

# Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy

**Ontario Developmental Services**

*Make a difference every day.*

## Developmental Services Sector Program Standards Committee

### **FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Prepared for the Developmental Services  
Human Resource Strategy Steering Committee

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Every day in Ontario, thousands of direct support employees assist people with developmental disabilities to live more inclusive and dignified lives. The quality of these services and supports has a significant impact on the quality of life for the people supported. The education of current and future employees of the developmental services (DS) sector is a critical piece in the foundation for quality services and supports.

### **Program Standards Committee**

The committee was formed in response to a recommendation from the Expert Panel on Training that the DS sector should work with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) and Ontario colleges that offer DSW programs to create more consistent and aligned DS education, supporting the implementation of core competencies. The Program Standards Committee was launched on Oct 1, 2008 as a subcommittee of the Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy (DSHRS).

The Program Standards Committee membership included representatives from the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS), the Provincial Network on Developmental Services, representatives of agencies from the sector, provincial colleges and the Expert Panel on Training. The committee also engaged representatives from MTCU. For a complete list of committee members, please refer to Appendix 1. The committee met face-to-face and via conference calls over a two-year period.

The mandate of the committee was to make recommendations to MTCU regarding DS Program Standards and to strategize on how to influence college curriculum to be reflective of the evolving sector. The work of the Program Standards Committee was to be integrated with the work of the other subcommittees, particularly the Core Competencies Committee, under the auspices of the DSHRS. As well, the work of the Program Standards Committee was to consider the unique diversity related to the agencies represented in this sector and to be consistent with the vision, principles and objectives of the developmental services transformation, including its principles of citizenship, fairness and equity, accessibility and portability, safety and security, accountability and sustainability.

To meet this mandate, the committee agreed to work on the following deliverables:

- 1) Provide recommendations regarding Development Services Worker (DSW) Program Standards as set out by MTCU that support and reflect the development and implementation of core competencies within the developmental services sector;
- 2) Identify and review any processes to recognize agency-based training as credits towards the DSW program;
- 3) Provide a strategy to communicate the process to participate in college educational programs that educate the professionals in the DS field;
- 4) Provide recommendations for a process to link agencies and colleges;
- 5) Develop an inventory of courses offered in various DSW programs throughout the province; and
- 6) Provide recommendations to the DSHRS Steering Committee with regards to the committee's findings and outcomes, based on what the committee learned about how the system works and recommendations for how employers engage their employees in education. (This report will serve as this deliverable.)

## DELIVERABLES

### **Recommendations Regarding DSW Program Standards that Support and Reflect the Development and Implementation of Core Competencies in the DS sector**

On August 4, 2009, the Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy (DSHRS) Steering Committee and representatives from the MCSS met with key representatives from the MTCU. At the end of their presentation, the DSHRS Steering Committee concluded that there is some congruence between the core competencies developed for Ontario's developmental services sector, the DSW program standards, and the DSW Apprenticeship Program skill set; however, there is significant potential for further alignment and integration. This alignment and integration could be achieved within the context of a DSW Program Standards review, resulting in potential changes to the DSW college curriculum and the DSW Apprenticeship Learning Outcomes.

Based on these conclusions the DSHRS Steering Committee made two recommendations to MTCU:

1. Initiate a review of the DSW Program Standards in 2009, recognizing the number of changes in the DS Sector.
2. Establish a collaborative process between the MTCU, colleges, the MCSS, the DSHR Strategy and the DS sector for moving forward.

### **Methodology**

In December 2009 the Program Standards Committee submitted a report titled *“Gap Analysis: Comparing the Core Competencies for Ontario’s Developmental Services Sector to the Developmental Services Worker Program Standards and the Developmental Services Worker Apprenticeship Training Standards, Schedule of Training”* to the DSHRS Steering Committee. This report was prepared by the Gap Analysis Task Force, a task group of the Program Standards Committee. The Gap Analysis report was based on an analysis conducted by the task force in which the core competencies related to direct support professionals were compared to both the DSW Program Standards and the Schedule of Training for the DSW Apprenticeship Program.

