



NEWCOMERS WITH DISABILITIES NAVIGATING THE SYSTEM

Date/Time:
September 27th 2022 / 1:00PM – 3:00PM

Location: Zoom

Chairs: Mezaun Lakha-Evin, Michael Farr

In Attendance:

Abdullah Ahmed (Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers)
 Alex Montiel (Diversecities)
 Angelica Uy (U of C Intern)
 Arevik Tokmajyan (Calgary Local Immigration Partnership)
 Ashija Joshi (ASSIST Community Services Centre)
 Ben Patmore (Calgary Catholic Immigration Society)
 Christian Ladores (Alberta Association Of Immigrant Serving Agencies)
 Fiona Lowes (Calgary Immigrant Women's Association)
 Fobete Dingha
 Francis Boakye (Action Dignity)
 Ginger Mullen (Providence)
 Jaya Dharan Calgary Region Immigrant Employment Council)
 Lester Valenzuela (Centre for Newcomers)
 Linn Andersen (Saamis Immigration Services Association)

Margot Brunner (Voice of Albertans with Disabilities)
 Mezaun Lakha-Evin (Alberta Ability Network)
 Michael Farr (EmployAbilities)
 Michelle Ledo (Calgary Immigrant Women's Association)
 Mirzeta Mujanovic (Training Inc)
 Nada Starcevic (Alberta Association Of Immigrant Serving Agencies)
 Qabas Al-Sammarraie (Care for Newcomers)
 Rahma Bejaoui (Catholic Social Services)
 Reeba Sara Koshy (U of C Intern)
 Sandy Wagner (Providence)
 Susan Ma (Calgary Immigrant Women's Association)
 Taylor Bauer (Canadian National Institute for the Blind)
 Teagan de Seguin (Catholic Social Services)
 Yahya El-Lahib (U of C)
 Yasmin Mohamed (Children's Link)

Meeting Minutes

Land Acknowledgement
Welcome and Introductions

Minister Qualtrough video message

Spotlight Series: Inclusive Child Care with Providence

- Each region has an agency that handles all-inclusive childcare referrals. Northwest Region has Stepping Stones Day Care Society, Northeast Region, and Calgary has Providence, Edmonton Region (West) has GRIT, Edmonton Region (East) has Midwest Family Resource Centre, and the South Region has Key Connections.
- Former name is Supported Child Care Program. Their purpose is to support all children and their families with access to inclusive childcare.
- Offer strategies and resources to childhood educators that can help increase engagement, and satisfaction and decrease staff and family turnover.



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- The implementation, follow up and discharge process takes 3 months where there are monthly visits to observe goal implementation and a final review with the Director before discharge.
- If you have any questions, please contact Ginger at gmullen@providencechildren.com

Topics of Discussion:

Disability Info Sheet

- An information sheet (either one or two pages) that explains in plain language what a disability is in Canada and what types of services and supports exist.
- Should include disability rights and account for potential language barriers.
- Maybe instead of one document about general supports, we can produce a series of documents addressing different areas of concern.
- Ensure no steps are being missed throughout the process of immigration. 50% of immigrants use immigrant serving agencies when immigrating to Canada, while the other 50% don't.
- Guaranteeing immigrant agencies and the Alberta welcome package include the one-pager to ensure all areas are being covered.
- The current system isn't succeeding, and we need to fill the gap. It doesn't have to be a one-pager but a resource list of how a frontline worker can contact agencies that can support newcomers with disabilities.
- There isn't an easy roadmap to navigate the resources offered throughout the province.
- We are currently discussing how to share resources with newcomers coming into Canada but there are many newcomers who have been living here who don't know how to navigate the system.
- The disability sector doesn't understand the specific needs of the settlement sector and vice versa. This is why we wanted to create this table, to bring both sectors together and work together for a collective solution to our problems.
- As we have many new members and lots of work to get done, we will create a subcommittee that will report back to the table.
- If you know anyone with lived experience that would be interested in this table, please ask them to contact Meri at mtopchieva@cpalberta.com.

Action Items:

- Meri will create a definition of what the Government of Canada recognizes as a disability in plain language and share it via Google Documents.
- Subcommittee is required to further discuss creating a one-pager/information document. Please contact Meri if you are interested in being part of the subcommittee.

Wrap-Up/Adjournment

Next meeting:

Date: October 25th, 2022

Time: 1:30PM – 3:30PM

Location: Zoom