



Organizational and Operational Review of Child, Youth and Family Services – Executive Summary

Prepared for the Department of Health and Community Services

March 2007

Background, Scope and Approach

- Deloitte Inc. was retained by the Department of Health and Community Services in October 2006 to undertake an organizational and operational review of child, youth and family services (CYFS).
- The scope of the analysis included the Child, Youth and Family Services system at both the regional and provincial levels. Specifically, it involved a high level review of:
 - The roles and responsibilities of various positions (rather than individuals) involved in child, youth and family services at the four regional integrated health authorities (the Authorities or the regions) and the Department of Health and Community Services (the Department) including reporting structures;
 - The relationship between the Authorities and the Department in relation to, but not limited to, the findings of the Turner Review and Investigation; and,
 - The tools and processes that support child, youth and family services including clerical support, IT, HR and information sharing, as well as the potential for new technologies to facilitate the work.
- The scope was limited to operational and organizational matters, and excluded any clinical matters.
- In completing our analysis, Deloitte solicited extensive input from the following sources:
 - Collected data and information from past studies and reviews related to child, youth and family services;
 - Conducted interviews and focus groups with approximately 200 individuals in the four regions and the Province. Interviews and focus groups were conducted at all levels of the organizations and were completed in person in each region and in the Department;
 - Collected reports, information and data from the regions and the Department concerning current practices and initiatives;
 - Conducted working sessions with senior managers responsible for CYFS in each region, Directors of CYFS in each region, and senior management in the Department responsible for CYFS;
 - Administered an on-line questionnaire to all CYFS social workers across the Province; 156 social workers out of 293 surveyed responded;
 - Interviewed the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate; and,
 - Interviewed representatives from New Brunswick, Ontario, and British Columbia regarding provision of CYFS in their jurisdictions.
- The findings from these efforts, and the resulting recommendations, are provided in the full report. The recommendations are summarized on the following pages.

About Child, Youth and Family Services

- With its proclamation in 2000, the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFS Act)* replaced the *Child Welfare Act* which had its statutory basis rooted in legislation drafted some 50 years ago. Prior to the proclamation of the *CYFS Act*, it was recognized that a statute which allowed for intervention with children under the age of 16 and their families only at the time of crisis was no longer appropriate for today's children, families and communities. Therefore, the Bill represented a significant shift in the legislative framework in that it recognized the need for a) enhancements of services to youth and families; b) investment in prevention and early intervention strategies; c) client participation in decisions which affect them; d) partnerships with community in supporting the safety, health and well-being of children; and e) timely responses to children who are maltreated.
- CYFS consists of four program areas:
 - Child Protection /Protective Intervention – Includes the investigation, assessment and intervention for children up to the age of 16 who are determined to be at risk of maltreatment as defined by Section 14 of the *CYFS Act*.
 - Foster Care/In Care – Includes the provision of a safe alternate living arrangement when the child cannot reside in their family home. In care includes voluntary care, interim orders, temporary custody to continuous custody. The Caregiver (Foster care) program is responsible for the recruitment, assessment, training and support of Caregivers.
 - Family Services – Includes earlier intervention services to families to promote the safety, health and well being of a child, promote strengths in families, and reduce the risk of maltreatment, improve parenting, prevent removal of a child from his/her parent, and support communities to meet the needs of children and families. The program consists of the *Child Welfare Allowance Program, Family Support Services, and Voluntary Care Agreements*.
 - Youth Services - Includes the provision of residential and other support services (i.e. financial, counseling) to youth ages 16 and 17 who cannot remain in their family home due to reasons of maltreatment or because they have no parent or person willing or able to provide care for the youth. The primary goal of the Youth Services program is the safety, health and well being of youth. In keeping with this goal, supports can be provided to the youth and their family to maintain the family unit. Where a youth was previously in care of a director, he/she can remain in the Youth Services program until they are 21 years of age (or school leaving, whichever comes first).
- The CYFS program is unique for several reasons:
 - Services are **mandated** under the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*. The regional integrated health authorities do not have the discretion to decide not to provide a particular service in their region.
 - Clients are primarily **involuntary**. Except for Family Services, they are clients of the system not because they choose to be, but because there is a legislated requirement.
 - There is **no ability to wait list**. Children cannot be left in a situation where their personal safety, health or well-being is compromised, due to lack of resources in the system.
 - There is **overlap of clientele** between CYFS and other program areas such as Community Youth Corrections and Adoptions. In addition to CYFS, social workers often have responsibility for program delivery in various programs.
- As a result of these factors, those working in the system work in an exceedingly difficult and stressful environment.

