

GTA LEGAL CLINICS' TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2014

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

NORTH YORK MEMORIAL COMMUNITY CENTRE, GOLD ROOM 5110 YONGE STREET

PRESENT: Marjorie Hiley (FCLS), Isabelle Khan (SECLS), Steven McMahon (RCLC), Jack de Klerk (NLS), Christie McQuarrie (WSCLS), Joey Myers (WCLS), Dennis Robideau (Unison), Keslie Anderson (WTCLS), Charinee De Silva (DCLS), Norma English (NP+DCLS), Dennis Bailey (CLCYR), Liz Klassen (SCLS), Carol Baker (WSCLS), Jack Fleming (ETCLS), Matt Benson (ETCLS), Yodit Edemanam (RCLC), Pamela Courtot (CLCYR), Paulos Gebreyesus (Unison), Sean Rehaag (PCLS), Nancy Henderson (PCLS), Sharon Majik (SECLS), Julius Mlywarski (SECLS).

SUMMARY OF TASKS

Agenda Items	Discussion/ Information	Outcome	Action/Discussion Points
1 Welcome/introductions			
2 Review of meeting materials	Information	Approval	
3 Review of minutes of February 11 and feedback from Clinics	Discussion	Approval	
4 Working Group Report	Information	Received	
5 Discussion and small group work focusing on system assets and elements	Discussion	Received	Discussion will aim at identifying assets and challenges in the current system. Discussions will also identify which elements in the system are changing, in need of change, or are working well.
6 Adjournment and next meeting	Discussion	Approval	Tuesday March 11, North York Memorial Community Centre, Gold Room, 5110 Yonge Street

MINUTES

1. Welcome / Introductions

2. Review of Meeting Materials

Multiple copies of newsletters are distributed for SC members to take back to their clinic and share with partners/stakeholders.

A Special Edition Newsletter will be disseminated via email tomorrow that provides an overview of the project and timelines. It is a good tool to base discussions with stakeholders on.

3. Review of minutes of February 11 and feedback from clinics

Received and approved.

4. Working Group Report

Community boards are continuing to have conversations about the transformation project.

Received update on the first inter-clinic meeting that brought together SECLS, NPDCLS, and Rexdale.

March 29th retreat has been booked from 9am – 4pm and it is vital that SC members attend and have prior discussions with board, staff, community and all stakeholders, as this day away will be the basis of a proposed new model of service delivery.

5. Discussion and small group work

Steering Committee members were asked to write down on the individual cards provided, 5 elements of their legal clinic that they would like to keep and 5 elements they would like to change. They were asked to consider all the project research, conversations with colleagues, and what impacts their work in their decision. They were asked to put their cards in a “keep” envelope and a “change” envelope which was collected by PI.

Analysis of these responses shows patterns of which element to keep and elements to change. The main area of agreement is in maintaining community governance and accountability, followed very closely by both the notion of keeping clinics connected to communities and a continued commitment to PLE/CD/outreach. Other elements the SC would like to keep include the clinic culture and work environment including creative problem solving and team dynamics; maintaining a collegial work environment that does not have an institutional feel; the flexibility to respond to changing client needs and; professional development opportunities.

The element that received the highest vote for change in the clinic system is resource allocation, including more resources and more fair distribution of resources across the GTA, in addition to bigger teams, more staff, and consistency of caseloads across clinic system. Also of high importance is the need for more time and resources dedicated to PLE/CD/outreach, and the need for better IT systems. Other elements of the current system that needs reforms and changes include more formalized community partnerships, which can enhance referral services; less administrative oversight by LAO, including less frequent need to fill out funding applications in addition to better communication with them; and expanding the areas of law that clinics can provide services for.

The next activity was designed to get SC members thinking about elements of clinic systems in more complex ways. They were provided with a list of clinic elements (attached) and asked to discuss, in small groups, where they would consider an element/system to be in a life cycle. A diagram of the life cycle and its stages (mature function; decline/dysfunction; [re]imagining; change; new ideas) was provided, and members were able to put the same element in a different stage of the life cycle, depending on how it operated within their own clinic.

This discussion found that elements and systems were in different stages of their life cycle in different clinics. For some, the intake process, for example, was in its’ mature function or decline stage, whereas other clinics are in the process of reimagining or changing the way they do intake. The same was found for all other elements including developing new partnerships, learning, referrals, and coping with other areas of law. Clearly these systems exist within life cycles that can be re-evaluated and re-envisioned as service delivery needs and client needs change to make them relevant again.

6. Adjournment and next meeting

Next meeting is March 11, 2014 in North York, 5110 Yonge Street, Gold Room

Meeting adjourned at 7:57pm