

# **The Newcomer Navigation and Support Unit at Manitoba Possible**

## **Providing a Lifeline to Clients During COVID-19.**

**Traicy Robertson  
Manitoba Possible**

# Manitoba Possible

**Society for Manitobans with Disabilities (SMD) is now Manitoba Possible.**

**We believe an inclusive and accessible society is possible. That's why we work together to eliminate barriers to full and equal participation.**

# Services

- ❖ **Case Management/Counselling Services**
- ❖ **Therapy for Children**
- ❖ **Communication Centre for Children**
- ❖ **Children's Leisure and Recreation Services**
- ❖ **Employment Services for Adults**
- ❖ **Life Skills Programming for Adults**
- ❖ **Services for Individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing**
- ❖ **Wheelchair Services**
- ❖ **Newcomer Navigation and Support Program**

# Newcomer Navigation and Support Program

- ❖ Established in 1997, formerly known as the Ethno-Cultural Program.
- ❖ We are a cultural brokering program working with newcomers with disabilities, whose first language is not English.
- ❖ Assist clients to navigate the various systems and sectors available to support them.
- ❖ Our team is made up of 9 cultural resource facilitators, currently have 23 languages spoken in the program.

# Who/What is a Cultural Broker

- ❖ **Cultural brokering is defined as the act of bridging, linking, or mediating between groups or persons of differing cultural backgrounds for the purpose of reducing conflict or producing change (Jezewski, 1990).**
- ❖ **A cultural broker acts as a go-between, one who advocates on behalf of another individual or group (Jezewski & Sotnik, 2001).**

# Essential Attributes of Cultural Brokers

- ❖ Work embedded in their communities
- ❖ Are able to fluently speak the language/languages of the community they serve and understand and interpret their intricate customs and beliefs
- ❖ Are highly skilled communicators and are able to build, and facilitate, trusting relationships with their clients.
- ❖ Are of good standing in their communities.

# Challenges to our work during Covid 19

- ❖ Clients responses to Covid and the shut down
- ❖ Working remotely – challenges for the clients, service providers and our team
- ❖ Education Sector
- ❖ Disability supports and Health Sector
- ❖ Daily Living Challenges for Clients and their Families

**Thank you!**

**For more information on our program please  
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