by the client.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommendation 8:</b> Provide specific employment programs that meet the needs of vulnerable populations. (E.g. Food Safe certification and other opportunities that allow these populations to attain basic survival jobs.)</p> <p><b>Recommendation 9:</b> Integration of food and food security information into settlement programming. (E.g. How and where to secure affordable food.)</p> <p><b>Recommendation 10:</b> Create resources that are culturally and linguistically appropriate for vulnerable populations that meet them at their level (i.e. survival level information, not high-level.)</p> <p><b>Recommendation 11:</b> Create / share resources on housing / affordable housing</p> <p><b>Recommendation 12:</b> Greater integrated access and collaboration for child and youth mental health services</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a contact person in each government department (e.g. Housing, Health and CIC) that Settlement agencies can access without having to experience the same wait time as the public does. .</li> </ul>	
<p>What improvements would you recommend?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the reporting to be successful, it would be critical, particularly for smaller centres, to have a narrative report template.</li> <li>• Clients who access services for vulnerable populations are addressing their settlement needs from a survival perspective and thus the normal data reporting method does not capture in statistics their successes.</li> <li>• For agencies it would be helpful to have a clearer understanding of activities (such as field trips) that would be approved under their current CA and when it is necessary to get CIC approval.</li> <li>• In order to improve the employment opportunities of vulnerable individuals it would be beneficial if basic job training courses such as Food Safe are offered.</li> <li>• The GARs do not have to pay back the travel loan as this put an added burden on the client</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommendation 13:</b> Remove the requirement for Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) to repay travel loans. This requirement has a serious detriment to a refugee's initial settlement.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 14:</b> Discuss how to create an exit strategy of support – support for vulnerable clients' ends after one year even if the client still needs the assistance.</p>
<p>Can you identify information and training needs and provide suggestions for AMSSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide staff and settlement worker training on providing services to LGBTQ newcomers and refugees</li> <li>• Mentorship/Exchange opportunities between small rural agencies and larger agencies that are more experienced to help navigate, share experiences and best practices.</li> <li>• Provide staff and settlement workers training on providing services to newcomers and refugees affected by trauma, particularly suicide intervention knowledge.</li> <li>• Provide staff and settlement worker training on providing services to newcomers and refugees who are experiencing domestic violence.</li> <li>• Discuss how to create an exit strategy of support – support for vulnerable clients' ends after one year even if the client still needs the assistance.</li> <li>• Outreach worker safety training.</li> <li>• Understanding child protection obligations and reporting with a cultural lens in a settlement context.</li> <li>• Confidentiality training for staff and agencies specifically on how to protect the client better.</li> <li>• Provide online training for new settlement workers in rural communities.</li> <li>• Train the trainer life skills coaching courses.</li> </ul>	
<p>What resource(s) can you recommend to share with the sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AMSSA co-created resource on Domestic Violence</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.Tutela.ca">www.Tutela.ca</a></li> <li>• PRISM</li> <li>• Centre for Suicide Prevention</li> <li>• Family Services of Greater Vancouver</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.ClickLaw.bc.ca">www.ClickLaw.bc.ca</a></li> <li>• Wrap Around Canada</li> <li>• West Coast Domestic Workers Association</li> <li>• New to BC Guide</li> <li>• Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Next Steps</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next working group date is to be decided.</li> <li>• Working Group members are encouraged to share their email addresses with other</li> </ul>	

	<p>members to facilitate conversation and learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AMSSA will summarize the notes, and draft minutes will be sent to all Working Group members for review prior to sector-wide dissemination.</li><li>• Following a final review by working group participants, information from the group will be shared on the Settlement Net message board. Information from this Working Group may also inform the content of AMSSA's training and information sharing activities</li></ul>	
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