### **Recommendations**

1. The DSW Program Standards should be revised to maximize consistency with the core competencies.<sup>1</sup>
2. Key elements of the core competencies which are embedded in the existing “Vocational Outcomes”<sup>2</sup> and “Elements of the Performance or Generic Outcomes”, should be elevated to the status of individual Vocational Outcomes.
3. The final version of the DSW Apprenticeship Schedule of Training should ensure that the learning outcomes are consistent with the core competencies.<sup>3</sup>
4. The final version of the DSW Apprenticeship Schedule of Training should provide more explicit standards with respect to mastery of “on-the-job” skills, and these standards should reflect the core competencies.
5. All of the core competencies should be reviewed to determine applicability to academic settings. For example, the competency “resilience” may be more suited to “on-the-job” training and development.
6. A standardized DSW Field Placement Manual that incorporates the core competencies should be developed and used provincially.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on DSW Program Standards reference:

<http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/college/progstan/humserv/edevserw.html>

<sup>2</sup> For more information on DSW Vocational Outcomes and Generic Outcomes reference:

<http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/college/progstan/humserv/edevserw.html>

<sup>3</sup> “At the time of registration as an apprentice, an apprentice receives an **Apprenticeship Training Standard**, which outlines the skills training objectives to be met or competencies to be learned on the job. These competencies equip an apprentice to work in the trade as a certified skilled worker or “journey person”. The employer or sponsor or trainer of an apprentice signs the relevant section of the training standard to indicate the progress of the apprentice in meeting individual training objectives” [http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/employmentontario/training/pdf/620D\\_Eng.pdf](http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/employmentontario/training/pdf/620D_Eng.pdf)

In preparing the report the committee also became aware of the impact that the delivery method of distance education might have on the teaching of core competencies. Based on the information that this committee had reviewed regarding core competencies they made a further recommendation:

7. The distance education delivery method should be thoroughly reviewed with respect to its effectiveness in teaching core competencies, which focus on interpersonal experiences.

### ***Future Steps***

In early 2010, the MTCU indicated that it would commence a review of the DSW Program Standards and DSW Apprenticeship Training Standards in the fall 2010.

### ***Update: March 2011***

The MTCU confirmed that they had hired a consultant and started a review of the DSW Diploma Program Standards and DSW Apprenticeship Learning Outcomes.

### **Identify and Review Any Process to Recognize Training Credits Towards the DSW Program**

It was determined that this deliverable complemented the Agency-Based Training Committee's deliverable of:

- Recommendations for consistent agency-based training including a system of credits at colleges and recognition across the sector.

### ***Methodology***

The task group responsible for identifying and reviewing any process to recognize agency-training credits towards the DSW program from the Program Standards Committee and the Agency-Based Training Recognition Task Group from the Agency-Based Training Committee met, and engaged representatives from colleges to develop a joint draft document titled: *Agency Based Training and Colleges: A Reference Document to Guide Agencies in the Process of Seeking Formal College Recognition*. The purpose of the document is "to guide agencies in seeking formal college recognition for agency based training.

### ***Recommendations***

The task group from the Program Standards Committee submitted the following recommendations:

1. The document should be made available to the sector and colleges for their review.
2. Agencies and staff interested in further education should familiarize themselves with the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) process at the local college.
3. Agencies should consider preparing themselves to plan for the PLAR process with their local college, and perhaps develop an agreement or working arrangement with their local college.

### **Provide a Strategy to Communicate the Process to Participate in College Education Programs that Educate the Professionals in the DS Field and Recommendations for a Process to Link Agencies and Colleges**

### ***Methodology***

In January 2010 it was decided that, in an effort to accomplish the deliverable, a questionnaire would be developed to ask key questions of partners within the college system. That same strategy was expanded to include identified sources from agencies to offer a broad perspective. Interviews took place in person, over the phone or electronically, in the months of March and April. In early May 2010, task members met to review the information and compile the data received.

### ***Recommendations***

From the material gathered and compiled the committee developed a document titled *Opportunities to Build Relationships Between Colleges and Agencies* to highlight opportunities that agencies and

colleges could use to build a strong and collaborative relationship. In addition to the document, the committee made the following recommendations to the steering committee:

1. The DSHRS Steering Committee should seek to create a mechanism to address the considerations and recommendations included in this report.
2. Agencies providing support to individuals with developmental disabilities and their Human Resources personnel should develop a tracking mechanism for all hires that would include, but not be limited to educational credentials; years in relevant field of practice; accompanying certificates; diplomas; and other pertinent data. This information should be consolidated in a standard format and shared with stakeholders.
3. Review the DSW Advisory Committees as mandated by the MTCU and consider how best practices could be shared within the sector.
4. Develop a standardized Field Placement Manual for the DSW Program and ensure that the manual is being used effectively. Colleges should equip agencies to use the field manual and agencies should commit to use the tool and receive training as necessary.
5. Agencies providing supports to individuals with developmental disabilities should consider the provision of bursaries/awards at the secondary and college levels.
6. It is recommended that the HRRSC consider ongoing ways to promote collaboration between the sector and colleges in a joint effort to attract people to a career in developmental services.

**Future Steps**

It is clear there is much to celebrate and much work to be done in this area. A clear, combined effort in the spirit of collaboration is strongly recommended, and is instrumental to a positive, sustained relationship between developmental services agencies and our partners at the community colleges.

**Develop Inventory of Courses Offered by All DSW College Programs Throughout the Province**

Below is a list of colleges that offer the DSW Diploma program, as well as colleges that offer the DSW Apprenticeship program.

**Developmental Service Worker Approved Training Locations**

(as provided by MTCU, November 2010)

**Community College (CAAT) and Apprenticeship (APP)**

| Community College | College Program | Apprenticeship Program |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Algonquin         | CAAT            | APP                    |
| Cambrian          | CAAT            | APP                    |
| Centennial        | CAAT            | APP                    |
| Confederation     | CAAT            | APP                    |
| Fanshawe          | CAAT            | APP                    |
| Georgian          | CAAT            | APP                    |
| Humber            | CAAT            | APP                    |
| La Cité           | CAAT            | APP                    |
| Lambton           |                 | APP                    |
| Loyalist          | CAAT            | APP                    |
| Mohawk            |                 | APP                    |
| Northern          | CAAT            |                        |
| St. Lawrence      | CAAT            |                        |
| St. Clair         | CAAT            | APP                    |

Please note that while there is a consistent approach to the developmental services curriculum, some colleges are developing specialties with regards to such topics as employment supports, dual diagnosis and case management. A complete list of the various courses is available on the individual college websites.

### **Communication and Collaboration with the College Sector**

In May 2010 the Chair of the Agency-Based Training Committee, the Chair of the Program Standards Committee and a member of the steering committee made a presentation to DSW Program Coordinators from Ontario's colleges at their annual conference. The purposes of the presentation was to provide an update on the Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy and the newly developed core competencies; to emphasize the importance for both the developmental services sector and the education sector of incorporating the core competencies into programs; and to discuss and establish an ongoing collaborative partnership to strengthen the alignment and linkages between the education and DS sector.

The recommendations presented to the college representatives were:

1. Reflect the core competencies and additional newly required technical skills in a revised DSW college curriculum and make the curriculum more consistent across Ontario.
2. Engage agencies to ensure education reflects current needs of employees.
3. Recognize agency-based training for credit towards the DSW diploma.
4. Work with the sector to promote DSW college programs.

The response from the colleges was very positive. Colleges were provided with a short summary of the presentation and recommendations to share at their college by the steering committee. It is expected and desirable that continued work of the Human Resources Strategy would incorporate this group as well as specific professionals from the college sector.

## APPENDIX A

### Program Standards Committee Members\*

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Janet Nolan (Chair) | Vice President CH Canada and Strategic Initiatives Christian Horizons                                  |
| Bill McKee          | ED, Forward House of London  |
| Bill Tourloukis     | Program Manager, CL Toronto  |
| Colleen Ashmore     | Director of Operations, Safehaven Project for CL   |
| Dwayne Milley       | District ED, Christian Horizons  |
| Holly Duff          | Project Coordinator  |
| Hugh Nelson         | Executive Director, Y's Owl Maclure Coop   |
| Jason Lem           | Policy Analyst, Community and Developmental Services Branch, Social Policy Development Division, MCSS, |
| Jo Anne Nugent      | Coordinator, DSW Program, Humber College   |
| Karen Gray          | Supervisor, Program Services, Pathways to Independence (Ottawa)  |
| Linda Morel         | Executive Director, Sudbury Community Service Center   |
| Mark Benner         | Professor/ Social Worker, Fanshawe College/ Regional Support Associates                                |
| Merla McGill        | Manager of Operations, CL Kawartha Lakes   |
| Sandra Phillips     | Resource Support Coordinator, North Hastings Community Integration Association                         |
| Starr Olsen         | Executive Director, CL Quinte West   |
| Vanine Yee          | Senior Policy Advisor, MTCU (committee participant ex officio)   |

\* As at date of this report.