

Children, Seniors and Social Development

Strategic Plan

2021 - 23





MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

As Minister responsible for the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development, I am pleased to present the Department's Strategic Plan for the period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2023. This Plan is necessary due to departmental restructuring which occurred in April 2021 as a result of the addition of the Income Support and Community Sector program areas to the CSSD mandate.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has identified its strategic directions for the province for the two-year period from 2021-23. Two of these strategic directions are especially relevant to CSSD's mandate: **Healthier People** and **A Bright Future**. CSSD focuses on ensuring that policies, practices and services respect diversity, increase equity, and reduce barriers to self-determination while emphasizing prevention, early intervention and protection to ensure that all individuals in the province are supported to thrive. Together with our community partners, and other government departments, CSSD is committed to ensuring an inclusive, accessible and socially advanced province that values its children, youth, families, seniors and all individuals across the life span.

This plan is submitted in accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**. As Minister, I am accountable for the preparation of this plan, and the achievement of the specific goals and objectives contained herein.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John G. Abbott". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Hon. John G. Abbott
Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development

Table of Contents

- Mandate 1
- Lines of Business..... 1
- Staff and Budget 2
- Financial Information 3
- Vision..... 4
- Issue One:..... 5
 - GOAL: 5
 - Indicators:..... 5
 - Objective 1:..... 6
 - Indicators:..... 6
 - Objective 2:..... 6
 - GOAL: 7
 - Indicators:..... 7
 - Objective 1:..... 8
 - Indicators:..... 8
 - Objective 2:..... 9
- Annex A: Active Entities 10

Overview

Mandate

The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development (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.

Legislative framework for CSSD mandate

- **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.

Strategic Plan 2021-23

- 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 Assistance and Basic Benefits - provides monthly benefits, earning supplements, and one-time benefits to individuals and families.
- Poverty Reduction - prevents, reduces and alleviates poverty and fosters opportunities through policy development for all citizens to share fully in our society and economy.
- 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.

The departmental website is: www.gov.nl.ca/cssd.

Staff and Budget

As of June 30, 2021, CSSD had 984 positions - 912 permanent, 64 temporary and eight contractual. Of these 984 positions, the headquarters had 155 positions which carried out work in the lines of business identified above.

The Children, Youth and Families Branch is structured into Central-West Region, Labrador Region, and Metro Region, as follows:

- Central-West: 278 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: 119 positions, with offices located in Cartwright, Forteau, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Hopedale, Labrador City, Makkovik, Nain, Natuashish, Rigolet and Sheshatshiu;
- the academic community and student populations;
- unions;
- professional organizations;
- Metro: 223 positions, with offices located in Bell Island, Ferryland and St. John's.

The Income and Social Support program has 209 regional positions with offices located in St. John's, Mount Pearl, Carbonear, Marystown, Clarenville, Gander, Lewisporte, Grand Falls-Windsor, St. Albans, Springdale, Stephenville, Corner Brook, Channel-Port-aux-Basques and Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

The department's 2021-22 gross budget is \$407,781,900.

Financial Information

Revenue and expenditures in this document are based on the information provided in the public report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2021. The 2021-22 budget reflects government reorganization in April 2021 with the Income Support and Community Sector programs incorporated into the Department.

Strategic Plan 2021-23

	2021-22 Budget (\$)	2020-21 Actuals (\$)	2020-21 Restated Original Budget (\$)
Executive and Support Services	7,075,600	7,138,692	7,703,200
Child and Youth Services	157,412,400	152,265,614	154,278,500
Seniors and Social Development	4,057,000	1,942,164	2,314,800
Prevention and Early Intervention	239,236,900		
Total (Department)	\$407,781,900	\$161,346,470	\$164,296,500

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, practices, and services respect diversity, increase equity, and reduce barriers, while emphasizing prevention, early intervention, protection, self-determination and self-reliance.

Strategic Issues

Issue One: Prevention and Early Intervention for Families

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has identified strategic directions for the province for the two-year period from 2021-23. Two of these strategic directions pertain to work with children, youth and families and include **Healthier People** and **A Bright Future**.

Over the next two years, CSSD will focus on prevention and early intervention for all families to improve outcomes for all children, youth and families. This child-centred, family-centred, and community-centred approach will identify and reduce systemic barriers, focus on community partnerships and coordinate government efforts to ensure government's policies, programs, and services support healthy children, youth, and families.

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.

Indicators:

- Established an interdepartmental committee to oversee and support the development and implementation of an action plan on early intervention and prevention for all children and youth.
- Consulted with community and research partners to formulate a better understanding of best practices and identify specific opportunities to improve prevention and early intervention services to support vulnerable families in Newfoundland and Labrador.

- Lead the development and implementation of a horizontal action plan on prevention and early intervention for children and their families in conjunction with community and research partners.
- Reviewed the Grants to Youth Organizations program to ensure it is aligned with departmental priorities, including prevention and early intervention.

Objective 1:

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.

Indicators:

- Consulted with community stakeholders to identify specific opportunities to improve prevention and early intervention services to vulnerable families in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- 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.
- Developed a draft horizontal action plan in conjunction with the interdepartmental committee.
- Completed a preliminary review of the Grants to Youth Organizations program to identify opportunities for alignment with departmental priorities, including prevention and early intervention.

Objective 2:

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.

Issue Two: Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion

CSSD is committed to carrying out the strategic directions 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 advancements 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.

Indicators:

- Developed a renewed strategy to reduce poverty in consultation with stakeholders, experts and communities.
- Developed and implemented new provincial accessibility legislation.
- Worked toward the establishment of an Advocate for Persons with Disabilities.
- Developed an action plan, informed by the recommendations of the Seniors' Advocate, to create an environment that fosters healthy aging, social inclusion, and age-friendly communities.
- Completed a five-year review of the **Adult Protection Act**.
- Developed a plan to move forward with the establishment of a social incubator/accelerator model.

Objective 1:

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.

Indicators:

- Advanced recommendations to government as part of Budget 2021 to improve the Mother Baby Nutrition Supplement.
- Reviewed program and service delivery models for income support to ensure continuous improvement.
- Developed a poverty reduction strategy and began implementation of policies and actions to reduce poverty.
- Drafted amendments to the **Adult Protection Act**.
- 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.
- Completed a jurisdictional scan to help inform the establishment 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 Advocate position.
- Consulted with stakeholders on the development of a social incubator/accelerator model for the province.
- Completed a jurisdictional review of social incubator/accelerator models in other jurisdictions.

Objective 2:

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.

Annex A: Active Entities

The Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development is also responsible for three entities, which carry out their own strategic planning and performance reporting in accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**. These include:

Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

The Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities advises the Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities on issues of importance to persons with disabilities and the removal of systemic barriers. The Council consists of 13 members, including the Chairperson. All members have disability-related experiences, knowledge and expertise.

Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors

The Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors advises government in preparing for an aging population by ensuring that a seniors' perspective is reflected in policy development and in planning for future service delivery. The mandate of the Council is to advise and inform government on issues, concerns and needs of seniors.

The Council consists of 13 members, including a Chairperson. Members serve up to a three-year term.

Income and Employment Support Appeal Board

The Income and Employment Support Appeal Board (the Board) is an independent, arm's-length body authorized to hear appeals on decisions regarding Income Support, as well as eligibility for employment supports funded by the Provincial Government. The Board is primarily governed by the Income and Employment Support Act; however, it is also responsible for appeals with respect to eligibility for benefits under the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP), under section 40 of the Pharmaceutical Services Act.

The Board is comprised of a Chair, a Vice-Chair and a Member, one of whom is a current or former recipient of income or employment supports. Three alternate members are also appointed, one of whom is also a current or former recipient of income or employment supports.

