

# 2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT



**Children, Seniors and Social Development**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

As Minister of the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development, I am pleased to present the Department's Annual Report for 2021-22.

Together with our community partners and other government departments and agencies, the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development is committed to ensuring an inclusive, accessible and socially advanced province that supports children, youth, families, seniors, persons with disabilities, and people living in poverty. The Department continues to deliver programs and services that are designed to improve overall social and economic well-being for all individuals across the life span, enhance accessible communities, promote healthy aging, ensure child and adult protection, and collaborate with Indigenous Governments and Organizations to provide services to Indigenous children, youth and families and support their journey to assert jurisdiction over child and family services. The Department's policies, practices and services focus on respecting diversity, increasing equity, and reducing barriers to self-determination while emphasizing prevention, early intervention and protection to ensure that all individuals in the province are supported to thrive. The Annual Report for 2021-22 demonstrates the Department's progress on objectives set out in year one of the Strategic Plan to achieve these goals.

Children, Seniors, and Social Development is considered a Category 1 entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, and the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development 2021-22 Annual Report satisfies the reporting requirements thereby demonstrating how the Department met its planned actions in 2021-22. As Minister, my signature below demonstrates my accountability for the results reported within this report.

Sincerely,

Hon. John G. Abbott

Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development



## Table of Contents

<b>Departmental Overview .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Organizational Structure .....	3
Staff and Budget.....	4
Vision.....	5
Mandate.....	5
Lines of Business .....	6
<b>Highlights and Partnerships .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Report on Performance .....</b>	<b>18</b>
Issue 1: Prevention and Early Intervention for Families .....	18
Goal .....	18
2021-22 Objective .....	18
Summary .....	20
2022-23 Objective .....	20
2022-23 Indicators .....	21
Issue 2: Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion .....	21
Goal .....	21
2021-22 Objective .....	21
Summary .....	25
2022-23 Objective .....	25
2022-23 Indicators .....	26
<b>Opportunities and Challenges .....</b>	<b>27</b>
Opportunities .....	27
Challenges.....	28
<b>Financial Information .....</b>	<b>31</b>





## Departmental Overview

### Organizational Structure

The Department of CSSD brings together a wide range of professionals and policy practitioners to focus on improving the health, safety, well-being, inclusion and social development of individuals, families and communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

CSSD received Treasury Board Secretariat approval in the Fall 2021 to amend the department's organizational structure. The organizational structure has the following four branches:

- **Child and Youth Services:** responsible for the delivery, management and oversight of front-line child welfare services including Child Protection, Children In-Care Services, Adoptions, Youth Corrections, Youth Services, and Kinship Services.
- **Corporate Services and Performance Improvement:** responsible for all standard corporate duties. This includes Finance, Quality Management, Policy and Planning, and Information Management;
- **Policy and Programs:** responsible for policy, program and legislative development in the following areas: Child Protection and Support Services, Children In-Care, Adoptions, Youth Corrections, Youth Services, Disability Policy, and Aging and Seniors and Adult Protection, and,
- **Prevention and Early Intervention:** responsible for policy development and supporting a holistic, government-wide approach to Social and Economic Well-being, including poverty reduction, the Community Sector and Income and Social Supports. This Branch is responsible for the delivery,

management, monitoring, oversight, policy and program development of the Income Support program. The Branch is focused on supporting the well-being of all people, with a particular focus on prevention and early intervention, horizontal policy development and ensuring a policy focus on the social determinants of health is undertaken in government decisions.

More information about the Department can be found on CSSD's website:

[www.cssd.gov.nl.ca](http://www.cssd.gov.nl.ca).

## Staff and Budget

As of March 31, 2022, CSSD had a total of 994 positions – 913 permanent, 68 temporary and 13 contractual positions. The Provincial Office has 128 positions which carry out work in all of the identified lines of business. Below is a breakdown of the number of employees per region.

The Child and Youth Services Branch is structured in three regions and has 619 positions as follows:

- Central-West Region – 277 positions (with offices located in Baie Verte, Bay Roberts, Bonavista, Botwood, Channel-Port aux Basques, Clarenville, Conception Bay South, Conne River, Corner Brook, Deer Lake, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Harbour Breton, Harbour Grace, Holyrood, Lewisporte, Marystown, Musgrave Harbour, Placentia, Roddickton, Springdale, St. Alban's, St. Anthony, Stephenville, Summerford, Whitbourne, and Woody Point).
- Labrador Region – 119 positions (with offices located in: Cartwright, Forteau, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Hopedale, Labrador City, Makkovik, Nain, Natuashish, Rigolet and Sheshatshiu).
- Metro Region – 223 positions (with offices located in Bell Island, Ferryland and St. John's).



