

Peel-Halton Settlement Partnerships Executive Council

Annual IRCC Action Days



Executive Council Report November 2 & 3, 2023

Summary and Recommendations

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our special thanks to the core Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) Action Day Committee for its dedication to making this day a success.

The committee was comprised of:

Kim Jenkinson	Halton Multicultural Council
Devanand Maharaj	Peel Career Assessment Services Inc.
Jessica Kwik	Peel Newcomer Strategy Group
Shriya Seksaria	Peel Newcomer Strategy Group
Stefany Cutuli	IRCC
Stefanie Isler	IRCC
Richard Cloke	Halton Newcomer Strategy
Vanja Hilson	Halton Newcomer Strategy

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land on which we live, work and gather is part of the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit.

The land on which the Region of Peel and the Region of Halton operate is rich in history and modern traditions of many First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. From the Anishinabek to the Attawandaron, Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, the Métis and Ojibway/Chippewa peoples, that these lands surrounding the Great Lakes are steeped in Indigenous history.

We are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land, and by doing so, give our respect to its first inhabitants.

We also acknowledge that we are all Treaty peoples, including those who came here as settlers, and those of us who came here involuntarily, particularly as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

We pay tribute to the ancestors of those of African-Indigenous origin and descent.

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Background

The annual IRCC Action Days, held on the mornings of November 2 and 3, 2023, focused on the progress since a year where action was taken on the two priority areas identified by the Peel-Halton Settlement Partnerships Executive Council members in 2022:

- Staff support and retention: The focus of the first morning held in-person at the Peel Career Assessment Services office.
- Improving digital service delivery collaboratively: A part of the collaboration focus on the second morning held online through a Zoom meeting.

The roundtable was mainly comprised of IRCC-funded newcomer-serving agencies, local immigration partnerships, and IRCC representatives. (See agenda in Appendix A)

Pre-event survey

IRCC shared a pre-event survey with questions related to: virtual/hybrid service, integration of equity, diversity and intersectional approaches, and specific input related to topics such as language training waitlists for clients, enhancing the Settlement workers in schools / Travailleurs et travailleuses d'établissement dans les écoles (SWIS/TEE program), streamlining information sessions/products. The results of the survey can be found in Appendix B.

Context from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Stefany Cutuli, Manager, Settlement, Integration and Francophone Affairs (SIFA) presented some updates on November 2.

- [Stabilizing Canada's immigration targets to support sustainable growth](https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2023/11/stabilizing-canada-immigration-targets-to-support-sustainable-growth.html) - Canada.ca
 - Maintaining targets for 2024; 500,000 permanent resident admissions for 2025 and 2026.
 - A continued long-term focus on economic growth, with over 60% of permanent resident admissions dedicated to the economic class by 2025.
 - A commitment to uphold the Government of Canada's humanitarian tradition support effort by responding to humanitarian and geopolitical crises around the world.
 - New ambitious Francophone immigration targets to support Francophone communities outside of Quebec. The targets represent 6% of total immigration in 2024, 7% in 2025, and 8% in 2026.

- Refugee and displaced persons updates were shared:
 - Commitment of 40,000 refugees to Canada has been achieved as of Nov. 2023.
 - Ukrainians can continue to access settlement services. A permanent resident program opened in October 2023. Please see frequently asked questions at the OUSH website for details: [Frequently Asked Questions | Ukraine Safe Haven](#)
 - [Family-based humanitarian program for Colombians, Haitians and Venezuelans - Canada.ca](#) (note as of December 30, 2023 there has been a pause due to a likely enough applications received to fill available spaces)
- IRCC released the report “[An Immigration System for Canada's Future](#)”.
- Improvements on the International Student program was noted: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2023/10/changes-to-international-student-program-aim-to-protect-students.html>
- Call for proposals 2024 will be released in November 2023.
- Recent restructuring at IRCC: IRCC settlement network has change to “Settlement, Integration and Francophone Affairs”
 - Please reach out to your program office to review the clauses of the francophone integration pathway.
 - November 5-11, 2023 is National Francophone Week.



