

April 2007 Status Report

CHANGES FOR CHILDREN IMPLEMENTATION TEAM PROGRESS REPORT

Implementation Team Meetings

Since mid November 2006, the Implementation Team has met on 17 occasions. The Team will meet weekly throughout March, April, May and June. Minutes from each meeting are kept and approved by the full team. An Implementation Staff Team (IST) comprised of staff assigned from each of the four child and family services authorities and the Child Protection Branch has been in place since mid-January 2007. The IST is located in offices at 800 Portage Avenue.

DEVELOPING DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

The Implementation Team is responsible for developing work plans to implement recommendations from five separate reports. This includes all of the recommendations from the two external reviews “Strengthening The Commitment” and “Honouring Their Spirits” (200 recommendations), the Section IV report on the tragic death of Phoenix Sinclair (32 recommendations) and the report from the Office of the Children’s Advocate on supports for youth transitioning out of the care of the child and family services system “Strengthening Our Youth” (45 recommendations). In addition, those recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General’s report on the Child and Family Services Division that are considered to cover areas similar to the recommendations in the other reports are also within the purview of the Implementation Team’s work. In total, there are 296 separate recommendations under consideration.

The IST has been engaged in a process of categorizing and prioritizing these recommendations into distinct work packages. This was a necessary first step to facilitate the development of detailed implementation work plans. The majority (not all) of the recommendations have now been analyzed and grouped into twenty-three (23) separate work package. Each work package may require that multiple projects be completed before full implementation has occurred.

The 23 work packages have been grouped into three categories depending on where the work is being done. The three categories are:

- Work to be completed by the Implementation Staff Team (13 separate work packages).
- Work being completed by an inter-sectoral or cross program committee including IST members (6 separate work packages).
- Work being completed through an existing AJI-CWI entity such as Standing Committee, the four authorities, the Alternative Care Sub-Committee or responsibility for addressing the recommendations is vested with the Department of Family Services and Housing (4 separate work packages).

Independent of where the work is being done, the detailed implementation plans must be submitted to the Implementation Team for approval before proceeding and before funding from the Changes for Children budget can be allocated. This has (or will be) stipulated into terms of reference for all working groups and committees. *(A complete list of the work packages is attached to this progress report).*

Since the last progress report (January 30, 2007) the Implementation Staff Team has developed seventeen (17) detailed implementation plans using a consistent template. Each implementation plan lists the tasks to be completed, deliverables by due date and the lead responsibility. Each written plan also includes a statement of expected outcomes (to facilitate evaluation) and is compared to the list of twelve guiding principles to demonstrate consistency with known best practice approaches. Implementation Team has determined that all plans must demonstrate consistency with the following two foundational principles:

- The Changes for Children work plan will demonstrate respect for the spirit, intent and longer term objectives of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry – Child Welfare Initiative; and
- The workplan will clearly demonstrate how the capacity of the child and family service system will be strengthened and ensure that vulnerable children, youth, families and communities who require, or likely to require service, are the primary beneficiaries.

The expectation that these two principles be respected has (or will be) communicated to all work teams. While not all of the work plans have yet been approved by Implementation Team, when in place, the work will address over 100 of the recommendations from the five reports. This is shown in the table below:

RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED BY CURRENT WORK PLANS

| WORK PLANS DRAFTED OR APPROVED | # of Recs Addressed: Strengthen the Commitment Report | # of Recs Addressed: Honouring Their Spirits Report | # of Recs Addressed: Office of the Auditor General Report | # of Recs Addressed From OCA Report on Youth Transitioning | Total # of Recs. |
|---|--|--|--|---|-----------------------------|
| CFSIS Incremental Enhancements/Re-Engineering | 3 | 2 | 6 | | 11 |
| Enhanced/New Training and Support For Front Line Staff | 12 | 13 | | 4 | 29 |
| Compilation and Distribution of Educational Materials | | 10 | | | 10 |
| Researching New or Alternative Service Models | | 2 | | | 2 |
| FIPPA/CFSA Interface | | 4 | | | 4 |
| Differential Response Capacity | 14 | 2 | | | 16 |
| Standardizing Special Rates | 3 | | 5 | | 8 |
| Strengthening the Capacity of the Authorities (Child Welfare Secretariat) | 5 | | | | 5 |
| Authority Determination Protocol Review | 3 | | | | 3 |
| Standards, Directives Protocols | 3 | 7 | | 9 | 19 |
| Total (to date) | 37 | 33 | 11 | 4 | 107 |

Based on the schedule in each of the detailed work plans listed in the above table, the 107 recommendations will be substantially if not entirely implemented by December 2007.

