

Fraser Valley Multi-Agency Partnership (FV MAP)

Meeting Minutes: Tuesday June 18, 2019 - 1:00pm-3:30pm

Location: **Archway Community Services** 2420 Montrose Avenue, Abbotsford, BC

This meeting was held on the unceded territories of the Sto:lo peoples.

Attendees: Alexandra Dawley (MOSAIC); Katherine Griffin (MOSAIC); Donna Lo (ACS); Richard Belcham (Inasmuch); Kanta Naik (SD34 SWIS); Dardane Shuska (ACS); Lisa Sadler (Langley School District SWIS); Lynda Brummit (City of Abbotsford); Sukaina Rehmtulla (CCS); Mandana Salimian (Canadian Red Cross); Sherman Chan (MOSAIC); Tammy Johnson (Inasmuch)

Distance: Manilyn Corpuz, MJTT

1:00 PM

- Co-Chair: Alexandra Dawley (MOSAIC)
- Alexandra provided welcome and introduction to FV MAP Meeting, and acknowledged that the FV MAP meeting was held on the unceded territory of the Sto:lo First Nation.
- Alexandra expressed that ACS has become Archway Community Services.
- Attendees introduced themselves.
- May 14, 2019 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved.
- The agenda was approved.

1:30 PM

Presentation: Canadian Red Cross – Supporting Refugee Claimants

- **Mandana Salimian – Emergency Management Coordinator, Canadian Red Cross**

Introduction to Red Cross/Red Crescent

- Overview of fundamental principles held by organisation
- Founded in 1909; present in 190 countries today
- Mission: improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity in Canada and around the world
- 3 main areas in Canada: Disasters & Emergencies; Health & Wellness; Prevention & Safety
 - o Refugee claimant program falls under Disasters & Emergencies (in the Emergency Management program)

First Contact Program: November 2008 – October 2017

- 24-hour multilingual Info + Referral Line for RCs or those wishing to make claim in BC
- Emergency accommodation/transportation/food to claimants for first 72 hours from start of RC process
- Entirely staffed by volunteers + only 1 staff member

Reason for transition from First Contact to BC211

- Expertise → Highly trained; interpretation; etc.
- Resources → Capacity; database; data tracking; etc.
- Reducing duplication

BC211 – Info and Referrals

- Info Kit available in 5 languages → Provided to RCs at ports of entry, IRCC office, settlement agencies
- Call 2-1-1
 - o Phone agent conducts brief needs + vulnerability assessment
 - o Provides I&R:
 - SOS
 - Legal Aid
 - MOSAIC
 - Others as needed
 - o If caller presents urgent needs → Dispatches call to a Red Cross on-call Duty Officer

Red Cross:

- BC211 triages calls and Red Cross continues to support vulnerable RCs as referred by BC211
- Red Cross continues to provide vulnerable families up to 72-hour assistance for commercial lodging, clothing, food and transportation
 - o Focus on commercial lodging
- **Question (Sukaina):** What if RCs still call Red Cross directly?
 - o First Contact phone number is no longer connected.
 - o If RC calls provincial 1-800 # for Red Cross, it will be answered by Duty Agent on call
 - o Clients and client serving agencies are encouraged to go through BC211 to most effectively funnel calls.
- **Question (Alexandra):** The commercial lodging available at hotels through Red Cross is a huge asset. Is that available to RCs in the Fraser Valley?
 - o Red Cross works with travel agencies nationally
 - o If someone is in FV, the travel agency will find commercial lodging with availability
- **Question (Sukaina):** How long can they stay in the hotel?
 - o 72-hours is the official mandate
 - o However, there is some flexibility when it comes to RCs
- **Question (Donna):** Does Red Cross help family find housing while they're in hotel paid by Red Cross?
 - o No → Role of settlement agencies
 - o Red cross is dedicated to *emergency* support
- **Question (Sherman):** Does Red Cross have geographic settlement data?
 - o No, only first point of contact data is collected.

2018-2019 Red Cross Refugee Claimant stats in BC (until June):

- Red Cross has served 315 refugee claimants (financial support) → 80 family units
 - o Average family size = 4
- 30 countries of origin
 - o Middle East (Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Egypt)
 - o Recent increase of South/Central America
- Almost 95% of services provided = Commercial lodging
 - o 313 provided with lodging
- Recent trend: Refugee claimant families moving to BC from Quebec

Questions:**Question (Katherine):** Could you clarify vulnerability criteria?

- As long as you are a family and in need, BC211 will refer to Red Cross
- Single male and female → *Not referred* (until presenting more complex situation, e.g. domestic violence, mental wellbeing issues, physical challenges ext.)

Contact Info:

Mandana Salimian

Mandana.salimian@redcross.ca**2:00 PM – BREAK AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITY****2:10 PM – Review of Resources to support Refugee Claimants in the Fraser Valley**

- Collective review of resources identified in May 2019 meeting brainstorming
- Discussion: Gaps, Successes, Effective Processes
- **Goal:** Refugee claimant-specific resource guide
- **Exercise (in pairs):** Of the services we have collectively identified in the May meeting, identify the top 5 and top 10 services that you regularly access in your community. Is there anything listed that you would dispute? Gaps in this list to address?
- We will also explore with MAP BC what might be on the website under MAP FV

Comment - Langley: ISS provides Stream B and other agencies Stream A for RCs in Langley → Unpredictable and insufficient service times. Clients who require services are falling through cracks or Langley agencies serve off side of desk.

- Lisa will send a list to Alexandra of services/conversation circles/etc. that SWIS knows about in Langley to share through FV MAP mailing list.
- Stats from BC Refugee Hub → reflect 0 RCs in Langley but this is not accurate
 - o Alexandra comment: MAP FV priority is to contribute accurate, comprehensive data

The resources available will be divided based upon municipality, drawing from feedback from today's exercise, in preparation for this autumn.

- This will be a dynamic, evolving document. Possibility to share aspects of this on the MAPBC website.

3:00 PM – World Refugee Day 2019

Alexandra, on behalf of Jennifer MCC: June 22nd Mill Lake Park WRD event

- Posters passed out in 3 languages
- MCC leading, Inasmuch, ACS with tables, MOSAIC and other groups attending.

Alexandra: Abbotsford Housing and Homelessness Forum in the morning of WRD (June 20)

Richard: “Why hire refugee claimants” Lunch with Chamber of Commerce (June 20)

- Tickets available on Chamber of Commerce website

Alexandra: CLEAR Symposium → Addressing accreditation barriers (June 25)

- At Hyatt Hotel
- It would be great to have Fraser Valley representation as well
- Alexandra will be presenting on challenges for RCs around accreditation

Richard: Screening of “Inside my Heart” documentary at Matsqui Theatre (June 20 7 pm)

- Inasmuch merchandise available
- Launch of “Welcome Homes” pilot
- Tickets are 5.50 on website
- **Tammy:** open to all, family, friends, outside of Abbotsford → good opportunity to raise awareness and introduce new people to issues

3:10 PM - Agency Updates

Sukaina (CCS):

- LINC closed for summer
- Settlement → limited summer hours (Tuesdays)
- Summer Conversation Circles: Monday, Wednesday evenings; and Tuesday during the day
- Regular programming will resume September 16

Dardane (ACS): Around 10 ACS staff will be at Mill Lake WRD event at June 22

Donna (ACS): June 25th information session for refugee claimants → Will be introducing counselling services, presented as “wellness opportunities, yoga ext.” The counselor will be at info session to introduce herself

- Free 2-day per week, 5-week Summer camps → literacy summer camps for middle school and high school (open to all status)
 - o 12 registered already; max 15

Kanta (SD34): large # of children of temp foreign workers → raising awareness at teacher level of different needs (RCs vs. TFW vs. etc)

- Approach: serve them all (regardless of funding differentiation)

Alexandra (MOSAIC): will offer FirstAid/Foodsafe certificates for refugee claimants Vancouver – July, Surrey – August. → Will circulate registration info. If this is a need in your community please advise.

- Planning to offer summer programming for children/youth
- Stats = 68 new clients served under MOSAIC Stream B funding last month

3:15 PM –Adjournment

We will break for July and August! Have a fantastic summer!

NEXT MEETING SAVE THE DATE: September 10th 2019, 1:00pm-3:30pm @ Mennonite Central Committee