



Halton **NEWCOMER** Strategy

*Halton...
a welcoming community*

Report to the Community

October 2014

Welcoming Newcomers to Halton

The Halton Newcomer Strategy

works to ensure newcomers in Halton are welcomed, supported and employed to their fullest potential.

The Halton Newcomer Strategy is coordinated by a Steering Committee that determines the vision, creates the strategic plan, sets the priorities and directs the work of the Halton Newcomer Strategy. The Steering Committee provides strategic direction to three working groups (Equity, Service Coordination and Employment), responsible for developing and implementing

activities aimed at ensuring effective integration of newcomers.

- **The Service Coordination Group** works to identify, recommend, support and/or undertake activities and initiatives that address gaps, enhance capacity and improve awareness, access and effectiveness of programs and services for newcomers in Halton.
- **The Equity Working Group** works to promote and improve equity in the community, as well as, within organizations and service providers

that support the settlement and integration of newcomers to Halton Region.

- **The Employment Working Group** works to enhance the readiness and capacity of employers to access and retain newcomer talent and improve the opportunities for newcomers in Halton to be employed to their full potential.

If you are interested in joining the Halton Newcomer Strategy, please contact us at www.haltonnewcomerstrategy.com

Message from the Chair

It's a privilege to be involved in the work of Halton Newcomer Strategy. Since its inception this organization has attracted numerous individuals from a variety of backgrounds who are committed to ensuring that Halton is a place where newcomers want to settle and stay.

The activities of the various working groups featured throughout this report are evidence of the dedication and commitment of the HNS team. The working group chairs are to be commended for their leadership. The support of

Halton Region staff is also integral to the success of HNS and is much appreciated.

I encourage you read this report to see what areas may be of interest to you; we welcome your involvement and support as Halton Newcomer Strategy moves forward. Check out the website at www.haltonnewcomerstrategy.com for more information.



Barb Krukowski, HNS Chair

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Citizenship and
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Service Coordination Working Group – Update

Capacity Building for Service Providers means Improved Service Delivery to Halton Newcomers

Between 2000 and 2009, the annual number of immigrants landing in Halton increased by over 140%.

(Source: *Citizenship and Immigration Canada*).

Moreover, the profile of our recent immigrants has changed significantly due to changes in immigration laws. It is also expected that the new “Express Entry” system will also bring immigrants who are “ready to hit the road running”.

However, due to the limited amount of professional development funding, Service Provider organizations have not been able to adequately prepare their staff for the changes that lie ahead.

The **Service Coordination Group**

decided to focus on enhancing service delivery capacity of Newcomer Service Providers in Halton.

Highlights of the Capacity Building Project:

- A total of 28 training areas were divided into four broad categories; Canadian Legal System,



Employment, Health Care and Specialized Counseling.

- A survey, to determine more specific training requirements, was administered to service providers on June 6/2014 with 138 responses received from 10 Halton Service Providers
- The following were identified as the top 12 training priorities:
 - Mental Health
 - Family Law Basics
 - Legal Aid System
 - Employee rights and obligations
 - Training/Upgrading/Credential assessment

- Employment Counseling Basics
- Social Media and Job Search
- Self-Care for Front Line Workers
- Senior’s Health and Government Programs
- Social Assistance and Social Housing system
- Culturally Responsive Practices
- Assisting Clients Dealing with Domestic Violence

The **Service Coordination Group** will identify trainers and staff will assist in the coordination of training sessions that will occur every 2 months beginning in September 2014 with the Opening Doors Project.

It is anticipated that these training opportunities will result in an increased knowledge base amongst the service providers and will improve delivery of services to newcomers to Halton Region.



Mental Health + Equity + Diversity

Through the **Opening Doors Project** of the Canadian Mental Health Association, the Service Coordination group organized a workshop “**MIGRATION & MENTAL HEALTH**” held on **September 25th 2014**. The workshop established

connections between individual understandings and experiences of mental health common in our communities, including the effects of migration and the stigmas attached to mental health. It promoted a broad understanding of mental health issues focusing on social factors, such as language, community, income, access to medical care and employment stability that may influence the mental health of

newcomers. Through interactive activities and discussion, service provider staff developed professional skills that may help them improve the fostering of welcoming environments for newcomers and refugees, with particular attention to mental health.

If you are interested in attending one of the Opening Doors Project future workshops, please call 416-789-7957 x 322 or email openingdoors@cmha-toronto.net

Newcomer Youth Project – Equity Working Group

The **Equity Working Group** and a research student from Humber College, Kate Doyle, are working on a project that focuses on enhancing and improving Newcomer Youth Programs within Halton Region.

