Settlement Workers in Schools: Gathering Information: New Version of the Needs Assessment

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Background

- Needs Assessment and Referral Service (NARS) is a key component of Canada's Settlement Program.

- Settlement Program services are available to permanent residents and protected persons. They are provided by Service Provider Organizations (SPOs).

- In the fiscal year 2016-2017, 412,000 clients accessed at least one settlement service.

- Settlement services include: needs assessment and referrals (NARS); information and orientation; language training; employment-related services; community connections (embedding newcomer services in public institutions such as libraries and schools); and support services (e.g. child care, interpretation & translation).

- Of the 412,000 clients, 48% (198,962 clients) accessed NARS.
  - NARS was accessed as follows in previous years:
    - 2015-2016: 194,703 clients; 2014-2015: 168,620 clients

What is NARS?

NARS is : *"an Integral part of settlement programming and a critical beginning to the settlement pathway for newcomers"*

- NARS is one of the initial contacts between the newcomer client and the Service Provider Organization (SPO) that is funded by IRCC.

- NARS consists of three components:
  1. the SPO meets with the client to identify their needs ("needs assessment");
  2. taking their needs into consideration, the SPO works with the client to create a customized roadmap ("settlement plan") to be used by the client to guide their settlement journey; and,
  3. using the settlement plan as the guide, the SPO provides recommendations ("referrals") to a broad spectrum of settlement areas and connects clients to settlement and community-based services. Also determined is the client's eligibility for services.

- Newcomer clients do not require a needs assessment to access settlement services but it is strongly encouraged as a first step in the client's settlement journey.

Needs Assessments

- SPOs use a variety of methods to help determine a client's needs:
  - Questionnaire
  - Group sessions/focus groups, information sessions
  - Informal follow-up/assessment (home visits, conversations)
  - Agency feedback (agency referral forms)
  - Other methods such as school instructors assessment, emails, etc.

- Assessments are usually done on an individual basis, however in some cases, SPOs conduct a family needs assessment.

- The completion of the Assessment feeds the development of the client's Settlement Plan.

The Settlement Plan

- Settlement Plans are central to the NARS approach.

- Settlement Plans outline a roadmap for the client to meet their settlement needs.

- Plans are:
  - Developed together with the newcomer.
  - Primarily a tool for the newcomer rather than the settlement worker.
  - A "Reality check" on the actions and time required to meet the newcomers' stated settlement objectives.
  - Newcomer-centered and owned.
  - Individual or family-oriented.
  - Portable and flexible/editable.
  - Useful for identifying "checkpoints" that can be used to monitor progress (e.g. language levels).
  - A tool for monitoring newcomer progress in meeting settlement objectives.
  - Revised as needs evolve over time.
  - Transferable among network of SPOs providing services to any one newcomer.

Referrals

- Needs assessment is an important enabling process that helps newcomer clients access settlement services.

- Needs assessments can be done:
  - Pre-arrival or Post-arrival to Canada

- Referrals are links to specific services that help newcomers settle in Canada. Referrals may be to internal services provided by the service provider that has conducted the needs assessment and/or to services provided by organizations other than the assessing organization.

- Needs assessments and settlement plans address needs in an array of settlement areas and thus referrals are made to both IRCC-funded services (e.g., language training, employment counselling, mentoring, etc.) and non-IRCC funded services (e.g., housing support, legal services, health care, etc.).

Need for SWIS Programs

- Gaps in SWIS System

  - Small Centers in Manitoba

  - Francophone schools in Calgary

  - Small Centers in the North

- Uptake Challenges

Age Range	Landings	Service Use	Shortfall
0-14	23.7%	13.4%	10.3% (8,352)
15-29	28.29%	24.9%	3.39% (2,749)

Need for SWIS Workers

- Presently inconsistent across PNT communities (urban and small centers/rural)

- IRCC to consider ratio of client served to FTE

- Providers asked to work with school board partners to produce annual heat maps of foreign born student numbers to drive amendment requests

    - F/T onsite SWIS worker

    - P/T onsite SWIS worker

    - Itinerant SWIS worker

Needs of Clients

- NARS in iCARE

Year	# of Clients	Percentage of Service Users
2014/15	168,620	46%
2015/16	194,703	49%
2016/17	198,962	48%

55% female

44% Economic Class

40% Principal Applicants

58% Spouses and dependents

30% Refugees

79% Needed to increase knowledge of community and government services

54% Needed to increase access to local community services

Needs of Clients

Client needs in APPR (2a-e)

- Did clients receive needs assessment?

- What tools or processes were used to assess client needs?

- Are there needs assessment approaches that worked best with specific clients? Explain.

- Describe any trends in the types of needs identified through the assessment process and the level of need

- Describe in point form any unmet or emerging needs and how they are impacting, or may impact, service delivery and client demand in your area, whether these factors are unique to a particular client group or community of residence.

Are Needs of Clients Met?

- ## APPR Client Feedback 8a-d

  - Did you collect feedback from the clients about this project?

  - For what purpose?

  - What method was used to collect the information?

  - How did or will you use the client feedback? What was positive or negative from the feedback?

- ## PNT-wide SWIS Evaluation

- ## LIP/RIF dashboards

- ## Jurisdictional dashboards

- ## National picture

Next Steps

- IRCC develops ratio of SWIS workers to case load for F/T, P/T, and itinerant in English/French and urban/rural context

- IRCC to analyze APPR for PNT SWIS programs and provide tabular information on 2a-e and 8a-d to SWIS evaluation advisory committee

- SPOs and school boards to develop a consistent approach to demonstrating need for SWIS workers to drive amendments in April 2018

- SPOs to compare current NARS tools and develop a consistent approach which allows multi-level reporting

- Consistent NARs tool implemented in 2018/19 and incorporated in PNT-wide SWIS evaluation

- Results of evaluation inform regional priorities for CFP 2020