



## Simcoe County Special Needs Strategy Communication

“An Ontario 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”.

It has been some time since you have heard from the Special Needs Strategy Planning Table and in that time we have evolved into the Simcoe County Special Needs Collaborative System Leadership Table. We want to update you on what has been happening with the Special Needs Strategy (SNS)! This change comes after much anticipated feedback from the Ministries that both the Coordinated Service Planning (CSP) and Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services (IDRS) proposals for Simcoe County met or exceeded expectations. We have been given a green light to begin implementation activities in both areas!

The Ministries have highlighted our ability to collaborate effectively and put the needs of children and families first in Simcoe County. We can celebrate our success as these elements have put us in the first wave of early adopters in the province, which is something to be proud of. The Ministries have posed a few questions about each proposal, which are being addressed. Clarification around elements such as ensuring seamlessness and the role of the shared record has been requested. For CSP we are one of a small number of areas to be the first to implement. We understand that for IDRS many areas are currently receiving support to revise their proposals to an implementation ready stage. Thank you to all as we really did come together to form a strong vision for Simcoe County that has been recognized at the Ministry level.

### Support from the Ministries...

- The planning table met with Ministry representatives regarding the CSP proposal in early March. We were able to highlight learnings from the use of the shared electronic record and our knowledge about how it can support enhanced communication and seamless services. This tool is not something that will be available across the province to support implementation so we left that conversation feeling very grateful for the work that has led the way in Simcoe County.
- Children's Treatment Network (CTN) team members attended the first meeting of the CSP provincial community of practice. CTN is the coordinating agency for CSP for Simcoe County. The CTN team was able to review draft CSP program guidelines and implementation markers and provide feedback which was very well received at the Ministry level. We look forward to the release of the revised CSP program guidelines soon.
- Program guidelines for IDRS have been released and are publically available on the SNS portal. Hopefully many have taken a look and begun to reflect upon the guidance they provide. This will be a foundational document in upcoming implementation planning work.

### What's Next?

- The Leadership Table has completed a Self-Assessment using the CSP Implementation Markers and is developing an implementation work plan based on those markers and the Simcoe proposals. The agency structure details of the IDRS proposal remain confidential as the Ministries continue to work at the provincial level on foundational elements of the plans and we await the IDRS Implementation Markers. Therefore, the initial work plan will focus on CSP and activities that will begin to ready the system for significant changes to come. Broader implementation of the English shared electronic record, development of communities of practice and clinical tools and processes are the types of task work that are planned. Task groups that include front line providers, leadership and family representation will be formed to complete the work and inform the Leadership Table. Keep your eye out for opportunities to participate.
- As we move forward, we plan to continue to embrace the strengths in Simcoe County. These include broad engagement and participation and utilizing the existing learning and planning processes. While more learning and growth are needed, Simcoe County's strong planning and collaborative system will ensure this happens in a supportive and meaningful way!

### Early Implementation Work...

*The more things change the more they stay the same....*

- The Leadership Table maintains membership very similar to that of the planning table. This is great news as Simcoe County had benefitted from very diverse perspectives at the table including strong parent representation. New members are being recruited or stepping forward to fill in any gaps in representation that existed. An initial terms of reference has been approved for the Leadership Table. This table's function will be to provide leadership to implementation including establishing required task groups and providing directional support and oversight to their work.
- In keeping with the strengths of the planning process, the Leadership Table will continue to oversee planning for the both CSP and IDRS. This will continue to support Simcoe's vision that these services will make up one comprehensive child and family service system.
- The Leadership table is being co-chaired by CTN as the Coordinating Agency and a partner agency. Louise Paul, the CEO of CTN will be fulfilling this CTN role and Rhea Taplin, Manager Child and Youth Ambulatory Care, Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH), has stepped forward and been endorsed as co-chair. This inter-agency approach to co-chairing demonstrates the table's commitment to integration and partnership. Following the sprint that was planning, Louise and Rhea are preparing for the marathon that will be implementation!
- To support the work ahead the Leadership Table has recognized the importance of administrative support. Julie McAlpine has joined the table and everyone is thrilled that she is willing to juggle the demands of her role at the Coalition with those of the SNS table. Further, the Leadership Table has endorsed the hiring of an Implementation Coordinator to support the work. Most will have seen the recruitment materials that were distributed via CTN. This is a key role and we are confident that there is someone perfect for this role within Simcoe County!

*'If it doesn't challenge you, it won't change you.'*

Unknown

Please feel free to contact your planning table co-chairs at for more information.

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