HIGHLIGHTS OF CHANGES FOR CHILDREN ACTIVITIES AND DECISIONS

As of January 30, 2007, the highlights of work completed include:

Funding for Workload Relief

- Implementation Team approved funding from the 2006/07 Changes for Children allocation in support of workload relief.
- The four authorities signed a joint resolution confirming that this funding will be utilized to achieve a reduction in work for front-line staff consistent with the recommendations in the external reviews. The Authorities will provide baseline data on the number of staff (by position) in place before the funding was received and quarterly updates on the hiring process.
- A list of longer-term outcomes has been developed for evaluating the impacts of the broader workload relief efforts.

Child and Family Services Information System (CFSIS)

- Priorities have been identified and work begun to make CFSIS more accessible and user friendly;
- An external vendor has begun work on developing the terms of reference for the CFSIS re-engineering project.
- Implementation Team approved a plan and funding to ensure that all open cases (Federal and Provincial) are entered onto CFSIS by the end of April 2007.
- Implementation Team has approved in principle, funding to solve current connectivity problems being experienced by some agency offices when trying to utilize CFSIS.

All Nations Coordinated Response Network

- The Implementation Team co-chairs reviewed and determined that the majority of the recommendations pertaining to the All Nations Coordinated Response Network (ANCR) have been satisfactorily addressed. ANCR is now delivering service as a new agency under a mandate granted by the Southern First Nations Child and Family Services Authority.

Differential Response

- A promotional/educational presentation on differential response models has been developed and each authority has (or will) be scheduling a symposium with their agencies to occur in March/April 2007.
- Similar informational presentations will be delivered to other departments, Healthy Child Manitoba and programs within Family Services and Housing.
- IST has begun working on criteria for selecting demonstration sites, a preliminary statement of expected outcomes and criteria for preparing demonstration proposals. These should be in place by April 2007.

Funding for Enhanced Communication

- Implementation Team approved funding from the 2006/07 Changes for Children allocation to enhance the communication infrastructure at each Authority (funds for communication equipment and website development). This was considered a necessary first step to ensure Authorities have the capacity to implement the recommendations for enhanced communication activity recommended in the external reviews.
- Implementation Team has approved in principle funding to organize two 2 day conferences to be offered in the fall of 2007. One conference will be offered in Southern Manitoba (likely Winnipeg) and one in Northern Manitoba (likely The Pas). Implementation Team has also approved a first draft of an agenda for the conferences where the first day would provide information on the history/trends of child welfare, an overview of the changes for children agenda and include panel presentations dealing with the role of the media and politics in child welfare (responding to specific recommendations in the external reviews). The second day will focus on differential response and plans for implementing this initiative in Manitoba.

Standardizing Special Rates

- A detailed implementation plan with milestones and deliverables is in development to ensure that a standardized rate structure is in place for January 2008.

Changes for Children Website

- The Changes for Children website is now live. The initial content was developed by staff in the Child and Family Services Division working in collaboration with the IST and approved by Implementation Team.
- The IST has developed a template for providing regular work plan updates.
- The Changes for Children vision statement was approved by Implementation Team and is on the website with the guiding principles and terms of reference.

Suicide Prevention

- Materials on suicide prevention and water safety have been compiled and are being packaged for distribution.
- Terms of reference for the Changes for Children Suicide Prevention Committee have been drafted and are currently being discussed with representatives from the Department of Health.
- Arrangements are in place for one staff from each authority to attend the Applied Suicide Skills Intervention Training (ASIST) training for trainers offered by LivingWorks. Certified trainers should be in place within each authority by the end of June 2007.

