



Pandemic Working Group (PWG)

Location: Zoom
Date: Thursday, March 31, 2022
Time: 12:00pm to 1:00pm

Agenda & Notes

Agenda Item	Notes
<u>Most Pressing Needs Assessment</u>	<p>Review of March 30th Data</p> <p><u>Organizational Needs</u></p> <p>Pressure items (increase & remains high):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employee well-being (e.g., experiences of burnout, energy depletion)• Trauma-informed supports to offer clients/beneficiaries (e.g., dealing with anxiety, stress, apathy, etc.)• Short-term vacancies (e.g., employee illness, requests for time off, temporary redeployments)• Longer-term employee vacancies and/or retention <p>Areas with a decrease in pressure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Program closures• Challenges related to program or operational funding• Access to COVID-19 protective equipment and resources <p><u>Community Needs:</u></p> <p>Pressure items (increase & remains high):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long wait times to access programs and/or services• Housing affordability• The need for food-related assistance (i.e., access to food distribution programs) <p>Areas with a decrease in pressure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prolonged isolation• Transparent info relating to COVID-19 (vaccinations, restrictions, closures)



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to COVID-19 testing and /or vaccinations <p>Noted that it would helpful to know what specific increase in challenges families are facing in i.e. accessing food assistance so that said challenges could better be addressed. Noted also that some of these needs are not isolated to the pandemic.</p> <p>Best Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the near future, to include responses from front-line staff, so that future decisions and actions aren't based solely on the perceptions of leadership• Ask one or two additional questions re: what specific needs people are seeing for food or housing insecurity
Education	<p>WRDSB > Have received their funding for next year. Includes transportation budget for children with special needs. Mental Health funding that was temporary during the pandemic has now become part of the base budget. Substantial grant money has also been acquired to help with efforts to support reading as a human right. Substantial grant money had been further acquired to support tutoring efforts. Have also acquired funding to support newcomers. Will continue to work with community partners to make the most of the funds (e.g. using Mental Health funding to further trauma-informed learning).</p>
CYPT Voting Member Meeting	<p>To access the slides from WRDSB's presentation at the CYPT Voting Member meeting, please click here. To view a recording of the meeting, please click here.</p> <p>It was noted that the transformation work WRDSB is doing is uncovering some divisions in the community and the goal is bring everyone together by building bridges between schools and the community. WRDSB want to expand their system coordination roles to aid in this. Noted that leadership roles need to consider the relationships that are already in place with families in the community through other organizations, so that those connections can be leveraged in system coordination efforts. Also noted the need to acknowledge the effect white supremacy has had on current systems, and that new approaches will be needed in the future.</p>
Public Health	<p>No update on vaccinations and the pandemic beyond what's already publicly available, including updates on vaccinations from the <5-years-old group.</p>



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	<p>Most staff who were redeployed during the pandemic are back in their home positions, but they're very much exhausted and experiencing burnout while relearning their previous role and relearning new contexts. Noted that this might explain the increase in employee vacancies.</p> <p>Grace noted that in the future she may invite the Public Health Manager responsible for early childhood to attend future PWG meetings, as they would have a clearer grasp on post-pandemic response.</p>
Newcomers from Ukraine	<p>Not yet aware of the impact that would result from welcoming refugees from Ukraine (i.e. how many would come to Waterloo Region.) Because Ukraine has announced that men 18-60 are not allowed to leave the country, the assumption is that most refugees will be unaccompanied women and children. Most refugees will arrive with a temporary status, which will create a barrier for accessing supports and social assistance. Advocating for organizations to adjust their eligibility requirements for employment, etc.</p>
Other Member Updates	<p>The upstream Waterloo website will continue to be available. The work of the Crime Prevention Council will transition to a new Justice Centre, lead by CJI. Crime Prevention Council members will continue to meet to assist with the transition to the new Justice Centre.</p> <p>Upstream Waterloo Region will continue to meet and website will stay. Will be housed at Community Justice Initiatives (CJI).</p>
Next Steps	<p>Next meeting will be held on April 21st.</p>

Future Agenda Items

- FACS trends related to pandemic impacts
- Future identity of PWG group – conversations have value, but has the identity shifted? If yes, to what?