



Date:	March 5, 2015
Time:	10:00am-12:00pm
Location:	KW Multicultural Centre- 102 King St. W., Kitchener
Present:	Eunice Valenzuela (Chair), Sharon Schmidt, Eliseo Martell, Ed Kaut, Heidi Newton, Laura Stoutenburg, Kristin Johnson-Perlock, Lynne Griffiths-Fulton, Nicole Francoeur, Mollie Witenoff (Student, MCRS), Gael Gilbert, Ana Luz Martinez, Peter Donahue (Chair, IP Council)
Regrets:	Liliana Araujo, Pari Karem, Mira Malidzanovic, Leslie Josling
Absent:	Pauleen Payne, Sheri Phillips, June Moyo, Sam Marzouk, Priscilla Muzira
Staff:	Daniella McIntosh

1. Welcome & Introductions

- Welcomed Peter Donahue, Council Chair and new SSG member Ed Kaut from Employment and Income Support division of Community Services at the Region of Waterloo

2. IP Council

- Peter introduced himself to the group and noted that he has recently taken over the role of Chair for the Immigration Partnership Council and wanted to take the opportunity to reach out to the steering groups
- Advocacy
 - Peter discussed the role of advocacy for the Immigration Partnership and stated that there is interest from Council as there are ways for this group to advocate. Council has been discussing topics such as:
 - What are the policies and procedures?
 - How can council support?
 - Aware that there are funders around the table so how can we use this as an opportunity? (i.e., having presentations at council)
 - The Immigration Partnership does have an Advocacy Policy that defines the role of Council and the Steering Groups in advocacy
 - SSG Comments:
 - Our advocacy efforts should also encourage others to seek advice and input



- A challenge is dealing with those urgent issues that come up today and need to be dealt with tomorrow, however, we do need to find ways to add our voice
- It is good to clarify our role and exactly how we can advocate given our main funding sources
- Research is an important part of advocacy but is not the only component
- Important to get the Region of Waterloo, Cities and Universities involved
- Overall the SSG is happy to see the development of a detailed advocacy policy and to know that Council will be supporting advocacy efforts
- Immigration Partnership Annual Community Forum
 - Invitations have been sent out and the Forum will be held on March 26th from 4-6pm at The Tannery. Registration is required (www.communityforum2015.eventbrite.ca).
 - Sharon inquired about the purpose of the forum and who has been targeted to attend
 - Peter shared that the emphasis is on public awareness of the Partnership and engagement and that key stakeholders and members of the Immigration Partnership have been invited.
 - Evaluation follow-up
 - Daniella asked the group to look out for invitation for a Sense Making session that is tentatively planned for the morning of April 22
 - This session will be an opportunity to go over the results of the Immigration Partnership evaluation

3. Review of Minutes- Nov. 25, 2014

- Clarification requested on the action for the group to review Immigration Partnership Advocacy Procedures and if this is the policy that Peter was referring to. Daniella clarified that it was and that all steering groups were provided with the draft policy and given the opportunity to provide input before it went to Council for approval.
- Question about when Public Health would be meeting with SSG and if this included the health supports group. Heidi provided information that Public Health is now aiming to reach out to Settle Pillar members around April-May for feedback on various projects.
- Minutes were approved.

4. Conflict of Interest

- No conflict of interest to declare

5. Community Action Plan

- Daniella shared that the Council Leadership Team (Council Chair, Vice Chair and all Steering Group Chairs and Vice Chairs) met with the Immigration Partnership Staff Team

and shared updates on the activities of each pillar and also discussed opportunities for collaboration, recruitment needs and gaps.

- Daniella provided context to the update document that was provided to the SSG in advance of this meeting and shared that was created to give everyone an update on all activities, accomplishments and discussions that that have happened within the Settle Pillar around the Community Action Plan.
- Group members went through the document together and provided their feedback and direction to Daniella for how to proceed:

1.1 Develop community supports for refugee claimants specifically geared toward their first eight weeks in Waterloo Region

- Eunice noted that although the position paper was issued, action around Bill C-585 is not complete and we need to continue advocacy efforts
 - There is a national campaign happening to ask provinces not to cut social assistance for refugee claimants
 - Need the Immigration Partnership to continue to advocate and share information-- to the Provincial government, Regional Council, Municipalities and the Region of Waterloo Social Services
 - MCRS has met with Daiene Vernile (MPP) about the issue
- Eliseo noted that there are situations when we can't influence the federal government but we can influence other groups
- Heidi noted that this is also a prevention piece, maybe we need to collaborate with the Belong Group- share stories of success. Heidi share that recently she was asked "What value do refugees bring?" and she was able to refer to the latest newsletter profile of Dali and Miroslav as an example. Emphasized that stories like this are helpful to share.
- Gael shared that recent news has highlighted refugee claimants having higher incomes than immigrants. This information was reported by CBC Canada from a research project looking at income over the long term.
- Group members noted the importance of partnering with universities. We need hard data on refugee claimants and we can use the stories to back up this data
- This is activity is a good opportunity to increase collaboration with other pillars, especially Belong with their public awareness work
- Heidi noted that there is still value in the ideas for possible next steps listed in the document, especially around looking at gaps
- Eunice shared that MCRS has a resource manual of organizations that she would be willing to share
- Daniella noted that a few group members have expressed concerns about not knowing how many refugee claimants there are and the amount of energy we initially intended on putting into this activity



- Sharon stated that initially 1.1 was the focus but considering the climate and opportunities in the Region maybe we be focusing more on housing and ensuring that immigrants and refugees are finding affordable housing
- Eunice suggested that many of the activities listed here can happen with the agencies around the table and that we shouldn't rely solely on IP staff in order to make progress
 - Eliseo expressed that it may be challenging for agencies to find the time and energy to do this on their own without the support of IP staff. Suggest being more concrete about who's responsibility it is to do what and when it will be done
 - Eunice shared that MCRS has students that we can use as a resource. We have to remember that we [the organizations and community members] are the Immigration Partnership and it is our responsibility to implement these activities

Action(s):

- Eunice to share MCRS resource manual.
- Eliseo share paper on mental promotion for children

1.2 Work with mental health service providers to improve service delivery through increased awareness of immigrant and refugee specific issues

- Gael provided an update that her organization's (Supportive Housing of Waterloo) CIC application has been sent back again and the response was that the workshop dates were too close. Gael will keep the group updated and stated that the intent of these workshops are to bring together housing support agencies and the settlement sector. Gael suggests that this piece remain a part of the group's action.
- Group noted that the focus for our activities in this priority action area seems to be people who already have mental health issues. We also need to focus on prevention and mental health promotion.
 - Daniella noted that the work of the Mental Health Workgroup through Public Health is focusing on Mental Health Promotion with the development of the Waterloo Region Mental Health Charter and we are involved in this group.
- Sharon asked if the document could highlight the groups that we are involved in that are lead by others to make it clearer as we review our work and to share when these groups are looking for other members
- Group members noted that there is a need throughout all of our work to emphasize the "who" – who will do these activities from our action plan? Who do we need to connect to? Who can be a resource for us?

Action(s):

- Gael to keep group informed of CIC application for housing workshops
- Daniella to highlight groups we are involved in that we are not leading

3.2 Develop an integrated English as a Second Language learning model for adults focused on practical use of language

- Laura shared that LINC going through many changes and are currently in the implementation state of a very structured and detailed language portfolio
- Laura has had informal conversations with people from St. Louis and LINC and asked the group if we want to bring them to the table now since we've been talking about this for quite some time
 - The meeting would give the SSG the opportunity to ask questions, talk about any disconnect between clients and the program, and to have them explain what it is that the providers do.
 - Laura suggested that maybe this happen as a separate meeting that is organized so that the people who are interested are there
 - Daniella asked who would be interested in participating-- Kristin, Lynne, Ana Luz, Sharon, Eliseo, Peter (from university perspective)
 - Group agreed to plan this session for April
 - Laura also shared concerns with how this activity is written—it is all about the curriculum. Believes some of the changes happening will help the teachers be more student focused.

Action(s):

- **Laura and Daniella will organize a meeting/information session with ESL and LINC supervisors for April 2015**
- Daniella asked everyone to participate in an activity to map connections and identify areas where we should be connected. Group members were given a blank piece of paper and asked to respond to the following:
 - 1) Where are you connected? List your involvement with other committees/groups/initiatives etc.
 - 2) Who should we be connected to? List people, groups or organizations that the SSG should be connected to (i.e., for the steering group, action group or in general to further our work)

6. CCR Consultations

- Sharon provided information about the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) and shared that they are an umbrella organization working with immigrants and refugees and sharing information on a national level
- Three groups within the CCR—those who are sponsoring privately sponsored refugees, Immigration and Settlement, Webinars
- CCR participants include refugee lawyers, Canadian Border Security, Canadian Government (able to talk about how changes are affecting us)



- They look at trends and policy changes
- Currently launching—Seven keys to protecting and welcoming refugees campaign
 - Eunice—will ask immigration partnership for support on this
 - MCRS is taking the lead on the social assistance and family reunification areas
 - There is a Walk with Refugees event coming up in June. Eunice will share information.
 - Sharon encouraged SSG to become a member of CCR or stay informed through their website and on social media (they are very active on Facebook and Twitter)
- Lynne noted that settlement workers need to stay on top of policy changes because this federal government is very strict on the policies. Workers need to be on the same page because often clients are receiving different information. Also noted that it would be nice to have somewhere to share information about particular cases that workers are working on and to discuss the process and results.
 - Eliseo suggested sending an “alert” to Daniella with important information or policy changes to be shared with group members and /or throughout the Partnership.
 - Peter noted that it can be useful to be a part of a network such as the CCR
 - Eunice stated that she would encourage the Immigration Partnership as a whole to participate in CCR and CCR workgroups.
 - Heidi noted that every meeting we discuss issues that come up and even though they may not be in the CAP they are still important and maybe we need to send information to Daniella before meetings as these changes are happening.
 - Nicole added that IP is becoming quite active on Twitter and this is also a communication tool that can be used

Action(s):

- Eunice to keep group informed about Seven Keys to Protecting and Welcoming Refugees campaign and will also share information Walk for Refugees event. Sharon is leading the walk team.
- Daniella to connect with Tara about Immigration Partnership becoming a member of CCR
- ALL- send information or an “alert” to Daniella regarding policy changes or important information to be shared with the SSG or the entire Immigration Partnership

7. Settlement Services Directory

- Daniella provided an updated that the Building Local Information Supports for Ontario Newcomers project with the Social Planning Council of Kitchener-Waterloo (SPCKW) is wrapping up, however the directory is available on the Immigration Portal (maintained by IP).