What's Working Well

Much has been written about CYFS. Most documents describe the challenges associated with the system, the resource shortages, etc. Despite the challenges – which are very real – there are a number of areas that are positive within the CYFS program today and are worthy of mention.

Children, Youth & Families

Workers and managers are committed to the children, youth and families of NL.

The *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* is supported in the community and within the CYFS system for its philosophical approach which promotes best practice in child welfare.

Colleagues

Social workers and managers in the regions, as well as consultants and managers in the Provincial Office, enjoy working with, and feel supported by, their colleagues.

Senior Managers

Senior managers in the regions responsible for CYFS are generally believed to understand and support CYFS.

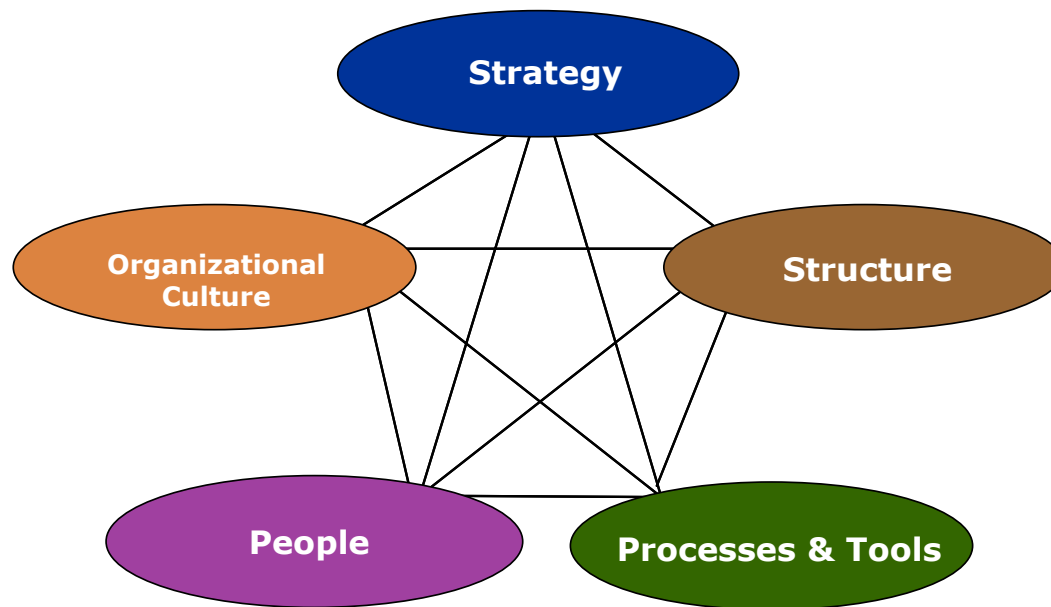
Risk Mgmt

The Risk Management System, as a concept, has been embraced by the regions, and is informing their activities.

Elements of an Ideal Work Environment

No one would suggest that the CYFS program in NL is operating in an ideal work environment today. All would agree that there are significant shortcomings.

What do we mean by an “ideal work environment”? There are five inter-connected elements of an ideal work environment. All must be in place to create a well functioning system.



On the following pages we summarize the recommendations for each of the five elements of an ideal work environment.

Summary of Recommendations

STRATEGY

- 1.1 A provincial strategy for CYFS should be developed that articulates the vision for CYFS as part of an integrated Department with a focus on child development. The strategy should also include 3-5 year targets for CYFS standards (for those standards that lend themselves to a phased-in approach – in some cases 100% will be the minimum standard).
- 1.2 Directors of CYFS should be held accountable for achieving minimum standards in their regions, and they must be given the appropriate resources to do so.
- 1.3 One comprehensive set of CYFS policies and standards must be developed.
 - A mechanism must be established to ensure regular review and updating.
 - Provincial Office is responsible for reviews and updating.
- 1.4 Provincial policy and standards documentation should be available on-line for ease of access and updating.
- 1.5 There is a need to identify regional operational policies that will be necessary to support provincial policies. Where possible, regions should work together to avoid duplication of effort.