Income Support is delivered through 17 offices throughout the province with 210 positions as follows:

- Eastern Region – 118 positions (with offices located in Carbonear, Clarenville, Marystown, Mount Pearl, and St. John's).
- Western Region - 98 positions (with offices located in Channel, Corner Brook, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Lewisporte, St. Alban's, Springdale and Stephenville).

As of March 31, 2022, CSSD had total expenditures of \$359,385,856 for the 2021-22 fiscal year. Additional financial information is included in the Financial Information section.

## **Vision**

A socially advanced province, where all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians live fulfilling lives of purpose, balance and meaning for them.

CSSD collaborates with a broad array of partners and community stakeholders and provides leadership in government to ensure that policies, programs, practices, and services respect diversity, increase equity, and reduce barriers, while emphasizing prevention, early intervention, protection, self-determination and self-reliance.

## **Mandate**

The Department of CSSD supports individuals, families and communities in Newfoundland and Labrador in achieving improved social well-being and reduced poverty and delivers programs and services to support children, youth and adults who are victims of abuse or neglect. The department collaborates with the community sector to foster their role in social and economic development. Further, it promotes the values

of inclusion and diversity, and leads the development of policies, programs and partnerships to improve services and overall social development across the lifespan of residents within the province.

The Legislative framework for CSSD mandate includes the following statutes:

- **Accessibility Act**
- **Adoption Act**
- **Adult Protection Act**
- **Children, Youth and Families Act**
- **Income and Employment Support Act**

## **Lines of Business**

The department fulfils this mandate through the following lines of business:

- Adoptions - finds permanent homes for children available for adoption.
- Adult Protection - protects adults who do not understand or appreciate the risk of abuse and neglect.
- Child Protection and In-Care - helps ensure the safety and well-being of children and youth in need of protective intervention.
- Community Sector - collaborates with the community sector to foster their role in social and economic development in the province.
- Community Youth Corrections - provides services to youth who come into conflict with the law between their 12th and 18th birthdays.
- Disability Policy - removes barriers and enhances the inclusion of persons with disabilities through government policies and programs.
- Income Support and Basic Benefits - provides monthly benefits, earning supplements, and one-time benefits to individuals and families.

## ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

- Social and Economic Well-Being - promotes social and economic well-being through leading cross-departmental policy development in the areas of poverty reduction, early childhood development and community belonging.
- Seniors and Aging - promotes healthy aging across the lifespan and fosters a healthy society that honours, listens to and includes seniors in building stronger, more dynamic communities.
- Youth Services - assists youth in need of protective intervention during their transition to early adulthood.

More information about the Department can be found on [www.gov.nl.ca/cssd](http://www.gov.nl.ca/cssd).

## Highlights and Partnerships

Throughout 2021-22 CSSD continued to deliver on its commitment to enhance the lives of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians by strengthening the social advancement of this province. Much of the work CSSD does is in conjunction with internal and external partners, giving rise to significant achievements that are beyond the scope of the established goals and objectives for the Department as outlined in CSSD's Strategic Plan 2021-23. Toward this end, CSSD has many initiatives and partnerships to highlight this year which include:

### Children, Youth and Families

- **Statutory Review:** A review of the **Adoption Act, 2013** identified the need to enhance clarity, close legislative gaps, address administrative issues, and strengthen practice. In 2021-22, legislative amendments to the **Adoptions Act** were completed to further align the Act with the **Children, Youth and Families Act**. Policy work to support these amendments is ongoing and is being completed in partnership with Indigenous Governments and Organizations. The new Act will be proclaimed in Fall 2022.
- **Collaboration with the Nunatsiavut Government (NG):** CSSD continues to work collaboratively with the NG to recruit, assess and support foster parents in Nunatsiavut. Through the pilot Caring for our Children project, there has been an increase in Nunatsiavut foster home applications, implementation of retention support for existing foster homes, provision of culturally relevant training, and completion of foster home assessments. Most importantly, this project has enabled Inuit children to remain within their communities. This project was approved to receive an annual grant to ensure continuation of this valuable work.
- **Review of Child Protection Services to Inuit Children:** CSSD collaborated with the NG on recommendations from the Independent Review of Child Protection Services to Inuit Children in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2021-22.

This work is intended to improve the outcomes for Inuit children, youth and their families.

- **Strengthened Partnership with the Innu Nation:** In June 2021, Minister Abbott joined Innu Leadership to sign a new CSSD-Innu Protocol to further strengthen the relationship through enhanced information sharing and service coordination to support the best interest of Innu children, youth and families.
- **Cultural Humility Training:** CSSD continues to work with Indigenous partners and other key stakeholders, including Memorial University's School of Social Work, via the Advancing the Practice Together (APT) partnership, to provide cultural humility training and training related to working with Indigenous children, youth, and families for CSSD staff.