- Daniella asked for feedback around the use of the Settlement Services Directory, participation on the BLISON advisory group going forward and interest in the SPCKW hosting a networking event.
 - One group member shared that they were accessing the resource at their organization
 - Majority of group members present did not know where to access the directory
 - Feeling that the directory is too complicated for clients to navigate and that it would be better used by staff helping clients
 - Concerns expressed as to why SPCKW was leading this project instead of settlement organizations
 - Eunice shared that she doesn't feel that organizations need to be attending advisory group meetings
 - Lynne shared that Reception House has own their internal database and has spoken to Trudy about using the information in the directory to supplement the information in their internal database. Noted that often the problem is that what is on paper is not often the reality of the services offered which creates more work for people looking for up to date information
 - Kristin noted that as a part of her role at KPL she will continue to participate on the advisory group and is happy to be a link between the advisory group and the SSG
- Many group members expressed that the networking event just sounds like another event to attend and suggested just sending an email or contacting organizations for information.
- Peter added that maybe the link to SPCKW could be more with the IP council

Action(s):

- Daniella to follow up with Trudy regarding feedback about Settlement Services Directory

8. Community Updates

- Region of Waterloo Strategic Planning Session
 - Daniella encouraged group to participate AND to share information with clients/community
 - Heidi added that how the plan is developed is very dependent on the input of the community and would strongly encourage people to attend
- World Refugee Day
 - Belong Pillar is taking on an organizing and coordinating role and their are opportunities for the Settle Pillar to be involved in the planning/organizing
 - 2015 theme is "I am a refugee—what do you see?"
- Welcome Home



- Sharon shared that they have moved out of their building location and they are working with Ray of Hope to look what Welcome Home will be in the future, where it will be and how will we sustain it

9. Meeting Schedule

- Daniella asked for feedback on the current meeting schedule, keeping in mind that we are in the second year of a three year plan and asked if group members feel meeting more frequently would be beneficial
- Heidi stated that meeting 6x/year may help us to stay more informed and on top of things
- 10/11 people present (not including guests or staff) felt that we need to more than 4x/year
- SSG members shared that Fridays, Wed (AM), Thurs (PM) are days that people are unavailable due to other commitments

Action(s):

- Daniella to send information regarding meeting dates for the rest of the 2015

10. Adjournment,

- Daniella thanked Peter for attending, Eunice for chairing the meeting and Ana Luz for arranging the meeting location.
- Meeting adjourned at 11:55pm



Date:	May 13, 2015
Time:	2:00-4:00pm
Location:	235 King St. E
Present:	Pari Karem (Chair), Eunice Valenzuela, Sharon Schmidt, Eliseo Martell, Heidi Newton, , , Liliana Araujo, Pari Karem, Pauleen Payne, June Moyo, Margaret Brockett (Guest), Eunice Valenzuela, Paulina Rodrigues (Guest, University of Waterloo), Nicole Francouer, Gael Gilbert, Lynne Griffiths-Fulton
Regrets:	Mira Milidzanovic, Ed Kaut, Kristin Johnson-Perlock, Laura Stoutenburg
Absent:	Ana Luz Martinez
Staff:	Daniella McIntosh

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. Determinants of Immigrant Food Security (presentation)

- Paulina Rodrigues, a master's student at University of Waterloo, presented her research and engaged group members to gather feedback and responded to questions.

Action:

- Group members to contact Paulina directly (prodrigu@uwaterloo.ca) to connect about research

3. Review of Minutes- March 5, 2015

- Minutes approved with a few minor changes

Action:

- Daniella to make changes that were discussed

4. Conflict of Interest

- No conflict of interest to declare

5. Impact of Citizenship and Immigration Canada Funding Reductions

- CIC funded organizations have received funding reductions effective April 1st, received decision at the end of March



- Organizations are currently dealing with impacts of funding cuts—staffing, no longer able to maintain all of the commitments that have been made, services will be impacted
- Changes in Settlement and reallocation of funds from CIC has been in the news and is available in the public
- As a group we need to look at what this means for each agency locally and how it affects clients
- Each local agency has different contribution agreements with CIC – so that there is no duplication – as a result we should not generalize when speaking about impacts of cuts
- Pari shared that the Immigration Partnership council will be discussing the impact of cuts and how to work with this reality going forward at their next meeting on May 19th
- Group discussion:
 - Group members wondering how we are going to track secondary migration and be able to support clients who have arrived in one place and then move to our community
 - How do we better collaborate to fill gaps and how do we figure out how to serve the needs of the clients?
 - Need data on secondary migrants
 - Pauleen shared that with LINC and ESL they might be able to track secondary migration using their program
 - We don't have accurate numbers for privately sponsored refugees
- What to do:
 - Find out exactly what the needs are based on the clientele
 - Who can do what? Who are we collaborating with to fill gaps?
 - What are the constraints?
 - What is the best approach?
- Some group members feel that there is collaboration especially between communities. The real problem is competition between organizations who receive government funds. If we don't know what programs are going to be affected, how do we fill the gaps? The government knows that the community will respond.

ACTION:

- Gather data that reflects the community to compare to the services that organizations are providing
- Revisit the idea of having a centralized intake process

6. Community Action Plan

- Engaging the WWLHIN (CAP 2.2)
 - The WWLHIN has requested updated data about the immigrant population in Waterloo Region. Daniella will share the updated Immigrant Fact Sheets from Public Health that are in the process of being finalized.



