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Newcomer Settlement and Inclusion in Peel: Building on Existing Assets

The Full Report on the Vision of a New Model for
Enhancing Newcomer Settlement Services in Peel



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Newcomer Settlement and Inclusion in Peel: Building on Existing Assets

Background

Over the past two years PNSG has been working with stakeholders from all parts of the community to identify ways to expand on the supports for settlement and integration for newcomers in Peel. The review of newcomer settlement and integration services has led to the development of a new model of serving newcomers in Peel.

Peel already benefits from many innovative and effective services to newcomers. In addition to the range of agencies and organizations providing direct services to newcomers, Peel newcomers have access to an informative Web Portal and the Newcomer Information Centre (NIC), to provide information addressing settlement needs.

The Region of Peel has undertaken valuable research on settlement issues by commissioning five discussions papers and a conducting a Labour Market Survey, which add to the research developed by the Social Planning Council of Peel. TRIEC and the Mississauga Summit have also contributed research, analysis and insights into the effort to improve settlement support. NIC and local school boards are also providing supports such as the Newcomer Needs Assessment Centre.

PNSG has drawn on those assets to develop the proposed model. The model also draws on extensive consultations across the sector with newcomers, stakeholders and service providers. These consultations led to the adoptions of four principles to guide the development and implementation of a model for service delivery.

A model for settlement and integration in Peel should:

1. Strengthen service coordination and planning across the region
2. Ensure accessible, client centered services for all newcomers
3. Create a continuum of effective employment strategies
4. Enhance the receptivity of the host community

The model and its implementation strategy are designed to fulfill these four principles.

Overview

The model centers on the creation of a network of services that are centrally coordinated and delivered by a combination of community hubs (which can serve geographic areas in Peel with the highest newcomer needs) and the flexible, newcomer services already in place which can address the many non-geographic issues for newcomers.

In most cases, hubs will offer a full suite of newcomer services, connecting residents in one neighbourhood to a broad range of services and would be tailored to the local populations. Services would be provided in the range of local languages, emphasizing the most common local services needs, and engaging the local community in ongoing community development to support community health and the responsiveness of the hub. The hub will function as primary gateway to services for newcomers.

Other newcomer service providers would continue to deliver assistance on a non-geographic basis. Working both independently and in partnership with hubs, these existing service providers would focus on particular needs and areas of expertise, addressing, for example, newcomer seniors' issues, specific needs of geographically diffuse ethno cultural groups such as the Vietnamese community and addressing specific policy areas requiring expertise, such as woman abuse.

The model supports a move to case management as the most effective tool for supporting newcomers through the complex array of services and the supports they need.

A central coordinating body will link hubs to ensure strong cross-sectoral cooperation, effective sector-wide research and planning. It would develop shared protocols to facilitate a "No Wrong Door" model of service delivery. It would also support funding prioritization by engaging funders with service providers, governments and institutions. It would support better employment strategies by helping to better link the sector with employers. The coordination will also provide venues for smaller service providers, newcomers and other stakeholders to play an ongoing role in planning and in shaping the ongoing development of service policies and infrastructure.

This model is derived from research carried out in three stages over the last year: a literature review, a community consultation, and consultations within the settlement sector. It reflects the guidance from all three stages of research, which consistently point out the need for a more coordinated, more engaged and more responsive service system.

Research

Results of the Literature Review

The Literature Review (included here as Appendix A) drew on published and unpublished materials on immigration with an emphasis on research reflecting the circumstances in Peel. Most valuable were the discussion papers commissioned by the Region with funding support from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, on key issues related to immigration. The review indicates that newcomers face a range of barriers to settlement and integration and that the service infrastructure in Peel and across Canada does not fully address those challenges. The nature of those challenges and the gaps in the services that address them are outlined below:

Outcomes

The challenges faced by newcomers and the ways in which those challenges remain unaddressed by the current service infrastructure has an adverse impact on outcomes for newcomers including employment, poverty, social inclusion, housing and health.

Accessibility

Access to services is a challenge for newcomers. Visibility is low and newcomers often cannot identify access points. Even for those who have accessed the system, navigability is poor, and newcomers often cannot find the appropriate services. Those that do find appropriate services often fall out of the system, rather than making the transition to the next appropriate service. Services are physically scattered and structurally fragmented. These circumstances appear to relate at least in part to the funding mechanisms, which creates competition and diminishes coordination and cooperation.

Appropriate Services

The linguistic and cultural appropriateness of services offered to newcomers is mixed. The format of services is often less than ideal. One-on-one, face-to-face support is the most effective, but is rarely provided.

Ethno-specific, faith based and other informal services

The challenges in the current infrastructure have contributed to the emergence of newer ethno-culturally focused services supporting groups that are often more geographically diffuse. They find the existing infrastructure does not accommodate them well and move to smaller, less well-funded ethno-specific services which can apply extensive resources to their support. Those same challenges have also contributed to the growing role of informal services including faith-based organizations and cultural groups, some of which provide services on a large scale. These are troubling outcomes as the effectiveness of informal networks and ethno-specific service capacity varies across cultural and linguistic groups and the adequacy and currency of information in informal sector is uneven, making the informal option most beneficial if it is connected to formal supports.

Community Engagement

Services work especially well when well connected to the community. A community development approach is beneficial and enhances outcomes. The receptivity of the host community is also important to success.

Resiliency

Resiliency is an effective paradigm for assessing the best approach to delivering supports. Increasing engagement of newcomers supports adaptation and builds opportunity. Creating the infrastructure for engagement, adaptation and opportunity requires a new approach to services for newcomers.

Many of these findings have since been corroborated in the Labour Market Study conducted by the Region of Peel, which underscores the challenge posed by fragmented, inaccessible services that don't engage newcomers as effectively as needed.

Results of the Community consultations

Extensive consultations with over 100 newcomers and 100 stakeholders provided more specific insights into the workings of the settlement system in Peel. A review of the directions from that consultation, *Strategies for Addressing Newcomers' Needs in Peel*, is included as "Appendix B".

Challenges with Initial Engagement

Early settlement and initial engagement are hampered by a range of systemic barriers and ineffective models of engagement. Initial contact is often ill-suited to the needs of immigrants just arriving in a new country. Materials are often linguistically inaccessible and more complex and less specifically relevant than desirable. Following interactions with newcomers are often just as poorly attuned to the way newcomers seek services and information. There are too few opportunities to access information on an as-needed basis. The focus on one-time supports and written material does not reflect newcomers preferred modes of interaction. Outreach is infrequent and not extensive.

The Service Infrastructure is Disconnected

Services are fragmented, sometimes hard to locate and often hard to navigate. Information about services is often hard to access, even for service providers. Connections between services are not often resourced and consequently are less common than would be preferable. Services are not always located where they are needed. Services are not always linguistically or culturally accommodating. Many newcomers lack information about services and information systems can be dated. There are also overlaps and gaps in service types and target communities.

Weaknesses in the Service Infrastructure Increase the Use of Alternatives

Informal services are increasingly common. Their flexible, client-centered, linguistically and culturally appropriate approach is attractive to newcomers. Intensive, face-to-face service, respect for culture and values, and familiarity contribute to their popularity.

Creating an Effective Settlement System Requires Coordination

More coherent planning of services based on more consistent gathering of data about needs is required. More coordination among funders would assist this process. A common intake, assessment and referral approach could improve navigation and integration of services and would enable service providers to offer a "No Wrong Door" approach, steering newcomers to the services they need from any point of contact. Mainstream services not primarily dedicated to newcomers should be connected to this intake a referral system, as should informal service providers.

Physical Access Issues Need to be Addressed

Services are often located far from the people who will use them. Limited availability of transit and child care make access more difficult. In addition to a “No Wrong Door” system, local access would be an advantage for newcomers. Basic services needed in communities could be met by community hubs. Hubs could house permanent services and could also be a venue for rotating service providers, but hubs should be a community centre, not just a service centre, so they can build social capital in newcomers’ communities as well as providing supports.

Current Services do Not Cover the Range of Needs Experienced by Newcomers

Services often fail to reflect the full range of service needs experienced by newcomers. Language, acculturation and employment programs tend to be more basic and less well-attuned to current needs than the today’s newcomers seek. Program content needs to change as well as format and setting.

Employment Services need to be strengthened

Despite innovative work by TRIEC, the Boards of Trade and others in the employment service sector, employment services are not meeting needs. Services are too basic and too narrow for the current newcomers. Employers are not well engaged by the system and need an interface that fully reflects the business case for employing newcomers.

Results of Sector Consultations

Consultations were conducted with most of the newcomer serving organizations in Peel because of the critical role they play in supporting newcomers. Newcomer serving organizations confirmed the findings of the research and consultations to date and provided guidance on how they should be implemented.

Building Collaboration and Partnership is Desirable, but Challenging

There was general recognition that more coordinated services were needed, but also a recognition that current structures make that challenging. There was concern that current funding structures promote competition and do not resource collaboration. Smaller organizations, in particular, do not have resources available for partnerships, collaboration or extensive participation in joint structures.

Continuing to Increase Client-Centered Service System is a Priority, but Faces Barriers

Almost all service providers recognize the need for more intensive, one-on-one services, reflecting what newcomers say they want and need, but there is concern that the current funding system favours quantity over quality, discouraging more intensive programs. Services are not always located in places that are physically accessible to clients, often far from the neighbourhoods newcomers live in. Navigation is difficult and visibility of services is poor. People don’t know where to go and information is not always current. Skills development, training and capacity building are growing but still lag behind needs.

Services are Often Disconnected

Communication across services and across agencies is inconsistent making referrals across services more infrequent and inconsistent. There is too little investment in capacity building, interagency connection and partnership which contribute to fragmentation of service. There is no common or coordinated intake mechanism. Services should be more holistic. There is some duplication in the current system but also many holes.

Building on Existing Assets is Efficient

Smaller organizations provide valuable services especially to specific sub groups such as language groups and age groups and some have valuable areas of specialization, such as woman abuse. These assets should not be overlooked. Development and implementation of new model should take place in ongoing consultations with the sector to ensure that new models should avoid discarding existing assets. Staff turnover is high and there are too few advancement opportunities, especially in smaller organizations, resulting in lost skills. More stability would protect those skilled assets.

Hubs Can be a Useful Component of a Model

Hubs are valuable but need to be in settings where all partners can have confidence and work in equitable, collaborative partnerships. Hubs demand effective internal management capacity to cope with volume of work and scope of partnerships. Hubs require robust, reliable and transparent governance structures to ensure accountability and responsiveness. Hubs need to address the full diversity of their community and the full range of culturally appropriate contact points. Some populations are not concentrated enough to be well served by hubs and need to be served on a Peel-wide basis (for example, diffuse ethno-cultural groups, specific age groups, and specific needs).

Recommended Approach

This model reflects the full range of feedback we received through research and consultations.

The model addresses the need for a more navigable and accessible service system through the creation of Community Hubs as hosts for the range of locally accessible services, possibly including case management models to support ongoing service access. The model provides for the establishment of a “No Wrong Door” assessment and referral process and the creation of outreach staff. The model addresses the need to build on the assets of existing service infrastructure by supporting the ongoing contribution of all service providers. The model addresses the need for coordination and planning in the sector by establishing a Central Planning Table and an ongoing series of Service Planning Forums to review progress and identify needs and gaps.

Community Hubs

Demographic data has identified areas with a high proportion of recent immigrants as priority neighbourhoods for settlement and integration. These "Priority Neighbourhoods" will have a Community Hub: highly visible, widely promoted and function as welcome centre to provide an accessible gateway to the service infrastructure for all newcomers. Wherever possible, Community Hubs will be colocated with other service providing organizations to create a one-stop shopping benefits that will lead to an easy-to-navigate gateway to a full range of settlement and integration services. Newly arriving immigrants to Peel will be provided with a map of Peel showing the location of the Community Hubs for each neighbourhood and providing contact information and identifying the Community Hubs as a contact point for a full range of services and information needed for settlement and integration. This locally relevant, one-on-one, face-to-face intake assessment and referral model at the community hub best reflects the most effective approach, according to best-practices research and consultations with newcomers and service providers.

Community Hub will be designed to make the broadest range of settlement services available within the community in the most accessible and appropriate way possible.

Community Hubs will be anchored by multi-service agencies providing a range of services meeting the needs of newcomers. These agencies will be required to develop service plans reflecting the needs of the surrounding community. Service plans will include an assessment of the linguistic and cultural diversity of the community and the accommodations required to meet the needs of that diverse group, as well as an assessment of the supports and programs needed by the community. The Hub Anchor agency will seek agreements with other existing service providers to meet the service needs of the residents or, where no appropriate services are available, develop new services to meet the identified needs. Other existing service providers will offer services at the Hub through formal agreements with the Hub Anchor. The Hub Anchor will offer other service providers space to deliver the needed services either on a permanent basis for ongoing service provision or intermittently for services offered on an itinerant basis, with the other service provider delivering services in available space at a number of hubs.

Hub Anchors will be expected to carry out community engagement and community development activities as part of their operating procedures. This engagement and development work should ensure that the Hub is connected to the community, gaining a detailed understanding of its dynamics and needs> Engagement should also seek to support the inherent strengths of the local community to provide support to newcomers and link them to appropriate services through informal relationships and social networks. The Anchors will draw support from groups like the proposed Mississauga Council for Diversity and Inclusion (MCDI) that is evolving through the Mississauga Summit to engage the local communities.

Hubs will also play a leadership role in reaching out to support the ability of informal service providers to facilitate access to services. Hub Anchors will actively develop relationships with

informal service providers and offer training and information to enable informal service providers to assist their participants, and to provide referrals to newcomers whose needs can be better met through the formal service system.

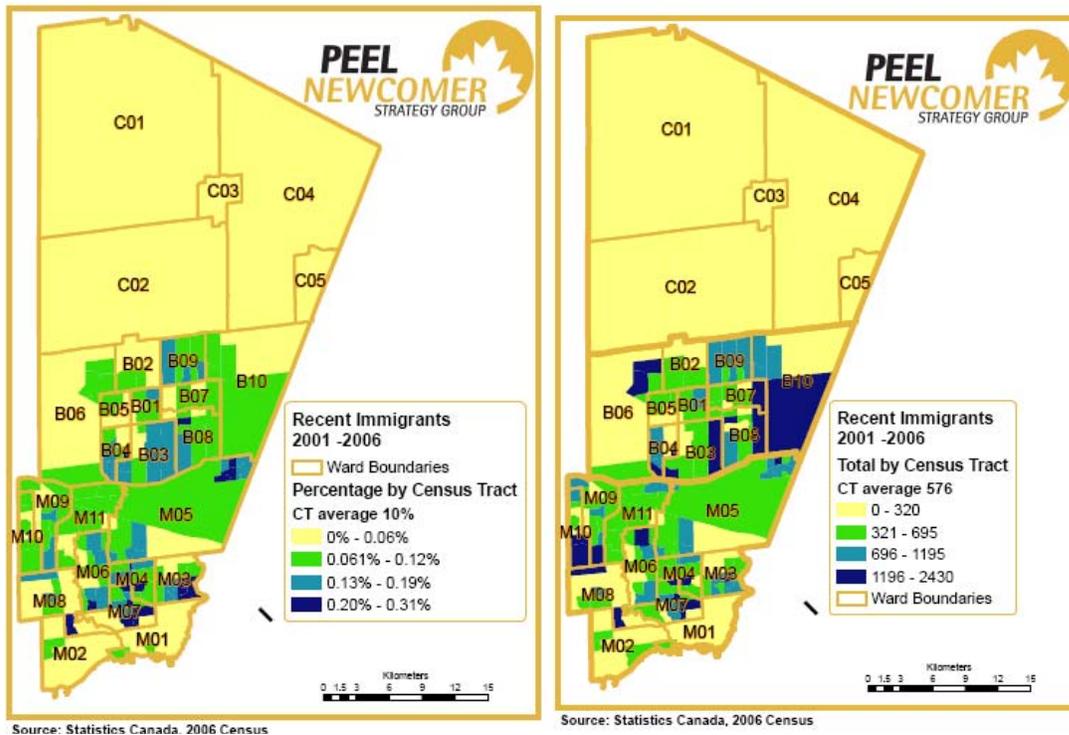
Hub anchors will also actively pursue relationships with mainstream service providers who primarily serve their catchments area, to support them in developing their capacity to provide effective services to newcomers. Hub Anchors will work with mainstream service providers to provide information on appropriate and available referrals for specific needs and provide information on cultural accommodations that may be needed by clients of the mainstream services.

Hubs Anchors will be selected through a transparent, clear, criteria-driven process, with an agency, or a consortium of agencies, selected for each Priority Neighbourhood. Selection will be based on the ability of the proponent to deliver a broad range of needed services that meet the service needs of the community and reflect the linguistic and cultural needs. Proponents will be expected to demonstrate exemplary governance and transparency and show a capacity for effective and successful partnerships with a range of partners. Proponents will also be expected to demonstrate strong links to the local community and a keen understanding of the local population.

This approach complements the creation of full suite Employment Ontario by providing single, comprehensive sites for service. This approach also works effectively with CIC's modernization initiative by breaking down silos and providing for the coordination of a variety of federally funded settlement services. Efforts should be made to coordinate hubs with existing service infrastructure including schools, libraries and assessment centres.

Hub Locations

The distribution and concentration of newcomer populations is uneven across Peel. The maps in this section show both concentrations and total volume of newcomers in each census tract in Peel.



As hubs are not simply service centers but centers of community engagement, their boundaries should reflect the patterns of association and identify already in place in communities. Hubs should be located in areas of established neighbourhoods and designed to accommodate the populations across those communities. The maps above indicate the established neighbourhoods in Peel and provide a basis for identifying appropriate hub communities.

Correlating the concentrations of newcomers with the established neighbourhoods in Peel, hubs are strongly indicated for Springdale, Bramalea, Central Brampton, Meadowvale, Clarkson/Erin Mills, Cooksville/Mississauga City Centre, Streetsville, Malton and Dixie Bloor.

Ongoing immigration trends suggest a hub in Caledon should be established, and that a hub be considered in the near future near Heart Lake and the Castlemore/Clairville area.

Other Settlement Service Agencies Continue To Play a Critical Role

The existing infrastructure of settlement service agencies forms a key component of this model. The rich diversity of settlement service agencies continues to be engaged extensively.

Although multi-service agencies anchor hubs and provide a key component of settlement service delivery, the research and consultations carried out in Peel, with newcomers and with the many agencies serving them, reinforce the fact that hubs alone cannot successfully meet the full range of needs of newcomers, and the diverse range of existing agencies is a vital component of any effort

to fully meet the needs of newcomers. Settlement agencies play valuable roles in the current service infrastructure and their specific skills and expertise need to continue to be part of the ongoing model.

There are several ways in which this model relies on those agencies to deliver services that hubs are unlikely to supply as effectively as the existing network of providers can. For example, some ethno-cultural groups are spread out, and do not have a sufficient concentration in any one neighbourhood to justify concerted programming in a local hub. Nonetheless, those communities have significant service needs on a Peel-wide basis. Small or ethno-specific settlement services may be the best vehicle for addressing their needs.

Also some demographic groups, such as seniors, have specific needs that may be difficult for all hubs to meet on an ongoing basis. Those newcomers may benefit from the itinerant, intermittent provision of services by a seniors-specific agency that is independent of any local hub.

Some service needs require specialized skills, for example woman abuse, and those services may best be delivered on an itinerant basis by a specialized service provider.

Agencies across Peel who are not large, multi-service organizations, continue to play a key role in this model. The model requires a carefully considered transition process to ensure that each agency is integrated into the service system and the contribution they make is not lost.

No Wrong Door

The array of agencies and service providers in Peel is broad. Many provide specific services and others provide a broad range of support and programs. While all have a role in a hub-oriented model, whatever model is used in Peel needs to improve the process of intake and referral. Both primary and secondary research shows that newcomers frequently fall through the cracks, failing to access appropriate services, falling out of the system too easily and having difficulty navigating from one program to the next. A "No Wrong Door" process that ensures that every part of the service system connects newcomers to every other part will help to overcome that problem. Harmonized intake assessment and referral tools need to be in place to enable every service provider to gather the necessary information on newcomers to understand what referrals are appropriate. Current information needs to be disseminated regularly to service providers to ensure that referrals are up to date and reflect the current service mix, service capacity and eligibility criteria for each provider.

Beyond the boundaries of formal service providing agencies, there are many other participants in the settlement process, largely operating on an informal basis, such as social and cultural groups and faith based organizations as well as social networks of families and friends. These organizations can also play a stronger role in the service network. Provided with accurate information and access to training, they can add to the scope of "No Wrong Door" service contact points, continuing to deliver the supports they are suited to providing but also connecting newcomers to other services that exceed their means or mandates. Hub Anchors would be

expected to work with partner agencies to develop and support those relationships over the long term. This support would include providing the information, training and capacity building to enable informal service providers to continue to successfully provide the most effective settlement supports possible for newcomers.

Central Planning Table and Service Planning Forums

The Community Hub and “No Wrong Door” model provide a network of well-structured neighbourhood-based needs and asset assessment and response systems. The Region as a whole also requires a coherent mechanism for assessing overall capacity of services in the region to address newcomer needs. This includes a method of identifying needs and planning services in areas lacking hubs and a method of identifying needs and services that are needed but are not geographically concentrated enough to be met using a neighbourhood model.

The mandate of the central planning table includes:

- gathering regional data on settlement and integration outcomes to determine the overall success of the settlement and integration efforts,
- assessing emerging service needs and gaps based on the ongoing analysis of data
- reviewing the service plans of the Community Hubs and assessing the effectiveness of key matters like outreach, service design, governance and transparency, to ensure that local hubs are meeting their objectives as part of a Region-wide settlement system
- Overseeing the operation of a coordinated liaison with employers
- Facilitating region-wide outreach and supporting the coordination of a no-wrong door model, including connecting to informal and faith-based groups
- Engaging the broader settlement sector in the review of progress on settlement and integration
- Ongoing implementation of the new model and making any necessary amendments to the settlement and integration model
- Developing or facilitating the capacity building and training processes necessary to support agencies in effective response to newcomer needs and successful participation in the new model

The Central Planning Table should include key decision makers from the organizations with the most capacity to address policy changes in the sector, the executive Directors of the Hub Anchors; major funders including CIC, MTCU, MCI, and the United Way; the major institutions including the Region of Peel, the municipalities and the school boards; and other relevant stakeholders including representatives of the employment sector including TRIEC and the Boards of Trade.

To ensure that the Central Planning Table reflected the concrete issues facing newcomers on a day to day basis, the Table would consult with existing service provider networks such as ISAP and LINC, provide opportunities for all service providers to meet regularly at a Settlement Services Network Table, to discuss settlement challenges and opportunities among themselves, and draw

on that table to gain direct representation from settlement service providers at the Central Planning Table itself.

The Table would operate with the help of a variety of more narrowly focused committees that would carry out much of the work of the table. Committee membership would be drawn from among the Central Planning Table members and from other relevant stakeholders.

Smaller organizations and newcomers themselves would not generally be able to participate in intensive regular meetings but have a significant contribution to make to policy development and system evaluation. To ensure input from smaller organizations, the Central Planning Table will also host annual forums to engage these organizations in a review of the needs and priorities in Peel, the structures serving those needs and the areas of success and needed improvement in the implementation and application of the model.

The Central Planning Table would gather data and report to the annual forum on key elements of the model including the range of services, linguistic and cultural accommodations, effectiveness of outreach and engagement, compliance with rigorous governance, accountability and transparency policies.

The Central Planning Table would also identify unmet capacity building needs within the sectors and develop strategies to address those gaps to ensure the model has the skilled trained personnel it needs to deliver on its mandate.

In regularly reviewing the model, the Central Planning Table would draw on their research to determine hub locations and the need for new hubs.

Service Changes

Consultations and research demonstrated the need for several changes to the service infrastructure. While the most consistent concerns related to the accessibility and navigability of the service system, concerns about the content of services were also significant.

Language Skills

Newcomers find the language training available insufficient for their needs. Existing programs were effective at providing basic conversational English competency to those who qualified (though criteria for accessing programs was identified as a barrier). However, a relatively high level of language proficiency is required for employment, especially at the level for which many current newcomers are qualified. Basic proficiency is no longer a sufficient target. Expanded language training, including employment-focused language skills, are required, and the training should take place over a longer period to reflect the greater skill level required. Better evaluation and more clarity in objectives were also seen as ways to improve language training.

Employment and Career Development

The area of greatest concern in the provision of services is in the area of employment. Newcomers find that employment services, though delivered by concerned and dedicated organizations and staff, do not reliably result in finding appropriate employment. Program content tends to focus (sometimes repetitively) on basic skills such as resume writing and tends to offer supports that can be provided in a large volume, with few one-on-one intensive supports available. This model is seen as unlikely to be successful by both newcomers and service providers. A combination of system pressures and economic ones lead to pursuing any job, rather than the appropriate job and place little energy of emphasis on the tools of advancement and job retention.

There is clearly a need for greater emphasis on advanced employment skills such as networking and career building. Newcomers want support and navigation to assist in obtaining certification for foreign credentials. There is consensus that successful pilots of more intensive, one-on-one supports like mentoring and internship have demonstrated their value and they should be rolled out to scale. Similarly, the HOST program is popular and successful and expanding it would benefit newcomers. However, the Labour market study found few newcomers were aware of these programs and fully appreciated their impact on employment outcomes

Programs that continue to support newcomers after employment to support retention and advancement to an appropriate level relative to their skills and training are also seen as a desirable component of a more comprehensive service mix. Access to paid opportunities to obtain “Canadian experience” and better access to financial supports for training and certification are also strongly encouraged by newcomers and service providers.

