

SOCIAL SERVICES SECTOR ROUNDTABLE YEAR IN REVIEW JUNE 2020

PURPOSE

The following provides an overview of the key activities and progress made through the Social Services Sector Roundtable (SSSRT) and the Recruitment and Retention Working Group from May 2019 to June 2020.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus of the SSSRT shifted to providing critical support and information to the sector on a weekly basis, supported by a deputy provincial health officer. Now that we are currently in a recovery phase, returning to the work that was planning prior to the pandemic is important.

Reviewing the work over the past year will serve as a record of our collaborative achievements and refresh the agenda that had been developed up to February 2020.

Government is committed to continuing to work with the social services sector to find ways to strengthen services in our province and the vital role staff play in this important work.

KEY ACTIVITIES / MILESTONES / OUTCOMES: (Appendix 1 for Details)

- On May 10, 2019, the Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction convened a roundtable of representatives from the social services sector to discuss and work collaboratively on issues faced by the sector.
- The purpose of the Social Services Sector Roundtable (SSSRT) is to provide a forum for Ministers and senior executives in government and community social services sector representatives to:
 - maintain good relations through on-going communications;
 - discuss matters of importance within the sector; and
 - address issues in a coordinated and collaborative way.
- The SSSRT [Terms of Reference](#) was finalized and updated to include its expanded membership.
- Four meetings were held in 2019 (May, August, October, December) and the fifth meeting on February 6, 2020. From March to June, 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the SSSRT met on a weekly basis to provide support and information to members, with a Deputy Provincial Health Officer attending meetings.

- The Recruitment and Retention Working Group (R&RWG) was established and met in June, July and September.

Recruitment and Retention - Prioritization

- At the initial meeting, participants identified recruitment and retention as a priority. A small working group was established to develop an action plan for government consideration. Key areas of focus for this working group included compensation, recruitment and career pathing, training, and workplace safety.
- The R&RWG held a full-day workshop on July 9, 2019, where community-based sector agency representatives tabled a *“Discussion Paper on Community Social Services Sector Sustainability Issues”* with 10 recommendations.
- The R&RWG members developed a draft Action Plan, which was considered by the SSSRT along with the *“Discussion Paper on Community Social Services Sector Sustainability Issues”*, leading to the development of a proposal to government to address recruitment and retention issues prioritized by the SSSRT.
- Key components prioritized in the Action Plan were: compensation, training and the development of a Sector HR Strategy.
- R&RWG members suggested that a Sector HR Strategy could set out consistent, cross sector approaches for key matters such as: Indigenous-specific issues; remote and rural worker recruitment; training; classification; public awareness; compensation and benefits; and a centralized hiring/vetting platform.

Funding Proposals for Government Consideration

- Through the work of the R&RWG and the SSSRT, key initiatives were prioritized for government consideration as part of the Budget 2020 process.
- This resulted in additional funding being approved to support key initiatives and help address challenges facing the sector.
- First, one-time funding of up to \$10 million was made available in 2019/20 to support recruitment and retention across the sector. This included funding for training and occupational health and safety initiatives. See Appendix 2 for details.
- Second, new funding of \$26.3 million is being made available in 2020/21 to help address recruitment and retention challenges faced by non-union and hybrid agencies in the social services sector.
- Funding has also been approved for the development of a Sector HR Strategy, including a sector compensation plan for government consideration.

Broadening the Reach of the SSSRT

- To broaden the reach of the SSSRT, SDPR hosted a Social Services Sector “*Together for Social Change*” Forum on November 15, 2019 in Richmond.
- Over 130 participants from community-based agencies, advocates, and government attended the event to learn about the work of the Social Services Sector Roundtable and create a blueprint for on-going collaboration with the broader social services community.
- The [Forum Report](#), which captured the discussions at the event, was released in February 2020.
- In addition, the Social Services Sector Reference Group was established, which is an informal coalition of associations working together to ensure broad sector participation and effective communication with their members in support of the Social Services Sector Round Table.
- A strategic vision for the sector was called for, resulting in a draft SSSRT Guiding Charter, tabled to the SSSRT members in February. Further work is required to finalize the Charter.

Procurement and Sector Human Resources Strategy

- Other priorities identified in the R&R Action Plan requiring further work are on Procurement and Contracting as well as developing a Sector HR Strategy, including a sectoral compensation plan.
- The Procurement and Contracting project and the development of a Sector HR Strategy will be a priority for the remainder of the year ahead.

APPENDIX 1 SSSRT / R&RWG - TIMELINE OF EVENTS MAY 2019 – JUNE 2020

DATE	ATTENDEES	DISCUSISON / OUTPUTS
May 10 2019	SSSRT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First meeting: discussed issues: recruitment and retention, procurement and contracting, relationships. Agreed on the need to establish the R&RWG.
June 12	R&RWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified four areas of priority: compensation, recruitment and career pathing, training and workplace safety. Agreed to gather and share information on issues in preparation for a planning workshop to discuss ideas and develop prioritized, concrete actions for the SSSRT to consider.
July 9	R&RWG Facilitated Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared information on issues identified, discussed four priority areas. Community-based sector agency representatives tabled a “<i>Discussion Paper on Community Social Services Sector Sustainability Issues</i>” with 10 recommendations. Developed a draft Action Plan for the SSSRT members to consider including actions under the following focus area: compensation, training and the need to develop a Sector Human Resources Strategy. Some recommendations from the discussion paper incorporated into the Action Plan.
Aug 1	SSSRT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed draft Terms of Reference MCFD provided update on Procurement & Contracting Review Received the draft R&R Action Plan and “<i>Discussion Paper on Community Social Services Sector Sustainability Issues</i>” Agreed that actions with budget implications would need to be based on sound data / rationale for government consideration in the context of budget discussions and the structure of the sector will need to be a part of future work – R&RWG to meet to discuss further. Agreed to discuss a sector wide Forum at the September SSSRT meeting – aiming for November.

DATE	ATTENDEES	DISCUSISON / OUTPUTS
Sept 14	R&RWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussed approach to develop high priority items for government's consideration. Agreement to proceed with four priority items for government's consideration: increase to service improvement allocation, funding for compression and inversion, block funding for sector training, funding to support Occupational Health and Safety initiatives. SDPR will share summary of budget request with R&RWG before submitting to government.
Oct 1	SSSRT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terms of Reference finalized / approved. SSS / R&R Funding Request Summary provided (also to R&RWG). Discussion on funding services for Indigenous peoples off-reserve and in urban areas. Confirmed date to hold SSS Forum on November 15 / initial planning / call for planning working group members.
Nov 15 Dec 3	SSS Forum SSSRT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All-day Forum held in Richmond – discussions to be reported Emergency Management Legislation Consultation Presentation Leslie Varley presented a discussion paper on the implications of the United Nations Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on urban and off-reserve Indigenous people's access to services – discussion on ways members can support within their areas of influence. SSS Forum Debrief. Members agreed that priorities for next steps included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing a strategic vision for the Social Services Sector; developing a Sector HR Strategy, progressing work on procurement and contracting; and developing a broader collaborative process (relationships). Agreed to extend reach of SSSRT through Reference Group and additional communications.
DATE	ATTENDEES	DISCUSISON / OUTPUTS
Feb 6 2020	SSSRT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair discussed R&R funding for 2019/20 (one-time) and 2020/21 proposal. PSEC confirmed importance of developing a Sectoral HR Strategy, including a compensation plan, that will need a working group to steer / advise.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Forum Report tabled • A reference group with broader sector representation is being established – an update will be provided at next SSSRT meeting. • In response to call for a sector strategic vision, SSS Guiding Charter tabled – feedback to include aspirational outcome goal and more specific references to principles of reconciliation – Leslie to provide support. • CFD Presentation on Procurement and Contracting E&Y report • Chair asked for members feedback on how SSSRT has gone this first year – positive – agreed to start distributing a Communique to broader stakeholders as appropriate.
March 20 – May 26	SSSRT COVID-19 Weekly Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings focused on support and information for the sector during the COVID-19 pandemic, attended by Deputy Provincial Health Officer. Weekly Communiques distributed to sector, including pandemic Q&As.
June 12	SSSRT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition to focus back onto previous work (February 14 minute) and on COVID-19 recovery as needed.

APPENDIX 2 SUMMARY OF FUNDING FOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION INITIATIVES

Initiative (Funding Ministry)	Proposed Recipient (by March 31, 2020)	Amount (\$ Millions)	Purpose
Indigenous Training (SDPR)	BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres	3.000	Provide training and development for Indigenous organizations and employees to strengthen capacity and grow the pool of skilled Indigenous workers in the sector.
Sector Wide Training (SDPR)	Federation of Community Social Services of BC	3.000	Provide broad and inclusive supports to address foundational knowledge and core skill needs (including leadership and management) across the sector.
OH&S Employee Supports / Training (SDPR)	Federation of Community Social Services of BC	1.400	Provide increased support to the Community Social Services Health and Safety Council to work on initiatives to improve workplace health and safety.
Home Share & Microboard Training (SDPR)	BC CEO Network	1.075	Develop and provide standardized and specialized training for contracted Home Share providers, coordinators, supervisors and Microboards.
Victim Services / Anti-Violence Training (PSSG)	Ending Violence Association of BC BC Society of Transition Houses Police Victim Services BC	0.600	Develop and provide specialized training for employees working in victim services and anti-violence programming.
Housing Training (MAH)	BC Non-Profit Housing Association Aboriginal Housing Management Association	0.600	Develop and deliver training for community housing service provider employees. Develop educational and professional pathways into non-profit housing sector through partnerships with accredited bodies and post-secondary institutions.
Foundational Tools (SDPR)	Vela Canada Family Support Institute	0.125	Update and enhance the Support Worker Central web-based platform that connects individuals, families and person-centred societies providing direct services or administer self-directed services (2,000 support workers, 3,400 families, individuals, societies).
Non-Profit Board Training (SDPR)	Board Voice Society of BC	0.200	Provide regional training to board members of non-profit Social Care Agencies.
Total		\$10.000	