- WWLHIN staff shared that they are starting to work on pushing for more accessible and responsive services for immigrants accessing mental health and addictions services
- The WWLHIN is in the process of community engagement to develop the next strategic plan for 2016-2019 and Immigration Partnership has been identified as a key informant. Their community engagement team is developing a questionnaire and would like to engage participants in the IP for thoughts and ideas. WWLHIN staff will be participating in a joint meeting with the Health Supports Action Group and the Guelph Immigration Partnership Interpretation Committee on June 15th to share information. The questionnaire that they WWLHIN is developing will be shared before the meeting.
- Meeting with ESL and LINC language providers (CAP 3.2)
 - Had meeting on April 28th – presentation slides were sent out via email
 - Take aways from the meeting:
 - There is no formal surveying of teachers to gather information of issues the students are sharing
 - ESL teaches similar content as LINC and uses the same curriculum—but ESL is about a year behind ESL in the program revisions
 - The average person takes 250 hours to move from one CLB level to the next and this increases with age (a full time student gets 27.5hrs of learning/week)
 - Both programs feel disconnected from Employment Ontario and Social Services
 - Challenge—continuous intake
 - Many benefits but needs assessment is done at the beginning of the term, students needs may not be addressed or they are spending time catching up
 - Teachers try to address this by continuing to teach the basic information in different themes (sections that the curriculum is divided into)
 - Settlement services need to be aware of the curriculum and changes
 - Asked if there was a mechanism in place to address students who may be learning at a slower or faster pace—encourage them to talk to their teacher, may be possible during mid-term report to move students ahead
 - SSG needs to re-evaluate activity in the CAP as it looks like the new curriculum revisions address the concern
 - Pauleen (Program Manager, ESL) suggested that settlement workers schedule a PD session with staff to talk about what they do and see with clients.
- Immigrant and Refugee Housing Consultation (CAP 4.1)
 - This event is taking place on May 26 from 1-4pm at Stirling Mennonite Church in Kitchener



- Need participation from Settlement organizations and other members of this group. Also want participation from clients

Action:

- Let Daniella know if you are interested in attending the meeting with the WWLHIN on June 15th
- Discuss CAP 3.2 and make a decision about how to proceed with this activity based on the information that came out of the meeting with ESL and LINC providers
- Lynne and Eunice to connect with Pauleen re: PD session and additional questions
- Everyone to promote upcoming Immigrant and Refugee Housing Consultation event and register to attend
- Daniella to invite Grand River Transit to SSG to talk about transportation

7. Summary of Promising Practices for Increasing Public Health Access for Immigrants and Refugees

- Heidi shared the “Summary of Promising Practices for Increasing Public Health Access for Immigrants and Refugees” that has been developed
- Research and recommendations development are still underway
- Heidi explained that this report is an Public Health Evidence and Practice Based Planning Framework (EPPF) project. Immigrants and Refugees are identified as a priority population meaning that they are a group that experiences disproportionate access to services

Action:

- Daniella to email electronic copy of the summary report to SSG

8. Community Updates

- Immigration Partnership Sense making workshop
 - This workshop was held on April 22nd and many individuals across the Immigration Partnership participated.
 - We discussed findings of the evaluation and how we will use them to be more efficient and impactful in our work
 - Comments from SSG members who attended:
 - Session was good, but will only be as good as the work and follow up that will come out of it
 - Very helpful to have all the groups from IP together
 - We have done all the ground work and there is a real call to action. Excited to see what happens with the recommendations.



- World Refugee Day- June 20th
 - Walk for refugees—5 refugee speakers, starts at Carizon and ends at the KW Multicultural Festival. Wear yellow shirts. www.worldrefugeedaywr.ca
- Social Planning Council of North Dumfries Poverty Symposium Panel Discussion
 - Tara is participating in a panel discussion at the SPCCND Poverty Symposium at the end of May on behalf of Immigration Partnership
 - The theme of the symposium is “the working poor” and will explore topics of precarious employment, minimum wage, living wage and poverty over the lifespan
 - Tara would like input on points she should touch on during her presentation by May 22nd

Action:

- Send ideas for Poverty Symposium panel to Daniella or Tara by May 22nd

9. Meeting Schedule

- Group will meet in June (3rd or 4th week—some time after World Refugee Day) before taking a break for the summer.

Action:

- All group members to complete doodle poll -- <http://doodle.com/ux9a877wy837532w> and Daniella will confirm the date

10. Adjournment

Date:	June 22, 2015
Time:	2:00-4:00pm
Location:	Reception House, 101 David St. Kitchener
Present:	Pari Karem (Chair- YMCA), Margaret Brockett (Sanctuary Refugee Centre), Sharon Schmidt (Welcome Home Refugee House), Nicole Francoeur (Region of Waterloo Housing), Lynne Griffiths-Fulton (Reception House), Ana Luz Martinez (KWMC), Mary Mueller (for Heidi N.- Region of Waterloo Public Health)
Regrets:	Ed Kaut, Kristin Johnson-Perlock, Laura Stoutenburg, Eunice Valenzuela, Eliseo Martell, Heidi Newton, Liliana Araujo, Gael Gilbert
Absent:	
Staff:	Daniella McIntosh, Tara Bedard

1. Welcome & Introductions

- Pari welcomed Margaret Brockett as a new member of the group representing Sanctuary Refugee Health Centre. Margaret is also a recent member of the Health Supports Action Group.
- Mary Mueller from Public Health is attending on behalf of Heidi

2. Review of Minutes- May 13, 2015

- Approved with no changes

3. Conflict of Interest

- No conflict of interest to declare

4. Council Updates

- Pari provided an update of the last Council Meeting (June 17th) and shared that she presented a summary of the information gathered at the May Immigrant and Refugee Housing Consultation

5. Federal Election

- Group discussed Immigration Partnership role in preparing for the upcoming Federal Election and ways to engage local candidates. Group is supportive of Council taking initiative to organize priority questions that can be used during all-candidates sessions.
 - suggested that in addition to creating questions we also recommend a strategy

- Nicole shared that a housing toolkit has been shared for supportive housing to help people who would like to be involved but don't know how. We could create a similar toolkit.
- OCASI will be doing advocacy on a different level
- Need to do advocacy locally (i.e., engage local candidates about immigration issues) that will filter up to the National level

- Group discussed potential priority questions/topics that local Federal Election Candidates should speak to:
 - Health Care
 - With emphasis on health care support for privately sponsored refugee's
 - What is your plan for restoring refugee health care after the cuts? (i.e., dental, vision)
 - How do you intend on ensuring immigrants and refugees have access to quality health care in Canada?
 - How will access to interpretation (using trained interpreters) be addressed?
 - How will government of Canada fulfill obligations?
 - How will your party fulfill Canada's international obligation to receiving refugees?
 - Reallocation of funds/Cuts to Settlement Sector
 - We understand that on a National level the plan is to reduce the number of immigrants arriving to Ontario, how do we continue to support the large number of immigrants that are already in the communities when there are significant cuts to the settlement sector? How are existing needs and gaps going to be filled? How are you going to ensure sustainability of funds for the settlement sector? What are you proposing in terms of working with the province?
 - How do we ensure that newcomers are supported in their integration to become Canadian Citizens?
 - Family reunification needs to be addressed

- Other points to consider
 - Need to present an evidence based argument about how people are impacted rather than focusing on emotions
 - As a settlement sector we need to communicate better, share data and have evidence to support our questions
 - Need to be very clear when we are speaking about immigrants and refugees when speaking to candidates (ex. Although immigrants are being directed to other parts of Canada and less are coming to Ontario, this is not the same for refugees—less refugees overall are coming)
 - Strong messaging of all levels of government working together



- We need to raise awareness and educate candidates about these issues – prepare a briefing package – needs to be shared before fall so candidates can be aware—“give us a reason to vote”

Action(s):

- Nicole to share housing toolkit with Daniella
- Daniella to share feedback with Tara so that it can go to Council

6. Community Action Plan

- Daniella shared an update as Kitchener Housing Inc. requested a presentation to their staff about Immigration Partnership work around housing and how they can better communicate with their immigrant tenants
 - Daniella consulted with SSG members to prepare a presentation and resource list for Kitchener Housing. Both Daniella and Pari attended Kitchener Housing Inc. on June 18th to deliver a presentation
 - SSG interested in asking Kitchener Housing staff to come speak to us about their organization
 - Suggested sharing information for Legal Aid Ontario (Frederick St.) with Kitchener Housing as they will also be able to provide support
 - We need to promote that housing is a shared responsibility

Action(s):

- Daniella to invite Kitchener Housing to SSG meeting in the fall and share additional resources with their staff
- Daniella also gave an update that the Health Supports Action Group along with members of the Guelph Wellington Immigration Partnership Interpretation Committee hosted staff from the Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network (WWLHIN) for a focus group to give input into their Integrated Health Services Plan 2016-2019
 - A [summary of the focus group](#) can be found on the WWLHIN’s website and Daniella also shared full notes from the meeting via email
 - Daniella also noted that in November 2015 the Health Supports Action Group had recommended to the WWLHIN that they engage the Immigration Partnership during their next strategic planning process
- Pari and Daniella presented a progress update to the group for each activity in the CAP and shared the [June quarterly report](#) that was presented to Council at their meeting in June. Group members shared the following feedback regarding each activity:
 - 1.1- Develop community supports for refugee claimants specifically geared toward their first eight weeks in Waterloo Region
 - Sharon stated that 84 refugee claimants arrive each year
 - Activity always felt very overwhelming, needs to be broken down—many of the components are being addressed in other CAP activities



- We figured out how to address many of these needs in crisis mode—but still need to look at how we address this overall? There are only so many crises' we can find solutions for.
- Housing is the key issue in this activity
- Organizations working to address these needs have to communicate better together

Action(s):

- Daniella to reframe 1.1 to connect to other activities and present to group
 - 1.2- Work with mental health service providers to improve service delivery through increased awareness of immigrant and refugee-specific issues
 - Continue with existing groups and connections and also need to invite other mental health groups to participate on our groups
 - 2.1- Develop an education strategy for health service providers to improve service delivery to immigrants and refugees
 - There is interest in the community and we have the expertise but we need to pull this together
 - Should communicate with the Center for Family Medicine and Kitchener Downtown Community Health Centre
 - The key would be to get the right people to the training

Action(s):

- Bring forward to the health supports action group
 - 2.2- Work with the Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network (WWLHIN) to prioritize services for immigrants and refugees
 - Progressing well—real test will be when their IHSP comes out
 - These conversations have shown that we really need to connect with hospitals and other health providers—not just the WWLHIN
 - 2.3- Building on past work, implement and enhance existing protocols for access to interpretation services within the healthcare system
 - Update to add—KWMC received funding to go into hospitals and give training on importance of using trained interpreters
 - 3.1- Strengthen partnerships with school boards to ensure that immigrant and refugee children are welcomed and encouraged
 - Support the BSG where needed, let them continue to lead this piece
 - Connect with BSG to ensure that they are considering refugees as they work through this action
 - Note that the school boards are just a piece of a bigger equity and inclusion piece that they are working on
 - 3.2- Develop an integrated English as a Second Language learning model for adults focused on practical use of language

