

Settlement Services Working Group
Meeting Minutes
Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture
194 Jarvis Street, 2nd Floor
June 17, 2013. 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Agenda

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| 1. Welcome and Introduction | 10 min |
| 2. Review of TSLIP Implementation Phase | 10 min |
| 3. Review of Working Group Priorities | 10 min |
| 4. Welcome Brochure | 40 min |
| • Review of Currently Available Welcome Packages | |
| • Geographic Boundaries | |
| • Establish Topic Areas (Top 5) | |
| • Preliminary Template Discussion | |
| 5. Discussion on WelcomePack Canada Inc. | 15 min |
| 6. Service Map Updating | 25 min |
| 7. Action Items/Next Steps | 10 min |

Attendance

Present:

Andrea Lagios	Epilepsy Toronto
Brent Kitagawa	Metropolitan United Community Services
Cindy Laparra	Parkdale Community Information Centre
Emelina Balla	Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture
Grace Ho	South Riverdale CHC
Maria Delgado	College Boreal
Natasa Boskovic	Newcomer Women's Services Toronto
Peter Chiu	TCCSA
Rowena Hill	Metropolitan United Community Services

Regrets:

Bill Sinclair	St. Stephen's Community House
Kamalesh Visavadia	Madison Community Services
Lata Patel	Aids Committee of Toronto
Michelle Adams	East York East Toronto Family Resources
Peter Foote	Toronto Employment and Social Services
Shaida Addetia	Woodgreen Community Services

Staff: Nicole Watson, Kera Vijaysingham

1. Welcome and Introductions

Members were welcomed to the meeting and were asked to introduce themselves and the agency they represent. Members were also given the option to mention any interesting initiatives, programs or news happening at their agencies

2. Review of TSLIP Implementation Phase

Members were given a brief overview of the TSLIP's current phase being Year 1 of the Rolling Action Plan. Last year was mainly a transition year as TSLIP members adjusted to the new quadrant structure and developed the new TSLIP wide settlement strategy/action plan. Members were told that the final report is now available on the TSLIP website, and will be sent out via a follow-up e-mail.

The TSLIP settlement strategy is divided into 8 sections, each outlining a key focus area (i.e. partnerships & service delivery cooperation; information outreach and planning; key support services and welcoming communities, etc.). This year the focus will be on implementation of the settlement strategy and action plan; largely through the work of the working groups and also the PSCC & LIP Council. Members were shown the outline of the current LIP structure (located on page 22 of the report).

It was also mentioned that there would be some changes this year particularly LIP funding, and as such there will be no money for space rental, refreshments and other add-ons. This means that the TSLIP will be relying on members (more than ever) to provide space in kind for events, meetings and activities. Members were also informed that the stipend money previously provided to LIP Council members from small grassroots agencies is no longer available. Also, the TSLIP will be unable to offer honorarium to our Newcomer Advisory Committee members, and as such, that group has been temporarily put on hold. Members were informed however that the Executive Committee and Project team will focus a lot of attention on sustainability and alternative sources of funding to support initiatives. Members were then asked to let TSLIP staff if they had any suggestions with regards to alternative sources of funding

3. Review of Working Group Priorities

Members were informed of the main focuses for the year for this working group: (1) developing and/or testing a newcomer welcome package; (2) joint marketing and outreach and joint newcomer information sessions; (3) (possibly) collaborate with the City LIP (TNO) on settlement related initiatives

4. Welcome Brochure

Review of currently available welcome packages

TSLIP staff began the "Welcome Brochure" discussion by leading a review of currently available welcome packages. As noted by staff, most of the readily available welcome packages are dense and contain a lot of information. Members felt that a Toronto South LIP welcome package could fill a gap by providing a simplified, condensed version of "essential" information for newcomers. Currently available welcome packages include:

- *Welcome to Ontario (Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration):* outlines Ontario's Settlement Program and different supports organizations can provide newcomers with including information about rights and responsibilities, health, education, legal services and connect newcomers with supports around form filling and arranging appointments.

