



DISCUSSION SUMMARY

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR PROVINCIAL CLUSTER MEETING

May 16th, 2017, 9:30 am – 11:30 am

St. John's (Boardroom, On the Move Partnership Office, 202 Elizabeth Avenue)

SUMMARY OF MAJOR ACTION ITEMS

- 1) **Chrissy Vincent** will ask Rose Ricciardelli whether the final report for her seed grant project on disability policies for government-funded protective services workers has been submitted, and if so, will request it and circulate it;
- 2) **Chrissy Vincent** will put Dana Howse in touch with Ololade Animashaun so that they can discuss their partnerships with Empower and ensure that no efforts are duplicated;
- 3) **Kathy Hawkins** will follow up with the National Community Caucus and begin asking some questions about the current status and how to move forward;
- 4) **Stephen Bornstein and Barbara Neis** will make sure to mention the National Community Caucus at their next executive meeting;
- 5) **Chrissy Vincent** will contact Nicole Power and invite her to join DIG-MUN;
- 6) **Chrissy Vincent** will create automatic replies for her e-mail account and a voicemail message for her phone that indicate her new hours of availability;
- 7) **Barbara Neis** will, upon receiving permission from Emile, share the mid-term review documents with the members of the NL cluster; and
- 8) **Chrissy Vincent** will circulate another reminder about the currently available student stipend opportunity.

This document summarizes the discussions that took place at the seventh Newfoundland and Labrador provincial cluster meeting of the Centre for Research on Work Disability Policy (CRWDP), which took place in St. John's on May 16th, 2017.

The meeting was chaired and facilitated by Barbara Neis, Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Co-Lead. In addition to Dr. Neis, the following individuals were in attendance:

- Stephen Bornstein – Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Co-Lead
- Kathy Hawkins – Manager of Employer Supports & Services, Empower NL (formerly the ILRC-NL)
- Aleksandra (Saska) Stefanovic – PhD Student (Community Health), CRWDP Student Fellow
- John Reardon – Workers' Advisor, Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour



- Tina Hickey – Employment Equity Officer, Department of Human Resources, Memorial University
- Chrissy Vincent – Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Coordinator

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The meeting opened with a review of the draft agenda as well as the action items from our previous provincial cluster meeting. The agenda was approved with no changes or additions. At our previous meeting on November 24th, 2016, nine action items were identified. The current status of each of these action items is as follows:

- 1) The final version of Aleksandra Stefanovic's seed grant report was circulated to the NL cluster.
- 2) All information on knowledge mobilization activities within the NL cluster is now shared with cluster members via the listserv and posted to the CRWDP project page of the SafetyNet website.
- 3) The final version of Stephen Bornstein and Kathy Hawkins' successful seed grant proposal was circulated to the NL cluster.
- 4) Aleksandra Stefanovic shared her successful ethics application from the recently completed seed grant project (on which she was the research assistant) with the new seed grant project team, and it was used to develop the ethics application for that new project.
- 5) The final report from Empower's inclusive roundtable event was circulated to the NL cluster.
- 6) The final report that Daniella Simas Medeiros submitted to the national office at the conclusion of her student fellowship was circulated to the NL cluster.
- 7) Dr. Amy Warren from the Faculty of Business Administration was invited to join DIG-MUN, and she accepted the invitation.
- 8) The original CRWDP Milestones document was obtained from the national office and used to help compile information for the SSHRC mid-term review; and
- 9) Complete knowledge mobilization information was systematically collected from the NL cluster, and was compiled and submitted to the national office to be included in its documentation for the SSHRC mid-term review.

UPDATES FROM TEAM MEMBERS

1) UPDATES FROM OUR CO-INVESTIGATORS AND PARTNERS

- **Stephen Bornstein** reported that work on the newly funded seed grant project (on which he and Kathy Hawkins are co-principal investigators) has not yet begun, but will soon get underway. Ethics approval has already been granted and a research assistant – Aleksandra Stefanovic – is in place. Work on the project should begin within the next several months (as soon as Aleksandra is finished with her PhD



comps). The project aims to examine work disability programs for individuals with autism or with mental health disabilities in Newfoundland and Labrador and New Brunswick, and will tie in nicely with Aleksandra's PhD research on supported employment programs within the province.

Discussion of this new seed grant project triggered a question about whether a final report for the seed grant project on disability policies for government-funded protective services workers, which was led by Rose Ricciardelli, had yet been submitted. None of the members of that seed grant team were present at the meeting to answer this question, so Chrissy Vincent agreed to follow up with Rose by e-mail.