Enhanced/New Training for Front Line Staff

- A training working group comprised of representatives from the IST and the training coordinators from each Authority has been established and has met on three occasions to develop and prioritize work plans.
- Opportunities for training front line staff in critical incident de-briefing and de-escalation (non violent crisis intervention training) have been identified and a proposal to schedule workshops will be submitted to Implementation Team in the near future.
- Implementation Team has agreed to provide funding in support of training delivered by the Authorities over the last few months in response to specific recommendations in the external reviews (e.g. - abuse investigation training).

Funding for the Standards Development Protocol

- Implementation Team approved funding to support ongoing consultations with staff as part of a new Standards Development Protocol agreed to at Standing Committee.

Protocol for Responding to Reports from the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

- Pending approval of draft legislation, Standing Committee has developed a protocol for responding to reports on child deaths prepared under section 10 of the *Fatality Inquiries Act*. The protocol describes a collaborative approach which sets out timelines, expectations and responsibilities of the Child Protection Branch and each Authority. The protocol also enables external monitoring of responding to these reports by the Office of the Ombudsman (again in response to specific recommendations in the external reviews).

Through these activities and in conjunction with steps taken up to January 2007, specific action has been taken to substantially address approximately 30 recommendations in the external reviews.

FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL JURISDICTION

Discussions have begun regarding the issue of federal-provincial jurisdiction. There is a commitment by all parties to continue to discuss ways to move forward on resolving this inequality that currently exists for First Nations families.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

Since January 30, 2007 three meetings have been held with the Office of the Ombudsman to discuss how that office will monitor and track implementation of the recommendations in the external reviews. Two of these meetings were attended by members of the Changes for Children Implementation Staff Team and staff from the Office of the Ombudsman who are responsible for monitoring progress. A preliminary list of work packages was distributed as well as a copy of the Implementation Team's terms of reference and guiding principles. Additionally, staff from the Office of the Ombudsman were provided with a presentation regarding differential response and the progress made to date on the Changes for Children work plan. It was agreed that similar meetings will occur every two months with information being submitted for the Ombudsman's annual report by the end of December 2007.

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

The Implementation Team co-chairs have met with a number of inter-sectoral partners (e.g. – Department of Health, Healthy Child Mb.) and with representatives from the MGEU. The co-chairs will continue to meet with these partners to further explore opportunities for collaboration and participation in the implementation of the Changes for Children recommendations.

CHANGES FOR CHILDREN WORK PACKAGES

To organize the development of detailed workplans, the Changes for Children Implementation Staff Team has grouped the recommendations from the four reports into categories called “work packages”. There may be multiple projects/tasks to be completed under each work package. Currently, the twenty-three (23) work package categories are:

1. Work Packages Involving Implementation Staff Team Members Only

- Building a Differential Response Capacity in the Child and Family Services System;
- Developing/Revising Standards, Protocols or Directives;
- Studying the Feasibility of New or Alternative Service Models (e.g. customary care, mediation, alternative dispute resolution mechanisms);
- Enhanced Communication;
- Child Welfare Secretariat (Common Table Unit);
- Workload Relief in the Child and Family Services System;
- All Nations Coordinated Response Network (reports refer to as JIRU);
- Strengthening Foster Care;
- Improving Quality Assurance in Child and Family Services;
- Youth Transitioning Out of Care;
- CFSIS Enhancement and Renewal;
- ADP Review;
- Comprehensive Supports For Child and Family Services Workers.

2. **Inter-sectoral Work Packages Involving Implementation Staff Team Members**

- Training, Workshops and New Information Packages;
- Suicide Prevention;
- Children's Mental Health Services and Addictions Treatment;
- FIPPA/CFS Act Interface;
- Services and Supports For Families Affected by FASD;
- Responding to Section IV Review Recommendations.

3. **Work Packages Involving Existing AJI-CWI Bodies**

- Current Priorities for Quality Assurance Work; (four authorities)
- New Funding Model ; (working group created through Standing Committee);
- Standardization of Special Rates; (Alternative Care Sub-Committee)
- Policy Decisions Required. (Department of Family Services and Housing).