- New portfolio based system definitely seems to address the issues
- Continue to maintain communication and provide feedback to ESL/LINC
- 4.1- Define and address issues related to accessible, affordable and quality housing for immigrants and refugees
 - Group members asked for an update on usefulness of being on HHUG
 - Gathering information
 - Support with immigrant and refugee housing events
 - Connecting with mainstream housing
 - We need to take advantage of being able sharing information
- 4.2- Enhance the existing Emergency Shelter referral protocol to include settlement services
 - Emergency shelter group that meets regularly – Nicole to send info
 - ROW is undergoing a review of the referral protocol
 - IP would need to identify what needs to be added—group to figure out what the needs are and what needs to be considered

7. Focusing our work

- Our CAP assumes that a lot of people are in a service
 - We need to make sure our work looks at this
 - How do we develop an awareness of services that exist in our community
 - What are the services that all people need to connect to (ex. Service Ontario— for a health card, SIN) and how can we have information available at the centres
- Next, we assume that people can access these services and are able to effectively navigate between these services
- Tara stated that these are three levels of planning that need to be done and addressed in all of our work
 - It won't be needed in every area but we should at least use this lenses, especially in the SSG since settlement is a point of entry
- This structure can channel the way we implement our work
- Our purpose is to ensure that we have all the bases covered
- Discussion:
 - Are we really getting to the people who need the services
 - Still, not everyone will be going to get a health card – maybe they don't know, or not eligible
 - When you raise awareness, you need to be able to provide the services and respond to the needs
 - Need to agree, at least for service providers sake, that we need to be aware of services that exist—need to hold ourselves, and each other accountable to knowing about each other
- We need to review these points when reviewing our CAP, perhaps create a new document to include these areas as a reminder

8. Adjournment

- Pari thanked everyone for all of their work this past year and noted that there has been lots of progress made as a result
- Action groups will continue to meet as needed during the summer and the Settle Steering Group will reconvene in the Fall

DRAFT

Date:	September 23, 2015
Time:	9:00-11:00am
Location:	YMCA, 800 King St. W.,
Present:	Pari Karem (Chair- YMCA), Margaret Brockett (Sanctuary Refugee Centre), Sharon Schmidt (Welcome Home Refugee House), Nicole Francoeur (Region of Waterloo Housing), Lynne Griffiths-Fulton (Reception House), Ana Luz Martinez (KWMC), Heidi Newton (Region of Waterloo Public Health), Kristin Johnson-Perlock (KPL), Laura Stoutenburg (Conestoga College), Eliseo Martell (Community Member), Liliana Araujo (Community Member), June Moyo (ACCKWA), Santiago Grande (Guest- Carizon); Barat (Guest- Carizon, MSW Student)
Regrets:	Ed Kaut (Region of Waterloo Employment and Income Support), Gael Gilbert (SHOW)
Absent:	Eunice Valenzuela (MCRS)
Staff:	Daniella McIntosh, Tara Bedard, Brianne Hollingsworth (MSW Student)

1. Welcome

- Pari welcomed everyone and introduced guests

2. Presentation: Carizon

- Santiago Grande from Carizon was asked to share information about programs at Carizon and was invited to join the Settle Steering Group
- Promise of Partnership
 - Partnership with Reception House, began 4 years ago
 - Other partners include the school board, F&CS, WRPS, CMHA
 - Purpose is to develop a community of practice within organizations to respond to the needs of immigrants and refugees
 - Promise of Partnership also works with community to align services
- Connectivity Table
 - Currently comprised of 29 direct-service organizations that meet weekly for 1 hour
 - Representatives bring issues that organizations are facing to the table and then smaller groups come together from the larger group to deal with the issue
 - Issues are then resolved and a report is brought forward during the next meeting
 - Kitchener table began in October 2014 and 78 situations have been resolved (top 3 issues- criminal involvement, mental health and drugs)
 - Expectation that more issues will be brought forward
 - Sue Coulter (Connectivity Navigator) coordinates the Connectivity Table



- Currently looking for someone to fill Kaghani Mardikian's position at the Connectivity table and represent immigrant and refugee issues
- Issues must meet certain criteria and level of risk—contact Sue to bring an issue forward

Action(s):

- Daniella to invite Sue Coulter to give an in depth presentation about the Connectivity Table

3. Review of Minutes- June 22, 2015

- Approved with no changes

4. Conflict of Interest

- No conflict of interest to declare

5. Council Updates

- Pari shared that Council discussed the local response to the refugee crises and asked SSG to provide input on who should lead/coordinate around further refugee work and if this is the role of the Immigration Partnership?
 - We need to keep putting pressure on the government and figure out how IP can do this
 - Need to bring all the smaller groups together and also be realistic about what can be expected
 - Help our community with receiving refugees
 - Need to be clear to potential sponsors about what they are taking on
 - Margaret shared a health care primer for refugee sponsoring groups that Sanctuary Clinic prepared as a resource for private sponsors so they know what they are taking on with regards to complex health issues of refugees coming in
- Organizations, Shamrose and Najda Now have expressed interest in attending/joining SSG
- Community Forum 2016
 - Discussion and planning is underway for next year's community forum and we are looking at having it in February
 - Tara clarified that the purpose of the forum is to bring awareness to the work/progress of IP and we would like to use this year's forum to draw in people from our community/other communities on how we are doing things
 - Looking for feedback on what organizations/groups/speakers partners would like to hear from at this forum and if anyone is interested in helping with planning the event

Action(s):

- Recommendation to Council that the IP role in responding to the refugee crises locally should be to:
 - coordinate bringing smaller groups and politicians together

- develop short/medium term strategy on how to put pressure on the government
- develop resources to inform potential community members interested in sponsorship
- promote various information sessions happening in the community and bring awareness to the fact that settlement workers CANNOT complete application forms for clients
- outreach to local immigration lawyers about a clinic to provide support
- Invite representatives from Shamrose and Najda now attend the next SSG meeting as a group and to present about their services
- ALL- share ideas regarding the 2016 community forum and contact Daniella if interested in joining a planning committee to organize the event

6. SSG Vice Chair

- Pari provided a brief update to those who may not be aware of Mira's retirement from Reception House and shared that we need someone to fill the role of Vice-Chair
- Daniella and Pari provided an overview of the role and encouraged nominations from all SSG members
- Daniella will initiate the process for selecting a new Vice-Chair via email so that we can have someone in the role by the next SSG meeting in November

Action(s):

- Email nominations for Vice-Chair to Daniella by Sept. 30th

7. Federal Elections 2015

- IP staff prepared a federal elections document based on input received from each steering group and a survey of the questions has gone out to all registered candidates
- The prepared questions will also be asked at various all candidates meetings
- Daniella asked if anyone was able to attend upcoming SPCKW all candidates meeting on Sept. 30th and Oct. 5th to facilitate the immigration discussion
 - Ana Luz, Heidi and Margaret available- Oct 5th SPCKW Session

8. Community Action Plan

- Pari provided an update that the Executive Directors from all the settlement organizations have now begun meeting and are talking about sector planning and following up on actions in the Settlement Systems Mapping Report
- Group reviewed latest CAP Implementation Quarterly Report that was presented to Council
 - Regarding action area 1.1 Sharon- provided feedback that CIC is taking longer to meet requirements, meaning that refugee claimants are waiting longer to receive financial assistance through OW; this is a National Issue
 - Group discussed additional suggestions in addressing 1.1
 - request a meeting with those involved in policy
 - organize delegation to Regional Council



- attend ROW community forum and meet with Director of Housing
- connect with habitat for humanity since they build houses for those in need and then present a model/different idea for how we can address this housing issue for immigrants and refugees
- Daniella asked for assistance in finalizing the Housing Report including recommendations from the Immigrant and Refugee Housing Consultation in May
 - Lynn volunteered to help and Sharon is available to help with housing related tasks after November
- SSG discussed forming a housing sub-group
 - Volunteers to participate include: Sharon, Nicole, Lynne, Pari (or someone from YMCA), Heidi (if support is need)
- SSG discussed the upcoming Housing Stability Forum and provided feedback that Daniella can take to the event regarding input on the Emergency Shelter Framework:
 - Understanding how a refugee is different than others accessing the system
 - What awareness they have about services/supports available in the community
 - Language supports
 - Fear for refugees in the shelter further traumatizing because of drugs, alcohol, addictions etc.
 - Connection between settlement agencies with shelter
 - Ongoing education and training needed for new staff as well
 - Placement of brochures from organizations to be placed in shelters
 - Intake questions around length of time in Canada, what agencies the client is already connected to

9. Community Updates

- Housing Stability 103 Training – Oct 20th – morning workshop providing an overview of the housing stability system- \$15
- BSG is hosting a Citizenship Ceremony on October 20th at 10am at Kitchener City Hall
- Sponsorship session-- Oct 8th at 7pm KPL Central Library

10. Next meeting

- Daniella will send out a Doodle Poll for a meeting date in November

11. Adjournment



Date:	November 23, 2015
Time:	1:30-3:30pm
Location:	Family Centre, 65 Hanson Ave. (Room 2015)
Present:	Eliseo Martell (Vice-Chair, Community Member), Gael Gilbert (SHOW), Sharon Schmidt (Welcome Home Refugee House), Ana Luz Martinez (KWMC), Nicole Francoeur (ROW-Housing), Ed Kaut (ROW-Income Support), Priscilla Muzira (ACCKWA), June Moyo (ACCKWA), Margaret Brockett (Sanctuary Health Centre), Heidi Newton (ROW- Public Health), Kristin Johnson-Perlock (KPL) Herb Richardson (Guest, Community Member), Sue Coulter (Guest, Carizon), Members of the Belong Steering Group
Regrets:	Eunice Valenzuela (MCRS), Laura Stoutenburg (LINC), Pari Karem (Chair, YMCA)
Staff:	Daniella McIntosh, Tara Bedard, Brianne Hollingsworth (MSW Student), Pauline Peng

1. Welcome

- Regrets from Cindy Tarasow (guest from IEAG/WSG to give a presentation on the ITEP project)

2. Approve Agenda and Past Minutes/ Declaration of Conflict of Interest

- No conflict of interest to declare

3. Review of Minutes- September 23, 2015

- Approved with no changes

4. Refugee Update and Discussion

- **IP Response to Refugee Crisis**
 - A refugee preparedness session was held on Nov. 20th at the Family Centre with over 100 participants
 - This response started with the Waterloo Region Welcomes Refugees rally held at the City of Kitchener in September and messaging from that day was that this community wants to be one that is welcoming to refugees
 - Following the rally, a meeting was held in October that brought together refugee support groups, faith groups involved in sponsorship, settlement organizations etc. to help people to understand who does what in the community and where to go for support (with a focus on sponsorship). Many



next steps were identified from the community and this information was shared broadly.