Through the APT partnership, CSSD:

- Supported 31 CSSD staff, MUN social work students, and police officers in Newfoundland and Labrador (RNC and RCMP) to complete Daring to Do: Anti-Black Racism training to support collaboration and advancement of cultural humility training and practice, and supported four CSSD policy and training staff to complete First Light's Cultural Diversity training.
- **Orientation Training on Indigenous Children, Youth, and Families:** New CSSD social work hires received training to support working with Indigenous communities, children, youth and families, including the history of Indigenous peoples in Newfoundland and Labrador and Canada, distinction-based practice, Cultural Connection planning, residential schools, resources, and appropriate application of federal legislation.
- **Foster Parent Training:** PRIDE (Parent Resource for Information, Development and Education) is a training module required by foster and adoptive applicants. It provides information on the expectations, roles and responsibilities of fostering

and adoption, as well as the needs of children and youth in-care, and their families. PRIDE training became available online in March 2021. Online training allows applicants to complete the training at their own pace. In 2021-22, CSSD began the implementation of PRIDE in-service training (includes 9 online modules focused on trauma informed caregiving) and First Aid training to foster parents. CSSD in collaboration with the Nunatsiavut Government are developing foster parent training on caring for Inuit children and youth.

- **New intergovernmental funding agreement:** A new intergovernmental funding agreement with Justice Services Canada was signed. This will provide an \$800,000 funding increase to support current corrections programming and strengthen the focus on prevention of youth involvement in crime.
- **Supervisory Training:** CSSD procured supervisory training modules for clinical program supervisors and management from the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS), through the MUN APT partnership. This training is designed to develop supervisors' knowledge and leadership skills, including practical application of theory, related to the management of child welfare. CSSD is currently contextualizing the training material with the goal of delivering it to supervisors in spring 2022.

#### **Seniors and Aging:**

- **Adult Protection Act, 2021:** CSSD, in partnership with the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information (NLCHI) and other key stakeholders, completed a comprehensive five-year review of the **Adult Protection Act** in 2020. Through this effort, the **Adult Protection Act, 2021** was passed in the Fall sitting of the House of Assembly. CSSD is currently engaging with pertinent stakeholders to update applicable regulations, policies and procedures, in preparation for the proclamation of the updated legislation.

- **Increase in Seniors Benefit:** Under the Government’s five-point plan and investment to support Newfoundlanders and Labradorians with the high cost of living, the Seniors’ Benefit will increase by 10 per cent for a total funding of \$63 million. Eligible individuals will receive up to \$1,444 annually.
- **Age-Friendly Communities Grants:** This program encourages the establishment of policies, services and structures that promote healthy aging. In 2021-22, CSSD continued to support this program by administering over \$95,000 to incorporated municipalities, regions and Indigenous governments whose applications were accepted through the Age-Friendly Community Grants program.
- **Building Age-friendly Communities:** In 2021, a webinar entitled, “Making Your Community More Age-Friendly” was held for community leaders and other members of the community. This webinar provided information on how to build age-friendly communities so residents of Newfoundland and Labrador can live safely, enjoy good health and stay involved in our communities, including the need for services and amenities that are accessible, affordable and address the needs of people of all ages and abilities. This webinar spoke to the importance of input from community residents and collaboration among government, public health and educational institutions, business and non-profit sectors and community organizations programs.
- **Newfoundland and Labrador Community Transportation Program:** CSSD funded three new projects under this program, which provides up to \$100,000 funding towards alternative transportation services for individuals living with mobility challenges who experience barriers to accessible, affordable transportation. There are currently 17 Community Transportation programs throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.



- **Support to SeniorsNL:** CSSD continues to support SeniorsNL with \$300,000 per year for information and referral services. CSSD serves on both the SeniorsNL board (ex-officio capacity) and the oversight committee for a multi-year project that is funded through the national New Horizons for Seniors program that fund projects designed to make a difference in the lives of seniors and in their communities.
- **Federal, Provincial and Territorial Collaboration:** CSSD represents Newfoundland and Labrador on the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Seniors Forum. CSSD actively participates in the Seniors Forum's working groups, including the Role of Technology to Enhance Aging in Place (CSSD is co-chair), Senior Abuse: During the Pandemic and Beyond, and Supportive Housing for a Diverse Seniors Population (CSSD is a co-chair).
- **Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors (PACAS):** CSSD Aging and Seniors Division continues to provide secretariat support to this Advisory Council, whose role is to identify and monitor the issues facing seniors in the province, and advise the CSSD Minister on potential policy solutions. PACAS continued to meet throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, in accordance with public health guidelines. In February 2022, CSSD welcomed Pam Anstey as the new chair, and Megan Ford and Joshua Carey as newly appointed members of the Council.
- **Aging Research Centre (ARC-NL):** CSSD continued its annual support of \$100,000 to the Aging Research Centre at MUN, housed primarily at Grenfell Campus. This partnership is essential in supporting evidence-informed policy development. CSSD participates in ARC-NL's Management Board and Advisory Council.
- **Seniors of Distinction Awards:** The Seniors of Distinction Awards celebrate the contributions, achievements and diversity of older persons. Five seniors were

recognized for their outstanding achievements on October 1, 2021 at the 13th Annual Seniors of Distinction Awards, which was held on the Provincial Government's celebration of National Seniors Day.

- **Seniors' Social Inclusion Initiative (SSII):** The SSII grant program supports the delivery of programs and community events that promote social inclusion of seniors. SSII provided grants that ranged from \$1,000 - \$3,000 for incorporated and/or unincorporated organizations to support social inclusion for seniors, and new in 2021-22, support for intergenerational activities. In 2021-22, CSSD awarded a total of \$200,000 to 99 organizations. Many organizations continued to find creative ways to engage seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic, including provision of personal protective equipment and healthy food baskets for isolated seniors.

### **Disability Policy**

- **Accessibility Legislation:** The province's first **Accessibility Act** was introduced in the House of Assembly during the October 2021 session, which became law on December 3, 2021. This Act is expected to further advance accessibility and inclusion of all persons throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. Following the principle of "nothing about us, without us", CSSD is supporting the establishment of an Accessibility Standards Advisory Board, as legislated under the **Accessibility Act**, with at least 50 per cent representation by persons with disabilities or from organizations that represent them. This Board will be instrumental in establishing and implementing accessibility standards within Newfoundland and Labrador, which are intended to identify and remove barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from full participation in society.
- **Grant Programs:** The Disability Policy Office's grant programs continue to encourage accessibility and inclusion throughout the province. These grant programs include the Accessible Vehicle (\$350,000), Accessible Taxi (\$50,000),

Capacity Building (\$250,000), Inclusion (\$75,000) and Para-Transit (\$94,500) programs. A description of the latter three grant programs is provided below:

- The **Capacity Building Grant Program** provides funding for capacity building initiatives that advance the inclusion and equality of persons with disabilities.
  - The **Inclusion Grant Program** provides grants to community-based organizations to help increase accessibility of their facilities and events. In 2021-22, twelve applicants were granted funding under this program.
  - **Paratransit Grant** provides annual funding to GoBus Accessible Transit to assist with the provision of a para-transit system in St. John's and Mount Pearl.
- **Income Supplement:** The Government's five-point plan was an investment designed to support Newfoundlanders and Labradorians with the high cost of living. Under this plan, the Income Supplement was increased by 10 per cent for total funding of \$74 million. Individuals with a disability will now receive a total of up to \$715 per year.

### **Social and Economic Well-Being**

- **Youth Grants:** With the transfer of the responsibility for youth-focused grants to CSSD, the department administered:
  - \$2,562,299 in annual core funding for the operation of 34 Community Youth Network (CYN) sites throughout the province. The CYNs focus on improving youth well-being, preparing youth for adulthood, and finding services and programs that may help them.
  - \$451,500 in special project funding to youth-serving organizations operating in Newfoundland and Labrador that focused on knowledge and skill development (e.g., leadership); engaging youth in contributing to their community, region, or province; supporting partnerships, collaboration and inclusion; closing service gaps; and building relationships between generations through intergenerational activities.

- **Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Collaboration:** The Poverty Advisory Committee (PAC) is part of the Ministers Responsible for Social Services (MRSS) Forum. The PAC provides policy analysis, research, shared knowledge, and other tools to support jurisdictions' policy development in the areas of poverty prevention and reduction. CSSD continued to participate on the PAC in 2021-22. Current priorities include identifying effective policy and program levers to reduce poverty and income insecurity, reviewing national and provincial measures used in data collection for poverty prevention and reduction, and sharing information on current policy gaps and hard-to-solve issues.
- **Vulnerable Populations Task Force:** CSSD continued to participate in the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's Vulnerable Populations Task Force. This task force was established to ensure people in vulnerable circumstances were not disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and economic shutdowns. This included working with stakeholders and community partners on various committees addressing issues related to rural and remote housing and homelessness, newcomers to Canada, vulnerable youth and young families, and food security.
- **Other Community Partnerships:** CSSD is a member of several committees that address issues related to social and economic well-being. These include the Community Advisory Board of End Homelessness St. John's, Seniors Collective Impact Oversight Committee, St. John's Affordable Housing Working Group, and the Housing Funder's Forum.

### **Income and Social Support**

- **One-time Payment Benefit:** In March 2022, as part of a five-point plan to help address the immediate pressures related to increased costs of living, Income Support regional service delivery staff issued over \$5 million to approximately 20,500 individuals and families in receipt of Income Support. This represented a

one-time benefit of \$200 for single people and \$400 for families. This is in addition to funds that are provided annually (over \$200 million) for income support payments to approximately 20,000 individuals or families.

- **Employment Stability Pilot:** CSSD, the Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills, Stella's Circle and Choices for Youth have collaboratively developed an Employment Stability Pilot. The pilot will introduce new and enhanced incentives and supports to encourage 200 people in receipt of Income Support to enter and remain in the workforce or increase participation. Modifications in Income Support benefit and service delivery structures are intended to increase financial stability and predictability to encourage steps toward increased self-reliance. Future implementation of incentives, supports and program modifications to the broader caseload will be based on evaluation results.
- **Bus Pass Pilot:** The Provincial Government, in partnership with the City of St. John's, implemented a Bus Pass pilot, which provided free Metrobus passes and GoBus passes to approximately 5,600 people in receipt of Income Support who live in areas serviced by Metrobus (St. John's, Mount Pearl and Paradise). The Province invested \$2.1 million in 2021-22. An evaluation indicates the pilot positively impacted those individuals' quality of life and overall well-being, mitigated the impacts of poverty (e.g., people were able to travel to purchase more, less expensive food), and reduced administrative time and effort. The above noted investment of \$2.1 million will enable the program to be expanded in 2022-23 to seniors over the age of 65 (who are receiving GIS) and youth receiving services from the youth services program.
- **Mother Baby Nutrition Supplement (MBNS) Program:** MBNS provides a monthly financial benefit to people with low income to assist with the extra costs of healthy eating during pregnancy and up to the baby's first birthday. An increase in this monthly benefit was implemented in July 2021. Eligible applicants

can now receive \$100 per month (increased from \$60) during pregnancy and up until the child is one year of age, as well as an additional \$100 in the month of the baby's birth (increased from \$90). The pre-natal and birth benefit is administered by Income Support program staff and the post-natal portion, which is paid by the Province, is automatically added to the Canada Child Benefit up to the child's first birthday.

## Report on Performance

In 2022, the Department of CSSD tabled a two-year Strategic Plan in the House of Assembly. This is the first annual report based upon the 2021-23 CSSD Strategic Plan, and reflects the objectives and indicators for fiscal year 2021-22.

### Issue 1: Prevention and Early Intervention for Families

Throughout 2021-22, CSSD reviewed existing actions required to enhance prevention and early intervention for all children and youth and participated in various Health Accord committees and subcommittees to share knowledge and expertise and ensure a collaborative and coordinated approach. Achievements during the 2021-22 reporting period positioned CSSD in its work to develop a child-centered, family-centered and community-centered approach to identifying and reducing systemic barriers for children and youth, engaging community partners and coordinating government efforts to ensure children, youth and their families are supported by policies, programs and services.

#### Goal

By March 31, 2023, CSSD, in collaboration with community and government departments, will have developed and implemented a horizontal Action Plan on prevention and early intervention for families.

#### 2021-22 Objective

By March 31, 2022, CSSD, in collaboration with other government departments, will have developed a horizontal action plan to address the issue of enhanced prevention and early intervention for all children and youth.



Indicator	Report on Performance
<p>Consulted with community stakeholders to identify specific opportunities to improve prevention and early intervention services to vulnerable families in Newfoundland and Labrador.</p>	<p>The development of a renewed Poverty Reduction Strategy and Prevention and Early Intervention Action Plan will be combined into an overall well-being plan referred to as the Social and Economic Well-Being Plan. This decision was informed by the work of the Health Accord, as well as other ongoing initiatives within government, including the implementation of the Education Action Plan and Towards Recovery recommendations. The department held off on public consultations while waiting for the release of the final Health Accord report. As a result, consultations with community stakeholders could not be completed in 2021-22 and are now planned for 2022-23.</p>
<p>Consulted with research partners to formulate a better understanding of best practices in prevention and early intervention that could apply to vulnerable families in Newfoundland and Labrador.</p>	<p>The department completed consultations with Newfoundland and Labrador Center for Applied Health Research (NLCAHR) to help inform the development of the Social and Economic Well-Being Plan. This work was published in March 2022 through NLCAHR's <b>Contextualized Health Research Synthesis Program</b> as a <a href="#">Snapshot Report</a>. Consultations with other government departments and agencies also took place throughout the year.</p>
<p>Developed a draft horizontal action plan in conjunction with the interdepartmental committee.</p>	<p>As noted, development of a renewed Poverty Reduction Strategy and Prevention and Early Intervention Action Plan have been combined into an overall well-being plan referred to as the Social and Economic Well-Being Plan. An executive-level steering committee and senior management working group have been meeting since</p>

Indicator	Report on Performance
	January 2022 and work is progressing. As a result of the decision to wait for the recommendations of the Health Accord, a draft action plan has not yet been completed.
Completed a preliminary review of the Grants to Youth Organizations program to identify opportunities for alignment with departmental priorities, including prevention and early intervention.	A preliminary review has been completed. It aligns with Government's commitment to develop and implement a new application and assessment process for grants to community organizations. Based on this preliminary review, the evaluation criteria for these grant applications have now been expanded to include "Provide opportunities for intergenerational activities that help build relationships between generations."

## Summary

CSSD is continuing to work on the following objective: "By March 31, 2022, CSSD, in collaboration with other government departments, will have developed a horizontal action plan to address the issue of enhanced prevention and early intervention for all children and youth". CSSD awaited completion of the Health Accord work before developing the action plan. Throughout 2021-22, CSSD focused its efforts on participating in the Health Accord work, synergizing existing partnerships around intervention and prevention for children and youth, and reviewing best and promising practices within Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada and internationally.

## 2022-23 Objective

By March 31, 2023, CSSD, in collaboration with other government departments, will have implemented the Horizontal Action Plan to strengthen programs, policies, and services focused on prevention and early intervention for all children and youth.

## 2022-23 Indicators

- Completed research, analysis, and a jurisdictional scan on the factors that will foster social and economic well-being throughout the lifespan, including prevention and early intervention for all children and youth.
- Completed consultations with stakeholders and people with lived experience on the development of a Social and Economic Well-Being Plan.
- Developed a Social and Economic Well-Being Plan that includes a focus on prevention and early intervention.
- Initiated implementation of the Social and Economic Well-Being Plan.

## Issue 2: Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion

CSSD is committed to carrying out the strategic directions pertinent to the department as identified by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for 2021-23, including Healthier People and A Bright Future. Over the next two years, CSSD will focus on strengthening social advancement of individuals in the province through a renewed strategy to reduce poverty and increase social inclusion.

### Goal

By March 31, 2023, CSSD will have strengthened the social advancement of the province by engaging with stakeholders and communities to formulate actions to reduce poverty, support healthy aging across the lifespan and encourage inclusive, accessible communities.

### 2021-22 Objective

By March 31, 2022, CSSD will have strengthened the social advancement of the province by developing and implementing policies and actions that reduce poverty,

support healthy aging across the lifespan and encourage inclusive, accessible communities.

Indicator	Report on Performance
Advanced recommendations to government as part of Budget 2021 to improve the Mother Baby Nutrition Supplement.	The monthly MBNS benefit for low income families was increased in July 2021 to support the extra costs of healthy eating during pregnancy and up to the baby’s first birthday. Additionally, families receive an additional \$100 during the month of the baby’s birth, which was increased from \$90.
Reviewed program and service delivery models for income support to ensure continuous improvement.	Some Income Support benefit and service delivery structures were enhanced in an effort to increase financial stability, quality of life, and well-being among individuals in receipt of Income Support through incentives and support, such as free bus passes, additional income support to help offset the increased costs of living, and supports to enhance mother and baby nutrition.
Developed a poverty reduction strategy and began implementation of policies and actions to reduce poverty.	The development of a renewed Poverty Reduction Strategy and Prevention and Early Intervention Action Plan have been combined into an overall well-being plan called the Social and Economic Well-Being Plan. Interdepartmental work is progressing and will be completed in 2022-23.
Drafted amendments to the <b>Adult Protection Act</b> .	Amendments to the <b>Adult Protection Act</b> were drafted and the Bill passed in the House of Assembly in the Fall 2021 session.  Proposed amendments were informed through feedback from key stakeholders including all four Regional Health Authorities, police (Royal Newfoundland Constabulary and

Indicator	Report on Performance
	<p>Royal Canadian Mounted Police), Office of the Seniors' Advocate, Coalition of Persons with Disabilities, community organizations, and the public.</p> <p>Changes to the Act include legislating timelines on investigations and investigation orders to ensure cases are resolved in a safe and timely manner, ensuring all adults are provided legal representation when appropriate, ensuring that the legislation captures Indigenous and cultural considerations, the ability of Regional Health Authority staff to intervene and support the safety and well-being of adults for an interim period with court authority, and ensuring that declaration orders meet the specific needs of adults in need of protective intervention.</p> <p>Regulations and policies associated with this Act are currently being drafted and proclamation of the Act is expected in Fall 2022.</p>
<p>Developed a draft action plan, informed by the recommendations of the Seniors' Advocate, to create an environment that fosters healthy aging, social inclusion, and age-friendly communities.</p>	<p>The development of a draft action plan will be included in the Social and Economic Well-Being Plan that is currently under development by the Division of Social and Economic Well-Being. Interdepartmental work is progressing and will be completed in 2022-23. This work includes the enhancement and building of age-friendly communities and the Healthy Built Environment work at the Health Sciences Centre.</p>
<p>Completed a jurisdictional scan to help inform the</p>	<p>A jurisdictional scan was completed to help inform the establishment of an Advocate position for persons with disabilities in the province. CSSD's Disability Policy Office</p>

Indicator	Report on Performance
<p>establishment of an Advocate for Persons with Disabilities in Newfoundland and Labrador.</p>	<p>completed in-depth jurisdictional scans. This included analysis and consultations with Provinces across Canada that have Disability Advocates to learn from their experiences and expertise. This information will help inform CSSD’s consultation and collaboration with the community of, and for, persons with disabilities, when developing this advocate role in Newfoundland and Labrador.</p>
<p>Consulted with key stakeholders to ensure persons with disabilities, and community-based organizations representing persons with disabilities, have the opportunity to inform the development of the Disability Advocate position.</p>	<p>A consultation plan is under development to ensure a “nothing about us, without us” approach is used when consulting with the community of, and for, persons with disabilities. This will be facilitated to ensure that the needs and voice of persons with disabilities within Newfoundland and Labrador inform the Disability Advocate position.</p>
<p>Consulted with stakeholders on the development of a social incubator/accelerator model for the province.</p>	<p>The development of a social incubator/accelerator model for the province will be included in the Social and Economic Well-Being Plan.</p> <p>CSSD officials consulted with the Social Enterprise and Social Innovation coalition on this initiative and will continue to consult with this group as part of the development of the plan. The Social Enterprise and Social Innovation Coalition is a group of community organizations involved with social enterprise and social innovation that came together to identify opportunities to support the</p>

Indicator	Report on Performance
	development of the sector. Consultations with stakeholders will take place as work progresses.
Completed a jurisdictional review of social incubator /accelerator models in other jurisdictions.	A jurisdictional review was completed to inform the development of a social incubator/accelerator model for the province. This review gathered information on incubators/accelerators in other jurisdictions. While most were focused on business, several were related to social enterprises and other social issues.

## Summary

Significant work was completed towards the objective that “By March 31, 2022, CSSD will have strengthened the social advancement of the province by developing and implementing policies and actions that reduce poverty, support healthy aging across the lifespan and encourage inclusive, accessible communities”. CSSD focused efforts on laying the groundwork for policy and program actions to emerge from a foundation of consultations with stakeholders including interdepartmental, intergovernmental, community advisory council and academic research partners.

## 2022-23 Objective

By March 31, 2023, CSSD will have strengthened the social advancement of the province by further implementing policies and supporting actions to reduce poverty, support healthy aging across the lifespan and encourage inclusive, accessible communities.



## 2022-23 Indicators

- Developed draft Social and Economic Well-Being Plan.
- Launched an age-friendly reward and recognition program.
- Developed draft of an intergenerational program guide to aid increased interaction between youth and older adults across Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Completed consultations with stakeholders to ensure Persons with Disabilities, and community-based organizations representing persons with disabilities, have the opportunity to inform the development of an Advocate for Persons with Disabilities in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Consulted with key stakeholders to ensure persons with disabilities, and community-based organizations representing persons with disabilities, have the opportunity to inform the development of the Disability Advocate position.
- Brought forward a recommendation from the Public Service Commission to Government to establish appointments to the Accessibility Standards Advisory Board.

## Opportunities and Challenges

In the 2021-23 Strategic Plan, CSSD committed to strengthening the social advancement of the province in order to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion, and focusing on prevention and early intervention for families to improve outcomes for all children and youth. Actions to meet these commitments in 2021-22 presented the following opportunities and challenges:

### Opportunities

- The new **Accessibility Act** is enabling legislation which allows for future development of associated regulations and policies, rather than prescribing specific requirements in the legislation. Upon development, these regulations or standards aim to improve accessibility by identifying, preventing and removing barriers that prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in society. The Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities will further advance this work by bringing forward to the Lieutenant Governor in Council a newly appointed board for approval and the Disability Policy Office of CSSD will provide the secretariat role for the board.
- With the release of the final report of the Health Accord and its focus on the social determinants of health, CSSD is well-positioned to respond to some of the recommendations, particularly those related to the social determinants of health, through the development of a Social and Economic Well-Being Plan that will focus on the concept of well-being and the social determinants of health.
- The Quality Management Division is responsible for training front-line child protection social workers. In the absence of space that met the social distancing requirements, this division pivoted and sought unique ways to offer the child protection training during the COVID-19 pandemic. A series of online training modules were developed to replace some of the in person training. Transitioning to this model resulted in the highest number of trained staff, per fiscal year, when compared to pre-pandemic years. In 2020, 161 staff received training in five

modules, which increased to 394 staff trained in 14 modules in 2021. While there will always be a need for in person training for specific modules, 2021-22 brought about a unique opportunity to develop a more broadly accessible curriculum that aligns with adult learning principles and provides staff with the ability to complete the curriculum at their own pace.

- There has been a positive impact on CSSD's collaboration with Indigenous partners and services to Indigenous, children, youth and families since the implementation of the **Children, Youth and Families Act** (June 2019) and the federal child welfare legislation, **An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families** (January 2020). Discussions with both the Federal Government and each Indigenous government and organization in NL is ongoing to identify areas of improvement to practice, policy and training.
- The Seniors and Aging Division continued, through PT consultations, to discuss best practices regarding adult protection and jurisdictional approaches to adult protection cases. This work has informed the development of policies and regulations (underway) for proclamation of the new **Adult Protection Act** in the Fall of 2022.
- CSSD's Seniors and Aging Division continue to participate in the FPT Seniors Forum working groups that report on core housing and community support needs of seniors, the impact of social isolation during the pandemic, the role of technology to support aging, and senior abuse.
- The COVID-19 Seniors' Working Group is an interagency group co-chaired by CSSD and SeniorsNL that is comprised of a network of seniors' organizations and municipalities. The group has collaborated on ideas to support vulnerable seniors, including food security, access to medications, free rapid tests, and financial literacy.

## Challenges

- Recent increases in the cost of living have caused additional financial difficulties for low income individuals and families. Such financial difficulties can translate into challenges associated with food security, healthy eating, adequate housing,

transportation, child care, overall emotional well-being, financial and educational planning, community engagement, and community participation. While CSSD is developing a long-term approach through a Social and Economic Well-Being Plan, there is a need for more immediate solution. The Government announced a five-point plan to help address some of the challenges faced by residents, including an Income Supplement, a Seniors' Benefit, and a one-time benefit to those receiving Income Support.

- Recruitment and retention of social workers to the Child and Youth Services Branch continues to be a challenge. Vacant positions in Child Welfare Services can impact the workload demands placed upon current staff within this branch. Complexity of work, availability of social workers, and geographical location are some of the barriers to filling vacant positions in Child Welfare Services. CSSD will soon commence collaboration with an external partner to review the current service delivery model for Child Welfare Services and social workers' workload. It is anticipated that this work will result in recommendations regarding the appropriate skill mix of social workers and other health professionals (e.g., an interdisciplinary model of care), workload management, and continuous improvement strategies for child welfare programs, policies, and operations.
- Individuals and families in low income brackets are struggling as the costs of necessities rise. With respect to seniors, many are struggling on fixed incomes and have experienced age discrimination (e.g. healthcare, employment), and have limited internet access. These challenges can negatively impact seniors' well-being and engagement and can arise due to poor financial planning, literacy, lack of knowledge and increased cost of living. CSSD continues to work with the community, government and external agencies in an effort to reduce ageism and improve financial and internet literacy among seniors, for example, by offering workshops tailored for seniors on financial planning and internet usage.
- Many individuals in the province continued to experience challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, including community engagement and social development, unreliable internet, remote meeting applications, and increased social isolation

during times of lockdown. The Department continued to work with community partners during the pandemic to alleviate the effects of these challenges.

## Financial Information

Revenue and expenditures in this document are based on the information province in the public Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the Fiscal Year ended 31 March 2022.

	<b>Actual (\$)</b>	<b>Estimates – Amended (\$)</b>	<b>Estimates – Original (\$)</b>
Minister's Office	214,505	223,500	288,200
Executive Support	1,473,036	1,479,400	1,383,600
Corporate Services and Performance Improvement	5,072,749	5,051,700	5,403,800
Child and Youth Services	129,961,133	131,464,200	129,657,500
Seniors and Aging	1,351,192	1,357,800	1,400,600
Disability and Policy	1,095,017	1,136,000	1,247,200
Child welfare Program and Policy	1,383,458	1,424,500	1,409,200
Income Support Regional Client Services	10,942,226	10,817,100	12,343,300
Income Support Program and Policy	203,766,955	205,130,500	218,407,800
Mother/Baby Nutrition Supplement	107,440		334,600
Poverty Reduction and Community Sector	4,019,130	4,047,900	3,811,200
<b>Total (Department)</b>	<b>359,385,856</b>	<b>362,132,600</b>	<b>375,687,000</b>

