Over the past several weeks, members of the Waterloo Region Special Needs Strategy Planning Table have engaged in a facilitated selection process for the Coordinated Service Planning Agency. While all partners at the Planning Table are committed to, and have essential roles to play in ensuring a system of supports for children/youth and families with complex situations, one organization needs to play the lead agency role in supporting the achievement of the overall goals. Our Planning Table has selected Developmental Services Resource Centre (DSRC) for this job. We know that their history of walking with children/youth and families, along with their commitment to the system transformation that the Coordinated Service Planning model brings, will ensure children/youth and families with complex situations get the support they need.
Survey Results – Draft Coordinated Service Planning Model

Over the past couple of months, we have been consulting with various groups on the draft Coordinated Service Planning model. We knew there were many more people interested in providing input so we were eager to make an on-line survey available. We were thrilled to have 57 service providers and parents take part in the survey and share thoughts. The feedback was similar to our group consultations, in that we seem to have a model that people believe is likely to bring improvements to children/youth and families, while at the same time noting that moving the ideas off of paper into the real world will likely bring some challenges. We are looking forward to submitting our “roughly right” concept to the Ministry in June and getting it off the ground. in the following months. We know our work is not done. We know that this new model of service will require on-going modifications as we learn what works well and what doesn’t. As we look for future input opportunities, we hope that our community will continue to share their valuable thoughts and ideas. Please visit our website in the next week for a summary of the survey data.

Survey Results – Values Survey

As we strive to create a transformation in our system of special needs supports, we want to ensure that the things families value most is woven through our work. In the recent Values Survey, we heard from 157 local parents and caregivers about what mattered most to them. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts. We will ensure that these pieces are kept front and centre on our work toward Coordinated Service Planning, as well as Integrated Rehab Services. Please visit our website for a summary of the survey data.
Moving Forward with Integrated Rehab Services

Over the last few weeks, we have had the opportunity to meet with families as well as service providers to talk about how to improve the integration of rehabilitation services in our community. For the purposes of this process, rehabilitative services include physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech-language therapy. We heard about how transition times can be challenging and the need for advanced planning. We also heard how tough wait times can be for service and the benefits that come with providing check-ins or strategies while awaiting service. Participants pointed out that the services need to function more like a system and tackle the differing philosophies and mandates to become more integrated (and importantly, there is a need to look at how this can be done with private therapists as well). Finally, we were told that clear options and contact points are essential to family-driven care.

Thank you to all who have kick-started our process to learn more about the strengths and needs in our system of rehab services.

Next Steps for Integrated Rehab – Advanced Team

The information shared through our rehab consultations to date has provided a great starting point for further conversations to learn more. Where do we as a service system do a good job of supporting transitions? Where can we create similar successful practices? What if private therapists were part of the care plan…what might that look like? We are eager to tap into the brains of those who work in the system on a daily basis and see those shortcomings and opportunities first hand.

Over the next month or so, we will be pulling together a small group of rehabilitation professions to take a system-level look at the way our services are currently offered and consider some of the ways in which we can better meet the needs of those we serve. Their thoughts will be used to help draft a plan that we will be eager to consult broadly on in the Fall.

Looking for More Information?

For the most up-to-date information, you can also visit our dedicated webpage at http://waterlooregionspecialneedsstrategy.weebly.com/ or the Provincial webpage at http://specialneedsstrategy.children.gov.on.ca

For more information on the Waterloo Region Special Needs Strategy please contact one of our Chairs or visit http://waterlooregionspecialneedsstrategy.weebly.com/. This document is available in alternative formats upon request and questions in French can be answered via our Chairs.