Stefany Cutuli from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) speaking on Day 1 at the IRCC Action Day

Progress on priorities for action

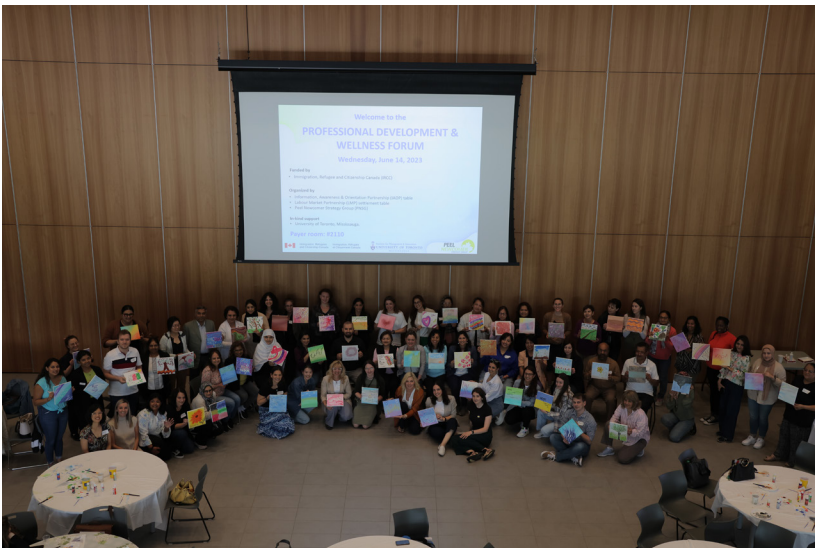
The report from [2022 IRCC Action Day](#) highlighted three key recommendations. The following section describes the progress made since last year.

1. Convening a task group on pay equity: While a formal group did not form, there was a follow-up meeting of Peel-Halton Settlement Partnerships Executive Council in December 2022 which led to a collective letter to IRCC in January 2023 signed by 18 signatories of Executive Council. This resulted in confirmation from IRCC that its existing policies and practices do allow for recipients to implement wage increases during the life of a contribution agreement. All IRCC-funded project can be amended to modify salaries of funded positions upon request from the organizations with reasonable justification.

2. Convening a staff support working group: While a formal working group did not form, there was progress in staff support through collective action as seen by:

- Partnership tables of Executive Council meeting quarterly to set professional development opportunities in coordination with PNSG. See Appendix C for slides on PNSG professional development survey results (feedback on 2022-2023 sessions and topics for next fiscal year).

In-person staff support was experienced through in-person events by each partnership table. For example, the IAOP and LMP tables worked with PNSG to host an in-person professional development and wellness forum repeated over two days to two groups totaling 187 frontline settlement and employment-focused staff. Feedback surveys (73 respondents, 39% response rate) demonstrated that the forum was useful (92% agree), relevant and achieved learning objectives (88%), and offered opportunities to network and make new connections (95%).



*Participants at the IAOP and LMP professional development and wellness forum held in June 2023
Photo credit: Ryan Cerrudo (r.cerrudo@utoronto.ca)*

- The Sheridan College “Settlement Practitioner Micro-credential” is moving forward from pilot phase to ongoing delivery for new cohorts of settlement staff with coordination support by PNSG. Designed for new staff of newcomer-serving agencies who lack social service background experience and knowledge, there are three courses (8 weeks each). The 2023-2024 cohort has begun. Costs for the course will be shared with Executive Council members. Organizations can consider using the professional development line of their IRCC funding to pay for the course per staff registered.

If you would like to receive the Executive Council network rate from Sheridan, please contact Peel Newcomer Strategy Group at info@peelnewcomer.org.



Devanand Maharaj, Executive Director of Peel Career Assessment Services, at the IRCC Action Day on November 2. Presenters from Sheridan College shared information on the Settlement Practitioner Micro-credential.

3. Hiring a third-party consultant to advance digital initiatives collaboratively: Based on discussions in 2022, the consultant would help with developing:

- Current state audit of digital maturity, digital tools and data management used by organizations in the Peel-Halton Executive Council,
- Roadmap for aligning systems to allow for regional data to support Executive Council organizations' and sector planning.
- Recommendations for tools to support project management, communications and referral.

In 2023, with funding support from IRCC, the Executive Council co-chairs opened a consultant selection committee and identified PNSG to hold the contract for the consultant. The interested committee members (co-chairs, PDSB, PNSG) selected Code 4 Canada as the successful consultants to support the initiative out of a competitive pool of seven experienced consultants who responded to an RFQ. Code 4 Canada representatives presented on November 3 to introduce the project to Executive Council.