Summary of Recommendations (cont'd)

STRUCTURE

- 2.1 The authority of the Provincial Director and the accountability of the regions must be strengthened. This can be accomplished by establishing a formal accountability mechanism between the Department and the regions.
- It is recommended that the Deputy Minister and CEOs, along with the Assistant Deputy Minister and VPs/COO, develop a policy to establish the accountability mechanism. (Note: consideration should be given to defining this accountability mechanism in law.)
 - The accountability mechanism should be a CYFS Program and Policy Committee to operationalize the *CYFS Act*.
 - The Committee should be comprised of Directors of CYFS, chaired by the Provincial Director.
 - The policy describing the Committee should describe the mandate, composition, accountability, issue resolution process, and monitoring and evaluation process.
 - The Committee should have authority to take action and implement recommendations (i.e. have "teeth") recognizing that decisions regarding CYFS must align with broader regional decisions as well as the legislated mandate of the *CYFS Act* and provincial direction.
 - The Committee should be accountable to the Deputy Minister and CEOs by reporting through the Assistant Deputy Minister and VPs/COO.
 - The Minister of Health and Community Services should communicate the importance of the Committee to the Deputy Minister and CEOs.
- 2.2 The Provincial Director must have the necessary resources to fulfill the legislated role. Existing temporary positions should be made permanent.
- 2.3 The link between the Provincial Director and the Minister should be strengthened.
- A formal reporting mechanism should be put in place that requires the Provincial Director to prepare a semi-annual report to the Minister on the state of the CYFS system.

Summary of Recommendations (cont'd)

STRUCTURE (cont'd)

- 2.4 Eastern Region must immediately move from an interim management structure to a permanent structure for CYFS to provide needed stability. This could include formalization of the current interim structure or consideration of options. (Consideration must be given to the vulnerability of the Director of CYFS role in the large Eastern Region with only one incumbent).
- 2.5 Working with the regions, the Department should lead the development of a formal complaint process at the provincial level (note that court-related complaints follow a different process).
 - A description of the complaint process must be communicated to all stakeholders.
 - The regions must have a regional CYFS complaint process that is integrated into an overall complaint process.
- 2.6 Consideration should be given to strengthening the accountability under the *Health Authorities Act* by making the regions accountable for more than financial performance.
- 2.7 The recently implemented organization structures in Western, Central and Labrador-Grenfell must be evaluated for effectiveness within 6-12 months of implementation. Consideration must be given to the following:
 - Alignment with provincial direction (*CYFS Act*) and regional strategy.
 - Clear accountability for CYFS by the Director of CYFS, as per the *CYFS Act* (note: Western is the only region where the Director of CYFS does not have direct access to senior management).
 - Importance of integration and other aspects of the Authority.
 - Economies of scale and workload.
 - Complexity of organization.
 - Diversity and complexity of clients served.
- 2.8 The Province should work with the Office of the Child & Youth Advocate to clarify the role of the Office relative to the Department and the regions, and communicate same.

Summary of Recommendations (cont'd)

CULTURE

- 3.1 Each region should develop specific plans to address organizational cultural weaknesses identified in this review.
- There are tools available to assess culture along various dimensions, which allows for development of specific plans to move from the current to a desired culture (see Appendix D for a sample tool – Deloitte’s Culture Print).
 - In regions where CYFS workers are integrated with non-CYFS workers, the cultural assessment should extend beyond CYFS to better understand the environment in which child, youth and family services are provided.
 - This should not hold up implementation of other recommendations.
- 3.2 Revisit and implement the evaluation framework for the *CYFS Act*.
- Revisit to ensure that all aspects are still relevant.
 - Implement.
 - Conduct external reviews of CYFS – on a rotational basis, review various parts of CYFS.
- 3.3 Regional worker safety policies should be developed.
- Regions should collaborate to avoid duplication of effort.

