



MAP Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 25, 2021 - 9:30AM – 12:00 PM

Attendees: Jenny Lam (Options), Thanh Lam (MPNH), Rod Holloway (LABC), Patricia Lim (LABC), Iris Solorzano (Options), Savleen Kaur (Options), Shelley Dhaliwal (Options), Patricia Castillo (Options), Brad Kinnie (JHC), Roberto Ortega (JHC), Barry Growe (JHC), Ricardo Rocha (JHC), Carillon Kinley (IRCC), Sharon Johal (IRCC), Xania Labreche (IRB), Angela Hu (IRB), Sandeep Johal (IRB), Marzieh Nezakat (MOSAIC), Jackie Sarvini (MOSAIC), Mssko Wakil (MOSAIC), Monika Isaak (Archway CS), Geeta Bhardwaj (Archway CS), Devinder Chattha (PICS), Raminder Kang (PICS), Ana Maria Bustamente (Burnaby Family Life/BLIP), Sabrina Dumitra (AMSSA), Masha Rademakers (Impact North Shore), Louisa Brett (Covenant House), Nazanin Moghadami (Rainbow Refugee), Elmira Tayvar (IRIS/UBC), Selamawit Hagos (IRIS/UBC), Valentina Stanciu (MSDPR), Nitsa Provias (MSDPR), Joni Rose (MUNI), Tammy Johnson (inasmuch), Sarah Mills (Inasmuch), Koyali Burman (SVNH), Loren Balisky (Kinbrace), Derek Chu (Kinbrace), Ryan Reid (Kinbrace), Adriana Zepeda (Kinbrace), Sophia Underhill (Ready Tour), Fran Gallo, Mahi Khalef (SOS-ISSofBC), Julia Wu (bc211), Sara Lopez (VAST), Mariana Martinez V (VAST), Diana Barry (Vancity), Sireen El-Nashar (Zaytuna), Ali Mustafa (Muslim Food Bank), Wen Ren (LMNH), Arely Rodriguez (LMNH), Richard Soo (ECC), Yola Vargas, Jenny Moss (MAP)

Regrets: Adrienne Bale & DIVERSEcity team, Sabrina Dumitra (AMSSA), Huda Bolbolan (SVNH)

Welcome from Co-Chair: Thanh Lam. She made especial mention of those MAP member agencies located within the BC flood area (Archway and Inasmuch).

At the same time pleased to recognize that the Order in Council on claimants arriving over the border has been rescinded so that claimants are beginning to arrive. And that although the Safe Third Country Agreement still applies at least some claimants are able to come to safety.

Thanh acknowledged and thanked the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish peoples from whose unceded lands she was hosting the meeting. It is MAP's intention to collaborate with indigenous peoples to foster informed relationships with refugee claimants and our In Focus event (Dec 2nd) is evidence of such.

Thanh also **acknowledged the generous funding from Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MUNI)** that makes MAP's work possible.

Thanh welcomed participants from **28 MAP member agencies**.

First time introductions:

- Xania – Acting Registrar with IRB-RPD division
- Sandeep – Acting Registry Support Officer at IRB

Thanh covered the meeting protocol including muting, the meeting is recorded for Minute taking only – it will be deleted once the Minutes are approved.

The **Agenda** was outlined, and breakout rooms described: 1) BC CHARMS project hosted by guest speakers 2) Settlement

Agency Updates were added to the CHAT and distributed later the same day.

The **October 28, 2021 meeting Minutes** were approved

(There was a correction to the name of one attendee at the October meeting)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

IRB Update – provided by **Xania Labreche (IRB-RPD)**

For the previous 3 months the Principal Referrals to the Vancouver office:

838 referrals in BC (from land border and inland office)

1,256 including associated family members

In **October** alone there were 144 Principal referrals (203 including family members)

47 – Iran

34 – India

9 – Mexico

4 – Afghanistan

5- China

45 – other countries

IRB is monitoring the road closures in BC regarding submission of documents and encourages everyone to use email, fax or other electronic means when in correspondence with the IRB. Documents can be submitted via email, mail, FAX, EPost, and Portal. It is currently not possible to do personal delivery at our office.

New Legal Clinic at the IHC: Jenny Lam, Rod Holloway (LABC), Fran Gallo

Jenny Lam – MOU to provide NGO services at the IHC will be signed shortly, and services will begin in January.

During the development of the services, we realized quickly we needed more legal resources, and we approached Legal Aid of BC who very generously agreed to set up a clinic rotating lawyers from their duty counsel program for the use of detainees.

Rod Holloway, Managing Lawyer – Appeals at LABC described the new service:

- The basic idea is to add time to the basic duty counsel system in the afternoon (Wednesdays)
- The first visit was a few weeks ago and it was apparent there is a need for interpreting.
- Fran Gallo offered to help with finding volunteer interpreters and creating a group.
- First clinic with the volunteer interpreters was November 24 and it went without issue.
- CBSA very helpful – they canvass folks in detention and provide a list of persons and languages they speak a day ahead for Fran to arrange interpreters.
- Sessions are 30-minutes, and it is conducted by phone, though we hope to move to online, so communication is easier when everyone is ready.
- Realize that some small changes may need to be made after some experience.

Fran Gallo

Thanks to those who have already volunteered – we have a list of 17 interpreter volunteers with many languages.

- Still in need of many languages: (not needed - Spanish and Vietnamese) – those that common in the BC lower mainland.
- Be available Wed afternoons – usually scheduled side by side same language for 30 minutes each.
- Can opt to do less – but great if same interpreter can do up to 3 sessions in a row.
- Must be prompt but most important is confidential – cannot be shared.
- Don't need to be certified –though this is a bonus.
- Immigration related interpretation experience preferred.
- Can be emotional and stressful – so you must be prepared for that.
- Confidentiality agreement must be signed – that will go to CBSA and LABC for record-keeping so be prepared that your information will be shared with them.
- For interpreters: glossary of relevant vocabulary to help with interpreting
there will be a training soon from those who have had some experience.
- Not an opportunity for advocacy – just clear interpretation of lawyer and detainee.
- Once NGO service at the IHC is set up there will be referral either way.

Question: Loren (Kinbrace): How many were refugee claimants

Response: (Rod) – this information is not recorded, we could ask and record what kind of immigration law we are asked about, but this has not been requested yet.

We do keep a list of people seen – but this is for lawyer's eyes only.

Loren – would be interested in knowing the % who are claimants.

Rod added that they see everyone regardless of their immigration status as there is a need.

CCR Consultation – Nov 29 – Dec 3, 2021: Mariana Martinez Vieyra (IP Chair/CCR)

<https://pheedloop.com/ccrfallconsultation2021/site/schedule/>

Mariana provided information about upcoming CCR Fall Consultation – MAP agencies will be most interested on the meetings and workshops connected with the **Inland Protection Committee**, of which she is co-chair.

Encouraged everyone to consider attending from all levels of agencies: place for NGO's government and others to gather to discuss issues and advocate for better services.

- Monday 29th: at 12pm PT – Working group meeting for Inland Protection
- Thursday 12pm – second Working Group meeting to follow up and create resolutions
- Theme of the consultation: **Welcoming Newcomers with Open Borders**
- 3 workshops organized under the Inland Protection banner:

- **Preparing for a sudden increase in refugee claimants** – with Barry Growe (MAP BC). Presentation will outline MAP BC's work on planning for an unexpected demand for services – 3 breakout rooms to discuss local needs – one led by Kinbrace's Derek Chu.

- **Regularization:** Fran Gallo & Sara Lopez are part of the organizing committee – concerned with rights of ALL migrants/people without status: 'leave no-one behind' – and how to make this a reality: speakers are: local lawyer Amanda Aziz, 2 failed claimants, expert professor, and advocates from eastern Canada.

- **Addressing gender and its impact on IRB hearings** – includes 2 recent claimants who went through hearing process, Peggy Lee (lawyer) dialoguing about the Guidelines 4 & 9 on gender in hearings and joined by 2 IRB representatives to join the discussion.

- **Caucus – follow up on virtual hearings monitoring project** – CCR has undertaken a thorough tracking of the process and submitted the report to IRB to continue the conversation – **Sophia Underhill** is moderating.
(Consultation report will be available on the CCR website for members)

In Focus #4: See the Humans behind the Trauma- indigenous and asylum seeker experience. Savleen Kaur: MAP BC Information Working Group

A conversation about how displacement and trauma are shared will be moderated by Mariana Martinez V (VAST) with great speakers: Linda Epp (NEC) and Malena Mokhovikova

In order to provide support there will be counselors on board at event.

See <https://mapbc.org/see-the-humans-behind-the-trauma-indigenous-and-asylum-seeker-experience/> for background information, suggested reading and the event recording.

Inasmuch Update – Tammy Johnson

Thanks to all who have reached out to check on Inasmuch during the flooding that is 5 minutes east of them – none of the families nor staff needed to be evacuated and all are fine. Thanks for your concern. Tammy and her husband are leaving for Thailand to pick up their adopted son next week – so this is her last day and she will be on parental leave till next October.

So, who is running Inasmuch? They are fine – business is as usual, **Sara** (Settlement worker) Settlement@inasmuch.ca is serving families in valley. **Kelly** (board chair) Director@inasmuch.ca is taking over supervision until they hire a new ED hopefully early next year. **Roberta** Roberta@inasmuch.ca is host and also running ESL and supporting volunteers. A new admin person has been hired. Tammy reassured MAP that Inasmuch is doing fine and continuing, and she will return after her paternal leave.

Presentation: An Overview of the BC CHARMS Project

Marzieh Nezakat (Manager RSIP, MOSAIC and co-chair of MAP Housing Working Group)

Jacqueline Sarvini (Project Coordinator, BC CHARMS)

Than introduced the speakers and welcomed them to present

Please see the slides shared by BC CHARMS attached.

BC CHARMS was started because: lack of information and pre-screening of housing candidates, referral and tracking insufficient, and collaboration between agencies and housing providers lacking.

Jackie provided an overview of the project to date, it's methodology, various sub-projects.

POLL#1: How do you feel about using new technology?

9% - I'm not confident enough without proper training

51% - With proper training I am willing to learn

40% - I'm usually able to figure out new technologies

With that background **Marzieh** walked us through the **workflow process** with the database as actual users: Apricot 360 Social Solutions. It is an easy-to-use system and data is kept in Canada.

2 main users: settlement worker and housing provider, other stakeholders such as lawyers, shelter staff, police etc. may refer clients in. Therefore, the referral form will be a PUBLIC form.

Question:

Brad (JHC) Question: from the initial referrer, the information is picked up by a Settlement Worker...and then intake. Which Settlement Worker or Agency picks up the initial referral?

Reporting process:

Reports can be generated such as:

- Total refugee claimants seeking housing
- Total refugees housed
- Time waiting
- Search & placement by location

POLL #2 What would you like to see in the BC CHARMS Database Training Session? (multiple answers)

Listed in order of preference:

72% How to refer a household to a vacancy

69 % How to work with the workflows

66% How to learn more about my responsibilities and rights

55% How to pull reports

41% How to keep the data secured

Training

Will be available online at a time to suit you

There will be a 'train the trainer' model too – so you can have a trainer within your organization.

Poll #3 – Would you like to be one of BC CHARMS trainers?

Discussed in the Breakout Room

Early 2022 – launch of the BC CHARMS database.

Jackie covered why this system will be so useful for the sector and assured members that BC CHARMS will be able to take everyone's comments into consideration to provide a great tool for fair and efficient housing referrals.

Participants went to the 2 BREAKOUT rooms: BC CHARMS and Settlement.

**Quantitative and qualitative update on Refugee Claimants in the Lower Mainland
Mahi Khalef (for Bahar)**

- BC Refugee Hub has posted recent video webinars on the website:
 - Canada Refugee Resettlement Program
 - Canada Private Sponsorship of refugees Program
 - Digital literacy and security
- Created a new info page with links to new statistics on Afghan arrivals

- And in conjunction with BC4Afghans and ISSofBC posted resources for newly arrived Afghans – medical providers, grocery stores and other resources for newly arrived Afghans
- Soon to release a new infographic on refugee arrivals and the processes pre and post arrival for them.

Report from MAP Emergency Task Force

Barry Growe (Journey Home Community)

The Task Force is well underway with its mandate– using the 50-page report Richard Belcham wrote as the basis of our work – we are examining its assumptions and descriptions of the kind of services required in an emergency.

We are also narrowing it down so that the report becomes a plan that can be implemented in a short period of time in response to an emergency – and can be kept fresh so that it is usable 5 years from now.

Will complete task force work in mid February – we will hire a writer to write the plan and present to MAP for comments and contributions so that it will be complete by the end of February.

Comment:

Jenny Moss (MAP) We have circulated a new survey to those agencies who responded in the spring, and we would appreciate as many completed surveys as possible. Please ask Jenny Moss (info@mapbc.org) if you would like a copy.

The new survey focuses on two questions:

- a) Are you seeing more refugee claimants?
- b) What is your capacity to respond in 'normal' times, and how much can you stretch beyond that?

Special Update

Selamawet Hagos – IRIS research project

'Evaluating inequities in Refugee & Immigrants' Health Service Access'

Now have the survey results in their first published paper based on 87 interviews with immigrant women and providers.

Results showed the damage done to patients by the policy of a 3-month MSP waiting period.

Especially difficult for pregnant women and children, resulting in delayed care, created high costs and perpetuated discrimination

Launched a media campaign with Sanctuary Health which resulted in media pick up in October highlighting the findings and harm done.

In response the Medical Commission said they would halt the policy in November, but then reversed their decision until 2022.

But IRIS continues to collect signatures for the petition and would appreciate everyone signing.

SEE: slide attached with links to research findings and the petition

One pager of research results

AGENCY UPDATES VERBALLY (updates from the CHAT below)

- **Sophia Underhill (Ready Tour)**
Ready Tours are coming up December 10 and December 22 at 9:30 am on Microsoft Teams
Contact at ready@refugeeclaim.ca
But Sophia will be taking mat leave from mid-January as she is having a baby!
- **Ryan Reid (Kinbrace)** also leaving on 10-month Parental Leave starting today– reach out to Mohammed at Kinbrace (mohammed@kinbrace.ca) for housing.
- **Barry Growe (JHC) re: Meanwhile Spaces** – well underway now - Concert Properties – providing 9 units in a building that will be torn down in July. They are sitting empty and so JHC has started housing refugee claimants and some government-sponsored Afghan refugees via ISSofBC. They have an Afghan staff member who is on site and can help.
- **Ali Mustafa (Muslim Food Bank)**
Saleem Spindari has joined as a Manager at Aspire Community Services
Event tomorrow morning for Afghan arrivals
Launching a food bank program focused on serving refugee claimants
- **Monika (Archway CS/FV MAP)**
FV MAP now has their own tab on MAP BC website. <https://mapbc.org/about/map-fraser-valley/>
If you have any questions about what we do, would like to join our meetings, or know of anyone who would benefit from joining our meetings, please e-mail Monika at monika.isaak@archway.ca or Tracy Tang at ttang@mosaicbc.org
- **Loren (Kinbrace) – Changing the way we welcome refugee claimants**
Loren Balisky (Kinbrace)
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/changing-the-way-we-welcome-refugee-claimants-research-recommendations-tickets-215851958017>
10 December 2021 1:00 pm Pacific
Changing the Way We Welcome Refugee Claimants - Research & Recommendations
About this event

“From Humanitarian to Human” is a community-based research project led with the guiding question of: “What would a values-based, human-centered, and transformational welcome for and with people seeking refuge and protection in Canada look like?”

A feedback poll was launched re: this MAP meeting – thank you everyone for your participation.

Adjourned 12:00 PM.

Next Meeting: Thursday January 27 online. Enjoy your holidays everyone!

Agency Updates from the CHAT (previously circulated)

Sara Lopez VAST

VAST provides a support group Getting Through It, for refugee claimants on Wednesdays from 10 am - 12 pm, via Zoom. There are interpreters available. For more info please email: referrals@vast-vancouver.ca
In addition, if you want to refer a client for individual counselling services, please.

1. Go to website <https://www.vastbc.ca/>

2. Click on Make a Referral.

3. Fill out the online form and save it.

VAST Intake team will contact the client in first language. Please be aware that there may be a waiting time to receive the services. Thanks

Brad Kinnie - Journey Home Community

Journey Home Community, through our Meanwhile Spaces initiative, has 6 two-bedroom units immediately available for families of up to 5 individuals or to be shared by 2-3 singles.

This is transitional housing available until June 2022. The rate is \$200 above income assistance rates. If you want to find out about the Meanwhile Spaces initiative and to make a referral, contact Ricardo Rocha /

ricardo@journeyhomecommunity.ca

Masha Rademakers (Impact North Shore)

Impact North Shore is organizing an online Zoom workshop: 'How to apply for a Work Permit Extension', taking place Wednesday December 8, 6:00 - 7:30 PM. Registration Link: <https://impactnorthshore.ca/our-workshops/how-to-apply-for-a-work-permit-extension/>

Raminder Kang (PICS)

Progressive Intercultural Community Services (PICS) Society

Please feel free to refer Refugee Claimant clients to us. We have the capacity to serve in the following languages: English, Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Dari, Pashto, Farsi, Arabic and Spanish.

Contact: Ph. 604-596-7722 Ext. 140

Fax 604-596-7721

Email: settlement.reception@pics.bc.ca

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