



## Federation Member Call with MCFD DM Bond COVID-19 Update April 1, 2020

*Federation Members can find a recording of this call on the FCSSBC Members-only site.*

This is MCFD Deputy Minister Allison Bond's second call with Members. Attending alongside PM Bond were Rob Byers - Assistant Deputy Minister & Executive Financial Officer, Carolyn Kamper - Assistant Deputy Minister, Cory Heavener - Assistant Deputy Minister & Provincial Director of Child Welfare, Diane Rivers - Director Screening Hub, Emily Horton - Executive Director Strategic Integration, Sheila Robinson - Assistant Deputy Minister & Chief Information Officer of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, Joanne White - Executive Director of Practice, and Samantha Cocker - Deputy Director of Child Welfare.

### YOUTH:

- Emily Horton: overarching goals to allow youth to maintain placements and supports.
- Youth just aged out – find and start supports. Youth who have recently aged out of care and are not connected to AYA, MCFD do not have a continued relationship. We know they are particularly vulnerable and so we are trying to find those youth and connect with them to get them onto AYA or connect them to the range of supports that they could access through new Federal and provincial measures.
- For youth who have aged out and are on AYA – will ensure that the monthly payments will continue to flow despite interruptions to their school or programs- can do this through policy, but are also seeking changes in regulations so that this period of crisis does not “count” towards their 48 months of being on AYA- looking to extend service beyond the 48 months.
- Youth transitioning to CLBC – supports are on case by case. Youth that were scheduled to transition to CLBC- working closely with CLBC to support youth on a case by case basis, recognizing a blanket approach won't work, CLBC is taking a similar approach to reduce issues- in some cases youth can stay where they were pre-19 and in other cases may be moving to Homeshare, for example.
- Joanne White: DAA youth in care – case by case. Working with RCY. Interim practice guidelines posted for staff (ie Standards and Policy).
- Youth in care from a practice perspective - responding case by case, talking with care providers, families and Nations about transition plans.
- For former Youth in care who turned 19 between Jan 1 and March 31, we will be reaching out to them to engage them in services and supports- linking to their former social worker or to the MCFD or DAA office in their community or with RCY

(working in coordination with pre-Covid-19 supports to connect them to AYA or other supports).

#### SCREENING:

- Corey Heavenor: Developed expedited process last week.
- Diane Rivers: for expedited needs, please send an email with the applicants name to general mailbox [CSH.HUC.General.Enquiries@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CSH.HUC.General.Enquiries@gov.bc.ca) to flag the applications. The HUB is working within a 5-day turnaround even with staff working from home. The CRAA applicants must be under full supervision, as RCMP are not doing fingerprinting at this time. This relates to 1% of those screened. Please connect with Diane if you are finding issues with the process.

#### CONTRACTS AND RENEWALS:

- Rob Byers: goal is to ensure uninterrupted payments with a 4-5 month extension. Those with a negotiated increase will receive it at renewal, in 4-5 months. Any overpayments from other issues will be dealt with post COVID-19. If you are experiencing challenges, please contact your Contract Manager. All Contract Managers have been informed of the directive to keep the funds flowing. The Community Social Services Roundtable recruitment dollars are still there and allocation will happen post COVID-19.

#### PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR MCFD STAFF AND DAA'S:

- Samantha Cocker: meeting with DAAs representation on program areas. Working groups formed and practice Response Group meets daily at 8:00am; working collaboratively with DAA's; met on Saturday to create Interim Practice Guidelines and Bulletin for across service areas. Virtual work guidance posted for staff, with the intention to maximize and maintain services. The Practice Bulletins for staff are to complement standards and policy (ie. CIC travel out of country), have made contact with CIC who are in other provinces. Some work done with care providers if a child becomes ill with COVID-19; work with independent youth agreements and young adults. Decision made by director of child welfare that moved from having in person to virtual visitation for CICs.

#### COLLABORATION TOOLS:

- Sheila Robinson: CLBC put out a directive on Monday, MCFD will get one out today. Working with OCI. Recommendation is for Skype for Business and paid Zoom as the only tools for MCFD when working with children and youth. Facebook Face Time and Facebook What's App are not approved for use. Never record any session. MCFD have tested them and found these best for families. MCFD is writing the instructions and will be getting out to service providers Thursday morning. Other tools approved were not that easy to use. MCFD is working on getting licenses for Zoom that they can share. In the meantime, please use the free app (limits re: 40 minutes). Sheila mentioned doing a webinar and providing supports to increase comfort with this technology.

### COVID-19 TESTING FOR CLIENTS/SERVICE PROVIDERS AND SUPPLIES:

- Allison Bond: Testing is not within purview of MCFD to do; it is up to the PHO – go to health providers first; the tests are available only through PHO. If you think you need a test call 811.
- Access to supplies – MCFD has a line on hand sanitizer but aren't sure on the distribution and will need to prioritize. All other PPEs is going to Health and Health does not have enough.

### Questions:

- Can you provide support for direct services that use a harm reduction lens?
- Individual youth supports? These are met on a case by case situation to best support the youth.
- Emergency Funding and the Child Care Sector? Emergency funding and the childcare sector – childcare BC funding providers is available- protection for workers and children – we have had calls and go to FAQs on the childcare BC site. Please visit <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children>
- Considering the wait time for Grants (ie Gaming Grants), how are agencies demonstrating they have lost 30% of their funding to qualify for the Federal Benefit? Any information on whether non-profits are eligible for the 30% federal dollars if organizations rely on grant funding; gaming and civil forfeiture grants are being delayed; MCFD will follow up.
- Member raised that some insurance companies are not covering business interruption insurance. Government is working on this issue. MCFD is aware and in discussions.
- Question from Gwen- practice and youth and harm reduction – as a service provider who provides residential services. Samantha Cook will have a conversation with member.
- Expediting people thru hub doesn't expedite them through the Solicitor General; what is required for licensing community care and (16 bed emergency youth shelter) have to run people through Sol Gen. This is bottlenecked on the Sol Gen side.
- BC housing is providing a top up for housing workers (\$5) – is this being explored with MCFD. Not in a position to do a top up. This is raised at the Social Services Roundtable.
- CLBC is investing in additional service hours.
- Working group for looking at work at risk- youth between placements and those who are AWOL?
- Kids that are aging out of MCFD into CLBC- potential delay in that transition? For youth where planning was underway, CLBC and MCFD will work together on what is needed for those kids. For kids in staffed resource and working through transition and they will need a staffed resource – one ages out in beginning of July, concerned that planning will grind to a halt, will our contract be extended?

- Emergency measures act will allow for extending caregiving arrangements for young people in care.
- Asking PHO for information for service providers, there was a call last week, precautions and safety messages.
- Setting up a call for CYSN and Care Providers and Parents call: Apr 3, 2020 12:15-1:15 PM.

THANK YOU to the sector