Summary of discussions

Day 1

Theme: Staff Support and Retention

Discussion topic	Discussion / Recommendations/ Action items
Compensation and staff retention, Facilitator: Debbie Douglas, OCASI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage data from OCASI to support with benchmarking staff compensation levels. • Convene to share best practices and common approaches on budgeting for staff compensation among EC organizations. • In response to precarious work, Halton District School Board championed permanency: Benefits, pension, sick time (short-term disability and long-term disability). This has helped with retention. • Some have built capacity of reserves for severance. Conversation with policymakers is needed. • Organizational policy: could include year-to-year contract workers to permanent employee. • Collective conversation for a common approach needed (CFP) – e.g. best practice to include increases year over year (cost of living amounts) when negotiating with funders. • The approach to funding supply staff needs to be reviewed.

<p>Staff support and career development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Staff should be trained to multi task, so that if one staff is not there, other staff can fill in for that person. · Have structured support in each organization for proper on boarding of the new staff, like the IAOP's "Welcome package" for onboarding of new staff. · Further micro-credentialing as professional development. Sheridan's micro credential is a good initiative for entry level jobs for the sector. A similar micro credentialing can be done for staff who are in the sector for many number of years/ or managers which can support with career growth. · Recognizing years of experience in the sector by putting them under certain NOC codes. For eg., a staff working as a settlement worker for 20 years can be given the credential of a "social worker" as they have been in the sector for many years. · Emphasis on staff wellness is important. · Including wage range in the job posting is a step towards pay equity. · Developing resources and sharing them across the sector for learning. · Everyone talks about collaboration, but someone has to take the initiative and have a vision for it. · Regional Accountability Models for Settlement (RAMS) project can drive/ support the training/ professional development agenda by allocating certain budget. · Sharing of staff: when contract of a certain staff ends they can be referred to other organizations by their managers so as to retain the staff within the sector. · Staff satisfaction surveys can be done periodically. · A shared inventory of settlement staff (especially with different language skills be developed. · Supporting a regional staffing pool: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LINC teachers – sharing staff (including supply teachers) - Shared listing of staff: As a staff contract ends, sharing job openings to keep them in the sector.
<p>Leadership and strategy for supporting staff leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Need trainings for future mid-level leaders to create the opportunities. · Cross learning: Knowledge transferring across all positions · Leading with humility - know every detail of staff's positions. (Able to identify) · Tendency to pile on work to those who are excelling and end up burdening with more work. People in the past have left because their work load was not being managed. Staff retention issue. · Engage in the decision making with future leaders and encourage decision making. · Mentoring is key to develop new leaders. · Formal training for leaders to develop mentoring skills · Performance appraisals should allow to explore future goals. Learning and developing for those staff members and what their intentions within the organizations. · Develop a thinktank project around retention, career and leadership development

Day 2

Theme: Best Practices & Collaboration; Recommendations

IRCC led a discussion on community planning:

1) What projects and/or practices funded recently in response to service gaps can be considered successful and why?

IRCC executive council members raised the following in response:

- **Settlement Workers in Schools:** Ensuring a 12-month funding vs 10-months for 2 SWIS. This funding permitted a yearly presence and a 51% increase in the number of new clients in the 2nd trimester of 2023-24, which include the additional 2 summer months that were funded, (37 new clients) vs 2022-23 (19 new clients).
- **E-learning specialist positions** have helped for digital literacy, positioning clients well for employment (Indus). This resonated with others who mentioned the roles have become essential to quality program delivery (Caledon Community Services, Peel District School Board – Adult education – who also found Chrome books purchase helped with language learning more than phones)
- **Summer Conversation Circles** for youth from countries like Ukraine and Afghanistan (Dixie-Bloor Neighbourhood Centre: 7 weeks, 5h/day resulted in 60 youth in 2023; 20 you in 2022)
 - Conversation build-up – SWIS workers support with practice sessions for 6-12 aged school-aged children allowing them to choose time and date
- **“Building capacity” train-the-trainer project** by PCHS to train settlement workers in sensitive on mental health first aid, certified by the Mental Health Commission of Canada. Over the past 3 years of 5 so far, there has been a great response to keep education on mental health. Involved partnerships with others, including PNSG.
- **Crisis support:** settlement and crisis workers working together is the best.

2. How do resettlement and settlement providers currently work together to ensure GARs have access to a continuous and comprehensive set of services and supports and remain connected to the network of services in transitions such as moves from temp to permanent accommodations and secondary migration? Are there best practices to support Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) arrivals with multiple barriers that we can scale up, share and learn from?

Participants shared:

- Serving refugees is a natural part of services so the number of services used increases even if number of clients remain the same.