Goal and Objective

- The project aims to identify youth program best practices and any potential gaps in service, with a final goal of recognizing, supporting and building the capacity of programs that best meet the needs of newcomer youth



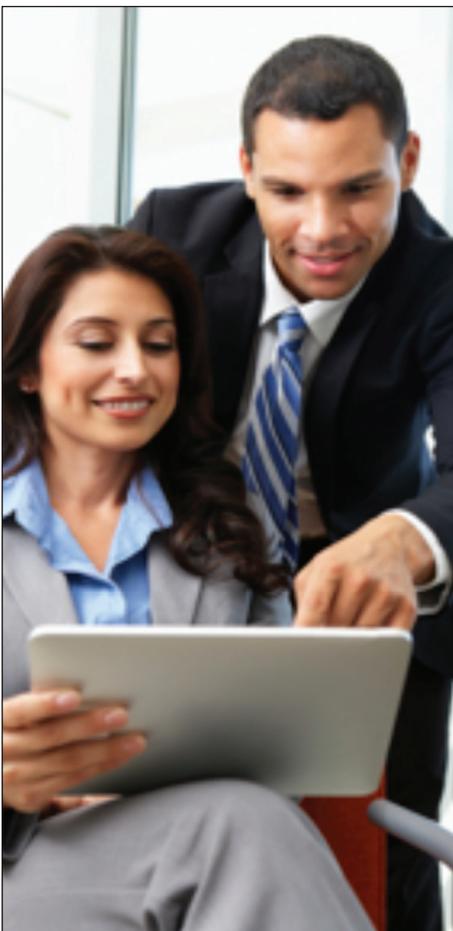
understanding of their needs and experiences

Methodology

- The research includes speaking with various Youth Programs to obtain detailed program delivery information and conducting a number of focus groups with Newcomer youth to achieve a better

Final Report

- Upon completion, a report and a presentation will be made available that outlines the findings, best practices and recommendations for future action.



Halton E-Mentoring Program – Employment Working Group

The **Employment Working Group** is supporting the development and implementation of an E-Mentoring program. E-mentoring is an online portal which will assist newcomers to enhance their skills, confidence and network by pairing them with a Halton Region employer.

Development

- The **Employment Working Group**, as well as various Halton employers and organizations have had significant involvement in the development of the E-Mentoring framework and will continue to be involved in the piloting stages and program recruitment plan

Pilot Testing

- Pilot Testing Phase I and II have taken place with excellent feedback/ suggestions received from both sessions. Program staff are currently working with the technology vendor, Orangutech, to implement the modifications
- Phase III and IV are scheduled for the early fall with an official Launch Date of December 2014

Recruitment

- Recruitment for Mentors and Mentees will begin in the late fall of 2014. If you are interested in participating in this project please contact Sabrina Essner at Sabrina.essner@halton.ca / 905-825-6000 ext. 2754

New Canadian Immigration Application System



Starting January 2015, skilled foreign workers will have access to Express Entry – a new electronic application management system – which will apply to Canada’s key economic immigration programs, such as the Federal Skilled Worker program, the Federal Skilled Trades program, the Canadian Experience Class and portion of provincial nominee programs.

Express Entry will result in faster and more efficient service to potential skilled immigrants. It will also allow the Government of Canada to

be more flexible and responsive to Canada’s changing economic conditions and priorities.

Under the new program:

- Potential candidates will complete an online Express Entry profile where they will provide information about their skills, work experience, language ability, education, and other details.
- Candidates will be ranked against others in the pool. Only the highest-ranked candidates (those deemed to have the best chances for economic

success, rather than the first person in line) and those with qualifying offers of arranged employment or provincial/territorial nominations will be invited to apply for permanent residence.

- Canada will be able to select “the best candidates” who are most likely to achieve success in Canada.
- An improved Job Bank will make it easier to find matches between Canadian employers and Express Entry candidates.
- Qualified applicants can expect faster processing times of six months or less when invited to come to Canada.

Source: cic.gc.ca/English/immigrate/express/express-entry.asp

COMMUNITY GRANTS

Ontario Trillium Foundation (Youth Opportunities Fund)	The YOF provides grants and capacity building supports to grassroots, youth-led initiatives and community-based organizations that serve youth who are facing multiple barriers to economic and social wellbeing. The program will engage and benefit young people ages 12 to 25 who are First Nations, Inuit or Metis, racialized, recent immigrants, LGBTTQ, and/or youth with special needs.	http://otf.ca	Grant application deadline is November 1, 2014.
Futurpreneur Canada (Newcomer Program)	Futurpreneur Canada provides Newcomers (18-39 years old, have been in Canada for less than 60 months) who have a great business idea with start-up resources, mentoring, financing, expertise and resources.	http://www.cybf.ca/cybf_programs/newcomer/	Sign up online anytime

Halton Newcomer Strategy & Social Media



VIDEO TESTIMONIALS

HNS supported the development of video testimonials from newcomers who shared their settlement experiences and explained the reasons why they choose Halton Region as their place to settle. Find them on our YouTube



LIKE us on Facebook

for up-to-the minute community events, training and days of celebration throughout the year.



haltonnewcomerstrategy.ca

Visit our website for information about HNS, our working groups and information to join.