- **Barbara Neis** reported that Dana Howse, the new post-doctoral fellow whom she will be co-supervising with Katherine Lippel and who was originally planning on starting her research in the winter, has not yet begun as she is still finishing up work on her PhD. She now plans to start her post-doc in September. In the meantime, she is working part-time with Barbara and Katherine on a related project focused on return-to-work issues within the population of highly mobile workers. This will tie in nicely with her proposed post-doctoral research, which aims to explore the intersectionality between work mobility and disability more generally. She will be partnering with Empower to design her post-doctoral study and recruit participants, so Barbara mentioned that it might be useful for her to speak with Ololade, a CRWDP-funded Master's student who is also partnering with Empower to recruit participants for her research. Chrissy Vincent agreed to put the two of them in contact with one another.

Barbara also reported that she is a co-editor on a Royal Society Atlantic background paper focused on building a sustainable post oil-dependent Newfoundland and Labrador, which includes a chapter on inclusion written by MUN researchers, Kathy Hawkins, and others from the community. The paper should be released relatively soon.

- **Gordon Cooke** was not present at the meeting, but provided an update by e-mail. He reported that he is still dabbling in research involving persons with disabilities outside of Canada (primarily in Ireland), but that his work tends to be more focused on employment quality and life experiences than it is on work disability policy proper. He also reported that Ololade Animashaun, the CRWDP-funded Master's student he is supervising, is making progress on her thesis and beginning to uncover some interesting themes.
- **Kathy Hawkins** reported that she has been working closely with **Tina Hickey** to conduct an audit of the Memorial University Human Resources Department's policies, practices, and procedures related to persons with disabilities and recruitment. At the present time, the focus is on external staff recruitment processes, with plans to look at other types of recruitment (internal staff recruitment and faculty recruitment, for example) at a later time. Kathy hosted a two-hour session around these issues with front-line Memorial University Human Resources employees, which was very well-received, and has also provided some disability confidence training. She is now preparing to submit a report to the Human Resources Department summarizing what has been accomplished so far, and they can then decide where they would like to go next. It was suggested that it might be interesting to figure out which



universities are particularly good at the disability inclusion dimension of recruitment, and study their procedures as a point of comparison – possibilities for where such good models might exist include those Canadian provinces with specific disability inclusion legislation (such as Ontario), Scandinavia, Australia, or even California. This may be an idea for a future seed grant proposal.

Kathy also reported that as part of her role with the CRWDP National Community Caucus, she worked alongside Emile Tompa, Alec Farquhar, Steve Mantis, and Maureen Haan to prepare and submit a *Canada 150* funding application. If successful, the funding would have been used to host a national consultation in December, which would bring together relevant stakeholders for a broad discussion around return-to-work policy and research. Unfortunately, they were not successful in securing the grant. They did, however, meet with James Van Raalte (Director General, Office for Disability Issues, Employment and Social Development Canada) in April to see if there is any way that the federal government may be able to assist in helping to make such an event reality. As an outcome of this meeting, Kathy is now putting together a one-page document summarizing the group's vision in an effort to try and move forward.

On a related note, Kathy reported that the National Community Caucus itself has not met on a national conference call in over a year. Her only recent involvement with the caucus has been as part of a small sub-committee of only four members (which lacks a BC voice). She feels that much of this is likely due to a lack of clear leadership as Steve Mantis pulls back from his role. She did mention, however, that Steve proposed some additional funding for the caucus, to which Emile Tompa has verbally committed. In order to get the ball rolling again, Kathy offered to do some follow-up with the caucus and begin asking some questions about the current status and how to best move forward. It is possible that she and Maureen Haan may be able to take over and co-lead the caucus in order to get it on its feet again. Stephen Bornstein and Barbara Neis suggested it may also be helpful for them to mention the caucus at their next executive meeting in an effort to prevent it from falling through the cracks.

Finally, Kathy reported that both she and Mary Reid (Director, Disability Policy Office, Government of NL) have joined the community advisory for SafetyNet, which recently met with the academic board and will be working to develop a new governance structure for the Centre.

ACTION: Chrissy Vincent will ask Rose Ricciardelli whether the final report for her seed grant project has been submitted, and if so, will request it and circulate it.

ACTION: Chrissy Vincent will put Dana Howse in touch with Ololade Animashaun so that they can discuss their partnerships with Empower and ensure that no efforts are duplicated.

