OCASI- Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Accessibility Planning in the Settlement Sector: Newcomers with Disabilities

Presentation by:

Chavon Niles

Coordinator, Accessibility Initiative
PhD Student, MA, BEd, HSBc

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

1

Review from Webinar 1

- How barriers intersect and interlock impacting the experiences of newcomers with disabilities in Canada.

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (the Act) as it relates to supporting newcomers with disabilities.

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Review from Webinar 1

- What barriers may prevent a person from accessing your services before getting to your front door?

- Once at your front door, what barriers might they experience at your agency?

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Questions to Think About…

1. How is my agency accessible?

2. How does my agency take into consideration the needs of immigrant and refugees with disabilities when developing programs and services?

3. What feedback mechanism do I have in place that lets me know how my clients with disabilities feel about the services they receive?

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Webinar 2

- How to complete an accessibility audit of your workplace including what accessibility features an office or meeting should include.

- How to develop an action plan for priority accessibility issues including organizational budget.

- Where to apply for accessibility funds/grants and how to include it in the current and future Call For Proposals.

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Accessibility Audit

- Identify barriers to accessibility people with disabilities might experience. Some barriers may be related to:
    - Attitudinal
    - Information or communications
    - Technological
    - Organizational
    - Architectural and physical

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Attitudinal

- Attitudinal barriers are those that discriminate against people with disabilities.
  - Disability is not seen or treated as taboo, burdensome or something to be ashamed of in our organization.
  - Staff are aware of non-western sociocultural understandings of disability and take this into consideration when working with immigrant and refugee clients with disabilities.
  - The assessment questions asked by our staff do not make assumptions about a person's ability.
  - Our organization use inclusive and accessible language, both verbally and in written documents and communications.

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Information or Communications

- Information or communications barriers happen when a person can't easily understand information.
  - All events including meetings, workshops/training sessions or class includes information about the accessibility of the event.
  - Our organization has a confidential and accessible complaints process that allows clients with disabilities to anonymously let us know about our services and programs.
  - Our organization provides alternative formats for clients with disabilities upon request (e.g. large print, Braille, high contrast print).

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Technology

- Technology barriers occur when a technology can't be modified to support various assistive devices.
  - The information on our website supports the use of assistive technology (such as screen reading software, screen magnifier, etc.).
  - Computers at our organization are equipped with screen reading software, magnifier, text to speech, etc. providing access to clients who use assistive technology.
  - Our organization provides assistive technology for clients with disabilities upon request (e.g. Big button telephone, TTY, large keyboard, etc.)

Organizational

- Organizational barriers are an organization's policies and practices discriminate against people with disabilities.
  - Our organization's policies reflect the Act and other accessibility legislations.
  - All or most of our staff (including full- and part-time staff, volunteers, Executive Director, Board members, and volunteers) have participated in OCASI's accessibility training or accessibility training that covers all five regulations in the Act.
    - Our staff receives ongoing accessibility training. This is included in our organization's policies.

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Architectural and Physical

- Architectural and physical barriers are features of buildings or spaces that cause problems for people with disabilities.
    - Before conducting a meeting, workshop/training, and/or class we ensure that the site is accessible for people with disabilities including determining appropriate space requirements, accessibility of washrooms, accessible technology available and/or needed, etc.
    - In accessible elevators, Braille signage and controls can be easily reached and a two-way emergency call system or telephone is provided.
    - Accessible entrances are clearly marked with the International Symbol of Access.

Developing an Accessibility Plan

- Work with a team including people with disabilities, frontline and management staff. You should:
    - Identify task to be completed
    - Barriers addressed
    - Activities
    - Persons involved
    - Budget
    - Timeline

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN					
TASK	Barriers addressed	Activities	Persons involved	Budget	Timeline
Establish policies and practices	- Attitudinal - Organizational - Technological - Information or communications	Examples: - Develop accessibility policies - Create budget for accessibility - Allow service animals on premises - Ongoing staff training - Expand service to include home visits	- Executive Director - Board of Directors - Staff		
Create a welcoming environment	- Attitudinal - Architectural and physical	Examples: - Respectful - Signage	- All staff - Building owner		

ACCESSIBILITY WORK-PLAN

TASK	Barriers addressed	Activities	Persons involved	Budget	Timeline
Establish policies and practices	▪ Attitudinal ▪ Organizational ▪ Technological ▪ Information or communications	▪ Budgeting for accessibility ▪ Cost of assistive technology such as screen reader, magnifier, high visibility keyboard, ▪ Print material	▪ Executive Director ▪ Staff ▪ People with disabilities		

Item	Cost	Timeline
Screen reader	Free - $1200	Immediately
Screen magnifier	Free- $ 900	Short term
High visibility keyboard	$ 20 and up	Short term
printing material (high contrast print, large print)	Depends on content to be printed	Long term

Funding

- Grants Ontario provides a detailed list of funding available across the province.

  – Visit http://www.grants.gov.on.ca/GrantsPortal/en/OntarioGrants/GrantOpportunities/GrantsbySector/index.htm

- Access Ontario provides a great deal of information on what you need to do to comply

  – Remember to build the accessibility needs of clients into your budget plan

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

The Assistive Devices Program (ADP): Ontario Government Funding for Assistive Devices

- The ADP provides money to Ontarians with physical disabilities for assistive devices.

- To find out if the assistive device you need is covered by ADP contact ADP directly at:
  - Phone: 416-327-8804 or 1-800-268-6021/TTY: 416-327-4282 or 1-800-387-5559 or Fax: 416-327-8192
  - Visit http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/adp/categories.html to view list of devices covered
  - Visit http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/adp/notcov.html to view list of devices NOT covered

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Other Sources of Funding Available

- Ministry of Community and Social Services

- Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities

- Ministry of Children and Youth Services

- The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board

- Community Care Access Centres

- Municipal Programs

- Enabling Accessibility

- Trillium Foundation

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Building Accessibility in the Call for Proposal

- Provide supporting academic and community based research.

- What are your program deliverables?

- What specifically do you need the funding for? Be specific.

- What is the expected outcome(s) of making your agency accessible?

- How will additional funds allow you to comply with accessibility legislations nationally and provincially?

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Case Study 1

- Special education teacher
  - A settlement agency needed a special education early childhood educator to support children with disabilities.
  - When applying for funding the agency identified the needs of the students in the classroom, highlighted how the teacher would allow them to meet the requirements under the Act, the cost and the potential outcome of having the teacher in the classroom.

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Case Study 2

- Mental health settlement worker
  - A settlement agency serving a large number of clients with mental health needs could not adequately support these clients.
  - The agency applied and received funding for a mental health settlement worker.
  - They cited the Act to show how to adequately support clients they needed an employee with specialized skills to comply with the law and ensure clients get the services they need.

Case Study 3

- Staff training
  - A settlement agency requested additional funds for professional development days for staff at their agency to receive accessibility training.
  - Agency highlighted the need for the training to comply with the Act, the cost for the training and how it would enable them to better support clients with disabilities gain access to the services they needed to integrate.

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Summary

- Accessibility audit

- Action plan

- Accessibility funds

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Thank you!

Questions and/or comments contact me at

cniles@ocasi.org **or** 416 322 4950 x 260 | TTY: 416 322 1498

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants