EMERGING PRACTICES IN SETTLEMENT SERVICE DELIVERY: A HYBRID MODEL TO RESPOND TO NEWCOMER NEEDS

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Settlement & Family Services

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Responding to the Pandemic with Resilience: Emerging Practices in Settlement Service Delivery

Peggy Lau, Program Director, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Settlement & Family Services

Communication

- Establish a new communication strategy

Support

- Lead with flexibility & adaptability

Community

- Develop an internal support network

Resilience

- Build trust, stay motivated & create a supportive, trauma-informed, virtual work environment

Communication: Establish a New Communication Strategy

▪Staying connected virtually & remote support

▪Setting up a new check-in procedure with effective tools

▪Find ways to interact with teams & don't forget to create mini opportunities to socialize informally while virtual

▪Regular team meetings & discussion to collaborate on changes in operational procedures and take into account new and emerging protocols

Communication: Establish a New Communication Strategy

Ensure **professional boundaries & and confidentiality** while serving clients remotely

- New protocols & procedures in place for 1-1 and group Information & Orientation sessions, Language training, Employment-related services and Building Community Connections activities

- Provide staff training and resources to review new protocols & procedures

- Ensure continued informed client consent

Support: Leading with Flexibility & Adaptability

- Lead with empathy, including acknowledging one's own vulnerabilities

- Collaborate with staff about existing or new accommodation needs and work with them to provide support

- Recognize "red flags" and offer low impact debriefing for staff who are overwhelmed and relevant resources with staff facing challenges

- Respect staff work hours and need for breaks in order to foster and model healthy boundaries

Support: Leading with Flexibility & Adaptability

▪Review and modify service plans as needed, based on direct feedback from frontline staff

▪ Ensure your direct reports are up-to-date on important deadlines, with as advanced notice as possible and with gentle reminders

▪Invite guest speakers to conduct live, online training around topics to support staff professional development

▪Provide time for staff to learn and adapt to new technologies in order to work remotely

Community: Develop an Internal Support Network

▪Take time to provide low-impact debrief opportunities for staff

▪Encourage peer support and mentorship opportunities within your staff teams while continuing to maintain professional boundaries

▪If your agency has an Employee Assistance Program, have contact information handy to remind staff of this and other community supports if they are feeling overwhelmed

Resilience: Build Trust, Stay Motivated and Create a Supportive, Trauma-Informed, Supportive Virtual Work Environment

- Lead with kindness and compassion

- Foster a culture of open, collaborative communication

- Foster a climate or respect in which members feel safe to share new ideas

- Consciously incorporate steps towards becoming a trauma-informed organization

- And simply… recognize staff excellence and let them know about it! Well-deserved and specific praise goes a long way!

Resilience: Build Trust, Stay Motivated and Create a Supportive, Trauma-Informed, Supportive Virtual Work Environment

▪ Demonstrate authentic empathy and be available

▪ Recognize the impact of isolation, loneliness as well as staff family commitments; be aware of changes you may notice in your team's ability to cope

▪ Encourage work/life balance; find ways to share ideas

Planning a Settlement Service Office Return after Working Remotely: Risk Management & Emerging Practices During a Pandemic

Shae Viswanathan, Associate Program Director, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Settlement & Family Services

Planning a Settlement Service Office Return

▪Creating a COVID-19 Safety Plan for gradual re-opening

▪Preparing an office to ensure Safety Protocols are in place for both staff and clients

▪Safety protocol training & support for staff before and after re-opening

Creating a COVID-19 Safety Plan

- Review and action planning of the physical office space

- Preparing the office space

- PPE for staff and clients

Safety Protocols

- Multi-lingual office signage

- Multi-lingual forms

- New procedures for clients to book appointments

Staff Training & Support

- Pre-opening staff training

- New orientation to the physical workspace for staff

- Follow-up support post-reopening

Maximizing the use of Technologies to Support Newcomer Language Proficiency

Calisto Mudzingwa, Language Training Services Best Practices Coordinator, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Settlement & Family Services

Background

- COVID-19 forced all classes to be online (114 classes)

- Zoom and Moodle

- Moodle (existing, robust Moodle)

- More than 75% of teachers had already completed LearnIt2teach

- Teachers worked in teams to create content

- Within 3 weeks all classes were 'up and running'

Student Technology Proficiency

3 groupings of technology proficiency to consider in supporting student learning

Familiarity with blended learning	Unfamiliar with any online learning

Literacy and tech-challenged

Students with Literacy Challenges & lower CLB Level students and Technology Usage

▪ Prior to COVID-19 misconception: "Literacy and lower CLB (Canadian Language Benchmarks) level students can't handle technology"

▪Reality: they were able to use technology and *support* is the key

▪With support, students *were* able to navigate various devices and technologies

o Zoom session (really enjoyed Zoom sessions)
o Moodle (more challenging, steep learning curve)
o email

Language Instructors and the Use of Technology

Varying degrees of competency among Language Instructors

- Pre-pandemic developed tech skills and blended teaching experience
- Limited tech skills, yet, open to learn
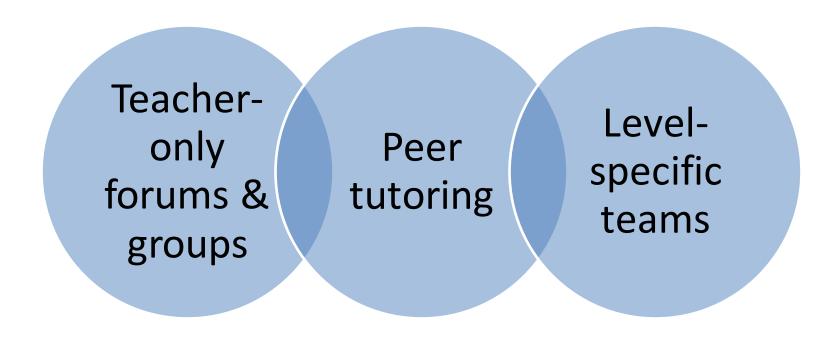- Limited tech skills and hesitant about tech

S.U.C.C.E.S.S. responded by offering Language Instructors ongoing support and training

Support for Language Instructors

- Weekly drop-in tech sessions to increase digital skills

- External training (LearnIT2teach; TUTELA, AMSSA; BC TEAL)

- Streaming videos posted on Moodle

- Professional development days

Support for Language Instructors cont'd

Teacher-only forums & groups

Peer tutoring

Level-specific teams

Administrators' Role

- Clear protocols and guidelines for teachers and students

- Adjustments of policies to reflect online learning

- Develop pedagogical guidelines on teaching online

Implications for the Future

- Online learning is here to stay
- Online teaching = core competency
- In person = still preferred for Literacy and Lower CLB level learners
- Regardless of CLB level, development of tech skills is a must for language instruction (directly or indirectly)

Implications for the Future cont'd

In person	Online, instructor-led
Online, self-directed	Self-directed via correspondence

Implications for the Future cont'd

- Challenge of assessment validity
- In class and external assessments
- Absence of a proctor (CCLB)
- Online self-assessment
- Honesty & integrity

Q&A

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THANK YOU!

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