

DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY

OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN COLLEGES AND AGENCIES

This document has been developed by the Program Standards Committee of the Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy to highlight opportunities that agencies and colleges could use to build a strong and collaborative relationship. The material for this document was collected through conversations with representatives from Developmental Service agencies, Colleges and DSW Advisory Committees. The strategies presented in this document are for consideration purposes. Agencies and colleges will need to approach opportunities to build relationships with an understanding of their unique organizations and the individual challenges and opportunities they may have.

At each College the board of governors is to ensure that an advisory committee for each program of instruction or cluster of related programs offered at the college is established and is made up of a cross-section of persons external to the college who have a direct interest in and a diversity of experience and expertise related to the particular occupational area addressed by the program. (Minister's Binding Policy Directive, MTCU, 2005)

Build and participate in effective College DSW Advisory Committees

- Construct DSW Advisory Committees so they have a diverse membership including representation from a variety of agencies, community members, government, students etc.
- Utilize the Committees to solicit feedback about the DSW Program to gain a perspective on the perception of the course. (i.e. surveys, focus groups)
- Ensure meetings promote active participation by all members
- Be an active member of the advisory committee, be prepared for meetings and follow up on information from the meetings
- Market the committee, let stakeholders know that there is an Advisory Committee, its purpose and how to contact it
- Communicate with people who participate in other DSW Advisory Committees around the province to share ideas
- Develop a succession plan to replace long standing Advisory Committee members

Create an interest in each other

- Agencies offer bursaries for college programs, provide cost effective marketing for the Program and support participation in the college program
- Agencies support volunteer opportunities for high school students or the community that expose people to the sector and encourage them to obtain education at their local college
- Agencies ensure that their hiring and human resource practices reflect their support of the DSW Program
- Agencies post information about colleges on their website or make information accessible to employees
- Colleges promote services and employment opportunities in the sector
- College and agencies speak of each other in ways that communicates value and collaboration

Capitalize on Field Placements

- Agencies help students build their portfolio by offering students opportunities to participate in agency training and by providing documentation for the training; this also helps ensure that the employee candidate pool has related training
- Agencies include field placement supervision as part of the defined duties of those who have that responsibility and ensure they understand their role
- Colleges provide information about the field placement process to agencies and ensure that there is a resource at the college to contact for more information
- Agencies have a student placement log-in on their website where students access information about the agency

Share information on current trends

- Colleges utilize agency personnel as guest speakers or part time instructors
- Agencies invite college faculty to sit on community or agency committees
- Agencies and colleges develop a mechanism for information sharing, including creating mechanisms to communicate with agencies that are not members of the Advisory Committee
- Share information between colleges and agencies about what is happening in the community or sector that impacts the field or education

Collect data

- Agencies collect data on how many DSWs they hire, how long they stay and indicators of success of their employment; this information can be shared with colleges to indicate the success of the DSW graduates and needs that are not being met by DSW graduates

Collaborate for training

- Capitalize on opportunities for collaborative training. College professors offer training for an agency
- Agency training could be reviewed to determine if it meets criteria for college recognition

Other communication

- Share agency newsletters with colleges and students
- Agencies and colleges use a common language when possible (i.e. core competencies for professional development)
- Agencies and colleges share information about training opportunities

The committee recognized that the DSW diploma program might not be available in all areas of the province and therefore an agency may have developed a relationship with a college that offers a different program. The committee believes that the information in this document will also be beneficial to those relationships.