- Discusses living arrangements and options, schooling for children, public transportation, obtaining a driver's license, consumer protection, health care services and service Ontario affiliated information. Provides information around education, employment, entrepreneurship and volunteering. Includes a list of settlement related agencies funded by government of Ontario and outlines CIC oriented responsibilities.
- *Welcome to Canada (Citizenship and Immigration Canada)*: includes important things to do before arriving in Canada; i.e. bring all official documents (passport, birth certificate, marriage certificate, education diplomas, etc.), learn some English/ French, plan immediate living arrangements, prepare to find employment, learn education system, purchase private health insurance until OHIP is issued, learn about province and city of planned residence, purchase warm clothes, learn about Canadian laws, rights and civic responsibilities. Gives an overview of Canada, Canadian laws and the Canadian justice system. Includes information on employment, education, housing, healthcare, finances, transportation, communications and community connections. Also, breaks information down into weekly advice:
 - i.e. within 2 weeks of arriving: learn different sources of information to help settle, call/ visit settlement agencies for support, apply for health insurance, apply for SIN card, obtain bank account, obtain a map and explore, explore access to phone calls and internet, memorize emergency number
 - i.e. within 2 months of arriving: make plan to improve English/ French, search for residence, learn about education options, learn about public/ private schooling for children, learn about Canadian laws, rights and civic responsibilities, find family doctor
 - *Orientation to Ontario (O2O)*: a bilingual pilot project, co-funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI). The pilot initiative is designed to ease the transition of newcomers by providing access to standardized information about settling in Ontario and connecting newcomers to community services shortly after arrival. Involves three components (workbook, website, workshops). Helps newcomers develop a “settlement plan” after their arrival
 - *#211 Toronto*: An extremely comprehensive, however navigation may be difficult for newcomers. Includes information on “Newcomer and Settlement Services” which is further subdivided into various categories of information including: settlement, employment, language services, health programs, interpretation/ translation services, housing, legal services, befriending programs and programs for specific populations or groups. Also includes a list of agencies that can serve newcomers in each of these areas. Provides links to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section on Settlement.org
 - *City of Toronto – Immigration Portal*: Similar to #211. Addresses areas such as employment, housing and health care. Provides general information on relevant services provided by the City of Toronto

Geographic Boundaries

Members moved on to discuss the potential scope of the brochure, specifically whether a single Welcome Brochure should be produced for the entire Toronto South LIP region or whether multiple neighbourhood specific brochures should be produced. Members discussed the pros and cons of each option. Overall, members felt that a Toronto South LIP wide brochure would be most effective for several reasons including: (1) newcomers often seek information and services across neighbourhoods; (2) most of the broad scope information that is to be included in the brochure

does not change based on neighbourhood (3) links to neighbourhood specific maps/information can be included on a TSLIP wide brochure (4) translating 5 different neighbourhood specific brochures into multiple languages will be difficult to coordinate. Members were informed that the LIP Council and participants at the workshop day would also be giving their input into the welcome brochure format and content.

Establish Top 5 Topic Areas & Content

Following this, the group moved into a discussion on brochure content. In accordance with the results emerging from the TSLIP January Workshop Day Breakout Session, the group felt that housing, employment, education, language and health were the top five essential topic areas to include. Space permitting, members also suggested having a “Community Service/Support” section (which would provide information on food banks, furniture banks, financial assistance, etc.), a section on “Road Safety” (which would include information on biking rules and how to use public transit/streetcars) and a “What’s Next” section that would refer newcomers to additional external resources (i.e. #211).

The group then reviewed the three most frequently asked questions under each of the top five topic areas on settlement.org and engaged in a discussion around the prioritizing of information:

1. HOUSING

- Top Three Questions: (1) What should I know about landlord and tenant rights? (2) What do I need to know about renting in Ontario? (3) How can I find housing or an apartment to rent?
- Working group members felt that the 3rd question was the most essential, as finding and securing housing is a primary concern for newcomers
- They felt that the first question could be addressed in a sentence with a link to CLEO (Community Legal Education Ontario) for additional information
- The group felt that the second question opened up the opportunity to describe the various types of housing available (i.e. shelters, subsidized housing, coop housing, etc.)
- Overall the group agreed with the prioritizing of these questions

2. EMPLOYMENT

- Top Three Questions: (1) Why should I get help to find work? (2) Why should I get my international educational credentials evaluated? (3) How do I get a Social Insurance Number?
- Question three was deemed the most essential for inclusion
- It was suggested that question one was more accurately worded “Where can I get help to find work” and could then include information on employment centres (or a link to information on these services)
- Members suggested questions such as “How can I get experience in my field?” and “What do I need to get a job?” are also urgent and frequently asked questions

3. EDUCATION

- Top Three Questions: (1) How do I enroll my child in school? (2) Where can I get my English level evaluated? (3) How do I apply for admission to a university or college?
- Members felt that question two would be more appropriately placed under the language section and that question three could lead to information on funding options and professional training programs

- Members also suggested that this section should include a breakdown of information on the schooling options for children (i.e. public school, Catholic school, home schooling, special needs, private school, etc.) and childcare options for children in schools

4. LANGUAGE

- Top Three Questions: (1) What is Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) (2) Where can I get my English assessed to take adult ESL classes (3) How do I enroll in ESL classes?
- Working group members suggested that the questions above used too much jargon and were not as comprehensive or poignant as they could be. Instead the group suggested using the questions: “Where can I find free English language training and how can I enroll?” and “Where can I go to determine my language level for the Citizenship Test?”
- The group also felt the brochure should provide information on Occupation-Specific Language Training (OSLT)

5. HEALTH

- Top Three Questions: (1) How can I get health care coverage (Ontario Health Plan or OHIP)? (2) How do I find a family doctor? (3) What are community health centres?
- The group felt question one is essential and that questions two and three could be combined and expanded to “What are my health care options?” which would include information on the various supports available and when to access what (i.e. family physicians, walk-in clinics, hospitals, CHCs, etc.) as well as information on Telehealth, Health Connections and the Sick Kids information line.

Preliminary Template Discussion

The group briefly discussed possible templates for the Welcome Brochure. Members felt that information could be presented in pamphlet or booklet style as long as it is kept succinct and simple. In order to achieve this, members felt using links to the TSLIP website and Service Map would be key.

During this discussion the group also explored the possibility of having the brochure translated into various languages. Members felt that because the booklet/ brochure will be quite short, they could arrange for it to be translated either through themselves or their agencies. The following languages were identified as feasible to be translated:

- a. French – College Boreal
- b. Tagalog – Metropolitan United Church Community Services
- c. Spanish – College Boreal
- d. Eritrean – Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture
- e. Chinese (Traditional/ Mandarin) – TCCSA
- f. Greek – Epilepsy Toronto
- g. Hungarian – Epilepsy Toronto
- h. Shona – Epilepsy Toronto

Members deemed the quality of translation as very important. It was mentioned that COSTI provides cost-associated translation services which may not be feasible for the TSLIP at this time. In response, members discussed the importance of creating a sub-committee to approve the translations and they agreed a system must be in place to ensure the accuracy of the Welcome Brochure. Members also mentioned considering options to provide the brochure to the visually

impaired, i.e. podcast. One member suggested seeking support from the CNIB in order to pursue this item. Please see Action Items for next steps around translations.

5. Discussion on WelcomePack Canada Inc.

TSLIP staff gave a report back on WelcomePack Canada Inc. a company that is recruiting corporate brands across Canada to create a box/ kit that includes coupons for goods and basic settlement-related information for newcomers. TSLIP staff explored this initiative because it had been suggested that these kits could potentially be provided in conjunction with the Welcome Brochure. A meeting was set up with Danny Mui, Director of Field Operations, and former Executive Director of the Centre for Information and Community Services and CareFirst. He emphasized that WelcomePack has recruited consultants who have worked in the settlement sector, to ensure that the kit contains content that would be useful, respectful and valuable to newcomers.

WelcomePack plans to distribute 30,000 boxes during Phase 1 of the project with distribution set to begin in September 2013. WelcomePack is currently in the process of developing a distribution network, with 16 agencies currently offering a verbal commitment of interest. A listing of items contained in the package cannot yet be released due to legalities but this information should become available prior to the start of distribution. Mr. Mui pointed out that all box content must be kept neutral; meaning no external information (i.e. agency brochures) can be added to the boxes. Agency information can be handed out in conjunction with the boxes; however boxes will arrive sealed to prevent additional materials from being added inside and to avoid any liability for the distributing agencies.

Procedures will also be put in place to ensure that the boxes are only being distributed to eligible newcomers (permanent residents who have been in Canada less than two years and are over 18). Newcomers receiving the welcome pack will have to present their PR card and provide their year of birth, landing date, address and phone number. They will also be required to sign a release of information form. Participating agencies will receive a \$2.00 honorarium for each package distributed.

Although appreciative of the information working group members did not feel that it would be appropriate to partner with WelcomePack Canada at this time. TSLIP staff will keep members informed of any updates or information they receive.

6. Service Map Updating

Members were informed that the Service Map would be updated for the purpose of providing information in addition to the Welcome Brochure. They were led through the current Service Map on the TSLIP website in order to visualize the current structure and make suggestions as the website is being reconstructed.

Members pointed out that it would be useful for specific areas/ services to be included on the map in order to focus in on what the user is looking for. For example, include LINC classes as an option rather than merely Language Services. It was also suggested that actual services be broken down into agencies that provide direct services and information/ referrals. Members felt this would be important to include to help the user distinguish between the services offered at each agency. This would improve time efficiency on the part of the user as well as member agencies.

Members were also asked which functions they felt were most important under the Advanced Search which they identified as Service Categories and Languages.

In terms of Languages, members identified the following languages as missing from the Service Mapping System:

- a. Amharic
- b. Tagalog
- c. Tigrigna
- d. Arabic
- e. Bengali
- f. Farsi

In order to ensure that all member agencies are represented on the Service Map, TSLIP staff presented a draft form to the working group that will be distributed to all TSLIP member agencies. Similar to the agency profiles used in the current structure, this form will require agencies to note all services offered in detail in order to fulfill the new structure of the Service Map.

7. Action Items/Next Steps

Action		Who
Brochure Translation	Explore possible connection to translation/interpretation services that could be used to help translate brochure	Andrea Lagios, Epilepsy Toronto
Draft Brochure	Prepare a draft Welcome Brochure complete with content to have reviewed by working group	TSLIP Staff
Information Exchange	Provide an update of Settlement Services working group information at the LIP June 2013 Workshop Day, Welcome Brochure breakout session	TSLIP Staff
Language Capabilities	Identify the top 10 languages in the TSLIP region and develop a list of members willing to translate the Welcome Brochure	ALL Members & TSLIP Staff
Website Updating	Connect with the TSLIP website/communication team to confer working group's feedback on website updating as related to the service map tool	TSLIP Staff
WelcomePack Canada	Keep working group members informed of any updates regarding the WelcomePack Canada project	TSLIP Staff