- Crisis counseling positions help with housing and food security. Further, it may help to have some that are specific to youth and some with language-specific skills.
- The refugee assistance program (RAP) at Polycultural features referral to a client's closest settlement agency. There are many service organizations coming into the RAP reception centre share information with clients.
- SWIS workers have helped register children for school
- Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir (Csc MonAvenir) has seen an increase of Francophone government-assisted refugee (GAR) students and families. To ensure supports to GAR students who are often in temporary housing, Csc MonAvenir facilitates student transportation to school. As Csc MonAvenir schools in Waterloo region are regional, it provides children with a certain stability when families move into a more permanent housing. Even if the residents' address changes, the likelihood of a family to live outside of the school boundaries is diminished. In addition, as clients identified needs are assessed, Csc MonAvenir multilingual SWIS workers refer GAR clients to partner service providers in order to ensure families access community and settlement services and programs.

3.What partnerships or best practices have you developed to strengthen referrals and improve collaboration between Anglophone & Francophone organizations?

Jean-Claude N'Da from the Réseau en Intégration Francophone Centre-Sud-Ouest Ontario (RIF CSCO) shared that many organizations may be focusing on the IRCC Francophone integration pathway requirements policy and concerns about losing funding through referrals, rather than on the clients needs themselves. The RIF will work with other LIPs to help IRCC-funded service providers about the four requirements of the IRCC Francophone integration pathway.

Others responded that it's important to remember the purpose of (re)settlement and providing wrap-around service where quality is prioritized over meeting targets. The RIF was commended for bringing Francophone service providers to help with African francophone asylum-seekers (not as many Francophone refugees have been seen through the GARs by Polycultural's RAP program).

A few ideas were raised to overcome organizational barriers for referrals between organizations and raise awareness of services, particularly for frontline staff:

i) Networking organizations together

- Formal tools to develop networks (e.g. among anglophone and francophone service providers) may be helpful, with the suggestion that guidelines be facilitated by IRCC.
 - Best practices, standards for referrals (e.g. warm transfer during an appointment to a francophone organization), guided and funded by IRCC to address competition issues between organizations when referring.
 - Resources for bilingual resources need to be part of contribution agreements.
- Partnerships and joint initiatives may help bring service to communities of clients that may otherwise be missed. These partnerships were noted as adding resources by mutual exchange.
- Written agreements such as memoranda of understanding may be a tool to support referral and provide clear guiding principles, roles and responsibilities.

ii) Create mechanisms to increase awareness of services, particularly among frontline staff.

Beyond organizational official agreements, it is important for frontline staff to have awareness and ready access to information about services available in relevant geographic areas to help refer a client.

- Online platform to connect staff to lists of services (searchable)

- Networking frontline providers to help fill a particular need through partnership-building.

“I think facilitating spaces for francophone and anglophone agency representatives to meet, connect, share information about programs and work on referral practices and collaborations can be very helpful to increase service awareness, understanding and referrals.”

- Csc MonAvenir school board has reached out to most service providers Settlement Services, including those serving GAR's, to increase awareness of the referral process to Francophone Services. In addition, one-on-one meetings or presentations to several Anglophone Service providers to explain the realities faced by Francophone newcomers, the services available to the Francophone clientele, the importance of the reference process for the integration of the Newcomer Francophone family, the countries of origin the Francophone Newcomers and facilitate the referral process.

iii) Positive connection by RIF and LIPs to service providers.

- The RIF presented to refugees about services and how to navigate them at the hotel for temporary emergency accommodation. Jean-Claude Nda from the RIF shared that he presented a workshop at the 2022 Bridges conference on the best practices for collaboration; and recently the RIF just released a study on needs of French speaking immigrants in Peel and Toronto with insights that Francophone workers take more time to build relationships.

Breakout group discussion topics	Discussion highlights
Leadership succession planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Need to create a collaborative table for these conversations to be ongoing. · Deciding preemptively who will take over at some point could miss out on opportunities for others to grow into the potential. · Choosing our language – ‘performance reviews and management’ could change to ‘career development’. Need to get out of the way of your staff’s careers as language can instill fear.
Regional data ecosystem: Priority areas for sector planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Create minimum standard for the sector, to be applicable across all organizations. · Common learning and sharing platform needs to be developed and maintained. · Data sharing guidelines needs to be developed. · Avoid creating parallel platforms and focus more on what we already have. · We need a mechanism that can help us use the data in the most efficient way to help & serve the clients.
Regional accountability models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · There has to be accountability and performance modelling but stability of funding is important when the program is ongoing for example language assessment and HARTS. · Administering funds to service providers and considering how to support non IRCC funded agencies as well. · Cost of adding an extra layer should be considered. · Job description of the host needs to be included.
Developing client service standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · All clients coming to an agency should be offered services. After needs assessment and determining the eligibility referrals should be made if necessary. · Having a standard intake process (asking the same questions) is important to collect standard set of information from each client. Standard use of software across the sector. · Community and client consultation helps in knowledge sharing and should be practiced by all agencies.
Other (e.g. Outreach for new clients – integration opportunities for Anglophone and Francophone)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Outreach to newcomers about the available services is important to provide the settlement support during initial years of immigration. · Leveraging social networks (neighborhood and family networks) and social media for outreach · Leveraging technology for outreach, like social media promotions, chat bots, online networking platforms with other newcomers, mobile apps in different languages etc. · Leveraging pre arrival services.