- Immigration Partnership Council decided that the partnership does have a role to play in coordination and a refugee primer was prepared and issued to the community
- Refugee preparedness session
 - Many sectors were present: health and mental health, education, basic needs (food, shelter, clothing, transportation etc.), housing, emergency responses, language, documents (i.e., SIN, OHIP), settlement
 - Currently in the process of identifying designated agencies from each sector to be the lead and to help with coordination
 - IP staff is reviewing notes from each discussion at the planning session to determine next steps and a structure that will be supportive for all refugees coming to the Region
 - IP staff is also working on extending the Immigration Portal to include a section on the refugee response (with a section for the general public and a separate section for agencies where they can upload content to be shared)
- Eliseo comment that while we are preparing for an influx of refugees and coordinating our response, we must also keep in mind our existing work and supporting immigrants and refugees already in the community
- Tara expressed we need to be clear in our messaging that we are not just working to help the influx of people arriving now but we are focused on being inclusive and that includes people already in the community
- Need to be aware and reassure current community members that the work that we are doing to prepare for newer refugees will not be at the expense of community members that are already accessing community supports/social services

ACTION: if anyone wants to get involved or help, please get in touch with IP staff

- **Refugee Services Action Group**

- Margaret presented background information about this group and requested that it become an action group of the Settle Steering Group
- The group began when Welcome Home and Reception House connected with Sanctuary Health Clinic approximately 6 months ago about common issues being faced by refugees that were not necessarily being addressed when speaking about immigrants, so they wanted to have a distinct group
- The group has been discussing having a refugee hub of services where refugees could attend for support that would also put them at a “level playing field” with other new Canadians



- The concern is that the needs for refugees are distinct and refugee service providers wanted to ensure that the refugees have a place to go
- Sharon noted that the conversations that have happened already within this group happened prior to the Federal Election and prior to knowing that we will be accepting a large group of refugees
- The concept of the hub that is being discussed is to provide the one stop access for information and coordinating services
- Daniella reiterated that the current members of this group are also members of the Settle Steering Group
- Settle Steering Group members agreed that it made sense to adopt the Refugee Services Action Group as a formal action group within the Settle Steering Group

- **World Refugee Day 2016 Planning (BSG item—requesting participation from SSG)**
 - Janet distributed a backgrounder and provided information about WRD event planning
 - Many members of BSG and SSG are already participants in WRD planning
 - In light of the refugee crises, June may be a good time to have a bit of a celebration
 - Need to decide if we want to take on a coordination role going forward into next year. Options below:
 - Set up a small action group with CCORIC members still involved, SSG and BSG with staff support from Daniella and Janet
 - Ask Refugee Services Action Group if this is within their mandate
 - Refugee Services Action Group expressed that this would NOT be a good place to coordinate planning about WRD at this time
 - BSG determined that they would continue with planning of WRD for 2016 along with members of CCORIC and would invite SSG to participate

5. BSG CAP Update -- See BSG minutes (will be posted on the Immigration Portal soon)

6. Community Updates/ Emerging Issues

- Sue Coulter from Connectivity Waterloo Region presented additional information and invited people to connect with her if interested in joining the table or bringing issues forward
 - Situation table (known as Connectivity in Kitchener) based on social determinants of health
 - Hosted by Langs in Cambridge and Carizon in Kitchener-Waterloo
 - 30 organizations that meet once a week for an hour



Actions: If any questions or interest in how to bring issues forward – email Daniella to connect with Sue

- Heidi and Dan, Public Health Update
 - Over the last two years, public health has been looking at how to improve access to information, resources and services for immigrants and refugees
 - Promising practices that were researched (things that people have found very valuable and have been found in the literature that was reviewed)
 - Peer approaches
 - Addressing social determinants of health in reducing barriers such as transportation and child care
 - Increasing cultural competency and cultural awareness in staff groups
 - Going to places where people are
 - Interpretation and translation
 - Community development
 - Collaborative partnership
 - Health equity measurement
 - Looking at other means for information (i.e., social media, word of mouth)
 - Developed recommendations that were approved
 - Offering interpretation consistently throughout entire public health department—commitment where possible to offer interpretation and translation where needed. – will be phased in over the next year
 - Building relationships with settlement agencies and maintaining a list of ethnic groups (hope that other people from the partnership will be able to use this resource)
 - Using peer approaches in outreach
 - Cultural Competency/Equity training for staff
 - Continue to explore other contacts and organizations

ACTIONS: Heidi to send report to SSG; ALL—questions and concerns, send to Daniella or contact Heidi directly

- BSG—Nov. 30th, 2015 Organizational presentation with Waterloo Catholic District School Board – RSVP required to Janet
- Session on Nov. 30th at Victoria Hills Community Centre on Refugee Sponsorship (Bring Back Hope)
- Nov. 24th session on Sponsorship at KPL, Nov. 26th Session for Sponsors with information on services
- City of Kitchener has The Neighbourhood Matching Funds Grant



7. Close and Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be January 2016
- Daniella will send out a Doodle poll to determine the exact date.