Finally, employment systems need to create better connections to employers. Right now many employers find the array of organizations offering job connect and other employment programs daunting and complex. The lack of a single entity with a clear track record of supporting the real business needs of employers leads many to continue to use paid employment recruiters despite the offer of free services. A service or other entity that reaches out to employers to support receptivity to employing newcomers and provide connections to well trained, qualified newcomers is generally recognized as a significant need. This body would have to reach out to and serve employers on their own terms, articulating the business case for employing newcomers, rather than the socially responsible one, and working to meet the business needs of employers by referring appropriate, job-ready candidates consistently. While educating employers is a key aspect of the process of building a better employment environments for newcomers, anybody seeking to link newcomers to real jobs has to reflect the concrete business needs of the employer to be successful. Such a body would also need to offer a marketable “brand” that is recognized by employers as a reputable alternative to the private sector recruitment and hiring products used by head hunters, recruitment firms and placement agencies. TRIEC and the Boards of Trade have expressed great interest in playing a role in creating and supporting such a body and should be engaged in its development. Mississauga has mobilized through the Mayor’s Job Creation Summit to improve employment and career development for newcomers.

Acculturation and Systems Navigation

Newcomers indicate consistent needs for education about Canadian ways of doing things. Newcomers express concerns about everything from customs and expectations to systems and laws.

While many of these needs relate to navigating the culture, others relate to basic needs. Understanding the segmentation of the retail system, for example, is a matter of familiarity rather than logic. Getting used to the transit system takes time and experience but an orientation is helpful. Accessing housing is critical and a basic understanding of the housing laws, as well as an appreciation of how the housing market works can make a significant difference in accessing appropriate affordable housing.

Some information guiding newcomers through local systems and approaches are intended to be built into the LINC curriculum and other language learning settings. Providing ways to augment and build on these basic opportunities through settlement classes would be beneficial.

Hub Services

Hubs will build a service mix appropriate to their local client population, tailoring the languages and cultural accommodations to the local community and reaching out and engaging local residents to guide the hubs service planning. Some services are likely to be widely needed and it is reasonable to anticipate that the service plans for all hubs will include some core services. Language training, both basic and training geared to employment needs would be among the likely core services. Employment programs whether directly delivered or delivered through participation of the local Employment Ontario hub would likely be key components. Acculturation programs and other life-skills opportunities would be beneficial in the hub setting. A range of optional services can augment these basic ones in any hub, but most importantly, the hub should develop a strong capacity for connecting newcomers to the broad range of service offered both internally and externally, and develop relationships with other service providers that enable the hub to draw partners in to deliver services that correspond to local needs.

Case Management Model

The challenges newcomers face with navigating settlement services would be immeasurably improved with the establishment of ongoing supports in the form of case management services. This model of supporting the navigation of complex support systems has shown considerable success in health care and mental health fields, housing services and other social service settings.

A Case Management model would ensure that at their first intake and assessment at any settlement service, newcomers would be provided with a support worker who would, on an ongoing basis, identify the appropriate service to support the next stage of settlement and integration. Newcomers would work with their case manager to identify challenges, determine short, medium

and long term objectives. The case manager would assist in determining the series of supports and interventions most likely to facilitate efforts to reach those objectives and help newcomers access those services.

With a newcomer population of 100,000 in Peel, the selection of case management models will have a significant impact on staffing. Coordinating case management for newcomers with other case management systems administered by the public sector, such as employment and social assistance, could minimize the costs involved and make this very attractive service delivery model an economically attractive one as well. OCASI and other settlement sector organizations such as the Welcome Centre partnership in York region have also explored effective and viable case management models.

Next Steps

This model calls for significant changes in the way services are delivered to newcomers in Peel. They will require a carefully planned transition, overseen by the PNSG and ultimately by the Central Planning Table, but engaging key stakeholders throughout.

The PNSG should convene working groups composed of participants who are well informed about the relevant component of the settlement infrastructure and the policies and processes involved in the reform to map out the transition strategy and plan implementation. Working groups can include Central Planning Table partners and other relevant stakeholders to guide each aspect of the transition.

Working Groups will be required for the following:

1. Community Hub Development
2. Employer Engagement
3. Intake, Assessment and Referral System/
Case Management System
4. Informal Services Network
5. Host Community Receptivity
6. Investment/Funding
7. Communication/Engagement Plan

The Central Planning Table can be assembled during the early stages of the implementation process employing key partners at the Working Group tables and other relevant stakeholders. Working Groups should be formed immediately following the adoption of the model and report to the central body monthly on progress toward the finalization of implementation.

This report was prepared by:



Appendix A: PNSG Background Literature Review

INTRODUCTION

An extensive review of literature on newcomer settlement and services, newcomer challenges and barriers, and place-based approaches to service delivery was conducted. The purpose of this literature review was to identify the challenges newcomers face in regard to settlement and community (social) integration. In particular, the efficacy of a place-based framework was explored as a coordinated and comprehensive approach to the settlement and integration needs of newcomers. Academic internet search engines, including the portals of Social Science, Social Science Abstracts, and Google Scholar were used along with commissioned papers and publications from research institutions and settlement libraries (CERIS and OCASI).

The reviewed literature encompassed studies throughout Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States, with a specific focus on Toronto and Peel region. The literature review also included a review of toolkits, best practices, and evaluation reports.

ISSUES FACED BY NEWCOMERS

The newcomer experience is characterized by multiple intersecting factors that are compounded by many unique barriers and challenges. Newcomers often encounter many problems in trying to access settlement services. Often, before a newcomer can consider how to access these much needed services and supports, they are confronted with the reality of everyday basic survival in their new home country. In this section, we will explore some of the common challenges and barriers faced by newcomers related to integration and settlement identified in the literature reviewed.

Settlement and integration are considered to be the two key traits that indicate successful engagement, participation and adaptation of newcomers. The Canadian Council of Refugees (CCR) (1998) refers to settlement as “the acclimatization of newcomers in terms of individual basic adjustments to life in a new country. This includes finding housing, learning the local language, getting a job and learning to navigate in an unfamiliar society.” Integration is a process by which newcomers and the receiving society work together to build secure, vibrant, and cohesive communities. The settlement and integration of newcomers is a complex and multifaceted long-term process that requires ongoing reciprocal support and exchange between the newcomers and the host society. If newcomers are able to experience measurable and positive outcomes in the social, economic, cultural, and political sphere, then successful settlement and integration has occurred (CCR 1998).

Although the markers of successful settlement and integration can be affected by factors at an individual level, the focus of this report is on the barriers that newcomers as a group may encounter that challenge their successful incorporation and participation in Canadian society. The

literature review identified several of these types of barriers and challenges: language, poverty and unemployment, information and access, discrimination, and health and well-being. This section of the report will clearly outline each of these issues and outline the recommendations the literature provides to address these identified challenges and barriers.

Language

A sizeable body of the literature reviewed addresses the importance of language in relation to newcomer settlement and integration. Language is identified as the largest single barrier to accessing government and community services (Cabral, 2002; Wayland & Agrawal, 2008; Gee 2006; Albiom, 2005; Bauder & Lusic, 2006; Chinese Advisory Council of Peel, 2008; Kithinji, 2006; Boyd, 1990). Effective communication skills are integral for newcomers to successfully access supports and services at the points where these are made available to them. Most of the literature suggests that communication is essential in service provision and decision-making, as the ability to communicate facilitates access to the fundamental supports of the host society, including education, health, legal services and job supports among others. Without efficient or adequate language supports, the newcomer's ability to effectively navigate through the complex system of settlement services and supports is severely limited. These barriers may be compounded for newcomer women, who may not have as many opportunities as their male counterparts to learn the official language of the host country.

The literature reviewed (Wayland & Agrawal, 2008; Agrawal, Qadeer & Prasad, 2007; Kithinji, 2006; Boyd, 1990; Li, 2000) identifies language barriers as a critical area for newcomer settlement, noting that newcomers who lack proficiency in French or English are often unable to communicate with their service providers, which negatively impacts their access to services and overall service delivery. In a series of community consultations regarding health care delivery to immigrants, Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services (2006) identified that many newcomers felt overwhelmed and frustrated because of their inability to communicate effectively with health care providers. They noted that in some cases newcomers had to bring their children with them to appointments to interpret for them due to the absence of interpreters at most health care facilities. For many newcomers interviewed, this raised concerns about receiving accurate information in regard to their health, and resulted in a lack of confidentiality, as their children had to translate personal and confidential information for them. In addition, they reported less adequate management of their health and in some cases increased instances of hospitalization. This challenge in communication extends beyond the realm of health care institutions to actual settlement service agencies themselves, which lack the linguistic and culturally-appropriate services to best serve their clientele (Kithinji, 2006). This fundamental communication barrier leads to newcomers becoming overwhelmed by "the system" and contributes to their frustration and general lack of trust in public agencies and government institutions (Bernhard, Hyman & Tate, 2008; Agrawal et al., 2007; Kithinji, 2006; Decoito, & Williams, 2000).

Language also plays a pivotal role as a barrier to potential employment. In Canada, the ability to communicate in either English or French is a huge asset for the labour market. The literature reviewed (Wayland, 2006; Wayland & Agrawal, 2008; Scassa, 1994; Alboim, Finnie & Meng, 2008; Schellenkens, 2001) identifies that, for many newcomers and employers, the inability to effectively communicate in the host country's language is the main barrier to employment. Scassa (1994) corroborated this by recognizing that non-native speakers of the dominant language encounter "roadblocks" to securing employment due to language characteristics such as the ability or inability to be fluent in the host country's main language. The literature further suggests that even beyond speaking the language, having an accent considered 'foreign' also devalues newcomers' skills and abilities, thereby decreasing their marketability to employers. This can be very problematic for newcomers whose primary settlement need is employment. Language proficiency has also been linked to increased employment earnings and is considered an important determinant of employment. In her study on newcomers' language proficiency in England, Schellenkens (2001) identified the lack of English proficiency or ability to communicate in English as impediments in securing employment. This sentiment is echoed in a study on the hiring practices of employers in North Peel. The study identified that 87% of companies surveyed insisted on a "high" level of proficiency in language. This included not only ESL training, but proficiency in both written and oral skills, and comprehension levels that met the needs for meaningful communication within their professional field. As has been identified within other areas of their lives, the inability for a newcomer to effectively communicate can have detrimental implications for their success in obtaining employment, and thus in their overall settlement and integration into Canadian society.

Although limited in scope, the literature reviewed (Madibbo, 2005, 2001) suggested Francophone newcomers immigrating from Africa and Haiti who settled in Ontario found it increasingly difficult to facilitate their settlement process. A number of factors were cited in the literature, including being part of a racial minority group within the larger Francophone community, experiencing language discrimination from the larger Anglophone community, and the under-representation of Black-Francophones in positions of authority. Like other newcomers groups, the Black-Francophone newcomers reported higher rates of underemployment and non-recognition of their credentials despite being proficient in one of the two official languages of Canada.

When it comes to accessing services, the literature indicated that not only was there a lack of coordinated approaches when it came to addressing their needs, but an insufficient amount of French language services were available. In addition, where there were services available in French, Black Francophone newcomers experienced racial barriers, an absence of ethno-specific staff and a lack of cultural understanding on behalf of the service providers (Madibbo, 2001).

These language challenges are complex. The literature outlines a wide range of strategies to address the language challenges and barriers faced by newcomers. The literature reviewed (Wayland, 2006; Wayland & Agrawal, 2008; Scassa, 1994; Alboim et al., 2008; Schellenkens, 2001, Agrawal et al., 2007) suggests the following actions:

- Provide services that are linguistically sensitive to meet the needs of ethnically diverse populations
- Ensure written materials are reflective of the multiple languages of ethnically diverse newcomers
- Support employment by providing greater access and opportunity for newcomers to receive required language training
- Provide materials for newcomers who are developing their communication skills in English and French, using clear, simple, and inclusive language
- Link language training to employment and job opportunities
- Increase access to language training by promoting such training through methods likely to reach monolingual audiences, for example, ethno-cultural community newspapers, television, and radio programming

Poverty and Unemployment

Focusing on the human capital of newcomers, Wayland and Goldberg (2008) noted that newcomers were more likely to live in poverty than non-immigrants. In their report on poverty in Peel, The Peel Provincial Poverty Reduction Committee (2006) identified that in 2006, 15% (approximately 167,000) of Peel's population lived below the Low-Income Cut-Off (LICO). Within this population, recent immigrants had a median income of \$15 000 and a poverty rate of 33%, approximately two and half times higher than the total population. As a result, recent immigrants were deemed to be at risk of experiencing long-term poverty (Peel Newcomer Strategy Group, 2008). Research indicates that poverty creates a variety of barriers and challenges for newcomers. Low incomes obstruct access to safe and affordable housing, affordable childcare, transportation, and the provision of basic needs (Chinese Advisory Council of Peel, 2008; Social Planning Council, 2008; Wayland et al., 2008). Furthermore, poverty contributes to stress and family breakdown (Mawani & Hyman, 2008; Chinese Advisory Council of Peel, 2008; Social Planning Council, 2008; Access Alliance, 2002). For many newcomers, poverty significantly inhibits their ability to access services or obtain employment. For example, not being able to afford transportation and childcare creates a vicious cycle that undermines access to the services and supports they need, the skills that make them more employable and the employment opportunities that might improve their conditions (Chinese Advisory Council of Peel, 2008; Social Planning Council, 2008; Mawani & Hyman, 2008).

In many cases, lack of employment and underemployment are key contributing factors to newcomers' poverty. Although Canada's immigration policies focus on recruiting skilled workers and professionals, the realities faced by many newcomers in obtaining employment and making economic gains is riddled with contradictions. Newcomers encounter numerous barriers related to employment (Chinese Advisory Council of Peel, 2008; Canadian Race Relations Foundation, 2000; Social Planning Council of Peel, 2008; Wayland & Goldberg, 2008; Hou & Balakrishnan, 1996; Reitz, 2003) which in turn raises important issues for integration and settlement. For example, newcomers possessing university degrees earn 71% of what Canadian-born university graduates earn (United Way of Greater Toronto & The Canadian Council on Social Development, 2004). In

the Region of Peel, the unemployment rate for newcomers aged 25-54 with a university degree, certificate, or diploma is 10%, compared to 3% of the total population (Peel Newcomer Strategy Group, 2008). Other literature reviewed notes an obvious disjuncture between Canada's efforts to recruit highly skilled immigrants and the actual employment opportunities that are available to them. The literature suggests that newcomers face specific barriers to employment that include lack of pre-migration employment, lack of recognition of foreign credentials, lack of Canadian work experience, inadequate social networks and other barriers to working in regulated professions, thereby restricting them to a cycle of unemployment, underemployment and the devaluation of skills.

Accreditation is considered a major barrier to employment for newcomers (Guo, 2008; Reitz, 2007; Li, 2001; Alboim et al., 2008). Li (2001) attributed this to the low market value attached to newcomer credentials. Most of the literature (Rietz, 2003-2007; Alboim et al., 2008; Li, 2001) points to an underlying apprehension on the employers' part to recognize credentials due to unfamiliarity with foreign education and training standards. Rietz (2003), in particular, noted that employers may not be willing to face the risks involved in 'taking a chance' on what may be seen as an unknown quantity. This results in the devaluation of immigrant skills and creates barriers to their employment.

The fear of the unknown and unwillingness to take risks is further exemplified in a survey conducted by Skills Without Borders with businesses within the Region of Peel. In the survey, 73% of businesses reported that foreign credentials were too difficult to assess without a clear understanding of how the credentials equate with Canadian standards. This suggests employers do not believe foreign credentials are transferable to the Canadian context (Fong, 2008). In any case, the failure to recognize foreign credentials results in the unemployment and underemployment of newcomers. Reitz (2003) asserts that this has a negative impact on the labour market, as university-educated newcomers are forced to consign themselves to much lesser-skilled occupations, which only further magnifies the lack of credential recognition. Brower (1999) suggests this creates a highly-educated and experienced group of newcomers in Canada who are unemployed and vastly underemployed

Despite the fact that the most recent newcomers to Canada are more skilled and educated than their previous cohorts, the barrier of experience still persists as a determining factor in obtaining employment. Specifically, the lack of Canadian experience has hindered the labour market integration of many newcomers. The literature reviewed indicates that Canadian experience is an important barrier newcomers face when it comes to employment and income (Chinese Advisory Council of Peel, 2008; Canadian Race Relations Foundation, 2000; Social Planning Council of Peel, 2008; Wayland & Goldberg, 2008; Alboim et al., 2008; Li, 2001). Most of the literature suggests that the need to demonstrate 'Canadian workplace experience' not only discounts the valuable assets that many skilled and professional newcomers have attained elsewhere, but severely restricts their ability for full labour market integration.

To address the poverty and employment challenges, and barriers faced by newcomers, the literature reviewed makes the following recommendations (Ritz, 2006; Alboim et al., 2008; Agrawal, 2007; Wayland, 2006; Wayland & Goldberg, 2008; Canadian Race Relations Foundation, 2000; Peel Poverty, 2008):

- Address the various impacts of poverty (such as access to transportation, housing and childcare) as it relates to newcomer populations
- Support local community agencies and municipalities to ensure the availability and coordination of a range of local services and programs that address poverty and other issues associated with poverty
- Link language training and employment opportunities
- Create social enterprise strategies that promote community-focused initiatives;
- Provide employment training opportunities for newcomers
- Support newcomers to gain valuable Canadian work experience through volunteering
- Consolidate and coordinate services in a strategically-located multi-service centre that would reduce newcomers' difficulties in terms of access, information and transportation
- Provide services to promote newcomer entrepreneurship. Establish business incubators, support small business development, and establish employment development programs
- Develop explicit policies on equity as a demonstrated commitment to social inclusion
- Recognize foreign credentials as a way to address the underemployment of highly skilled immigrants
- Assist employers in recruiting, retraining and promoting skilled newcomers
- Create mentoring partnerships with the business sector that connect newcomers to valuable employment opportunities
- Create employment equity measures that move beyond recruitment to focus on the retention and promotion of newcomers

Information and Access

Information and access are other significant challenges faced by newcomers in their settlement and integration. Information and access to information play a key role in the overall orientation of newcomers in the host society. Missing information and lack of knowledge about points of opportunity where information can be accessed can have very detrimental long-term effects on newcomers. Lack of access to information can be further compounded by the intersections of language and cultural barriers. Services delivered in ways that are not linguistically or culturally appropriate to various groups make access difficult for newcomers. In many cases, the literature reviewed identified informational barriers such as lack of awareness of the various supports and services available as prohibiting factors to newcomer's settlement. (Chinese Advisory Council of Peel, 2008; Social Planning Council, 2008; Kithinji, 2006; Wayland & Agrawal, 2008) It is clear successful settlement and integration depends on newcomers' ability to access information on job training, employment opportunities, skills upgrading, language programs, and available social and settlement services.

Cultural barriers were also identified in the literature as barriers to information and access. Some of the literature (Wayland & Agrawal, 2008; Mawani & Hyman, 2008) suggests that certain

cultural norms dictate that seeking and asking for help are not acceptable. In some newcomer communities there is social stigma attached to identifying yourself as being in direct need of assistance.

Both the Chinese Council of Peel (2008) and the African Service Providers of Peel noted that Chinese, African, and Afro-Caribbean newcomers were confused about how to access information and new technologies to assist them in finding housing and jobs. Lacking basic information such as how to apply for OHIP, how to register a child for school, etc. can result in newcomers feeling lost within the system. Wayland and Agrawal (2008) argue that despite the continual expansion of some settlement services there continues to be an ongoing lack of knowledge that these supports exist. Services often lack visibility, being located off main streets and out of regular visible contact. In addition, the uncoordinated and fragmented nature of the service infrastructure provided requires newcomers to access multiple service providers and points of delivery. This creates additional challenges and makes it increasingly difficult and frustrating for newcomers to navigate and access services and leads to greater dissatisfaction in terms of settlement and integration.

The literature reviewed makes the following recommendations to address the information and access challenges and barriers faced by newcomers:

- Provide material on the information, services, and programs available in languages that reflect the diversity of newcomer populations;
- Provide ongoing orientation and training for newcomers on how to navigate and access, health, education, housing, employment opportunities, and other supports;
- Consolidate and coordinate services in a strategically-located multi-service centre that would reduce newcomer's difficulties in terms of access, information and transportation;
- Post advertisements and information about program and services in ethno-cultural community newspapers, television and radio programs;
- Hire a liaison officer/community outreach worker to conduct outreach to diverse newcomer communities to promote programs and services;
- Provide newcomers with opportunities for ethnic matching.

Discrimination

A majority of the literature reviewed described the numerous challenges and barriers newcomers face in terms cultural discrimination and racism, particularly in education and employment (Social Planning Council of Peel, 2008; CASI, 2007, Chinese Advisory Council of Peel, 2008; Reitz & Banerjee, 2006; Galabuzi & Teelukshingh, 2008; Wayland & Goldberg, 2008). Galabuzi and Teelukshingh (2008) argue that despite Canada's multicultural policies and assumptions of equal access, explicit systems of racism and cultural discrimination persist that directly impact the opportunities and resources for racialized newcomers. Both Wayland and Goldberg (2008) and Reitz (2001) point out that newcomers arriving in Canada and in Peel take longer to gain employment skills than previous cohorts. Some of the literature reviewed suggests

that visible minorities face more obstacles than newcomers of European origin (Pendakur 1998, 2002). The Canadian Council on Race Relations Foundation (2002) published a report that cites that a growing number of racialized communities continue to have unequal access to employment, educational, and income opportunities. An example of this is Bauder and Cameron's (2002) study of the barriers to labour market integration for newcomer South Asians and Yugoslavians. In their report, they discussed how South Asians faced discrimination based on culture, religion and race. In addition, Bauder and Cameron (2002) noted that immigrants from the former Yugoslavia had a cultural advantage of fitting in with the Canadian-born workforce due to perceptions based on skin colour and dress. Galabuzi and Teelukshingh (2008, 2006) identify these patterns of discriminatory practices as a form of social exclusion that further reinforces social inequalities and oppression, negates newcomers' overall sense of belonging, and impedes their process of settlement and integration.

Not only is cultural discrimination and racism experienced by newcomers in broad systemic and structural institutions, but the research highlights that newcomers experience this when trying to access specialized settlement services as well (George, 2000; Galabuzi & Teelukshingh, 2008; Kithinji, 2006; Reitz & Banerjee, 2006). Some of the literature reviewed indicates that newcomers felt discriminated against by the very supports and services put in place to assist them. The broad range of needs in newcomer groups, the insufficient cultural understanding and linguistic capacity of staff and agencies, and the lack of linguistic and culturally trained staff create adverse conditions that have an exclusionary effect on newcomers. As Galabuzi and Teelukshingh (2008) note, these findings are particularly significant, as they highlight the importance of acknowledging the differences between immigrant groups and illustrate the various levels in which discrimination or exclusion can negatively affect social cohesion.

In the literature reviewed, the following recommendations were made to address the cultural discrimination, racism challenges, and barriers faced by newcomers:

- Identify opportunities for utilizing the diversity of newcomers for social innovation and better service delivery
- Hire staff that are culturally, linguistically and ethically representative of the diverse newcomer populations
- Establish ethno-specific delivery of services that are both community-supported and community-led
- Develop culturally-competent programming
- Implement policies that address discriminatory practices
- Fund initiatives that foster relationships and cross-cultural bonds across various ethnic, religious and racialized communities
- Identify and address systemic barriers to service delivery such as cultural discrimination and racism
- Promote the importance of diversity and the value of newcomers

Health and Well-Being

Poverty, unemployment and underemployment also have a significant impact on newcomers' health. Raphael (2008) suggests there is an intersection between poverty and the social determinants of health as it relates to an individual's health status and risk for health problems. There appears to be a correlation between income and one's quality of life which has an impact on one's overall health. According to the literature reviewed, prior to immigrating to Canada newcomers experienced an overall better health status than the Canadian -born population, meaning that upon arrival, on the whole newcomer populations are healthier than their Canadian-born counterparts. They note, however, that over time the health status of newcomers declines in correlation to their length of stay in Canada. Commonly referred to as the 'healthy immigrant effect' the overall deterioration in health has serious implications which make newcomers more susceptible to chronic illness and disabilities over the long term.

Newcomers' health and well-being is sometimes overlooked, but in fact it actually plays a significant role when it comes to successful settlement and integration. In a review of the health needs of immigrants conducted by Mawani and Hyman (2008), they conclude that newcomers face a plethora of issues on political, economical, physical, and social levels that directly impact their overall health and well-being.

According to Gulzar (1999), access to health care is contingent on personal, socio-cultural, economic, and systemic factors that enable individuals, families, and communities to receive necessary and satisfactory health services with continuous and timely delivery. With the provincial health care system already stretched thin, Access Alliance (2002) argues that newcomers and refugees face an ever-growing inequality in terms of health provision and access to services. For example, the prevalence of poverty and underemployment for newcomers often correlates a lack of access to health services not covered under OHIP, such as dental and ophthalmological visits as well as prescriptions for needed medicines (Chinese Advisory Council of Peel, 2008; Access Alliance, 2002; Bannerman, 2003). A review of the literature suggests newcomers experience many barriers to accessing health care such as a lack of cultural understanding by health professionals, the three month waiting period to gain access to health care coverage (OHIP), a frequent inability to pay for health care, a lack of culturally appropriate services, and the fundamental inability to communicate due to a lack of interpretation services. These barriers are an indication that newcomers' health care needs are not being sufficiently met, as suggested by Dunn and Dyck (2000). Hyman (2001) further echoes this point in a study that demonstrated a significant underutilization of preventative and mental health services, despite evidence of significant demand on the newcomers' behalf.

The stress of untreated health issues, as well as other psychological impacts such as relocating to a new society, can have negative consequences on the mental health of newcomer families. This can lead to an increase in stress, breakdown in family cohesion, and ultimately poorer health. The lack of mental health provisions is a current gap that needs to be addressed particularly in the context of newcomer settlement and integration. It is very important to consider the significance of the impact settlement can have on newcomers' mental health.

According to the Canadian Task Force on Mental Health Issues Affecting Immigrants and Refugees there are several risk factors that can impact mental health:

- Negative public attitude
- Separation from community
- Inability to speak English or French
- Failure to find suitable employment

In a study of Southeast Asian refugees, Noh et al. indicated that those Southeast Asians who had experienced racial discrimination also experienced higher rates of depression. This example demonstrates how important it is to consider the role racial discrimination, unemployment, underemployment, the ability to effectively communicate in the host language, isolation and connection to community play in the mental health of newcomers, and the subsequent implications for their overall health.

In addition to social and governmental policies that negatively impact on adequate health provisions for newcomers, there is a significant lack of coordination between settlement and health services. This lack of collaboration further contributes to the barriers newcomers experience when trying to access health care. The literature suggests that a more collaborative approach between settlement and health service would facilitate a better understanding of the factors contributing to successful newcomer settlement and integration, and how the determinants of health such as affordable housing, employment, literacy, migration, and environment influence this process. (Wayland and Goldberg, 2008; Collins and Guruge, 2008; Raphael, 2004; Access Alliance, 2002; Gulza, 1999) The lack of a coordinated approach to service delivery can result in newcomers falling through the systemic cracks and never receiving proper health needs assessment.

In terms of addressing the health and well-being challenges and barriers faced by newcomers, the literature reviewed suggests the following recommendations:

- Ensure newcomers have the information they need to make successful health choices
- Bring health resources and care where there are higher concentration of newcomers
- Consult the community about preferred models of health service delivery
- Translate health-related and health promotional items for greater access
- Provide health services for the uninsured
- Create more Community Health Centers
- Develop ESL content-based health programs

Newcomer Women

Having identified the issues and barriers faced by newcomers, it is important to examine these as they relate to newcomer women. Many of the issues specific to newcomer women are left out of policy agendas, and development and integration outcomes. When language, employment, poverty, and other factors are looked at through a female lens, it becomes apparent that newcomer women face a myriad of intersecting platforms.

As outlined in the section *Issues Faced by Newcomers*, language proficiency plays a critical role in newcomer integration and settlement. The inability to speak the host country's language is an important factor in the marginalization and exclusion of newcomer women. The literature reviewed suggests that the inability to speak English is a significant barrier to labour market integration. The literature also identifies that newcomer women, and refugee women in particular, are less likely to speak English post-migration (Mann, 2004; Kouritzin, 2007; Beisser & Hou, 2000; Boyd, 1992). Kouritzin (2007) argues that this is partly because, unlike their male counterparts, newcomer women face a duality of socially-constructed identities of working women and as the retainers of home culture, values, and norms. Newcomer women are also often charged with being the emotional supporter for the family post-migration. For the most part, newcomer women have to prioritize their roles as mother, wife, and bread winner, and as a result are forced to walk a fine line between educating themselves (i.e. learning English) and supporting their families.

When it comes to labour market integration, the literature suggests newcomer women encounter not only a racialized labour market but a gendered one as well (Boyd 1990; Mann 2004, Kouritzin 2007). As a result, most newcomer women are relegated to low paying, unskilled jobs. In addition, their participation in the labour market is much lower than their male counterparts. Newcomer women were also identified as receiving less pay than newcomer males and were typically relegated to working in professions designated as 'women's jobs' such as retail, clerical work, and manufacturing. On average, newcomer women in the Region of Peel were identified as earning an income less than average for the total population, as well as having a unemployment rate twice as high as women within the Region (Peel Newcomer Strategy Group, 2008). The literature also suggests that in terms of labour market participation, newcomer women tended to understand it within the parameters of family (Vanderplatt, 2007). Meaning that newcomer women have family as their first priority and work as a secondary priority, based primarily on the family's overall need for economic survival.

Newcomer women also face information and access barriers resulting from language, structural, and cultural barriers. According to Kouritzin (2007), time was identified as a major barrier for information and access, as newcomer women tended not to have the time to access programs and services if they had to split their time between being home taking care of children and working to contribute to the family's income.

When it comes to health and well-being, newcomer women encountered challenges not only in terms of accessing health care for themselves but for their families as well. The lack of language skills and the lack of interpreters at health care services were challenges for newcomer women. It is also important to note that newcomer women were more likely to depend on cultural constructions of health and well-being as definers of their health status, and what they deemed as appropriate health care. (Vanderplatt, 2007; Hyman & Guruge, 2002). The literature identified that newcomer women were unfamiliar with health promotion initiatives and therefore felt informal social networks were more viable options to access health care (Vanderplatt, 2007; Stewart, 2006). It was

also suggested through the literature that the health of newcomer women was compromised by gender, race and sexism.

The literature also suggests that violence against newcomer women has an impact on their health and well-being, and that the stressors of migration and integration made newcomer women more vulnerable to abuse (Mawani, 2008). As a result, newcomer women were less likely to seek help out of fear of stigma, cultural norms, deportation and further increased violence. In addition, the literature identified that the lack of culturally-specific and relevant services, coupled with the inappropriateness of some current services, prevented newcomer women from seeking and obtaining assistance.

PLACE-BASED FRAMEWORK AND NEWCOMER SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION

As identified in the previous section, newcomers face significant challenges and barriers to settlement and integration. In order to address some of these issues, the identification and design of a more coordinated and comprehensive response is needed. The Canadian Council on Refugees identifies 12 core values as effective best practices for newcomer settlement:

1. Access
2. Inclusion
3. Client empowered
4. User-defined services
5. Holistic approach
6. Respect for the individual
7. Cultural sensitivity
8. Community development
9. Collaboration
10. Accountability
11. Orientation towards positive change
12. Reliability

Access refers to the provision of services that are accessible to all who need them, and can be characterized by a welcoming environment, culturally and linguistically appropriate services, offering childcare and outreach services, and being located in a geographically and physically accessible area.

Inclusion refers to offering services and programs that are equitable and sensitive to the diversity of the populations being served. These services are characterized by delivery within an anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory framework and direction, and provided in safe and non-threatening environments.

Client empowered refers to services that foster independence in clients and facilitate meaningful and engaged participation. Client empowered services are characterized by client

involvement in all levels of the organization, the building on of resources, experience, and skills of newcomers, as well as promoting the employment and advancement of newcomers.

User-defined refers to services that respond directly to the needs as identified by newcomers. This is typically characterized by involving newcomers in all aspects of implementation such as needs assessment, program identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation. User-defined services are flexible to the particular needs of the newcomer community it serves.

A holistic approach to service delivery can be understood as addressing the complex, multi-faceted, interrelated dimensions of settlement and integration. Holistic approaches must respond to a variety of needs simultaneously occurring in one location. Holistic approaches need to recognize the role of community and family in newcomers' lives with a service delivery model centred around advocacy and recognition that settlement and integration is a long term processes.

Respect for the individual refers to the manner in which services are delivered. Service delivery focuses on the respecting of the rights and dignity of individuals. This is characterized by confidentiality, equitable and non-discriminatory practices and codes of ethics, and commitment to quality of services.

Cultural sensitivity refers to services that respect and identify the needs of particular cultural groups. This is characterized by staff who share the clients' ethno-cultural and linguistic backgrounds, show respect for different cultures, and deliver programs and services that are both culturally appropriate and competent.

Community development refers to services that foster distinct but related community character that facilitate newcomer participation and engagement. This is characterized by incorporating aspects of community building, newcomer organizing, investment in newcomer communities, and linking newcomer communities. The goal of community development in this context is to reduce the barriers to newcomer participation as well as public attitudes toward newcomers.

Collaboration can be understood as a process by which services are delivered. It is characterized by partnerships between organizations and newcomer communities, teambuilding, coalition-building, communication and sharing of information, referrals and taking stock of available resources as well as providing opportunities for newcomers to take the lead in problem solving.

Accountability in service delivery refers to agency monitoring and appraisal of services, and ensuring fiscal and social responsibility. It is characterized by the development of goals and realistic outcomes and utilizes a board to oversee procedures, the on-going evaluation of activities, the involvement of newcomers, and the maintenance of close connections with newcomers to community services.

Orientation towards positive change promotes newcomers' and the communities' capacity to offer equal opportunities for all. This is characterized by improving services and training though

research, advocating on the behalf of newcomers at other organizations as well as other levels of policy development, and building the possibility of change into the lives of newcomers in society as well as celebrating successes.

Reliability refers to ensuring services are up to-date, and is characterized by the regular exchange of information and use of social research.

These best practice guidelines serve as indicators for inclusive settlement and integration. However, based upon the literature reviewed, there are continued obstacles in terms of implementation of these best practices for success in settlement. New strategies and resources need to be applied if the needs of newcomers are to be met.

Relevance of Place-Based Framework

A place-based framework has been identified as one effective approach both to overcoming the barriers outlined in the previous section, as well as for facilitating the best practices outlined above.

Literature in the field of community services increasingly focuses on the advantages of place-based strategies (MacLellan, 2008; United Way of Peel & Region of Peel, 2008; Torjman, 2007; Bradford, 2005; Freiler, 2004; Gillen, 2004). Furthermore, a review of the literature suggests that a place-based framework may provide a more inclusive, coordinated, and comprehensive response to the current gaps identified in newcomer settlement and integration, as communities play a central role in defining needs and creating solutions (Maxwell, 2005).

According to Gillen (2004), a place-based approach is a process where people living in or having a connection to an area work together via collaboration to improve community-building and neighbourhood renewal. Freiler (2004) echoes this by stating that place-based approaches are about making place matter not to just the individual but to the broader community; where individuals, community organizations, and other stakeholders play the role of capacity builders for their neighbourhood. By doing this, communities play a central role in identifying their community needs and creating their own community-based solutions. The case for place-based strategies is essentially an asset-based case premised upon the idea that neighbourhoods matter to both the well-being of individuals and to the broader community (Peel Newcomer Strategy Group, 2008). Communities, no matter how new, fragile, or disadvantaged, possess inherent assets. Their leadership, social networks, internal communications, linguistic capacities, shared knowledge, and shared history constitute a valuable pool of social capital. This social capital in turn mobilizes resources and strengthens relations that exist within the community, facilitating individual empowerment, community participation, and action (Freiler, 2004).

In contrast, service systems delivered in a “top down” manner tend to overlook that capital. Top down systems often try to determine needs without drawing on the knowledgebase of existing networks, attempt to deliver services without recognizing the barriers apparent to the residents,

and conduct outreach without using the preexisting connections within the community. These disadvantages make the provision of services and supports significantly less effective. Place-based strategies draw on the assets of a community and are more effective due to the infusion of social capital, thereby encouraging citizen engagement and promoting neighbourhood vitality. According to MacLellan (2008), a place-based approach can serve as a building block for newcomers, allowing them to recognize and promote the contributions of ethno-cultural communities within the broader Canadian community. By doing so, the resilience of communities is built, thereby enabling them to be stronger, more vibrant communities, and facilitating effective community-based responses to issues, thus achieving the results the community chooses.

The social capital of communities benefit from place-based strategies, and a reciprocal relationship evolves. By rooting themselves in the community and building on the existing networks and skills, the place-based framework enables community members to accomplish more, and therefore build greater social capital through their collaboration and partnership within the existing infrastructure. Networks gain more members because they are better connected to significant resources such as services and information. Skills are enhanced by their application to new challenges and opportunities. Residents participating in the place-based strategy encounter each other more frequently in positive, supportive environments, which results in greater community cohesion. In other words, a place-based approach can be an effective way of providing immigrants with the opportunity to promote their local needs at a neighbourhood level (MacLellan, 2008; Torjman, 2007).

Place-based strategies create opportunities for governments, funders, and service providers to enter into a “virtuous cycle” with communities where each enhances the capacities of the other in a continuous and growing positive dynamic.