Summary of Recommendations (cont'd)

PEOPLE

- 4.1 Ensure that work is done by the most appropriate resource. Specifically:
- Introduce additional support roles – social work assistants, community service workers, behaviour management specialists, financial assessment officers (FAOs), improved legal access. Requirements vary by region; specific regional analyses are required. Roles and responsibilities of the various roles must be clear. (Note: it is important that there are adequate numbers of social workers and managers to direct the work of these support roles.)
 - Allow clerical staff to assist with CRMS (referrals, demographics, risk assessment, case notes). (Note: may require legal opinion.) Allow social workers flexibility in terms of how case notes are entered into CRMS, i.e. type themselves or hand-write/dictate for transcription by clerical staff thus accommodating strengths and weaknesses of individual workers. Train and/or increase the number of clerical staff accordingly.
 - Enhance delegation of authority for social workers (especially Code 26 in Eastern and Western regions).
 - Streamline staffing process at all regions to reduce time spent by managers.
- 4.2 Enhance clinical supervision by managers.
- Ensure that time of managers that is freed up (per recommendation 4.1) is redirected to clinical supervision.
 - Invest in managers to ensure they have the skills and competencies to provide adequate clinical supervision. Provide managers with training on clinical supervision (as part of the provincial competency-based training program).
 - Ensure that this increased focus on clinical supervision does not negatively impact the classification of managers.

Summary of Recommendations (cont'd)

PEOPLE (cont'd)

- 4.3 Further invest in orientation, training and professional development. Specifically:
- CYFS Program orientation should be developed centrally and rolled out consistently across the Province.
 - Workers should be restricted from handling a caseload or all functions of work until they have completed orientation, including initial training, and have been delegated authority. They should be buddied with/mentored by an experienced worker for several months. Initial client visits should take place with the buddy/mentor.
 - As is currently planned, competency-based training and professional development should be developed provincially (including clinical supervision, documentation and case notes).
 - Dedicated training resources should be in place in every region and provincially.
 - Managers require a significant investment in training: clinical supervision (as per recommendation 4.2), managerial (e.g. performance management / mentoring / coaching, staffing), administrative (e.g. budgeting, time sheets, expense reporting).
 - Managers should be trained before front line workers receive the same training.
 - The Department should work with Memorial University to enhance the CYFS curriculum in the School of Social Work.
- 4.4 The scope of responsibilities of the Provincial Director of CYFS should be limited to the programs legislated under the *CYFS Act* and *Adoption Act*. Dealing with the responsibilities of the Provincial Director beyond this will require a change to the management structure of the Division.

Summary of Recommendations (cont'd)

PEOPLE (cont'd)

- 4.5 Continue work on workload measurement approach and guidelines.
- Build on work currently being undertaken by the CRMS Documentation and Statistical Reporting Working Groups, which encompasses MIS Standards implementation, including workload measurement.
 - The Province should participate and actively encourage progress nationally and internationally with respect to workload measurement.
 - In the interim, a provincial approach and guidelines should be developed to allow for a consistent approach to resourcing throughout the Province.
 - Additional social workers and managers will be required throughout NL to bring workload to a reasonable level.
- 4.6 Ensure that on call practices across the Province are consistent (to the extent possible), and that workers are adequately trained to meet on call needs.
- 4.7 Ensure that classification and compensation are fair and equitable across the Province.
- 4.8 Ensure there are formal processes in place in each region to re-assign cases when workers are on leave or absent.

Summary of Recommendations (cont'd)

PROCESSES AND TOOLS

Regional Risk Management

- 5.1 The CYFS Program should actively participate in and support the regional approach to risk management.
- Provide top down direction and support for completion of occurrence reports.
 - Increase risk management awareness of staff through top level support, training, and on-line promotion, specifically, provide access to information on each region's intranet website.

Information Technology

- 6.1 Undertake a comprehensive evaluation and develop a plan for CRMS with the objective of identifying how to make the application more user friendly and ensuring it is clinically sound.
- CRMS has been operating for more than five years and has not yet been evaluated.
 - This process should include development of a strategic plan for rolling out additional modules of CRMS.
 - The plan should document the process for making and communicating enhancements. In future, the nature of the enhancement must be communicated more clearly to the regions.
 - The link between CRMS and policies must be clearer, i.e. the impact of any CRMS enhancement on provincial policy must be clearly articulated.
 - Continue implementation of policy direction that allows frontline staff to make changes/edits where appropriate.
 - Once enhancements are made, update CRMS user manual and provide access on-line.

