

Waterloo Region Special Needs Strategy Planning Table

Work to Date – Issue #2

February 2015



Community Engagement

An important part of our workplan involves engaging our community in the vision of a new system of services and supports. The Planning Table has created an engagement strategy that makes sure we have opportunities to gather input from children and youth with special needs and their families, as well as front line staff and community partners. Our goal is for community engagement to be:

Participatory – Engagement will be interactive. Youth and family members should feel comfortable sharing their views and not feel that they are being judged or that they are in danger of losing services.

Accessible – Engagement activities will be accessible so that children and youth with various physical, intellectual and sensory needs can participate in a meaningful way.

Inclusive - Participants should feel that they and their views are respected, that they are being listened to.

Accountable – Participants will be provided with opportunities to provide input and feedback regarding the engagement process.

Focused – The focus will be on how to make service coordination and integration of rehabilitation services work best for children and youth with special needs and their families. This will mean identifying changes needed to current local services.

Ongoing – While the initial focus of engagement will be the creation of models for both service coordination and integration of rehabilitation services, engagement will continue after the local Table submits its proposals to the provincial government, so that there is continual evaluation of the models' implementation.

Special Needs Strategy Vision:

A Waterloo region where
children
and youth with special
needs get the timely and
effective services they
need to participate fully
at home, at school, in the
community, and as they
prepare to achieve their
goals for adulthood.



Every Voice Matters!

The Waterloo Region Special Needs Strategy Planning Table will be engaging with a variety of stakeholders to help shape the vision of coordinated services and integrated rehabilitation for children and youth with special needs and their families. We want to hear from individuals, from groups, from unique communities, from our service delivery partners, from anyone who shares our commitment to the Strategy's vision.

The following is an overview of the planned consultations to date. Please check our [website](#) regularly for updated engagement activities.

January - Visioning

- Small focus group session with 20 families of children and youth with complex special needs.
- Focus group with 10 agency front-line staff currently providing coordination of services for children with complex special needs.

February – Consultation on Draft Models

- Youth coffee sessions.
- Two consultation sessions with families and caregivers for input on a draft model.
- A gathering with representatives of the Aboriginal community.
- The launch of an online survey for all interested stakeholders.
- Key informant interviews with community stakeholders.
- Focus group with front line staff currently providing rehabilitation services.

March – Refinement of Models

- Consultation session with community agencies.
- Open community consultations sessions with all interested parties on the proposed models.

April – Development of Implementation Plan

May – Sign off on Coordinated Service Plan Proposal by all table members

June – Submission of Coordinated Service Plan Proposal to Ministries

Summer – Refinement of Integrated Rehabilitation Proposal

September – Sign off on Integrated Rehabilitation Proposal

October – Submission of Integrated Rehabilitation Proposal to Ministries

Planning Table Members

- Carizon/Lutherwood
- Children's Planning Table
- Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud (CSDCCS)
- Conseil scolaire Viamonde
- Erinoakkids
- Family and Children's Services
- Kerry's Place
- KidsAbility Centre for Child Development
- KidsAbility School Authority
- KW Habilitation
- Region of Waterloo
- Sunbeam
- Waterloo Catholic District School Board
- Waterloo Region District School Board
- Waterloo Region Family Network
- Waterloo Wellington Community Care Access Centre (CCAC)
- Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network (LHIN)



Please note, at any point in the process, **any individual or group can provide input directly** to one of the Chairs of the Waterloo Region Special Needs Planning Table (see contact information at bottom of third page), and we will ensure it is incorporated into the collection of feedback.

Local Input in Action

The Waterloo Region Special Needs Strategy Planning Table is a community planning initiative mandated by the Ontario Government. Across Ontario, Planning Tables similar to ours are convening to engage stakeholders, consider a new vision and plan to break down barriers as we discover new ways to work together. This work is being informed by children, youth, families and staff who are at the core of engagement. To guide our efforts, we have considered carefully how we will make decisions, who we will consult with, how we will have difficult conversations, and why we need to keep children, youth and families at the centre of our work. We are committed to being **Responsible, Accountable, Consultative and Informative**. This has resulted in a “charter” that we have called our **RACI** document. It can be found on our [website](#).

The Ontario Special Needs Strategy is a joint initiative of the Ministries of Children and Youth Services, Education, Health and Long-Term Care and Community and Social Services. Along the way we are required to identify to the Ministries any concerns or barriers that we may anticipate. The Ministries have committed to working collaboratively with one another and with local planning tables to address the barriers. At mandatory checkpoints, Waterloo Region has raised the following issues for discussion:

1. Labour Relations/Contracts

- All providers and partners have staffing arrangements, collective agreements and/or fee for service contracts in place covering provision of services, which need to be considered for the implementation of our vision.

2. Current Regulatory Restrictions

- In all sectors there are regulatory and eligibility restrictions that may impact our vision.

3. Electronic Client Record

- Need for a technology solution that will enhance ability of providers to work in integrated manner (perhaps a single plan of care).

4. School age and transition to adult services

- Limited resources exist for children over the age of six requiring PT, OT and SLP, as well as other services and supports.

5. Special Needs Resource Program (municipal program).

- While this program is not technically in scope, there is a clear link with respect to the provision of OT, PT and SLP services

We are working actively with the Government to find mutually agreeable solutions that will allow us to develop the best possible models of services for children, youth and families.

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.

Coordinated Service Planning

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