ACTION: Kathy Hawkins will follow up with the National Community Caucus and begin asking some questions about the current status and how to move forward.

ACTION: Stephen Bornstein and Barbara Neis will make sure to mention the National Community Caucus at their next executive meeting.



2) UPDATES FROM OUR STUDENT FELLOWS

- **Ololade Animashaun** was not present at the meeting, but provided an update by e-mail. She reported that she is simultaneously working on analyzing her data and writing her thesis, and has so far uncovered a number of common themes – major ones include issues regarding transportation (particularly for persons with disabilities who do not live in urban areas) and issues regarding disclosure. She hopes to submit a draft of her thesis to her supervisor (Gordon Cooke) by the end of May, and to have a final draft completed by the end of July.
- **Aleksandra Stefanovic** reported that her PhD work has been progressing well, and that she will be completing her comps within the next couple of months. She also reported that she has been in touch with Dr. Bonnie Kirsh at the University of Toronto, who is leading a big national partnership development grant project (funded by SSHRC and CIHR) on supported employment, and who is interested in possibly including her on the project team. As a side note, she mentioned that Nicole Power from the Department of Sociology is also involved with that project, and may be a good addition to DIG-MUN. Chrissy Vincent agreed to send her an e-mail and invite her to join the group.

Aleksandra also reported that her piece on civic engagement and disability, which she submitted as a contribution to a collection of pieces on democracy in NL being compiled by Dr. Alex Marland for publication as a book by ISER (the Institute for Social and Economic Research), was accepted.

ACTION: Chrissy Vincent will contact Nicole Power and invite her to join DIG-MUN.

COORDINATOR TRANSITION (FROM FULL-TIME TO PART-TIME)

Barbara Neis provided meeting attendees with an update on the configuration of the CRWDP Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Coordinator position, which is occupied by Chrissy Vincent. That position was always intended to be a part-time one (10 hours per week), but up until now it had comprised one portion of a full-time SafetyNet position, with approximately one-quarter to one-third of Chrissy's time being spent on CRWDP coordination activities and the rest of her time being devoted to other projects as needed. Recently, however, the SafetyNet Centre has encountered financial difficulties and no longer has enough resources to fund the non-CRWDP portion of Chrissy's position. As a result, Chrissy is now a part-time employee who is only present in the office for 10 hours per week. She works a full day (9:00 to 5:00) on Tuesdays, and in the morning (9:00 to 12:00) on Thursdays. As long as the CRWDP initiative passes mid-term review, this arrangement should remain stable for the remainder of the project and little should change with regard to coordination support. It was suggested, however, that in order to avoid confusion, Chrissy should create automatic replies for her e-mail account and a voicemail message for her phone that indicate her new hours of availability.

ACTION: Chrissy Vincent will create automatic replies for her e-mail account and a voicemail message for her phone that indicate her new hours of availability.



SSHRC MID-TERM REVIEW AND UPDATE ON PROJECT CO-DIRECTORS

Barbara Neis informed meeting attendees that all documentation has now been submitted for the SSHRC mid-term review of the CRWDP initiative. We should receive word on the results of the review by sometime in mid-summer. It is likely that the initiative will pass review, as it is relatively rare for projects such as this one to have their funding revoked partway through the grant. CRWDP co-director Ellen MacEachen has decided to step back somewhat from her active role as co-director. She will maintain responsibility for the seed grant program and will still be working with some community partners, but for the most part, the project will now be managed by Emile. While this is an unfortunate loss, it means the project should be able to continue running smoothly.

Barbara has asked Emile if she can share the mid-term review documentation with the members of the NL cluster, as it contains a number useful resources. Upon receiving permission from him, she will pass along the documents to be circulated.

ACTION: Barbara Neis will, upon receiving permission from Emile, share the mid-term review documents with the members of the NL cluster.

STUDENT STIPEND OPPORTUNITY

Meeting attendees were reminded that our cluster is still in the process of recruiting a graduate student to take advantage of the stipend funding that is available to us for the 2017-2018 academic year. (We have a total of three years' worth of student stipend funding remaining.) The deadline for the current call for applications is May 31st. It was suggested that one final reminder about this be sent out through our distribution channels, and Chrissy Vincent agreed to do so.

ACTION: Chrissy Vincent will circulate another reminder about the currently available student stipend opportunity.

WRAP-UP

There were no additional comments from participants during the meeting's wrap-up.