Recommendations and conclusion

The 2023 IRCC Action Day provided ideas and guidance for making further progress on the following priorities identified by Executive Council in 2022:

Staff support and retention

- Staff compensation : Each organization is encouraged to focus on making the case for appropriate staff compensation with annual increases by leveraging OCASI data on salary as one of the tools they could use to support justification.
- Staff development: Sheridan micro-credential costs to be shared with Executive Council members to consider budgeting for the Call for Proposals by IRCC for funding for 2025-2030. PNSG to continue professional development offerings that are guided by the results from the 2023 sector staff survey results and could integrate learning about Francophone and Anglophone service offerings in Peel-Halton.
- Leadership development: Formation of organized forums to deepen learning, planning and identifying concrete collective actions ahead on issues such as retention, career and leadership development. Priyanka Sheth from Dixie-Bloor Neighbourhood Centre shared an impactful presentation
- Further, as CFP is released, group meetings will be facilitated by co-chairs to find potential for collaboration and alignment



Debbie Douglas from OCASI speaking at the IRCC Action Day

“Advancing digital collaboratively” initiative with consultants

- All executive members are encouraged to engage with the Code 4 Canada consultants as they undertake current state digital maturity surveys and digital/data alignment road-mapping.

Francophone integration and client referrals

- The RIF and LIPs to meet to discuss sector strategies to support meeting the Francophone Integration Pathway requirements in client-centred ways.
- Future discussions at Executive Council to consider next steps to support client referrals and service information sharing.

Appendix A

AGENDA Day 1

Nov 02, 2023, Day 1: In person

Location: Peel Career Assessment Services, 975 Meyerside Dr, Mississauga, ON L5T 1P9

Theme: Staff Support and Retention

Time	Agenda
9:00 am – 9:15 am	Coffee and tea and light refreshment Welcome
9:15 am – 9:30 am	IRCC opening remarks + Q&A
9.30 am – 10.15 am	Overview of topics for the day 1. Compensation and staff retention 2. Staff support and career development 3. Leadership and strategy for developing staff leadership
10:20 am – 10:55 am	Breakout groups Each group will include an update on progress and discussion on next steps 1. Staff retention and compensation: Discussion with a smaller group exploring ways an organization can make changes towards greater retention levels and pay equity. 2. Staff support and career development 3. Leadership and strategy for supporting staff leadership
10:55 am – 11:05 am	Break
11:05 am -11.45 am	Large group debrief and next steps
11:45 am – 12.30 pm	Refreshments/ lunch

Day 2
Nov 03, 2023, Virtual via Zoom
Theme: Collaboration and Best Practices

Time	Agenda
9:30 am – 9:35 am	MC Welcome
9:35 am – 9:45 am	EC co-chairs welcome and reflection
9:45 am – 10:25 am	<p>IRCC – Planning: Stefany Cutuli</p> <p>Discussion questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · What projects and/or practices funded recently in response to service gaps can be considered successful and why? · How do resettlement and settlement providers currently work together to ensure GARs have access to a continuous and comprehensive set of services and supports and remain connected to the network of services in transitions such as moves from temp to permanent accommodations and secondary migration? Are there best practices to support Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) arrivals with multiple barriers that we can scale up, share and learn from? · What partnerships or best practices have you developed to strengthen referrals and improve collaboration between Anglophone & Francophone organizations?
10:25 am – 11:15 am	<p>Collaboration and breakout groups</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership succession planning 2. Regional data ecosystem: Priority areas for sector planning 3. Regional accountability models 4. Developing client service standards 5. Other (e.g. Outreach for new clients – integration opportunities for Anglophone and Francophone)
11:15 am – 11:25 am	Break
11:25 am - 11:55 am	Large group debrief (5 min per group)
11:55 am – 12:00 pm	Next steps and closing

Appendix B

Pre-survey results by IRCC for all EC members.

Total responses: 35

1. Which service type has been most successfully offered using a virtual approach?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Language Training	54.29%	19
Intake, assessment and referral	11.43%	4
Employment Services	17.14%	6
Information delivery	17.14%	6
	Answered	35

2. Which service type has been most successfully offered using a hybrid approach?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Language Training	42.86%	15
Intake, assessment and referral	14.29%	5
Employment Services	17.14%	6
Information delivery	25.71%	9
	Answered	35

3. Share specific examples of how your organization incorporates equity, diversity and an intersectional lens to programming design and delivery.

- Anti-discrimination policy. Integrating Anti Racism and Anti Oppression (ARAO) approach into its organizational policies. Established an ARAO committee, which plays a pivotal role in ensuring that equity, diversity, and intersectionality are woven into our program design and delivery
- Hiring diverse staff (gender, language etc.) to serve the community. Staff are representative of most of the newcomers in the community and beyond
- Culturally tailored services
- Mandatory staff trainings for all levels.
- Applying gender-based analysis which would include the time needed to achieve desired results for different client groups, support services.

- Many multicultural festivals and days observation are taught and observed/celebrated in LINC classes
- Staff use pronouns, including in their email signature
- Partnering with organizations who specifically working with various groups for referrals.
- Flexibility in service delivery by allowing more time for clients to reach the expected result.
- Engage clients in providing feedback to support program design
- Developed a handbook that is given to service users to support their knowledge base about our services as well as a reminder of expectations. We further engage service users in feedback loops to consistently improve our supports and services.
- Conduct comprehensive needs assessments that consider the unique needs and challenges of diverse communities.
- Offer translation and interpretation services to support clients who speak languages other than the primary language of the program.
- Implement trauma-informed practices that recognize and address the potential impact of trauma on participants from diverse backgrounds.
- Ensure resources are distributed in a way that addresses historical disparities and supports the needs of marginalized communities.
- We provide services and program materials in multiple languages for diverse linguistic backgrounds
- Regular assessments and participant feedback to guide service improvements.
- Actively collaborate with with local community organizations to better understand the needs and challenges faced by other ethnic groups.

4. What approaches can we pursue to reduce client language training waitlists? How do we collaboratively manage waitlists?

- Offer additional LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) classes by partnering with other agencies to provide LINC classes. By expanding the availability of LINC classes, we can address the issue of lengthy waitlists and ensure that newcomers have timely access to language training services.
- Develop attendance policy to be implemented across sector. Steps of withdrawing students with poor attendance. Add extra classes for levels 0-2 as quite a few of the clients in this level are not able to read and write in their first language, nor do they have any digital literacy skills. The learning process for these illiterate newcomers takes longer.

- Have a list of local programs with low wait list. Develop a common attendance policy. We have one internal but approach has to be consistent for language training service providers. Be more strict with attendance policy/guidelines, for example warning is issued to students when attendance falls below 70% and in two weeks withdrawal letter is issued if no improvements.
- Be more flexible in allowing new classes to open to address waitlist for specific levels (in terms of reallocation or additional funding, CA amendment, etc.)
- Referrals to organizations with openings, offer flexible delivery formats, regular communication between assessment centres and service delivery sites.
- Maximizing spaces in classes and offering hybrid solutions; evening classes offer opportunities to expand the service offerings without a significant additional expense.
- Conduct a thorough needs assessment to understand the demand for LINC services in our community. Offer classes at various times of the day, including evenings, to accommodate diverse schedules.
- Incorporate hybrid learning components to ensure overrun students are also accommodated despite sometimes smaller class rooms.
- Streamline administrative procedures for enrollment, booking assessment, and placement to reduce processing time.
- Enable the creation of online supplementary classes, allowing agencies with extra funding to hire staff and support more combined classes, ultimately reducing waitlists
- Do our best to streamline registration, but the appropriate documents are required for registration - this often slows down when students can start school. We are working on alternate process for registration to help us with this.
- Open up more online and in-person classes across Ontario; address compensation issues caused by Bill 124 affecting recruitment and retention; additional funding to increase capacity.
- Open up additional classes (with slippage if applicable) in the highest demanded levels SP's could be assigned a collaborative connection to "share" the waitlists.
- Separate language assessment from language training delivery. (This is a clear conflict. IRCC shouldn't fund new agencies into the same space as existing agencies. Consistently check attendance lists to see absent students, contact them to gather more information, enrol new students into classes if previous students confirmed they are not coming back - Work collaboratively with LINC teachers to obtain attendance lists
- More teachers and resources should be given to the qualified organizations, such as more classes part-time, full time and hybrid.