Summary of Recommendations (cont'd)

PROCESSES & TOOLS (cont'd)

Information Technology

- 6.2 Separate responsibility for CRMS training from CRMS technical support.
- Until CRMS is stable, CRMS technical support should be provided provincially. Regional help desks lack technical knowledge of CRMS, which is changing frequently. This will require additional resources provincially. (Note: additional technical support cannot be provided by existing CRMS development resources.) The technical support resource(s) should be dedicated to CYFS.
 - This will allow CRMS Coordinators to focus on provision of timely and comprehensive training.
 - CRMS training curriculum development should be developed provincially to avoid duplication of effort. E-learning programs should be developed to supplement classroom sessions (once social workers are more comfortable with CRMS, e-learning will likely become an acceptable approach).
 - CRMS Coordinators should continue to come together regularly to share best practices.
- 6.3 Update policies and access to CRMS in order to enable clerical support staff to enter referrals, demographics and social worker case notes (sign-off from responsible social worker required) into CRMS.
- Legal opinion required.
 - Assess alternatives for social workers to document their notes (including digital dictation in portable handheld devices, which requires transcription and voice recognition software that automatically transcribes).
- 6.4 Include case documentation as part of the competency-based training being developed by the Province.
- 6.5 Provide access to other technological tools to support the work of CYFS.
- Workers and managers should have access to a laptop to work from locations other than the office, cell phone, and dictaphone to allow more flexibility in work practices.
 - These resources can be shared depending on demand.

Summary of Recommendations (cont'd)

PROCESSES & TOOLS (cont'd)

Information Sharing

- 7.1 A provincial policy or guideline should be developed to guide information sharing. It should be consistent with the Model of Coordination of Services to Children and Youth and require that individuals share information. It should identify what information is to be provided, under what circumstances, to whom.
- 7.2 Regional policies for information sharing should be developed or, if they already exist, enforced.
- 7.3 The Department, in conjunction with the regions, should provide education on duty to report as part of enforcing the legislation.

Human Resources

- 8.1 Streamline staffing practices in all regions.
 - Determine what is truly mandated under the collective agreement; identify areas that can be negotiated.
 - Identify where temporary positions should be converted to permanent positions.
 - Identify best practices regarding public sector staffing.
 - Determine if new transition agreement can address some of these issues.
- 8.2 Enhance the relationship between HR and CYFS in each region.
 - Best practice would suggest that managers should be heavily involved in HR processes (i.e. staffing, mentoring), but the processes should be streamlined and efficient.
- 8.3 Each region must put in place a formal performance management process.
 - Semi-annual or annual reviews of all staff.
 - Personal plans developed that align with strategic plan and operational plan, including personal training and professional development needs.
 - Performance appraisal process tailored to meet the needs of CYFS.

Summary of Recommendations (cont'd)

PROCESSES & TOOLS (cont'd)

Wellness Programs

- 9.1 Regions must ensure that CYFS staff are involved in development of wellness programs.
- Programs must then be well communicated to CYFS staff (including posting on intranet) and staff must be given the opportunity to participate.

Finance

- 10.1 Empower social workers with the ability to authorize all appropriate financial requests – to approve programs and funding for clients for all codes – within limits and with proper controls (will require change in provincial policy to align with direction that is evolving in regions).
- 10.2 Increase the number of Financial Assessment Officers and/or budget analysts in the regions to allow social workers to delegate the tactical aspects of client financial matters.

Clerical Support

- 11.1 Expand the role of clerical staff in all regions and add resources in the regions and the Province as required. The expanded role should include:
- Enhanced role related to documentation in CRMS (consider digital dictation where clerical staff are not on-site).
 - Assistance with file preparation.
 - Assistance with tactical financial matters (in the absence of Financial Assessment Officers).

Summary of Recommendations (cont'd)

PROCESSES & TOOLS (cont'd)

Legal Services

- 12.1 Improve access to legal services by the Provincial Office and the regions.
- Each region and the Provincial Office should have ready access to legal council knowledgeable of CYFS.
 - Where agents are used, regions should have input into selection of agents, based on past experience. Consideration should be given to having regions go directly to pre-selected agents.
- 12.2 Develop training in court preparation as part of provincially developed competency-based training for Child Protection workers.
- Topics could include interpretation of the *Act*, completion of forms, expectations for court appearances.
 - Various forms of training could be used including video / DVD, plus a manual, to supplement classroom training, mock court room appearances, etc.

Physical Space

- 13.1 Improvements must be made to physical space. Specifically:
- Given the sensitive and confidential nature of their work, CYFS social workers working in cubicles should be provided with office space. If that is not possible in the short term, CYFS social workers should be separated from social workers from other programs.
 - CYFS files must be stored appropriately at all sites as well as in the Department.

Summary of Recommendations

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Health & Community Services must develop an integrated multi-year **plan** of activities to improve the CYFS system across the Province.

- Work with the regions to develop an integrated workplan describing all the initiatives that will be undertaken to improve the system. The plan should include the sequencing and duration of initiatives, as well as the responsible party.
- The plan should incorporate all the recommendations from this report and others (e.g. Report of Minister's Advisory Committee).
- Progress toward the plan should be monitored on an ongoing basis. The plan should be embedded in the Department's operational plan and progress reports should be prepared periodically.
- A formal external review should be undertaken in 12-18 months to determine if the identified gaps have been closed.
- Communicate the plan to the CYFS system and the public, which will help establish confidence in the system

Top 10 Most Critical Recommendations

The following 10 recommendations are considered by Deloitte to be most critical; i.e. implementation should commence immediately.

- 1. A provincial strategy for CYFS should be developed that articulates the vision for CYFS as part of an integrated Department with a focus on child development.**
- 2. The authority of the Provincial Director and the accountability of the regions must be strengthened. This can be accomplished by establishing a formal accountability mechanism between the Department and the regions.**
- 3. The Provincial Director must have the necessary resources to fulfill the legislated role. Existing temporary positions should be made permanent.**
- 4. The scope of the responsibilities of the Provincial Director of CYFS should be limited to the programs legislated under the *CYFS Act* and *Adoption Act*. Dealing with the responsibilities of the Provincial Director beyond this will require a change to the management structure of the Division.**
- 5. Ensure that work is done by the most appropriate resource.**
- 6. Enhance clinical supervision by managers.**
- 7. Further invest in orientation, training and professional development.**
- 8. Eastern Region must immediately move from an interim management structure to a permanent structure for CYFS to provide needed stability. This could include formalization of the current interim structure or consideration of options. (Consideration must be given to the vulnerability of the Director of CYFS role in the large Eastern Region with only one incumbent).**
- 9. Undertake a comprehensive evaluation and develop a plan for CRMS with the objective of identifying how to make the application more user friendly and ensuring it is clinically sound.**
- 10. The Department of Health & Community Services, in collaboration with the regions, must develop an integrated workplan of activities to improve the CYFS system across the Province.**

Closing Remarks

- Everyone working in the CYFS system cooperated fully in the conduct of this review.
- Despite numerous reviews having been completed in the past, most of which resulted in few changes to the system, there is cautious optimism that substantive improvements will be made as a result of this review.
- Such improvements are required to create a sustainable Child, Youth and Family Services program that values children, youth and families, as well as those who serve them.

Deloitte.

Deloitte, one of Canada's leading professional services firms, provides audit, tax, consulting, and financial advisory services through more than 6,800 people in 51 offices. Deloitte operates in Québec as Samson Bélair/Deloitte & Touche s.e.n.c.r.l. The firm is dedicated to helping its clients and its people excel. Deloitte is the Canadian member firm of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu.

Deloitte refers to one or more of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, a Swiss Verein, its member firms, and their respective subsidiaries and affiliates. As a Swiss Verein (association), neither Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu nor any of its member firms has any liability for each other's acts or omissions. Each of the member firms is a separate and independent legal entity operating under the names "Deloitte," "Deloitte & Touche," "Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu," or other related names. Services are provided by the member firms or their subsidiaries or affiliates and not by the Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Verein.

© Deloitte & Touche LLP and affiliated entities.

Member of
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu