

WE Value Partnership

Settlement success. Together.



WE VALUE UPDATE

April - December 2020



Settlement Success. Together.

The WE Value Partnership is excited to share project updates from April through December 2020 with its stakeholders.

Our project and team are not alone in having experienced difficulties or setbacks due to the COVID 19 pandemic, but we would like to take this opportunity to share our progress, and how the WE Value model, team and champions have stayed resilient and flexible during a very difficult time for our clients and communities overall.

In this update, you can expect to see ongoing updates in our four key pillars of Service Delivery, Community Engagement, Technology and Data Collection & Dissemination.

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DISSEMINATION**

**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

TECHNOLOGY

**SERVICE DELIVERY &
COVID 19**

Data Collection & Dissemination

We continue to work on analysing the data of the 185 clients assessed prior to the start of the pandemic, albeit with a renewed focus. A full report based on the initial data as presented at the March 6, 2020 community forum will be completed by late September or early October with Dr. Nakhaie as the lead author.

That report will focus on understanding the specific characteristics, experiences, strengths, and challenges of that cohort prior to the start of the pandemic. Future reports will analyse how those factors change(d) as we conduct follow-up questionnaires with that cohort (beginning in August). With data collected through follow-ups and analysed against their baseline data (pre-pandemic), we should be able to be better understand how this cohort was and is impacted by the pandemic on several dimensions.

It is important note that the initial follow-up to be conducted with this group, will all begin in August (six months post-start of the pandemic), instead of 3-months after their individual WE Value Assessment. This inconsistency came about because of delays in associated tech development and the impact of the pandemic on our organization.

As such, for this cohort, follow up intervals will be categorized as six-months post-pandemic and one-year post-pandemic. To adapt to the realities of the pandemic, WE Value follow-ups have been adjusted to include COVID-19 specific questions that will assist our assessor to better meet the need of our clients during this time, and to collect more pointed, and standardized information.

Further details around mitigation strategies can be found in a separate section of this update. We continue to explore ways to present data to community stakeholders to represent the capacities, goals, and trends from newcomers making Windsor-Essex their home.

A Message from the Community

" The work you all have done on this project is simply astounding and inspiring. Also, something that I noticed that I felt I just had to say—everything from the feel of the room to the conversations at the table truly had a sense of collaboration and engagement. In my experience, that vibe happens when people feel respected, connected, and informed. "

- Leonardo Gil, Project Manager: Regional Community Safety & Wellbeing Plan, *City of Windsor*

Technology

As reported in March, the K2 system was slated for completion in April 2020. With core components of the system completed, the focus shifted to a full review and testing of the system. This exhaustive system testing allowed for several smaller *bugs/errors to be discovered and repaired while also improving the flow, speed, and usability of the system. These improvements have shown a marked improvement for staff to focus on client supports without the system presenting interruptions. Further efforts are focused developing comprehensive training tools that include text, images, videos, and interactive training. This will allow for improved onboarding of new staff as self-direct development and current assessors. We have also created training videos for our partners who utilize the partner portal, to make their experience easier and more effective.

*What is a bug? – an unexpected behaviour that the system was not designed or anticipated to do when using the system.

Settlement Sector & Technology Task Group

Newly formed, the Settlement Sector and Technology Task Group is managed by the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Social Affiliations (AMSSA) and reports to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's National Settlement and Integration Council (NSIC). They are working to discover, examine, and learn about the settlement sector's needs to successfully implement digital and hybrid service delivery models. [Learn more here.](#)

Heading this new group as Chair is Marco Campana who, you may recall, reached out to WE Value and wrote an article for Cities of Migration back in December 2019. [Read the article here.](#)



Community Engagement

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a shift in service delivery for the WE Value Partnership, as well as a change in how we engage our partners. Starting in March, partner engagement became virtual and a suite of videos were developed to introduce the community to the WE Value Partnership and to offer ongoing technical support with the Partner Portal.

Engagement is ongoing in our expansions to Leamington and Chatham-Kent as we explore the delivery of assessments in coordination with our partners at South Essex Community Council and Adult Language and Learning. Future assessments will be conducted virtually by WE Value Assessors in Windsor with staff from partner organizations supporting the development of a tailored settlement plan. Training sessions are anticipated to complete in December of 2020 with an official roll-out in February 2021. As this new year approaches, the team will ensure that community engagement initiatives are robust and support client needs and their strengths.

The WE Value Partner Portal allowed the transition into a new funding year, marked by the pandemic and a shift in service delivery models, to be a smooth one. Reminders were sent out to partners to update their programs and service offerings for the 2020-2021 fiscal year as they became available. As this information is collected and available for referral in real time, it continues to provide clients with the most up to date offerings across the region.

35

**Affiliated partners
in the Partner Portal**

78

**Non-affiliated
partners**

166

**Programs for
Referral**

225

**Services & Activities
for Referral**

Service Delivery & COVID 19

Due to the pandemic, all in-person WE Value assessments were suspended from mid-March through July. However, we are decisively moving forward with and adapted virtual option that will maintain the essence, values, and objectives of WE Value assessments. To this end, a comprehensive review of IRCC policies and mandates surrounding data security, confidentiality, and privacy was conducted, and a tailored policy was created to adhere to these requirements with our new online service delivery model.

Our policy considers aspects such as video recording of client consent, multi-factor security and new data storage processes, which are paramount to remaining responsible and accountable to clients, partners, and IRCC. We endeavour with these core principles and policy to not just meet but exceed the funder requirements and client comfort that the personal information they share with us will be treated with security and confidence. The K2 system along with Microsoft Teams allows for an opportunity to iterate on in-person service delivery and exemplifies the importance of secure, cloud-based, flexible, and customizable tools such as the K2 Pathway to Settlement System.

With new policies, processes, and training of staff thereof, WE Value assessments are scheduled to start in August. During our pause we kept record of new clients to us who would be suited for the WE Value assessment, who will be contacted once virtual assessments begin.

As has already been formally communicated to IRCC and to our Steering & Evaluation Committee, a mitigation plan was created wherein we adjusted our targets for WE Value Assessments. This can also be found in a separate section of this update.



219 Settlement Assessments

644 External client referrals

WE Value Explores Usage of the K2 Pathway to Settlement System in Calgary, Alberta

The YMCA of Southwestern Ontario (YMCASWO) has signed a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Immigrant Services Calgary (ISC) to explore the use of the K2 Pathway to Settlement System as part of ISC's Gateway Project.

The Gateway Project has been funded by IRCC to provide a single point of access into the settlement system in Calgary by 2023. This includes the streamlining and standardization of services to provide more effective supports for newcomers. They, similar to WE Value, envisioned an initial assessment, with longitudinal data collected through client check-ins, that support a future Data Hub that would be available to local stakeholders.

The WE Value Settlement Assessment and K2 Pathway to Settlement System both leverage newcomer assets, skills, and abilities while connecting newcomers to

appropriate settlement and mainstream programs and services in their host communities.

Recognizing this, and the opportunity to build upon existing technologies created for the settlement sector, the WE Value and Gateway teams were introduced. Over several months they discussed intended outcomes and goals of their respective initiatives.

This new agreement will provide ISC and their Gateway Project with access to WE Value's tools through a beta customer agreement. This is an important step forward in exploring standardization of needs and asset assessments in the Calgary community.

Further, this is an exciting step forward for the WE Value Partnership as their tools and processes are being explored as a best practice for newcomer services.

“This is an exciting development that unleashes the economic, social and civic potential of newcomers via innovative technology. This pandemic has been awful. It’s also created an opportunity to creatively reimagine how we work and adopt efficient, collaborative, and innovative solutions using the latest technology.”

- Hyder Hassan, Chief Executive Officer, Immigrant Services Calgary