There are four core essential elements to a place-based framework:

- **Tapping into local knowledge**

Communities are invaluable sources of information regarding service needs and priorities, as well as the most effective approach for service delivery. Locally-based and locally-responsive services are better oriented to draw on that knowledge than centralized services. Place-based strategies are most effective when they take advantage of that privileged access to local knowledge, and make their efforts to draw from and respond to it a centerpiece of their planning and management strategies.

- **Finding the right policy mix**

Communities differ in terms of needs, priorities, and capacities. Finding the right policy and program mix to meet the specific needs and draw on the specific capacities of a community can be done more easily when the service planners are directly engaged with the community. Successfully drawing on the community to find the policy mix that matches their needs, and implementing a service strategy that responds to those needs, builds confidence in the service system and increases client participation and access.

- **Governing through collaboration**

Efforts to engage communities in the design and implementation of effective services tend to be more successful when the communities feel like partners in the process. Collaborative governance is a key element in assuring communities that their input is valued and trusted, and in ensuring communities invest meaningfully in the success of the collaboration. Similarly, a broad mix of service providers from all levels of government and civil society need to be involved to achieve a comprehensive service mix, which requires strategies to ensure that they have meaningful input into the place-based service delivery system. Collaborative arrangements among all of these actors are critical to the continued confidence and commitment of these partners.

- **Recognizing local governments**

Research shows that Canadians see municipalities as the level of government most attuned to their needs. The role of municipalities in supporting place-based strategies is therefore a critical one.

The case for a place-based approach to newcomer settlement and integration is one that makes sense on many levels. According to Milroy and Wallace (2004), newcomers are changing the ethno-cultural mix of communities but have been left out in the periphery when it comes to participation. A more inclusive approach to participation helps to overcome that daunting experience. A place-based approach would facilitate such a process because its underlying premise promotes social inclusion and empowerment. McClellan (2008) asserts that by focusing on a place-based framework newcomers can begin to formulate a place that will recognize their contributions to their communities and Canadian society. Both Bradford (2005) and Torjman (2007) emphasize that the inclusive nature of a place-based approach allows for many diverse groups and individuals to engage in the process. In addition, this approach helps identify ways to assist newcomers via policies that promote their needs at the neighbourhood level. According to Bradford (2005), engaging local communities facilitates opportunities for vulnerable groups and marginalized populations to be empowered and involved in decision-making.

Nilsen (2005) asserts that a place-based approach promotes a framework that allows stakeholders to both develop shared meaning on place, as well as establish priorities for action that can help guide public policy. This process helps address and coordinate the activities of different stakeholders for the social betterment of the community. Because of the different voices represented within the context of a place-based framework, this process is seen as more of a holistic and inclusive approach to newcomer settlement and integration, which fosters cross-cultural understanding and improves programs and services that relate to newcomers. In terms of capacity building of community members, Bradford (2005), Torjman (2007), and Nilsen (2005) identify place-based models as providing the opportunity for communities to create local solutions with a community-driven agenda, promoting stronger community recognition and confidence.

The benefits of a place-based model also extend beyond newcomer settlement and integration to include the broader community. Tapping into local social capital is a key feature of place-based approach. According to Nowak (2008), social capital is the relationship glue through which individuals, families, and social networks navigate economic opportunity, social conflict, and various institutions. These connections within and between communities help build consent, preserve institutions, and organize for change. The literature suggests the inherent community-centred nature of this model benefits from this social capital, providing a mediating link between civic activities by promoting community capacity building and greater community participation and investment while enhancing the leadership capabilities of community members. In essence, a place-based approach would be meaningful for newcomers as it allows them to build upon the already established local and social networks that exist within their own communities (MacLellan, 2008).

Martin (2004) and Torjman (2007) argue that a place-based approach provides the opportunity for communities to legitimize their own agendas and foster an identity that moves beyond social differences to a more neighborhood/local agenda facilitating local solutions for desired outcomes and change. Within the context of newcomer settlement and integration, a place-based framework provides an opportunity to move away from notions of newcomers as being a single group existing outside of the mainstream, toward the idea that they are distinct groups representing the elements of a diverse community. This view allows both agencies and newcomers the chance to implement an integrated array of services that will respond to a variety of their needs.

The literature reviewed also identifies the advantages of a place-based framework for agencies and funders (MacLellan, 2008; Bradford, 2005; Torjman, 2007; Nilsen, 2005; Wayland & Agrawal, 2008; Atkinson, 2005). Roche and Roberts (2007) cite that interagency development and collaboration allows both agencies and funders the opportunity to establish a more coherent service sector, and thereby facilitates better program delivery. Interagency collaboration also increases professional development (Atkinson, 2005; Roche & Roberts, 2007; Anning, 2005) and allows for better communication and sharing of information (Atkinson 2005). Moreover, the one-stop delivery model allows for not only a more coordinated service delivery approach, but also increased service access by establishing familiarity and trust between newcomers and different agencies. This promotes increased access to services and referrals as newcomers have one familiar point of access for getting the supports and services that they need. (Roche & Roberts, 2007; Atkinson, 2005; Agrawal et al., 2007).

A place-based framework allows agencies and funders the opportunity to quickly identify gaps in services and develop more comprehensive and coordinated services. (Roche & Roberts, 2007). Another important and valuable benefit identified is the greater ability of both agencies and funders to have broader reach and approach in terms of service delivery, allowing for large scale impact in terms of the application of available resources. This would also suggest that agencies and funders have a greater opportunity to learn, think and act strategically together.

Challenges for Place-Based Models

It was identified that while there are numerous benefits to place-based approaches to service delivery, there are also challenges and barriers that could impact agencies as well as the settlement and integration of newcomers.

Most of the literature reviewed noted that place-based models make effective use of strong local networks and social capital. If social capital is limited within a community, a place-based approach lacks some of the advantages that recommend it. Without this bond, stakeholders may not be able to bridge their differences and be active participants in forms of civic engagement. Simply put, a locally-based social network is beneficial to facilitating community-based, community-oriented services. In addition, the literature also suggests a place-based approach is dependant on the ability of the communities to revitalize in accordance to their need (MacLellan, 2008). This however, can be complicated if the community does not have the proper supports to facilitate that process.

Most of the literature reviewed noted the need for a greater awareness of newcomer differences and the need to avoid essentializing newcomers and their experiences. Some literature cautioned that place-base models should not feed into assumptions that all newcomer needs are the same and all service approaches are universally attractive to newcomer groups. Locally responsive services also require responsiveness to diversity in the locality.

The criteria which define the development and implementation of services can be problematic as well. Some research has identified trends toward services and funding focusing on groups that have the largest linguistic representation, leading to a critical mass effect where the most dominant newcomer groups will get improved access to services but the smaller or less visible newcomer groups will not have improved access and potentially not receive much-needed services. This can contribute to what Gala (2008) identified as the continued social exclusion of newcomers across ethnic and cultural lines.

The argument is also made in the literature that newcomers may avoid place-based, ethno-specific services for confidentiality reasons, so that other members of their community are not aware of which services they access for support.

Within the framework of place-based service delivery and its correlation to ethnic enclaves, very little literature exists that informs on the issues related to the physical and social geography of neighborhood-based delivery and newcomer settlement and integration. Through further research, the impact of ethnic concentration on a place-based framework should be carefully considered.

Community Hubs

The establishment of community hubs is a strategy that could address the identified need for consolidation and coordination of services in a strategically-located, multi-service centre to reduce newcomers' difficulties in terms of access, information, and transportation. Although there has been very little research to date into the efficacy of community hubs for newcomer settlement and integration, the literature on community hubs indicates that the principles, aims, and benefits are congruent with the values identified as effective best practices for newcomer settlement. The United Way of Greater Toronto - in partnership with the province, private funders, and key agency partners - is currently developing community hubs in priority neighbourhoods, some of them with a high proportion of newcomers (United Way of Greater Toronto, 2007).

Within the last 10 years, community hubs are being developed and considered a viable option in response to economic challenges, enhancing access to programs and services and leveraging resources (space, human, and financial). A community hub is a multi-service facility that accommodates a variety of services, programs, and activities for the community it serves, and has a focus on community development. Although they can be located in community or recreational centers, schools, libraries or health centers, they are more than a traditional community or neighbourhood centre. The mix of uses within a hub is more extensive and may include facilities such as a library, as well as services like health care, social support, meeting space for community groups, office accommodation for community organizations, space for community functions and events and possibly some form of enterprise, whether that be commercial or social. (Farrell, Taylor & Tennant, 2002; Richardson, 2008; Valdez, 2007; Bertrand, 2007; Klahoweya Aboriginal Centre of SACS, 2007).

Community hubs are also places that encourage social gathering and are designed to provide spaces for people to congregate and meet together in both planned and incidental ways. Accessibility is a strong element of a community hub and its location relative to public transit is another key feature.

The literature identifies a number of principles that support the establishment of community hubs regardless of service delivery focus or location (Farrell et al., 2002; Richardson, 2008; Valdez, 2007; Bertrand, 2007; Klahoweya Aboriginal Centre of SACS, 2007):

- Hub is the centre of a broader web of services
- Collaboration and partnerships that bring together stakeholders from a variety of sectors reduces fragmentation. Designed to reduce duplication or competition among agencies
- Access to information
- Seamless continuum of services
- Reflect community character
- Adaptable to meet changing needs
- Community development that involves outreach and ongoing relationship building

- Community assessment of available resources and space. Making use of available space
- Accessible to public transportation and affordable
- Hosted by a local organization in partnership with an intersectoral coalition

The ability to deliver neighbourhood-based services as “one-stop shopping” successfully requires service coordination based on the establishment of partnerships and collaborations among a variety of service providers and organizations. In 2008, Public Interest conducted research into community hubs and looked at governance, partnership and community inclusion strategies for collaborative and co-located initiatives. Through this research, characteristics of successful partnerships were identified (Meagher, 2008):

- A common bond
- Shared vision, principles and intent
- Shared history
- Trust and strong relationships
- Familiarity
- Mutual respect
- Individuals skilled in collaboration
- Leadership or drive
- Organizational commitment/enthusiasm
- Involving the right people
- Clarity around roles and responsibilities
- Effective communication and information-sharing
- Adequate funding and resources
- Inclusiveness
- Equity
- Planning
- Transparency
- Evaluation and assessment

As well, challenges and obstacles to attaining successful partnerships were highlighted in this research relating to systemic and “on-the-ground” issues. Some of the systemic issues related to:

- Funding
- Funder flexibility
- Service needs exceeding capacity
- Dissonance between organizational mandates and collaborative goals
- Different cultures and structures between agencies
- Power imbalance

The “on-the-ground” challenges had more to do with inter and intra-agency issues such as:

- Personalities of staff involved
- Professional and agency cultures
- Time to engage in collaborative work
- Communication
- Sustaining involvement
- Role and expectation clarity

Service coordination and delivery may entail agencies being located within the facility as an “anchor” tenant, one of many tenants in this multi-service facility, or an itinerant service. Regardless of how the service deliverers are affiliated with the facility, there are advantages for developing a hub (Clemo & Smith, 2007; Bertram et al., 2001):

- Easier access for clients to access multiple services from a single point of access
- Increased awareness of services and enhancing utilization of those services
- Coordination of service delivery, as co-location promotes closer ties, more collaborative working relationships, and cross-referral of common clients.
- Potential for capacity building among services including sharing of promising practices and increasing services’ understanding of broader community needs having been exposed to a wider range of target groups
- Greater access to meeting rooms and other resources available
- Improving efficiencies regarding administrative and maintenance functions

Often, hubs are developed with a particular area of focus. Currently, Australia, California, United Kingdom, New Zealand, British Columbia and Ontario have established hubs that focus on providing more integrated and comprehensive services for children and their families.(Farrell, Taylor & Tennant, 2007; Richardson, 2007; Schroeder, 2005; Reid, 2007; Kla-how-eya Aboriginal Centre of SACS, 2007; Chin, 2001; Rushowy, 2008). Peel is involved in a 10 year initiative of the Ministry of Children and Youth in partnership with the Ministry of Education. This initiative, Best Start, involved community consultations to identify the needs for developing and implementing a comprehensive system of services and supports for children and their families. The implementation plan involved integrating the system of early learning and care with the education system. The aim is to create a seamless extension to the public school system through these services, and recognize public schools as community hubs.

Success By 6 Peel, an established collaborative of more than 40 partners from business, labour, education, recreation, health, social services, and government is committed to providing opportunities and experiences for children from birth to age in six in Peel to develop the emotional, social, cognitive, and physical skills to support them in reaching their fullest potential. (Reid, 2007) In 2008, members of the Peel Best Start Network, a subcommittee of Success By 6 Peel, made a

submission to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, titled "The Best Start Integrated Status Update."

In the United States, and recently in Ontario, community hubs have been and are being developed with a focus on health outcomes and addressing specific health issues such as pregnancy, diabetes, asthma, or a specific "at risk" population. In the United States, more than 10 communities across the country have adopted a community hub model that focuses on improving health outcomes and reducing costs. It entails care coordination agencies working together under a central point of registration to reach each "at risk" individual, help them overcome any barriers, and confirm their connection to medical care. This model sees the community hub as a central clearing house which helps agencies work together without duplication. It is based on a business model rather than a community needs focus (Clemons & Smith, 2007).

Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services (Fernandez, 2009; Nerad et al., 2007) is a community-based organization which focuses on serving immigrants and refugees in the GTA. It was established as a community health centre serving specific immigrant and refugee populations, and has now expanded its services to include new and emerging immigrants and refugees requiring health services. It also offers settlement, community outreach and development, research, and interpretation services. In some ways it is a community hub, in that it provides a diversity of services in a central location. Unlike the American model, it views settlement as a health issue and uses the social determinants of health to gauge their scope of service.

A few years ago through their strategic planning process, Access Alliance developed the "Access Model," which is a strategy for serving new and emerging immigrant and refugee communities through one or two main locations, as well as through neighbourhood-based service locations. All of their programs and services strive to:

- Be accessible, responsive and flexible
- Serve newcomers living in under-served neighbourhoods
- Establish partnership/coordination with other service providers, and
- Build individual and community capacity

The United Way, in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, identified Access Alliance as one of the community health centres to develop a community hub in Crescent Town, a community with a high proportion of low income families and newcomers. (United Way of Greater Toronto, 2008). It plans to be the lead agency and obtain a new site for the hub location. Access Alliance is currently searching for "anchor" tenants for the new location and is offering an array of services from its roster of services, as well as in partnership with other community agencies. Given its mandate to develop a community hub and focus on serving immigrants and refugees, it will be a good site to monitor as it builds its capacity to assist newcomers with settlement and integration.

Service delivery also involves schools being considered as community hubs. Finland, Georgia, California, Australia, and the United Kingdom have already introduced schools as locations for community hubs (Chin, 2001; Government of Australia, 2003; Richardson, 2007; Bertram et al., 2002; Government of New Zealand, 2008). Programs and services offered out of schools have been identified by the communities and involve such activities and services as:

- Opening schools in the evening for students to access computers or to serve as a meeting place
- Food bank, clothing exchange, holiday help program, nutrition, restorative justice, and migrant education
- Community groups like Al-Anon, Soccer League, Girl Scouts, Parent Faculty Association

In Ontario, schools are now being considered as venues for community hubs. Numerous documents and reports have highlighted the importance of schools in the provision of children's services beyond education. The Best Start plan has embraced the need for schools to provide space for early learning and child care spaces, as well as the expansion of education-related not-for-profit programs.

Another example of using schools as hubs occurred in 2008, when the Our Kids Network Acton Community Hub opened in the McKenzie-Smith Bennett Public School (Municipality of Halton, 2008) and in British Columbia (Bermingham, 2008). The Hamilton Wentworth District School Board has created a vision of secondary schools of the future being Community Hubs (Schools as Community Hubs Working Group, 2009). These would be inclusive and barrier-free spaces that provide services to all members of the community. They would use existing facilities such as classrooms, gyms, computer labs, auditoriums, libraries, and sports fields to offer a "full service" based on locally identified needs including education, social, vocational, medical, and recreational services. Sites would be accessible at all hours, offering a variety of activities, programs, and services. Parenting and family development programming would be provided for community members and parents, and settlement services would be provided for newcomers.

Hubs located in schools are a good way for families, schools, and the community to work together to support children, youth and parents in their neighbourhood. Collaborative work is done with community partners to find effective and creative solutions to problems affecting children and youth.

In the past, the value of schools to their communities was not considered relevant to the school closure process. However, with changes in community demographics and closures of schools, it is a good time to rethink the viability of these landmarks as community hubs.

There is a precedent in Peel for locating hubs in schools, as the Peel District School Board operates 10 Readiness Centres and four Early Year hubs. There are community hubs in schools in the Dixie-Bloor neighbourhood as a result of a community mapping exercise undertaken to identify where services were needed.

A community hub can be a single, multipurpose facility or a service point in the community. In Norfolk, United Kingdom, the Norfolk Community Council adopted the concept of the hub as a multi-service point in the community (Clemon & Smith, 2007). It is run and owned by the community, with a focus on community involvement resulting in increased empowerment. The key to this model is access to services and identification of community needs. The components of this hub include a shop with essential items, advice and information; internet access; a police facility providing administrative services like crime reporting and information; integration of young and old; postal services; and health services. Given its rural location, the components and focus of the community hub has taken geography, access, and size into consideration for its development.

The East Scarborough Storefront, although located in an urban centre, successfully incorporates some of the same elements as the Norfolk hub - the focus on community engagement and empowerment, and access to services that are convenient for the resident offered at the storefront. (Adler, 2009). This community hub came to be known as the "Storefront model." This model co-ordinates the work of agencies from various parts of the city to bring services to a "high risk" neighbourhood. The programs and services are provided by partner agencies, with each agency bringing its expertise to the community members on a particular day, at a particular time. Storefront staff link community members to the services and ensure that the agencies have everything that they need to provide high quality and effective resources and information.

Another aspect of community hubs is the focus on community development. Community development is the enhancement of connections and relationships among people in order to strengthen common values and promote collective goals. These goals may include community cohesion, safer neighbourhoods, and support for isolated or disadvantaged people, healthier children and families, increased local employment opportunities, greater cultural recognition, or more equitable access to housing. Community development is generally an ongoing process undertaken by residents in partnership with community organizations, non-governmental, and government agencies. It aims to build on social capital and address any challenges. The goal is to enrich community life, strengthen community assets, and create or enhance local institutions, organizations, relationships, or expectations. Community hubs can contribute to community development by providing:

- A place for community members to meet to undertake community building projects, which leads to civic engagement and the development of community leaders
- A focal point in the community for people to gather with common interests
- A source of information for people on how to access services and networks

The East Scarborough Storefront is a community hub committed to community-building. The staff assists groups of community members to voice their visions and concerns, to work together to improve their community, and to connect with other groups, politicians, agencies, and bureaucrats to get what they need for their community. Through these services and activities, it

has helped to create a vibrant, engaged community driven by community needs and issues. (Gloger, 2009; Adler, 2009)

Community hubs are places where a variety of activities can occur, a range of goals can be addressed, and different objectives can be pursued. It is through both the range and clustering of people identifying, generating, and delivering activities that community hubs become more than just multipurpose centres but catalysts for community activity and social interaction. In this way, although immigrants and refugees may not be representative of the entire community, incorporating community hub principles and activities reflective of an entire community's needs will provide opportunities for reducing isolation and enhancing settlement and integration into Canadian society. East Scarborough Storefront and Access Alliance are good examples of how community hubs have been able to offer services and activities to support the integration of newcomers into Canadian society.

CLIENT-CENTRED STRATEGIES

The settlement process is complex and lengthy, covering everything from pre-arrival to full integration into Canadian life. A significant challenge for newcomers is the ability to understand and navigate the complex web of systems and services required early on and throughout the settlement process. Clients have complained of having been bounced from one organization to another and wasting both time and resources trying various programs before finding one best suited to their needs, or in the worst case scenario, giving up entirely. To offer the best opportunity for effective settlement and integration, newcomer services have increasingly shifted to a more client-centered strategy which provides a continuum of supports and is responsive to the needs of newcomers. Such strategies offer a flexible, coordinated system of settlement services bolstered by strong partnerships as well as a single starting point that leads to multiple pathways or “No Wrong Door” access to vital services required by newcomers.

International Initiatives

Central Hume Region Health Services in Australia has developed an integrated protocol for health-related agencies that lays the foundation for a No Wrong Door service system. The protocols stress knowledge of different eligibility considerations across agencies to ensure proper referrals, informing clients about potential wait times for services, and post-referral follow up with clients. The protocols also support complimentary ongoing intervention and outline the responsibilities of each agency, a plan for communication between service providers, and a process for dispute resolution. Partners meet to explore funding, evaluate protocol success, and discuss and plan opportunities for transference of knowledge.

Alameda County in California struggled to provide children with access to health insurance, even among eligible families. Using a team approach, social services agency staff worked together to streamline and expedite enrollment into Healthy Families and available county and local programs, through multiple access points, toward a shared objective of broader

coverage. The system eliminated processing delays and increased approvals in available programs from 50 to 70 percent.

Other examples focus more specifically on methods of service delivery. Auckland, New Zealand's Settlement Strategy addresses the need for more accurate and realistic pre-arrival information about life in New Zealand, and encourages increased cooperation and planning between housing and other agencies. The Living In Harmony program plays a significant role in Australia's Settlement Strategy and provides funding for local community projects designed to engage the whole community in building positive relations.

Local Initiatives

The Region of Peel is not without homegrown examples. There are promising practices that recognize the benefits of client-centred approaches and rely on coordinated and collaborative ways to increase access, reduce redundancy and duplication, and maximize client confidence and satisfaction.

The Mississauga-Halton LHIN is moving towards "No Wrong Door" access becoming the norm for health services by developing a process for inter-professional or inter-service referrals or co-location of services. Children's mental health agencies in Peel have developed a common intake system, while services providing residential care for persons with developmental challenges have centralized their intake and are working on a common approach to other services.

The HEAL (Helping End Abuse for Life) Network is a collaborative of 18 agencies in the Peel Region dedicated to the implementation of a prevention and early intervention strategy directed toward children exposed to violence. The HEAL Network has been committed to providing culturally competent services to the diverse communities of the Region of Peel since its inception. The collaborative actively encourages representation from various ethno-specific and multicultural agencies, and seeks ways to ensure such organizations have an equal voice and sense of ownership.

HEAL has been in existence since 2000 and owes much of its success and ongoing stability to a formal partnership agreement and ongoing attention to the foundation of each individual partner and the collaborative as a whole. The partnership agreement provides the rationale for the partnership and a continuum of services and outlines guiding principles for the continuum of services, responsibilities of membership, processes and criteria for application and dissolution of membership, structure and decision-making, and a clear process for conflict resolution.

The collaborative proactively works together to address issues and gaps identified in service delivery. Members participate in outreach efforts to reach marginalized communities and strategically plan outreach initiatives. The network partners also participate in training to build their

capacity to understand the needs of children exposed to violence and assist in developing culturally competent responses to this issue. HEAL has also instituted a process for the distribution of resources driven by client need and involving applicants directly in making decisions on allocation of funds.

The 30 member agencies who make up the Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse (PCAWA) have worked together since 1984 to promote a more effective and coordinated response to woman abuse in the Region of Peel. The Woman Abuse Protocol, initiated in 1985, promotes an accessible, collaborative, case-management model of service delivery for agencies dealing with women who have experienced abuse in the Region of Peel. The protocol respects each member's mandate and includes elements which address the sharing of information and bounds of confidentiality.

Both the HEAL Network and PCAWA have articulated and demonstrated their commitment to serving Peel's diverse population and share many elements with the Central Hume Region Health Service in Australia described earlier, e.g.:

- stress on appropriate referrals, ensuring staff of all agencies have current knowledge of different eligibility criteria for participation in programming across services
- informing clients about potential wait times for services
- post-referral follow up with clients
- a clear outline of the expectations and responsibilities of members
- processes for dispute resolution. Partners meet to explore funding, evaluate protocol success, and discuss and plan opportunities for transference of knowledge.

The protocol/agreements and activities of HEAL and PCAWA have increased understanding and awareness of mandates and services between partner organizations, facilitated greater collaboration, and fostered a greater sense of camaraderie, all of which combine to effectively support the success of the client-centred strategy.

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Appendix B: Strategies for Addressing Newcomers' Needs in Peel (Presented at the Sectoral Roundtable on Newcomer Settlement and Integration: June 22nd, 2009)

Introduction

In order to develop a comprehensive community plan for the successful settlement and integration of newcomers in Peel, Peel Newcomer Strategy Group (PNSG) embarked on a series of community consultations. The purpose of these community consultations was to ensure the voices of those most directly affected and involved in newcomer settlement and integration were included. PNSG conducted a series of community consultations with more than 200 stakeholders, including newcomers / immigrants, employers, service providers, funders and other community partners.

Throughout the consultation process, these stakeholders identified possible strategies that enhance and support newcomer settlement and integration. PNSG has compiled their suggestions into this report on "Strategies for Addressing Newcomers' Needs in Peel".

A) Strengthening Service Coordination and Planning

Challenge:

Newcomers have difficulty navigating settlement services. A relatively loose network of agencies and organizations have assembled a collection of services from individual grants and programs, a structure that allows too many newcomers to fall through the cracks. Poor geographic distribution, challenges with cultural and linguistic accessibility, and gaps in the range and responsiveness of services are some of the challenges that result from this fragmentation.

Strategy:

- 1) Provide a systematic planning mechanism that looks comprehensively at the range of newcomer needs, and connects service providers, funders, and other partners to address areas of unmet need.
- 2) Support partnerships through service-provider networks, collaborations, and shared-service sites such as neighbourhood hubs.
- 3) Engage mainstream service providers in the effort to provide more effective supports to newcomers.

Elements:

1) Provide for systematic planning:

- Ensure there is a planning table with all partners - including funders, governments, service providers, and mainstream service partners and other stakeholders - to coordinate and plan service in the settlement system in Peel.

- Assess the gaps that prevent newcomers from finding a continuum of support.
- Conduct research to identify emerging needs and gaps using outcome identification systems.
- Explore gaps and challenges jointly with funders and providers to identify best practices in addressing them.
- Support capacity building for service providers to address gaps.
- Ensure long-term strategic funding fro priorities identified by the planning process

2) Support partnership:

- Identify partnership opportunities directly by creating increased dialogue among partners.
- Provide support and capacity building for partnership development and management.
- Provide support and capacity building for joint actions such as common intake and interagency transition to services for newcomers.
- Provide partnership development and management tools based on successful Peel-based models.
- Host partnership tables and sectoral tables that create opportunities for information sharing.
- Host staff roundtables or networks that create safe spaces for sharing challenges and solutions.
- Support and facilitate conflict resolution among partners.

3) Engage mainstream service providers in the effort to provide more effective supports to newcomers:

- Support mainstream organization cooperation and partnership with settlement sector organizations to serve shared clients, especially in high -demand, high-specialization areas such as mental health and professional education.
- Support training and capacity building in mainstream sector to better enable support for newcomers.
- Link with other collaboratives to support shared goals.
- Advocate for mainstream services reflecting newcomer needs such as more affordable childcare.

B) Client-Centred Service

Challenge:

Service providers and newcomers think current services are not provided in ways that make them accessible and usable for many newcomers.

- Many services are not linguistically, culturally or physically accessible to some newcomers.
- The format and content of services do not reflect how newcomers seek and use services because there is an emphasis on providing information and support in written form, and through short, one-time interactions.
- The content of services tends to reflect the newcomer populations of previous decades and is not as extensive and complex as current newcomers need.

This has resulted in some newcomers using informal mechanisms that are more accessible to them and delivered in ways that better reflect their way of working.

Strategy:

- 1) Focus on engaging newcomers in ways that better reflect how they seek services.
- 2) Focus on delivering program content that better reflects the full range of needs.
- 3) Focus on making services accessible in ways that reflect how newcomers seek these services.

Elements:

1) Focus on engaging newcomers in ways that better reflect how they seek services:

- Expand and enhance to face-to-face, one-on-one service.
- Develop alternatives to written material including a hot line or 211 strategies that allow newcomers to phone with questions and seek information and referrals.
- Look at approaches to service that increase access to more intensive services and supports such as accompaniment to challenging appointments.
- Expand the web portal and offer it in more languages.
- Provide training and support to staff to enable increased language and cultural responsiveness.
- Reduce the emphasis on conveying information all at once and allow progressive, gradual interactions.

2) Focus on delivering program content that better reflects the full range of needs:

- Focus more in the early days of settlement on the most practical elements such as housing, food, bank accounts, school registration and transit.
- Offer more programs to address acculturation challenges.

- Offer programs that cover a range of needs: from settlement information, conversational English and basic job search programs to complex social acculturation issues, advanced language training and employment training for professionals.
- Address gaps to provide a continuum of services across the whole range of needs.
- Create stronger links between mainstream services and the settlement sector to better serve the needs of newcomers for childcare, housing, mental health services and other needs not specific to newcomers.

3) Focus on making services accessible in ways that reflect how newcomers seek these services:

- Support the development of local hubs in high immigration neighbourhoods.
- Cluster services that must be centralized in a single, accessible location.
- Reach out to informal supports such as cultural and faith groups to develop networks that connect to these forms of settlement support.
- Develop a “No Wrong Door” program that improves the capacity of mainstream organizations to perform sound intake and referral for newcomers in need of supports.
- Support ongoing transition through a continuum of services.
- Make a commitment to quality referrals including common intake models, accurate assessment, up to date referral information and follow up.
- Focus evaluation as much on quality as on numerical targets.

C) Accessibility

Challenge:

Newcomers find the current settlement services difficult to access due to a variety of barriers. Services are fragmented, and linguistically or culturally inaccessible and often hard to identify. Anecdotal evidence as well as statistical research shows newcomers using informal mechanisms more often than formal ones for many key services.

Strategy:

- 1) Create a “No Wrong Door” model of service.
- 2) Reach out to informal service providers such as faith and cultural groups, and support their efforts to provide effective assistance to newcomers.
- 3) Reach out to mainstream service providers and support their efforts to provide effective assistance to newcomers.
- 4) Support the creation of community hubs in neighbourhoods with large newcomer populations.
- 5) Develop an effective outreach, information and referral capacity to support newcomers who might fall through the cracks.

Elements:

1) Create a “No Wrong Door” model of service:

- Develop a common intake mechanism.
- Have clear and usable assessment tools.
- Have a clear referral strategy with identified contacts.
- Ensure up to date information.
- Support and train partner organizations to use the tools and information.
- Ensure all partners commit to quality referrals, including follow up.
- Grow the web portal and explore changes to 211 to facilitate more access points.
- Enhance capacity and resources to carry out assessments and referrals at high volume newcomer services such as LINC and ESL classes and employment training.

2) Reach out to informal service providers such as faith and cultural groups, and support their efforts to provide effective assistance to newcomers:

- Acknowledge the role faith and cultural groups play in supporting newcomers.
- Offer support for their work.
- Provide training and information on settlement systems, programs and regulations.
- Provide information to facilitate appropriate referrals.
- Provide reliable contacts for all referral information.
- Ensure ongoing access to up to date information.
- Support common intake and accurate assessment.
- Provide training on quality referrals.
- Connect faith and cultural groups to hubs.
- Ensure supports and engagement respect the volunteer base of organizations and the constraints this places on their time, resources and capacity.
- Build on existing Peel models for engaging partner agencies.

3) Reach out to mainstream service providers and support their efforts to provide effective assistance to newcomers:

- Provide training and information on settlement services, programs and regulations.
- Provide training and information on cultural accessibility.
- Encourage and support access to multilingual service.

- Provide information to facilitate appropriate referrals.
- Provide reliable contacts for all referral information.
- Continue to ensure access to up to date information.
- Support common intake and accurate assessment.
- Provide training on quality referrals.
- Connect mainstream services to hubs.
- Build on existing Peel models for engaging partner agencies.

4) Support the creation of community hubs in neighbourhoods with large newcomer populations:

- Work with funders and partner agencies to identify opportunities to create multi-service sites where a variety of agencies can offer services in a single, accessible location.
- Encourage hub models that draw on community capacity and local social networks to guide hub priorities and shape hub policies.
- Develop hubs as community centers designed to not only offer services, but also to increase connections between community members, build local social capital, and provide a venue for the development of new skills

5) Develop an effective outreach, information and referral capacity to support newcomers who might fall through the cracks:

- Develop more capacity for outreach and referral by employing dedicated staff as Liaison or Community Outreach Workers for the settlement sector.
- Connect outreach staff to sites with high volume use by newcomers such as LINC and ESL classes and employment programs.
- Support common intake and quality referrals by outreach workers.
- Connect outreach workers to other venues frequented by newcomers such as libraries, community centers and ethno-specific malls.
- Link liaison and outreach staff to SWISS workers.

D) Employment

Challenge:

Newcomers continue to face high rates of unemployment and underemployment. Employment services designed to address these issues have had mixed results, imparting a number of useful skills but linking few newcomers to actual employment. Employment services do not serve many of the needs of newcomers

seeking senior positions or professional employment. Due to a variety of barriers, many newcomers can only find employment in fields far below their levels of skill and training. Many employers lack the tools to recognize the advantages of employing newcomers and assess newcomer candidates for employment. Successful employment programs have tended to require more intensive supports and have not been scaled up from their pilot stages.

Strategy:

- 1) Through ongoing processes and through current restructuring, adjust existing employment programs to better reflect the full range of current newcomers' needs.
- 2) Use existing employment programs to deliver the services that work more consistently.
- 3) Reduce barriers to advanced employment for newcomers.
- 4) Enhance the receptivity of employers to hiring newcomers.

Elements:

1) Adjust existing employment programs to better reflect the full range of current newcomers' needs:

- Acknowledge that the employment needs of newcomers have changed.
- Review the program mix to accommodate the full spectrum of clients, including newcomers with more varied employment needs and objectives.
- Resource the gaps in program mix to provide a continuum of service that meets the full spectrum of needs.

2) Use existing employment programs to deliver the services that work more consistently:

- Set clear objectives and strategies for all employment programs.
- Integrate employment programs and information into ESL curriculum.
- Acknowledge and support the value of intensive support for newcomers in seeking employment, including intensive job search and detailed interview preparation.
- Design employment programs to engage with newcomers on a longer-term basis to allow for follow-up and support.
- Roll out successful pilots such as mentoring and internships.
- Fully integrate programs that support job retention and job advancement into the employment support mix.
- Link employment programs to employers to support job readiness efforts that relate to real jobs, and help newcomers gain information about the real employment context for available jobs.

- Create links to informal employment supports through faith groups and cultural groups; provide information and access to referrals and encourage employers in these groups to play an increased role in promoting and facilitating newcomer employment.
- Support staff at employment programs with training and resources to reflect the growing complexity of newcomer employment needs.

3) Reduce barriers to advanced employment for newcomers:

- Facilitate the creation of a systematic volunteering program that is centrally managed and accessible to newcomers and service providers.
- Facilitate Canadian experience through programs such as Toronto Social Services' Investing in Neighbourhoods program which can provide subsidized work opportunities to specific underemployed populations.
- Use employment opportunities in the settlement sector to increase access to experience and training for newcomers.
- Support accreditation for newcomers by providing access to the kinds of financial supports available to other students (e.g. OSAP), thus enabling newcomers to manage the time and expense required for accreditation.
- Encourage regulatory reform and enforcement to address abusive employment practices that adversely affect newcomers.

4) Enhance the receptivity of employers to hiring newcomers:

- Expand on current efforts to show employers the business case for hiring newcomers.
- Address receptivity of host community with both targeted and broad-based campaigns by business leaders who act as champions for newcomer employment.
- Build on and resource the efforts of business groups to communicate with their colleagues about the advantages of a diverse hiring policy.
- Explore strategies to incent small businesses to hire newcomers.
- Improve employers' access to information about credentials from various countries to facilitate the employment of professionally trained newcomers.

E) Receptivity of Host Community

Challenge:

Newcomers often experience difficulty with settlement and integration that is rooted in systemic barriers and bias.

Strategy:

- 1) Advocate for changes that reduce systemic barriers
- 2) Actively undertake initiatives that facilitate responsiveness to newcomers in public institutions
- 3) Actively undertake initiatives that facilitate responsiveness to newcomers in systems of service in Peel

Elements:

1) Advocate for changes that reduce systemic barriers

- Carry out broad public advocacy supporting the value of a diverse multicultural community.
- Address receptivity of host community with both targeted and broad-based campaigns by business leaders who act as champions for newcomer employment.
- Build on and resource the efforts of business groups to communicate with their colleagues about the advantages of a diverse hiring policy.
- Advocate actively with financial institutions to adjust the requirements for accessing financial services to better reflect the barriers faced by newcomers during the early period of settlement such as lack of credit history and lack of Canadian identification.
- Advocate actively with landlords to adjust the requirements for accessing rental housing to better reflect the barriers faced by newcomers during the early period of settlement such as lack of credit history, lack of employment and lack of Canadian identification.
- Work with mainstream agencies to reduce the barriers to service that result from lack of information about cultural barriers, linguistic barriers, and the specific needs of newcomers.
- Support training and capacity building to better enable effective engagement of newcomers, including providing education about anti-racist and anti-discriminatory processes.

2) Actively undertake initiatives that facilitate responsiveness to newcomers in public institutions

- Show leadership in recognizing and addressing systemic barriers in public institutions

- Set clear goals for creating viable and measurable progress in addressing systemic barriers in public institutions
- Support training and capacity building to better enable effective engagement of newcomers, including providing education about anti-racist and anti-discriminatory processes
- Encourage responsiveness of schools to newcomer students and parents and their unique needs
- Actively pursue efforts to ensure a Centre of Excellence for Diversity and Inclusiveness in Peel

3) Actively undertake initiatives that facilitate responsiveness to newcomers in systems of service in Peel

- Recognize specific demographic subgroups among newcomers in Peel that are experiencing unique challenges
- Recognize the challenges of the settlement and integration process and ensure access to mental health; work with mental health services to design supports and efforts to minimize the emotional and psychological impact on the family. In particular newcomer women who carry the burden of the emotional well being of the family.

Prepared by: