

BCEP

BULLETS . . .

Bullet #10

September 2008

BCEP Contractor Client Engagement Strategies

To: MHSD Regional Services /BCEP Contractors

Purpose:

To provide RSD field staff with examples of some of the practical and innovative strategies BCEP contractors are undertaking to mitigate client no show and engagement challenges. EAWs, in particular, may wish to use some of these strategies as aids to 'marketing' BCEP to referred clients.

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Both the ministry and BCEP contracted service providers have faced a number of challenges regarding client engagement since program implementation:

1. Referring BCEP clients and getting them to the contractors
2. Keeping clients engaged once accepted by the contractors
3. Ensuring robust and timely service delivery to meet client need

In concert with existing ministry strategies to deal with client engagement, BCEP contractors have implemented their own best practices focusing on four key themes:

- Incentives to clients – both \$ and items
- Food / sustenance is a must
- Workshops / events must be fun
- Assist clients with basic needs – e.g. help with finding accommodations, food preparation on a budget, etc

The following represents activities / strategies broken down into five topic areas: *Communication, Incentives, Ambiance, Special Events* and *Workshops*. Please note that activities identified may not be in practice in all areas / bundles. EAWs are encouraged to speak with their local BCEP contractor to determine practices for their specific community.

Communication:

- EAW Information Sheets with merchandise voucher attached for referred clients
- Work closely with MHSD offices to see clients as soon as referred – especially those with no fixed addresses ('NFAs')
- Participant Satisfaction Surveys issued regularly

Incentives:

- Coupons for food, clothing and other supports for attending intake appointment
- Ongoing rewards / incentives during program participation (e.g. completion of intake or assessment = \$25 voucher, Employment = \$50 voucher)

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- Breakfasts, Barbecues, Celebration Events
- Free interview clothing
- Warm / seasonal clothing

Ambiance:

- Open and Hospitable
- Coffee, cookies and fruit always available
- Engage clients through 'fun' conversation
- All staff are in and available when doors are open in the a.m. – daily availability is flexible based on clients' needs
- Celebrate the simple steps – engaging clients through conversation

Special Events:

- 'Theme Month' — provision of hot lunches, warm clothing; Halloween – staff in costume serving lunch
- Reward cards (like Air Miles rewards) – staff provide points for using resource room – points exchanged for food / clothing vouchers
- Open house and clothing exchange once a month – all staff participate

Workshops:

- Specialized Touchback workshops for clients aged 45 or older
- Names drawn for gift certificates (e.g. Tim Horton's)
- Specialized themes – e.g. Nutrition on a Budget – clients bring in low cost recipes which are shared – workshop completers receive a crock-pot
- Parenting workshops – e.g. fun crafts for kids – material provided so clients can create crafts / gifts for Christmas
- Other specialized themes – e.g. Nutrition, Health and Wellness, Reclaiming Personal Power – clients given pre-workshop tasks relating to theme
- Scheduling of workshops e.g. time of day, sessions together
- Start clients off in fun / personally rewarding workshops to keep them interested and engaged and returning for more.
- Group re-connection sessions – reiterate expectations of contractor and clients – provide an incentive for attendance (e.g. Daytimer)