- There is already good collaboration on wait lists, it might be a good idea to do a graduated list. Require people to attend online classes until in person is available, otherwise they lose the spot on the wait list. It would ensure wait lists represent people really wanting to learn English.

5. Are there opportunities to enhance Settlement workers in school/ Travailleurs et travailleuses d'établissement dans les écoles (SWIS/TEE program) delivery, achieve greater consistency and efficiency?

- Develop program guidelines
- To conduct program evaluation to find efficiencies and identify recommendations. There are a number of regular meetings and networks for SWIS with schoolboards. May consider to work on program guidelines including all details, such as are SWIS worker allowed to have hybrid model or not?
- Currently, the program is in need of expansion, as school principals are reaching out to us for a settlement worker at their schools, requesting a 3 to 4-day model instead of the previous 2-day model. This shift is driven by the changing demographics in the area, with newcomers arriving more frequently
- SWIS staff need to work in July (12 months) like the other SWIS agencies in Ontario. Consistency is important to deliver services when a high number of newcomers are coming during summertime
- IRCC to allocate funding of iFun and WOW (newcomer youth orientation program) to the SWIS providers and add more days to run the programs (one day is insufficient)
- SWIS providers need to have funding to provide PD for their own staff.
- It will be very helpful for the settlement workers of the organizations that lack workers in school to have permission to access the youth of particular cultural backgrounds and work with their parents to reduce inter-generation gaps in a culturally competent model.

6. How do you streamline the delivery of information sessions and the development of information products to ensure what is conveyed to clients is consistent and locally-specific and non-duplicative?

- When service providers provide us the information sessions we assess whether they are locally-specific and non-duplicative before we publish through our media outlets.
- **Regular Feedback:** At the conclusion of each session, our counselors solicit input from participants regarding topics and content for future sessions.
- **Client Surveys:** send out survey links to newcomers to gather feedback on previous sessions and obtain recommendations for future ones.

- **Needs Assessment:** Analyze the needs of newcomers to identify topics and areas that require attention in information sessions.
- **Demand Consideration:** Consider the demand for specific sessions; for example, we recognize that there is typically high demand for tax return filing sessions in February.
- **Local Resources Integration:** Our information packages include details about local resources available to newcomers, ensuring relevance and access.
- **Clear Session Outlines:** Flyers and promotional materials for sessions include outlines of the information to be covered. This transparency helps participants understand what to expect and prevents duplication.
- Coordinate the schedule for sites, post it online. There may not be an issue with duplication, it may reach different client groups if delivered at different site or promoted at various regions. Most important is accuracy and up to date information presented. Following Information and Referral Standards helps.
- Staff are informed about IRCC expectations and emerging client needs. Staff read what is being offered by other local agencies. Staff also form relationships with other newcomer agency staff and discuss emerging issues and approaches and plans for program offerings. The agency also partners with other agencies to co-present and co-host events. Staff also look at client progress rate, the local data and projections to inform next steps and recommendations.
- Follow Information and Referral Standards is a key including reviewing information to make sure it is complete and up to date. We are coordinating the planning and promoting sessions on the website and app calendar.
- Staff reviews contents periodically and make necessary updates. Communicate with other SPOs via various service networks and meetings.
- Create video content that can be shared across the network.
- All programs are offered in French so there are non-duplicative.
- Often information is not absorbed especially if dealing with trauma and displacement. Many individuals take time to absorb and whilst this may seem a duplication, it is more in the realm of service user engagement even if information is shared often.
- Always researching new content to stay updated and inform our clients. Based on the new findings, our existing materials and curriculum get revised.
- Settlement staff meet regularly with our coordinator (multiple times a week) to ensure alignment.

- During the IRCC committee meetings (LMP, IAOP, PHL and CC) share best practices and program offerings to be aware of any duplication (and/or gaps) and address with the IRCC Officer.
- Information sessions are updated with new facts and laws provided by credited sources - Invite local organizations to provide information sessions (Peel-based) - deliver sessions in 3-6 months intervals to avoid duplication
- We need online “knowledge Base Practice” resources accessible to all settlement workers in Peel. Four partnerships are old-fashioned and not effective. Executive Council should meet every other month
- Partly on history and what has been of value to clients, partly from client input and trends.
- A needs assessment will be conducted to ensure that settlement workers can understand the specific information needs and preferences of our clients, helping us identify the most relevant topics and formats. We also customize the information to make it locally-specific. This could involve adding information about local resources, services, or community organizations. All content will be reviewed by supervisors to ensure accuracy, cultural sensitivity, and relevance, and to ensure that clients receive the most current, up-to-date information. Materials are developed in multiple languages to ensure accessibility for clients with diverse linguistic backgrounds. We also use digital platforms to deliver information online or offer a hybrid option, making it easily accessible to clients at any time.
- Coordinator of Diversity and Inclusion works in collaboration with other organizations, including Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services, to deliver EDI workshops to newcomers. Additionally, community-based interagency collaboration with local settlement agencies and the Toronto South, North, and West Local Immigration Partnerships assist in developing the most consistent and locally-specific information sessions for our service users.
- **Standardization of Information Products:** Explain the development of a standardized framework for information products, including brochures, handouts, and digital resources, to ensure consistency in the content delivered to clients. Describe the use of templates and guidelines that incorporate local-specific information while maintaining a uniform structure across different products. Centralized Information Management System: Discuss the implementation of a centralized information management system that allows for the efficient storage, retrieval, and dissemination of up-to-date and locally relevant information to clients. Emphasize the use of technology to facilitate easy access to information, ensuring that all staff members have consistent access to the most current materials.

Appendix C

Professional development for newcomer serving staff:2023-24

Presented at IRCC Action Day, Nov 2, 2023

Sessions in 2022-2023		Total attendees : 821
#	Topic	# of attendees
1.	Mississauga Community Legal services	55
2.	Innovative Outreach Strategies to Reach Newcomers	105
3.	Refugee Sponsorship Training Program's Settlement Support Connections	65
4.	Maximize your Potential for Career Advancement	68
5.	Case management for settlement staff and supervisors	115
6.	Professional Development and Wellness Forum	187
7.	Welcome to Ontario Parks: Trips and tricks for your camping trip	47
8.	Exploring newcomer young adult mental wellness through photovoice	32
9.	What is a Power of Attorney	112
10.	Anti human trafficking	35

Feedback question	Average score out of 5
The webinar content was relevant and achieved my learning expectations.	4.8
I intend to do something new or different after attending the session	4.6
If a similar session is offered in the future, I would recommend it to a colleagues/ friends/ network.	4.9
This topic should be offered again as a future learning opportunity.	4.8

Other suggestions

- More time for discussion/ Q& A
- More in person sessions

Fall 2023 survey results

Survey sent out in September 2023

Total: 94 responses

	Artificial intelligence and transformation of settlement sector	47.87%	45
2.	Career management for staff	43.62%	41
3.	Conflict resolution (de-escalation, active listening)	42.55%	40
4.	Crisis support and emergency training	39.36%	37
5.	Leadership development and support	39.36%	37
6.	Job developer skills (e.g. referral pathways between settlement and employers, supporting clients with job retention)	34.04%	32
7.	Case management technique (e.g., time management, case notes, privacy, confidentiality, records management, data tracking)	32.98%	31
8.	Digital service delivery: how to support clients remotely	31.91%	30
9.	Cultural competency	30.85%	29
10.	Support newcomers with disability	30.85%	29

11.	System navigation (e.g. how to navigate Service Ontario, the healthcare system etc)	27.66%	26
12.	Indigenous population and newcomers	25.53%	24
13.	Anti human trafficking	23.40%	22
14.	Trauma informed care	22.34%	21
15.	Emergency response (e.g. first aid, police engagement, crisis planning)	20.21%	19
16.	Mental Health first aid	20.21%	19
17.	Online fraud prevention	20.21%	19
18.	Gender-based issues	18.09%	17
19.	Promotion of other regions for housing	18.09%	17
20.	Research and data (e.g. basic research tools)	15.96%	15

Other topics/ speakers of interest

Topics

- Building partnerships
- Well-being for staff
- Facilitation skills
- Changes in Immigration Trends/applications
- Housing - how to assist clients after they leave the shelter
- LGBTQ presentations
- Cognitive Behavior Therapy – CBT
- Sessions on Immigration updates and more on applications for Immigration including online portals.
- Domestic violence training (Baldev Mutta)
- [COSTI Family Services](#)
- [Toronto and Region Conservation Authority](#)
- [Chantal Desloges](#)
- [Toronto Hostels Training Centre](#)

Speakers

- [Dr. Yuliya Knyahnytsk, CAMH](#)
- Karyn Hand- CMHA- Facilitation
- Tammy Whelen- Mental Health
- Tamarack and Maytree presenters