Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy

Ontario Developmental Services
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Developmental Services Sector Agency-based Training Committee

FINAL REPORT

Prepared for the Developmental Services
Human Resource Strategy Steering Committee

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Every day in Ontario, thousands of direct support employees assist people with developmental disabilities to live more inclusive and dignified lives. The quality of services and supports offered has a significant impact on the quality of life for people who receive them. The training of employees in the developmental services (DS) sector is critical in ensuring that developmental services professionals have the education, skills and competencies required to provide the highest quality of supports.

Background

On September 9, 2004 the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) announced a process to transform services for people with a developmental disability. The goal of the transformation is to create an accessible, fair and sustainable system of community-based supports. A transformed system requires a comprehensive human resource strategy that contributes to sector stability and positions developmental services as a worthwhile career choice.

In 2007, an Expert Panel on Training with broad DS stakeholder representation held six meetings and provided recommendations to the Ministry on competencies, training and career paths for developmental services agency staff.

The Expert Panel on Training made the following recommendations related to training:

The DS sector should have:

- A sector-wide training and development strategy that supports the development of core competencies, recruitment and retention, career progression, professional recognition, service quality and the fulfilment of transformation outcomes and values in the sector;

- Recognized agency-training credits towards the Developmental Services Worker (DSW) college program;

- DSW diploma or sector-accepted equivalency as a qualification for direct support employees;

- Flexibility for agencies and employees to pursue any of the following vehicles to build towards the core competencies for direct support employees:

    o DSW diploma program;

    o Other relevant college or university diplomas and degrees (e.g. Bachelor of Social Work, Social Service Worker Diploma, and Bachelor of Arts) if training is provided to bridge the gap between their education and the competencies required to be employed in developmental services;

    o DSW Apprenticeship Program; and

    o Any consistent agency training program, to be determined and recognized across Ontario.

- Formal and consistent on-boarding programs for all new agency employees to ensure that new hires are properly trained and well connected to agencies;

- Ongoing professional development, formal training and education, mentoring, and job shadowing programs that foster a culture of life-long learning in the sector; and

- Leadership development programs and options for individuals in or preparing for specialist, supervisor and management level positions, incorporated in annual learning plans and supporting future talent requirements based on workforce and succession planning.

Based on all the recommendations of the Expert Panel on Training and the findings of the research study on recruitment, training and retention conducted by Deloitte, the Provincial Network on Developmental Services, in collaboration with the MCSS, developed a Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy (DSHRS) to improve and maintain a quality workforce in the DS sector for the next 10 years and beyond.

The Agency-Based Training Committee is a subcommittee of the DSHRS. In response to the recommendations of the Expert Panel on Training, this committee was given the mandate to make recommendations for a consistent agency-based training in Ontario's DS sector. The work of the committee considered the unique geographical and diversity idiosyncrasies related to the agencies represented in this sector.

CURRENT LANDSCAPE

The DSW college program has been the main educational program specific to the sector over the years.

The Agency-Based Training Committee members reported that, within their agencies, there are few employees that have acquired the DSW diploma; it is generally understood that this is reflective of the sector. This is due to a low number of students graduating with a DSW diploma and a high number of DSW graduates deciding to work in other sectors. The actual number of DSW graduates working in the sector is not known.

The recent addition of the DSW Apprenticeship Program is providing the opportunity for formal education on developmental disabilities to current employees, but this program is in its infancy and the number of employees that will access this educational opportunity on a long-term basis is not yet known.

Existing agency-based training (that lacks consistency across Ontario), serves a number of purposes:

- To ensure that employees have current generic and specialized skills required to meet the needs of the people they support;

- To provide employees with the education and training required to support their respective agency's services, culture, values and philosophy;

- To meet legislative and regulated requirements; and

- To support employees in pursuing career paths, ongoing professional development and areas of interest within their profession.

Given the very low number of DSW graduates working in the sector, there is currently a wide and varied range of minimum requirements for staff working in DS across the province. Employees have a variety of experiences and educational backgrounds when they enter the sector as agencies across the province cope with the challenges of recruiting, training, and retaining qualified staff. Agency-based training is essential to ensure that all employees have the required skills, training and education to provide quality supports to people with developmental disabilities.

There is currently mandatory training in Ontario's DS sector that is legislated by Occupational Health and Safety legislation, as well as through the MCSS (*The Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008*).

Many agencies have indicated that they have limited training budgets and are required to spend a substantial part of it on mandatory training or basic training for employees to meet the foundational skills of the job. Also, many employees are employed in more than one agency at the same time and the agency-based training they receive is generally not transferable from one agency to the next due to several factors, including:

- Objectives and learning outcomes are very specific to the agency delivering the training program;

- Training may be reactive and "one-off," designed to address the issues of today;

- Lack of recognition from other local agencies; and

- Lack of coordination and partnerships among sister agencies.

The result is an inefficient system of agency-based training with well-intentioned agencies duplicating each others' efforts to address employees' training needs. Currently, aside from legislated training requirements, there is no mechanism or system to ensure consistency in training provided to employees throughout the sector.

As stated earlier, the training and development provided to employees from one agency to the next can vary greatly. Therefore, and as recommended by the Expert Panel on Training, there is a need for more formal and consistent training practices and formal processes for recognition of agency-based training at the college level.

AGENCY-BASED TRAINING SURVEY

In order to meet its mandate, the committee conducted research on current agency-based training offered by transfer payment agencies in Ontario's DS sector. The information gathered was a key component in informing and assisting the Agency-Based Training Committee to fulfill its key deliverables of:

1. An inventory of current agency-based training programs across the province,

2. Analysis of agency-based training programs, and

3. Recommendations for consistent agency-based training including a system of credits at colleges and recognition across the sector.

Methodology

This section describes the design of the research study conducted by the committee and the methods and instruments used to collect the information.

Method and Research Instrument

Following an analysis of options available, the members of the committee decided that:

- A quantitative research method should be used to collect the information needed;

- Conducting a comprehensive cross-sectional survey would ensure objectivity, reliability and a higher degree of precision in drawing conclusions and generalizations;

- A user-friendly questionnaire should be designed in an Excel format for self-administration; and

- An e-mail mode of survey administration should be used.

The following objectives were developed for the training survey:

- To identify training programs being offered on a *regular* basis in developmental services agencies across the province;

- To collect information about the details related to the training offered in developmental services agencies and to identify provincial trends; and

- To inform decisions regarding courses/topics to be recommended for a consistent agency-based training in Ontario's DS sector.

Target Population and Sample

An effort was made to reach as many developmental services agencies as possible in Ontario that are funded by the MCSS. In total, the survey was sent to 243 agencies providing DS services to adults, with an invitation to participate in the survey.

Survey Instrument Design

The questionnaire asked a wide range of questions and was designed to collect information about the courses offered by agencies. This course information included target learners, course delivery and development, instructors and instructional materials used, course length, eligibility, refresher offered, certification, evaluation of learners, course payment, action taken if learner is unsuccessful and course recognition by colleges.

General questions needed to capture characteristics about participating agencies (e.g., region, location, number of employees/job category, number of DSW graduates employed) were also included. The survey was launched in 2009 but asked for information on training offered in 2008.

To guarantee the validity and reliability of the study, a concerted effort was made to ensure that questions were clear and relevant and that responses were easy to provide, using drop-down options. Both selection and open-ended (numeric or text) questions were used in the survey design.

To make things easier for completion, the definitions for all terms used in the survey were embedded as notes in the survey instrument for easy access as well as a glossary of terms document.

Pilot Survey

When finalized, the survey was piloted in 10 agencies represented in other subcommittees of the DSHRS with the purpose of assessing both the survey (in terms of clarity and relevance) and the related instructions developed. As a result of the valuable feedback received during the piloting phase, revisions were made to the survey to ensure that it was user-friendly, and above all, easy to complete.

Survey Distribution

The survey instrument was distributed to MCSS-funded agencies via provincial umbrella groups' e-mail distribution lists (e.g. ED list serve for Community Living Ontario and OASIS). Additional surveys were sent to agencies outside of these umbrella groups.

The survey was sent to the executive directors of each agency with a request that they delegate the task of completing it to the person with the most responsibility for training in their agency. The following material was included along with the survey instrument to assist with completion requirements:

- An *Introductory Letter* presenting the purpose of the survey, the deadline for completion, and a contact person that would answer any questions related to the survey;
- An *Instruction Sheet* providing information about the survey and tips for completing the survey;
- A *Frequently Asked Questions* document to assist with completing the survey; and
- A *Glossary of Terms* document defining all terms used in the survey.

Both the survey and the above documents were approved by the HR Strategy Steering Committee and were translated and made available in French, as well.

Note: To see a copy of the survey instrument and the above documents, please see the *Analysis Report.*

Data Collection

Data collection began in March 2009 and was completed by August 2009. Agencies were assured of complete confidentiality. Further confidentiality is provided by limiting the information provided as findings to aggregate results.

To support participation, follow-up e-mails and calls were made to agencies and any questions received were answered promptly. In addition, the initial deadline for survey completion and submission was extended to allow for greater return rate.

Return Rate

A total of 243 surveys were sent to DS agencies in Ontario funded by the MCSS. In total, 102 responses were received back from agencies, placing the rate of return at approximately 43%. After completing the process of cleaning the data, 95 valid surveys remained and were included in the final sample for analysis. If the return rate is calculated based on this valid number, the percentage becomes 40% on average.

This return rate is very good, especially considering the survey's length (some agencies spent over 1-2 hours on completion) and the fact that the average rate of return for most surveys is generally realized at 30%.

The final sample is representative of the unique geographical and diversity idiosyncrasies related to the agencies represented in this sector providing confidence that the results could be considered quite representative for Ontario's developmental services.

The first two sections of the *Deliverables* section of this report will provide information on the findings of the Agency-Based Training survey.

Region	Number of Surveys Sent to DS Agencies and Surveys Included in the Analysis		
	Number of surveys sent	Number of surveys used	Return rate
Central East (CE)	25	10	**40%**
Central West (CW)	21	10	**48%**
Eastern (E)	23	7	**30%**
Hamilton-Niagara (H-N)	28	10	**36%**
North East (NE)	19	10	**53%**
Northern (N)	22	13	**59%**
South East (SE)	30	9	**30%**
South West (SW)	51	18	**35%**
Toronto (TO)	24	8	**33%**
	243	**95**	**40%**

Data Entry and Data Analysis

A database was developed to capture all of the information collected through the survey. The data was checked once again for completeness and was cleaned for accuracy. For the purpose of the analysis, the 10 respondent agencies that have multiple locations across Ontario were included in the database only once, in the region where their head office is located. Following the analysis of the survey, descriptive statistics were used to describe agency profiles of respondents and to summarize all of the information on training collected. A qualitative analysis was also conducted for the responses to the open-ended questions.

DELIVERABLES

Inventory of Current Agency-Based Training Programs

The following chart presents a list of main courses offered currently by the respondents and the percentage of agencies offering them.

Course *(currently provided)*	Percentage of all respondents *(N=95)*
Values and Philosophy	
Values and Attitudes	57%
Rights	64%
Social Role Valorization	22%
Person-Centred Planning	60%
Facilitating a Personal Planning Meeting	43%
Working with an Inter-disciplinary Team	11%
Faith-Based Training	6%
Self Assessment/ Personal Outcome Measures	45%
Training in core competencies for DS staff	11%
Health and Wellness	
Nutrition	39%
Aging	35%
Sexuality/ Relationships	46%
Bereavement/ Grief and loss	35%
Preventing and Responding to Abuse	53%
Augmentative Communication Devices	28%
Sign Language	34%
Pharmacology	35%
Medication Administration	78%
Health and Safety	
First Aid and CPR	97%
Automated External Defibrillator (AED)	34%
Workplace Hazardous Material Information System (WHMIS)	87%
Universal Precautions	55%
Lifts/ Transfers and Back Care	72%
Fire Safety	80%
Safe Food Handling	60%
Stress Management	25%
Staff Safety in the Community	14%
Defensive/ Safe Driving	27%

Course *(currently provided)*	Percentage of all respondents *(N=95)*
Developmental Disabilities / Common Disorders	
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	39%
Aspergers	26%
Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD)	26%
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	20%
Rett's Syndrome	14%
Seizure Disorders	31%
Obsessive Compulsive Disorders (OCD)	28%
Down Syndrome	21%
Prader Willi Syndrome	15%
Pica	13%
Fragile X Syndrome	19%
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)	20%
Developmental Psychology	13%
Dual Diagnosis	54%
Interventions	
Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) – Non-violent Crisis Intervention (NVCI)	88%
Understanding and Managing Aggressive Behaviour (UMAB)	11%
Prevention and Management of Aggressive Behaviour (PMAB)	7%
Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI)	5%
Safe Management Group (SMG) – Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments	20%
Applied Behaviour Analysis / Behaviour Management	26%
Computer Skills	
Introduction to Computers	28%
Word processing	19%
Spreadsheets	21%
Presentation Software	18%
Database	21%
Email/ Scheduling/ Calendar	18%

Course (currently provided)	Percentage of all respondents (N=95)
Professional Development	
Teamwork	45%
Documentation	38%
Communication	33%
Conflict Management	36%
Confidentiality	34%
Counselling Skills	8%
Personality Indicators	21%
Creative Program Development	14%
Diversity Training	19%
Community Relationships	17%
Family Relationships	18%
Collective Agreement/Grievance Process	28%
Understanding DS Sector	15%
Community Development	16%
Leadership Skills	41%
Management	39%
Negotiation Skills	19%
Person-Directed Planning for Supervisors and Managers	26%
Problem Solving	19%
Performance Management	27%
Supervision	34%
Time Management	20%
Coaching/Mentoring	32%
Project Management	11%
Interviewing Skills	18%
Accreditation	29%

Other Courses
As part of the survey, agencies were asked to add and provide information about any courses/topics that they offer to their employees which are not part of the survey list. In total, about 90 different courses/topics were added as being offered by one or a maximum of two agencies.

Analysis of Agency-Based Training Programs

Overall Findings of Survey
This section presents the main results of the analysis conducted on all courses reported as offered by respondent agencies. The information is presented in detail in the *Overall Findings* section of the Analysis Report provided by the Agency-Based Training Committee to the DSHRS Steering Committee.

There are approximately 170 different courses/topics offered by the 95 agencies that responded to the survey. By tallying all courses offered by all agency respondents, there are 2,512 courses/topics considered for the analysis.

Agency-Based Training Offered in Ontario's DS sector – Target Learners
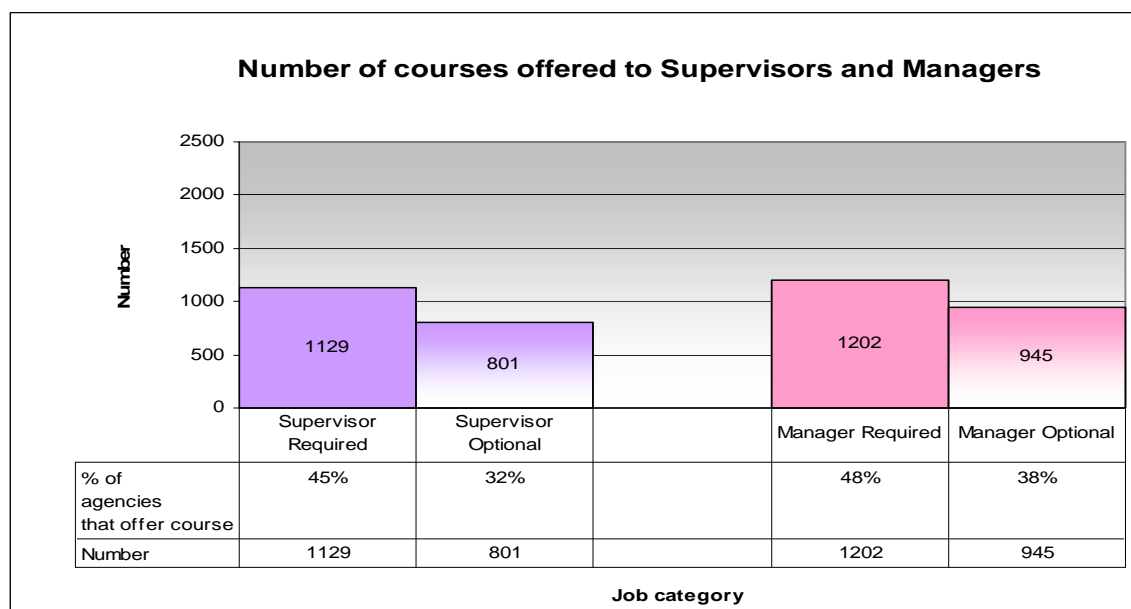*a) Training offered to direct support employees, Specialized and Clinical staff*

	DSS - FT Require	DSS - FT Optiona		DSS - PT Require	DSS - PT Optiona		DSS - Casual Require	DSS - Casual Optiona		Specia-lized Require	Specia-lized Optiona		Clinical Staff Require	Clinical Staff Optiona
% of all courses offered by all agencies	48%	32%		45%	31%		29%	22%		15%	12%		9%	8%
Number	1,207	815		1,139	789		726	555		384	312		232	191
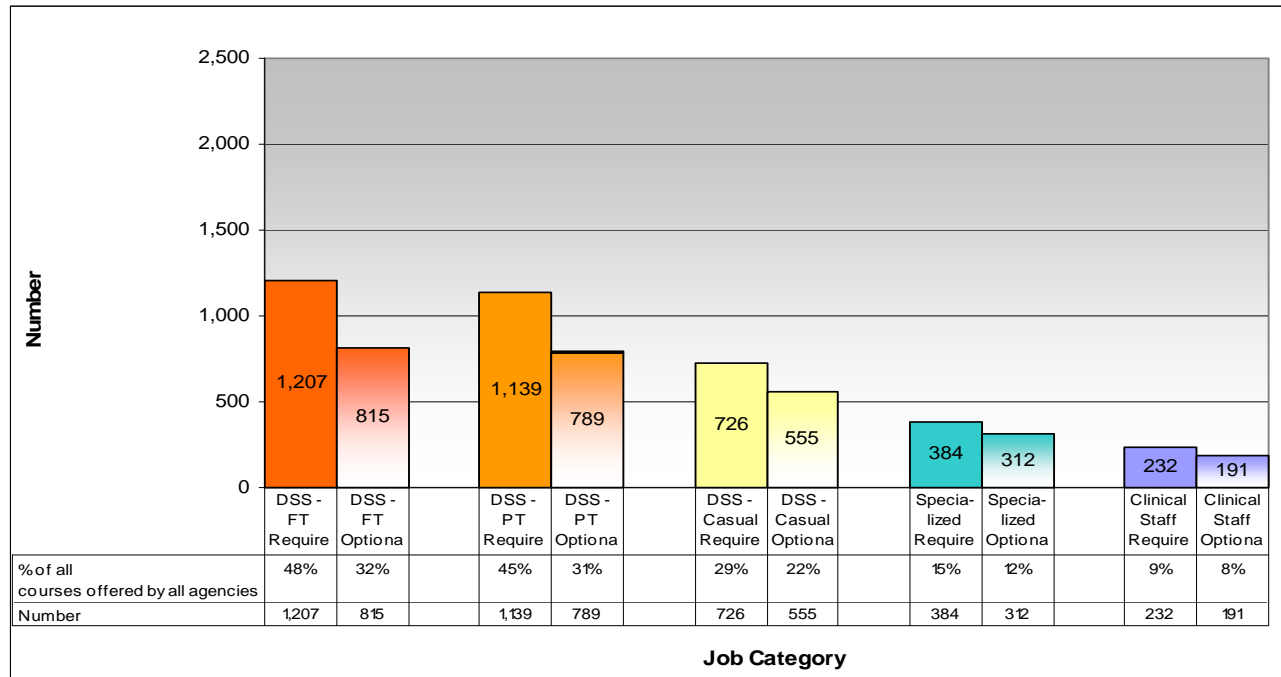
Job Category

The graph above reflects the overall number of courses/topics (and the corresponding percentages) that are "required" *and* "optional" for the following job categories: direct support employees (full-time, part-time and casual), specialized, and clinical employees. Note that not all agencies have employees that fall in the job categories of casual, specialized and/or clinical, resulting in lower numbers reported for these categories. Agencies are more likely to offer courses to direct support full-time and part-time employees compared to casual employees.

Almost half of all courses offered by all agencies (48% of 2,512) are offered to direct support staff as mandatory training.

b) Training Offered to Managers and Supervisors

Number of courses offered to Supervisors and Managers

	Supervisor Required	Supervisor Optional		Manager Required	Manager Optional
% of agencies that offer course	45%	32%		48%	38%
Number	1129	801		1202	945

Job category

The graph above illustrates the overall results for the number of courses/ topics offered to supervisors and managers broken down by required and optional offerings. Out of all the courses offered by all agencies surveyed, 45% are offered to supervisors and 48% to managers as mandatory. Some agencies may not have both supervisor and manager job categories, which may impact the results.

c) Training offered to people supported, families and general public

Number of courses offered to people receiving support, family members and the general public

	Person Supported Required	Person Supported Optional		Family Members Required	Family Members Optional		Open to the Public Required	Open to the Public Optional
% of agencies that offer course	3%	22%		1%	19%		0%	9%
Number	66	559		22	473		10	227
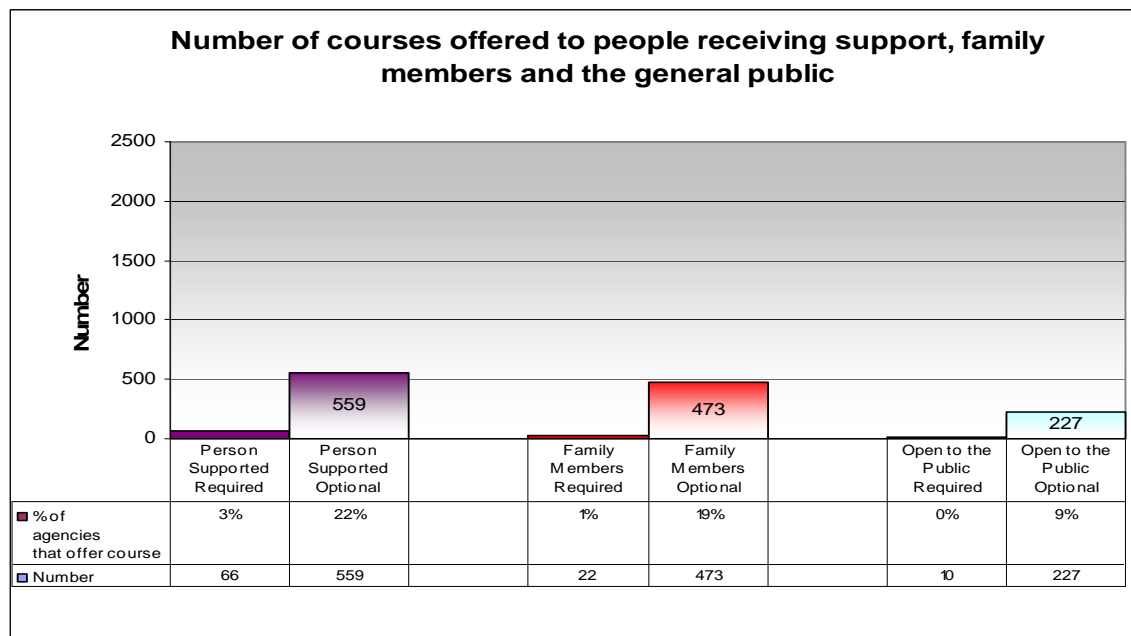
The graph above illustrates the number of courses/topics offered to people receiving support, family members and the general public. The number of courses are further broken down into those that were "optional" or "required". The graph shows that there are very few courses/topics that are "required" for these audiences. Still, the results are encouraging and demonstrate that there are some agencies that are offering training opportunities to people who receive support, family members and the general public.

Courses in the *Developmental Disabilities* category are more likely to be offered to the general public. The same courses are more likely to be offered to family members, in addition to courses listed under the *Values and Philosophy* category.

Some of the courses offered to people receiving support are: *Preventing and Responding to Abuse, Rights, Fire Safety, Person-Centered Planning, Values and Attitudes, Confidentiality*, etc.

Development and Delivery of Courses/Topics

Courses delivered by…				Courses developed by…			
Type of body that delivers the course	Number of agencies/ body	% of agencies/ body	% of agencies/ body (*Excludes non-responses*)	Type of body that develops the course	Number of agencies/ body	% of agencies/ body	% of agencies/ body (*Excludes non-responses*)
Our agency	1,057	42%	45%	Private organization	860	34%	36%
Private organization	598	24%	25%	Our agency	736	29%	31%
Other	196	8%	8%	Other	253	10%	11%
Agency partnership	181	7%	8%	Agency partnership	170	7%	7%
Another DS agency	155	6%	6%	Another DS agency	159	6%	7%
Community college	142	6%	6%	Community college	138	6%	6%
DS Association	45	2%	2%	DS Association	49	2%	2%
Non-response	*138*	*5%*		*Non-response*	*147*	*6%*	
Total	**2,512**	**100%**	**100%**	**Total**	**2,512**	**100%**	**100%**

The findings show that most of the courses/topics are delivered by the respondent agency (45%) or by private organizations (25%). In contrast, 36% of courses/topics were reported as being developed by private organizations while only 31% were reported as being developed by the respondent agency. When the results from the respondent agency marked "our agency" are combined with the results from the "agency partnership" and "another DS agency" responses, the results are that much more significant in both categories: delivered = 59% and developed = 45%. These results show the capacity that currently exists in agencies (alone and in partnership).

In general, the courses/topics are usually delivered by the same body that develops them. The one exception are courses/topics offered by the "own agency," as many agencies are also delivering courses/topics developed by private organizations (e.g. externally certified train-the-trainer courses like *First Aid/CPR*, Ministry-approved *crisis intervention* courses).

Courses/topics are delivered by an agency partnership in only 8% of the cases and by a community college in only 6% of the cases. This shows that there is a significant potential for

building partnerships with other agencies and colleges for a more efficient and cost-effective system of agency-based training.

Mode of Delivery and Instructional Material Used

Mode of Delivery (Results are NOT mutually exclusive)			Instructional Material Used (Results are NOT mutually exclusive)		
Type of delivery	**Number of courses**	**% of all courses**	**Materials used**	**Number of courses**	**% of all courses**
Classroom/ Face to face	2,059	82%	**Participant Manual/ Handout package**	1,444	57%
Video-conference	280	11%	**Power Point presentation**	1,190	47%
On-line/ E-learning	176	7%	**CD/DVD/ Video**	549	22%
Other	111	4%	**Instructor's Manual**	534	21%
Paper-based/ Distance ed.	79	3%	**Other**	165	7%

The most common mode of delivery for courses/topics offered to DS employees is face-to-face in a classroom setting (82% of 2,512).

Among courses that are not offered face-to-face by some agencies are:

- Most courses/topics under the Developmental Disabilities/ Common Disorders category;
- *WHMIS* (offered by DVD or CD);
- *Universal Precautions* (offered online or as part of the annual policy review);
- *Preventing and Reporting Abuse;* and
- *Teamwork, Stress Management, Spreadsheets, Sign language, Sexuality*

Video-conferencing (11%) and online/e-learning (7%) are other methods used to deliver some courses/topics, most of them found under the Developmental Disabilities/ Common Disorders category (e.g., Autism, Down Syndrome, Dual Diagnosis, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). These results show great potential for the increased use of technology to move agency-based training beyond the traditional classroom setting, in order to increase access.

Instructional material is largely paper-based as participant manuals/handout packages are used in 57% of cases and/or PowerPoint presentations in 47% of them. For about one-third of all courses/topics offered to staff by all agencies, a combination of participant manual along with a PowerPoint presentation were used as instructional materials**.** A CD/DVD/Video was used in one in 22% of cases.

"Other" instructional material (7%) cited included: books recommended by the agency, an agency manual, a field trip and practical demonstration.

Instructors Used

Instructors Used			
Type of instructor	Number of courses	% of all courses	% of all courses *(Excludes non-responses)*
External expert in subject area	882	35%	42%
Internally approved trainer	742	30%	35%
Externally certified agency staff	214	9%	10%
College faculty	145	6%	7%
Other	133	5%	6%
Non-response	*396*	*16%*	
Total	**2,512**	**100%**	**100%**

In most cases (about 3 in 4), external subject matter experts (42%) or internally-approved agency trainers (35%) were used to deliver courses/topics. Externally-certified agency staff was used in 10% of all cases while college faculty were used to deliver 7% of all courses offered.

"Other" type of instructors (6%) reported were: executive directors, managers, staff, health unit, fire department, members of local planning groups, family members, to name a few.

External subject matter experts deliver the majority of courses/topics from private organizations, agency partnerships, other DS agencies (almost all) and DS associations.

Courses/topics delivered by own agencies are delivered mainly by internally-approved trainers or by externally-certified agency staff.

Almost all courses delivered by colleges use college faculty as instructors. The remaining college courses (up to 100%) are delivered by subject matter experts.

Who is Paying for Staff Training?

Paid for by...			
Paid by...	Number of courses	% of all courses	% of all courses *(Excludes non-responses)*
Agency- fee&time	1,308	52%	56%
Agency - time	683	27%	30%
Agency - fee	119	5%	5%
Shared cost	94	4%	4%
Staff - time	84	3%	4%
Staff - fee&time	28	1%	1%
Staff - fee	8	0%	0%
Non-response	*188*	*8%*	
Total	**2,512**	**100%**	**100%**

In the majority of cases (91%), agencies cover the cost of attending training for the learner either entirely (in 56% of cases) or by paying for learners' time (30% of cases) or covering the training fee (5% of cases). There were only 19 respondent agencies where staff paid for some of the courses/topics attended (either a fee, time or fee & time)**.**

Evaluation of Learners

Evaluation of Learners		
(results are NOT mutually exclusive)		
Type of evaluation	Number	% of all courses
On-the-job performance	876	35%
Practical skill demonstration	693	28%
Written exam/ Quiz/Test	622	25%
Team exercise/ Group assignment	536	21%
Individual assignment	271	11%
Other	54	2%
None	*834*	*33%*

For 33% of all courses/topics offered, agencies responded that they did not evaluate learners. In cases where an evaluation was conducted, it took the form of an on-the-job performance evaluation (in 35% of cases), a practical skill demonstration in 28% of cases, a written exam/quiz/test in 25% of cases, a team exercise in 21% of cases and an individual assignment in 11% of cases.

A combination of evaluation methods was sometimes used. In 32% of these cases, a practical skills demonstration is required while on-the-job performance is monitored. For another about 9% of cases, both a written test and an on-the-job performance component are part of the evaluation process.

Refresher Courses

Out of all the courses offered by all agencies that responded to the survey (2,512), for only about 27% of them a refresher is offered.

The analysis shows that the most likely courses to be offered as a refresher are those listed under the "Health and Safety" category (*Lifts/Transfers and Back Care, WHMIS, Fire Safety, First Aid*) and "Crisis Intervention" category (Ministry-approved training programs).

Refresher Course Offered			
Frequency	**Number of courses**	**% of all courses offered**	**% of all courses offered** *(Excludes "not required" and non-responses)*
Not required	1,685	67%	
After 1-2 years	455	18%	67%
After > 2 years	208	8%	30%
After 7-11 months	13	1%	2%
After 1-6 months	7	0%	1%
Non-response	*144*	*6%*	
Total	**2,512**	**100%**	**100%**

The majority of refresher courses are offered after one year or more. About two in three courses offered as refresher are offered every 1-2 years. Another 30% of these courses are offered after more than two years.

Certification

Certification Offered			
Frequency	**Number of courses**	**% of all courses offered**	**% of all courses offered** *(Excludes "not required" and non-responses)*
Not offered	1,891	75%	
External training body	418	17%	84%
External college	78	3%	16%
Non-response	125	5%	
Total	**2,512**	**100%**	**100%**

Note: For the purpose of defining "certification" in this survey, the Agency-Based Training Committee requested that agency respondents only consider certification by an external training body or by a college.

For 75% of all courses/topics offered by agency respondents, no certification was provided following the completion of a course/topic. Of the courses that did provide certification upon successful completion, in most cases (84%) certification was offered by an external training body. The remaining 16% of courses that met this certification definition was reported as being offered by a college.

Action Taken if Learner is Unsuccessful?

Action Taken if Learner is Unsuccessful			
Action	**Number of courses**	**% of all courses offered** *(Results are NOT mutually exclusive)*	**% of all courses offered** *(Results are NOT mutually exclusive)*
Take course again	401	16%	60%
Re-train and mentoring	49	2%	8%
Other	51	2%	8%
Coaching/mentoring/counselling	39	2%	6%
Take test again	32	1%	5%
Condition of employment	27	1%	4%
Review of job performance	19	1%	3%
None	51	2%	8%

Out of a total of 2,512 courses offered by respondent agencies, a response to this question was only provided for 669 courses/topics (27% of all).

The most common action taken by respondent agencies if a learner is unsuccessful was to attend the course again (in 68% of cases). In 8% of such cases, a mentoring component was included in conjunction with re-training.

In 8% of the cases, no action was taken.

Courses Approved by Colleges
36 respondent agencies reported having one or more courses approved by various Ontario colleges. Most of these agencies are located in the same city where the college that approved the course is located (or at a reasonable distance from college). Humber, Northern and Loyalist are cited more often as colleges that approved agency-based courses. These are followed by the colleges Fanshawe and Cambrian.

Less than 3% of all courses are approved for some DS agencies by various colleges in Ontario. Courses which are most likely to be approved by colleges fall within the following categories:

- **Health & Wellness** (in order: *Pharmacology, First Aid, Sign Language)*

- **Computer Skills** (in order: *Introduction to Computers, Spreadsheets, Word Processing, E-mail Scheduling, Database, Presentation Software)*

- **Professional Development** (in order*: Management, Supervision, Conflict Management, Documentation, Leadership Skills, Negotiation Skills)*

The course which is most likely to be approved by a college is *Pharmacology*, mainly because it is also more likely to be developed and delivered by the college. This course is approved by various colleges for ten different agencies (mostly large and medium-sized agencies).

Most courses approved by a college are delivered by the same colleges. For example, all *Spreadsheets, Word Processing, Database and Presentation Software* courses are approved and delivered by the same college. The majority of approved *Pharmacology* courses are also delivered by the same colleges. The one exception is the *First Aid* course, which is approved by colleges, but it is mostly delivered by a private organization (e.g., Red Cross or St. John's Ambulance) or by the agency that it is offering it to their employees.

A few of the courses approved by a college are delivered by the "own agency". Among them: *Non-Violent Crisis Intervention*, *First Aid, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information Systems (WHMIS), AED*, *Applied Behavioural Analysis/ Management, Confidentiality, Dual Diagnosis, E-mail, Personality Indicators, Pharmacology, Prader Willi, SMG–Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments,* and *Sign Language.*

Only three courses approved by a college are delivered by an agency partnership*: Dual Diagnosis* (in North and CE), *Obsessive Compulsive Disorders* (in North) and *Personality Indicators* (in CW).Out of all the courses approved by a college and delivered by a private organization, *AED, First Aid and Food Handling* are offered more often.

If all cases where a course is approved by a college are considered (one course is counted multiple times, as it is offered by more than one agency)**,** there are 145 cases where a course offered by various agencies is approved by a college. These courses are mainly delivered by colleges (in 41% of cases). Others are delivered by "own agency" in 22% of cases or by a private organization in 15% of cases. In only 5% of cases, the course is delivered by an agency partnership and in less than 1% of cases by another agency.

For a very limited number of these courses (less than 10) credits are offered by colleges. Among the courses mentioned as receiving credits are: *Leadership Skills, Applied Crisis Intervention, Database, Word Processing, Dual Diagnosis, and WHMIS.*
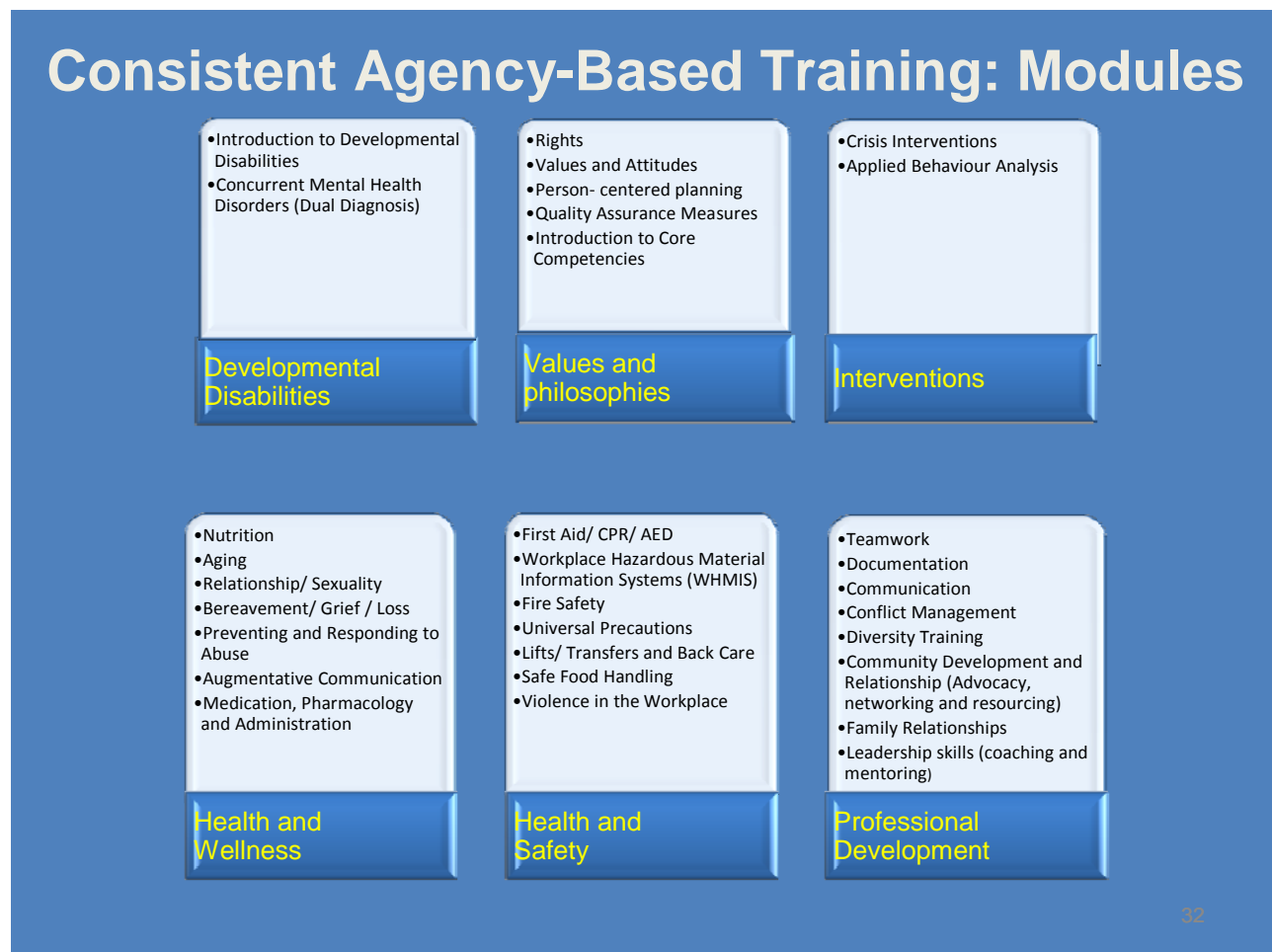
All approved courses that are delivered by a community college are developed by the college and use college faculty as the instructor.

Certification is offered by colleges for the majority of courses.

Recommendations for Consistent, Competency-Based, Agency-Based Training in Developmental Services
"Given the shortage of qualified workers, the sector needs to ensure that training is as available as possible and that programs have the capacity to provide a sufficient supply of qualified workers. Today's workers need training opportunities that are flexible and able to fit into their schedules." (Expert Panel on Training, 2007)

The Agency-Based Training Committee was tasked with determining a schedule of consistent training that would reflect current practices, meet legislated requirements and support employees to have the training and education required to provide a high quality of support. The committee reviewed the findings of the survey analysis and looked for commonalities and trends in training topics provided to direct support employees at the respondent agencies. Based on this analysis and following extensive discussions that included reflections on legislated training, the committee decided on the courses to be included in a foundational program (see chart below). In reviewing the list, the committee grouped together topics that overlapped or were part of a larger topic.

Consistent Agency-Based Training: Modules

Developmental Disabilities	Values and philosophies	Interventions
• Introduction to Developmental Disabilities • Concurrent Mental Health Disorders (Dual Diagnosis)	• Rights • Values and Attitudes • Person- centered planning • Quality Assurance Measures • Introduction to Core Competencies	• Crisis Interventions • Applied Behaviour Analysis

Health and Wellness	Health and Safety	Professional Development
• Nutrition • Aging • Relationship/ Sexuality • Bereavement/ Grief / Loss • Preventing and Responding to Abuse • Augmentative Communication • Medication, Pharmacology and Administration	• First Aid/ CPR/ AED • Workplace Hazardous Material Information Systems (WHMIS) • Fire Safety • Universal Precautions • Lifts/ Transfers and Back Care • Safe Food Handling • Violence in the Workplace	• Teamwork • Documentation • Communication • Conflict Management • Diversity Training • Community Development and Relationship (Advocacy, networking and resourcing) • Family Relationships • Leadership skills (coaching and mentoring)

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Below is the list of the proposed modules and corresponding topics recommended to be implemented in Ontario as a consistent, foundational agency-based training program for all direct support employees in the developmental services sector.

The topics are grouped within the following six themed modules:

Module 1: Developmental Disabilities

1. **Introduction to Developmental Disabilities:** This training will cover the evolution of services in Ontario for people with developmental disabilities, up to and including the up-to-date information on the MCSS transformation of supports and services. Topics covered will include common syndromes/disorders associated with developmental disabilities; quality of life issues; principles of normalization; communication disorders; and other general topics associated with developmental disabilities.

2. **Concurrent Mental Health Disorders (Dual Diagnosis):** This training will teach employees how to provide optimal support to people who are dually-diagnosed. Focus will be on people with developmental disabilities who have a secondary psychiatric diagnosis such as Schizophrenia. Employees will learn about various and common mental health disorders and the challenges related to finding appropriate psychiatric interventions for persons with a dual diagnosis. This course will include information on current cross-sector partnerships and opportunities to engage and work with hospitals and mental health institutions.

Module 2: Values and Philosophies

3. **Rights:** This training will help employees to understand the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* as it pertains to their role of supporting people with a developmental disability; explore the history and the impact of the disability rights movement; educate people who receive support on how to exercise their rights as full citizens; ensure that rights of supported individuals are not ignored or infringed upon; and make ethical judgements and decisions.

4. **Values and Attitudes:** This is an orientation and overview of an organization's mission, vision and ethical values. This training can include a summary history of the developmental services field; funding sources; organizational structure;human resource principles; and other related subject matter.

5. **Person-Centered Planning:** This training will review the philosophy of person-centered planning as an interactive, dynamic, person-focused process that helps bring clarity to decision-making and supporting people to achieve their goals in life.

6. **Quality Assurance Measures**: This training will cover topics in relation to quality assurance such as promotion of social inclusion; individual support plans; human resource practices; residential services and supports; safe environments; confidentiality and privacy; behaviour interventions; abuse awareness and reporting.

7. **Introduction to Core Competencies**: This training is part of the provincial core competencies implementation and can be taught through a train-the-trainer module. This training will assist employees to identify the key characteristics of a competency, become familiar with the Core Competency Models for roles in the developmental services sector and identify behaviours and link them to competencies. Upon completion of this course employees will be able to complete a competency self-assessment to determine their current performance level and where their development opportunities lie.

Module 3: Health and Wellness

8. **Nutrition:** This training will cover *Canada's Food Guide*; proper serving sizes; how to plan a healthy menu; discovering how to read and understand nutrition labels; and how to support people to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

9. **Aging:** This training includes common medical conditions associated with the aging process (especially common age-related conditions for people with a developmental disability) and practical tools for shared and multi-sector problem- solving and care planning for a person with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of age-related dementia.

Employees will learn the fundamentals of palliative care planning and about end-of-life care including pain and symptom management.

10. **Relationships/Sexuality:** The intent of human relationships/sexuality training is to help employees promote a healthy understanding of human growth and sexual development; to enhance the appreciation of and respect for oneself and others; and to heighten personal awareness of the boundaries and responsibilities involved.

11. **Bereavement/Grief/Loss:** This training will assist employees to gain a better understanding of grief and to facilitate the grieving process with people supported; to gain insights on characteristics that people may exhibit, rituals to help with coping and many other useful strategies; and to discover other types of grief such as the sorrow experienced after the end of a relationship. Grief isn't just about death, it's about loss.

12. **Preventing and Responding to Abuse**: This training will provide information on the various forms of abuse and ways to safeguard against abuse. It will also address the process for reporting abuse and suspected abuse; documentation requirements; legal obligations related to Quality Assurance Measures regulations; intervention techniques; and how to provide support to the victim.

13. **Augmentative Communication:** This training will introduce employees to the basics of American Sign Language (ASL) and augmentative communication. Employees will learn that augmentative communication provides opportunities to communicate effectively with the people they support and the importance of communication as a tool to positively address behavioural challenges. Employees will learn about a variety of augmentative communication methods and tools designed to effectively address communication challenges for the people they support.

14. **Medication, Pharmacology and Administration:** This training will provide information on medication therapies, safe practices and the due diligence of the direct support employee in the safe administration and documentation of medications. Topics will include medication identification; reasons why certain medications are prescribed; how to provide support with medication changes and side effects; problem-solving, monitoring, and overall health and well-being as it relates to best practices.

Module 4: Health and Safety

15. **First Aid/CPR/AED:** This training is a certification course that covers basic rescuer CPR and use of the Automated External Defibrillator (AED). This is a hands-on course covering topics such as providing basic first aid to burns, wounds, and musculo-skeletal injuries. Employees will participate in hands-on, skill- building activities and formal testing procedures.

16. **Workplace Hazardous Materials Information Systems (WHMIS):** This training is a certification course that covers workplace health and safety with regard to hazardous materials. Employees will become aware of WHMIS history and legislation; learn to recognize the classification symbols; understand workers, employers, and suppliers' responsibilities; familiarize themselves with Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS); and be able to recognize consumer product labels.

17. **Fire Safety:** This is a practical training where employees will learn to address and recognize hazards; take preventative measures; understand and implement emergency action plans; and learn to use a fire extinguisher safely and effectively.

18. **Universal Precautions:** This training outlines universal precautions that employees must be aware of and practice to minimize the risks to them and supported individuals. Employees will learn about the importance of taking general precautions in their day-to-day work. Topics covered will include Hepatitis, AIDS, Tuberculosis, Influenza and pandemic planning, SARS, MRSA, and West Nile Virus.

19. **Lifts/Transfers and Back Care:** This training will focus on back care and safety, preventative measures to avoid back injuries, and will teach safe lifts and transfers techniques. This is a hands-on practical training program.

20. **Safe Food Handling:** This training teaches employees the importance of safe food handling to prevent health and contamination issues. Employees will learn the importance of safe storage of food, healthy preparation, and how to ensure that cross contamination does not occur.

21. **Violence in the Workplace:** This training will focus on the definitions and theories of workplace violence; identifying the differences between interpersonal conflicts; discrimination; harassment; and bullying in the workplace. Key components include identification, prevention, and reporting instances of violence in the workplace. Bill 168, *The Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act(Violence and Harassment in the Workplace) 2009* will be discussed and reviewed.

Module 5: Interventions
22. **Crisis Interventions:** This training focuses on crisis prevention and intervention and offers proven, Ministry-approved strategies/techniques for safely defusing anxious, hostile, or violent behaviour at the earliest possible stage and in the least intrusive manner. Only Ministry-approved training programs such as *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention* (Crisis Prevention Institute); *Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments* (Safe Management); *Therapeutic Crisis Intervention* (TCI); *Understanding and Managing Aggressive Behaviour* (UMAB); and *Prevention and Management Aggressive Behaviour* (PMAB) are authorized for use. Refresher training is required at the frequency as per the training entity requirement for certification.

23. **Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA):** This training speaks to the science of influencing and predicting human behavior and focuses on the observable relationship between behaviour and the environment. By assessing the relationship between a targeted behaviour and the environment, the methods of ABA can be used to change that behaviour. Research in applied behaviour analysis ranges from behavioral intervention methods to basic research which investigates the rules by which humans adapt and maintain behaviour.

Module 6: Professional Development
24. **Teamwork:** This training will promote teamwork in the workplace, suggesting that all members of the team combine their individual talents in pursuit of goals that provide the best quality supports and services to the people in their care, usually articulated through an organization's mission.

25. **Documentation:** This training will focus on how to create written messages and formal documentation requirements that are clear, purposeful and professional.

26. **Communication:** This training will provide all participants with the tools to effectively communicate with team members, people supported, families and community members. Training may use personality trait self-assessments to help participants recognize different traits in themselves and others may present strategies about how to be flexible in their communication styles and to adjust to unique and challenging situations.

27. **Conflict Management:** This training will provide participants with useful, relevant confidence-building tools to help them recognize and respond to conflicts in the workplace in a professional manner.

28. **Diversity Training:** This training is developed for the purpose of increasing participants' cultural competence. Employees who bring this training into the workplace will benefit an organization by protecting against civil rights violations, promoting inclusion and tolerance, and an overall healthy work environment.

29. **Community Development and Relationships (advocacy, networking, resourcing):** This training will focus on helping people and direct support employees to identify and establish supportive relationships in the community based on common interests and needs. The focus should be on approaching community members and organizations in a positive manner that promotes the inclusion and participation of people with developmental disabilities as full citizens in their communities.

30. **Family Relationships**: This training will teach direct support staff how to develop and foster positive relationships with the families of the people they support.

31. **Leadership skills (coaching and mentoring):** Leadership training speaks to enhancing the skills needed to motivate and lead a group of people toward a common goal. Coaching and mentoring training will enable employees to support skills development in other employees.

Note: A detailed result of the analysis of each course listed under the recommended training modules was provided to the DSHRS Steering Committee in the *Analysis Report*.

System of Recognition and Credits at Colleges for Agency-Based Training
For this deliverable, the committee created the document, *College Recognition of Agency–Based Training - A Reference guide for Developmental Services Agencies Seeking Formal College Recognition of Agency-Based Training* (Appendix B). This document was developed by committee members who had experience working with colleges in developing and delivering agency courses that received formal college recognition. In completing this task, this committee collaborated with members of the Program Standards Committee as one of their similar deliverables was to "identify and review any process to recognize agency training credits towards the DSW program."

The report contains the following topics:

- Introduction to the college Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) process, including the college assessment methodologies and the agency role in supporting students/employees in the PLAR process;

- The benefits of college recognition to colleges, agencies, students/employees;

- Criteria for college recognition, including key questions to address when working with your local college on a process; and

- Developing an agency/college agreement including discussion on documentation, course/curriculum revisions and instructor qualifications.

In addition, the members of the task group that worked specifically on this document met with three representatives from colleges to discuss the report and to ensure that it was a document that could be referenced by both sectors.

The committee recommends that the document, *College Recognition of Agency–Based Training - A Reference guide for Developmental Services Agencies Seeking Formal College Recognition of Agency-Based Training,* be made available to all DS agencies and colleges.

As part of the work to further align the developmental services and education sector, in May 2010, the Chair of the Agency-Based Training Committee, the Chair of the Program Standards Committee and another member of the steering committee made a presentation to the DSW Coordinators of Ontario's Colleges at their annual conference. The purpose of the presentation was to provide an update on the Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy (DSHRS) and the newly developed "core competencies" for DS employees, to emphasize the importance for both sectors to incorporate the core competencies and to discuss and establish an ongoing collaborative partnership to strengthen the alignment and linkages between the education and DS sectors.

The recommendations presented to the college representatives were the following:

1. Reflect the core competencies and additional newly required technical skills, in a revised DSW college curriculum and make the curriculum more consistent across Ontario.

2. Engage agencies to ensure education reflects current needs of employees.

3. Recognize agency-based training for credit or Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) towards the DSW diploma.

4. Work with the sector to promote and market DSW college programs.

The same message was conveyed at the DSW Program Coordinators meeting on May 25, 2011, where two members of the DSHRS Steering Committee presented an update on the Strategy.

The DSW Program Coordinators were provided with the presentation slidedeck, a short summary of the presentation, and recommendations from the DSHRS Steering Committee to share at their respective colleges.

The response from college representatives was positive. It is expected and desirable that the work of the DSHRS will continue to include discussions with this group as well as direct participation of specific professionals from the college sector.

The committee noted that future work on the training and education of DS sector's workforce should explore educational opportunities beyond the DSW diploma and apprenticeship program. For example, one committee member researched continuing education (CE) credits through accredited post-secondary bodies and determined that this option may also provide opportunities for recognition of agency-based training.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.) That all agencies adopt the agency-based training modules as described in the analysis report.

More information about this recommendation is found in first two deliverables described in this report. The recommendations below outline processes needed to continue the efforts toward implementation and sustainability of consistent agency-based training.

2) Collect qualitative information on the strong training practices in the sector as it relates to the training modules developed by the Agency-Based Training (ABT) committee.

Reason:
The training survey and work completed by this committee provided some rich and very useful data on the training topics being delivered by agencies across Ontario to their employees. However, the present data does not completely lend itself to fully assess qualitative matters related to course content. Going forward, agencies will need advice, support, and tools on how to assess their training programs to ensure that the research, development, content, modes of delivery, etc. are consistent across the province and support the development of a highly qualified and knowledgeable workforce.

Process:
Focus groups conducted across the province, with invitations to the employees that have the most responsibility for the training function in their respective agencies, would be crucial to collect this qualitative information.

Information gathered from the core competencies implementation pilot sites regarding strategies for providing training to large groups, may be also used to inform this process. The lessons

learned, challenges, and successes during the core competencies implementation period can be used to illustrate the benefits of consistency and quality through collaboration.

Additional focus groups with other stakeholders such as college representatives may give further insight on how agencies could align agency-based training with college curriculum and obtain college recognition and vice versa.

3) Reflect core competencies in all training modules.

Reason:
The DSHRS Steering Committee is committed to embedding core competencies in Ontario's developmental services. The core competencies will benefit agencies and the employees best if they are part of an integrated HR system including, recruitment, retention and training. The agency-based training modules should also reflect, where possible, these core competencies.

*Process***:**
For this reflection to occur in the moment, it will be critical that agency personnel providing training in their agency be trained, confident, and comfortable with assessing and evaluating core competencies. For training models that are used in more than one agency, there may be opportunities for collaboration to review the material and determine areas that could be revised to reflect the core competencies for DS staff. Trainers in agencies need the necessary tools and skills to competently evaluate content and testing procedures for core competencies in existing courses. Going forward, trainers will need to formally develop skills to recognize and embed core competencies during development stages of course design.

Lessons learned during the pilot implementation phase of core competencies could be useful to inform this process. For example: lessons learned through the process of delivering the *Introduction to Core Competencies* course to all of the employees from the pilot agencies, as well as, the use of the *Developmental Resource Guide* as a tool intended to assist employees with developing core competencies.

4) Invest in training modules that support leadership skills development, management training, and succession planning.

Reason:
The current work of the ABT committee focused on the training needs of direct support employees. It is critical that the sector is providing opportunities and support to ensure employee development toward succession planning at all levels. There are examples of leadership and management training through agency specific efforts and formal education offerings that can be supported and shared throughout the sector. When savings are realized with a more efficient and coordinated system of consistent agency-based training being delivered to the direct support level, these savings could be redirected to leadership and management training events.

Process:
A by-product of the ABT survey was statistics gathered on training courses/topics offered for manager, supervisor, specialized, and clinical employee positions. Therefore, some useful data is available to guide further analysis on the development of processes and best practices related to training at this level. The committee also recommends that focus-groups be conducted with human resources personnel from agencies that have made formal efforts toward developing their future leaders while enhancing the skills of their existing leaders; subject matter experts (internal/external); managers/supervisors with a range of experience; identified potential leaders; and other relevant groups. This exercise would inform the development of a process toward consistent agency-based training for management staff.

In addition, the committee recommends that training events that target the supervisor/manager, senior manager, and the executive director positions are identified (e.g., Queen's Leadership program for non-profit sector and the MARC Group's sponsored training series for senior managers called "What a Non-Profit Executive Director Needs to Know") in order to ensure that core competencies for all management and senior executive positions are linked with training offerings at this level.

5) Support agencies to consider increasing their audiences to include families, people who receive support, and the general public.

Reason:
Such efforts would be consistent with the recommendations of the Expert Panel on Training and the principles of transformation.

Process:
The results of the survey show that some agencies across the province already open some of the training events to these target groups. This committee recommends that this practice be expanded and agencies consider inviting families, people who receive support, and the general public to their training sessions. Further analysis is required to determine training needs of these groups to inform whether customization of key topics is needed and/or separate training modules should be created. To gather required information, we recommend that facilitated focus groups be conducted with each of these target groups (specifically families and people who receive support) to make determination.

6) Support sector training opportunities and utilize more cost-efficient methods of delivering training events (e.g. online, video-conference, agency partnerships).

Reason:
Our training survey provided important data to inform our recommendations for consistent agency-based training in the DS sector. In addition, it provided us with data on a broad spectrum of training topics being delivered across the province via various delivery methods (i.e. face-to-face, video-conference, web-based, computer-based, on-the-job). There are specialized and multi-sector training initiatives to address the complexity of working in this field including training on dual diagnosis, medical conditions, issues related to aging, etc. The complex nature of working in the DS sector and training requires greater coordination and collaboration to maximize efficient use of training opportunities and efforts across Ontario.

Process:
Some partnerships for training already exist including the National Association for the Dually Diagnosed (NADD); the Ontario Partnership on Aging and Developmental Disabilities (OPADD); the Seniors' Health Research Transfer Network (SHRTN); the Ontario Association on Developmental Disabilities (OADD); regional HR groups; the Provincial Networks of Specialized Care; and George Brown College and Reena's Developmental Disability Counsellor Program. There is a need to engage existing structures in coordinating central/regional training events and/or create new entities to perform this function. Further investigation to assess opportunities and efficiencies (cost-sharing and/or investment) is needed.

7) Support the sustainability of existing regional HR groups around the province while encouraging the creation of others where they do not exist.

Reason:
The research conducted by this committee shows that there is a wealth of training offered by agencies across Ontario. The results also show that there is a great opportunity for collaboration and greater efficiency versus "re-inventing the wheel" when developing and

delivering such training. Among other things, the regional HR networks provide an opportunity for agencies to collaborate and share training ideas, training opportunities and related practices and policies. The ABT Committee should share the information in the *Analysis Report*, the report on college recognition for agency-based training and the final report with the networks. This action would support a pre-roll to obtain buy-in to the concept of consistent agency-based training recommended. Furthermore, the regional HR networks could provide feedback and actively discuss strategies for the implementation, sustainability, and evolution of this committee's recommendations.

Process:

It is the understanding of this committee that in some regions there are strong and well-connected HR networks whereas in other regions of the province there may not be as well-connected networks. We are not aware of a formal process for these networks to connect in any way beyond their regional borders or to connect to a central provincial body. This committee recommends that these regional networks develop a connection and/or reporting relationship with the Provincial Network's HR Subcommittee. This way, the information, once vetted at a high level, could be disseminated on a provincial scale through this mechanism. If such structure is adopted, an opportunity should be created for members of the ABT Committee to meet with the regional HR networks to discuss the reports and findings of their research. Furthermore, a plan can be developed for these regional networks to perform a coordination function for the current and widely accepted consistent training offerings (i.e. mandated through legislation and accompanying regulations). Lessons learned through this process can inform the next stage of development/implementation for consistent agency-based training modules.

8) Continue to build on engagement with colleges and obtain recognition for a consistent agency-based training.

Reason:

There are opportunities to continue to collaborate with colleges to influence the education provided to developmental service professionals. Through continued engagement with DSW Program Coordinators provincially, we can ensure that opportunities to inform and influence college curriculum, and collaborate with the education system, are acted upon and the work of the DSHRS is embedded within the college system. The *College Recognition of Agency-Based Training – A Reference Guide for Developmental Services Agencies Seeking Formal College Recognition of Agency-Based Training* provides a foundation for discussion about recognition of agency-based training at a provincial and local level.

Process:

Gathering information from colleges through a focus group, as mentioned in the recommendation #2 is one strategy. In addition, there may be an opportunity for a sustainable longer-term engagement with colleges to be considered by the DSHRS Building a longer-term relationship with colleges may have a mutual benefit to both colleges and agencies related to developing better prepared students to work in the DS field immediately following graduation. The introduction of DSW Apprenticeship Program is a prime example of an opportunity to develop that complimentary relationship.

A proposed recruitment flow would be: awareness and marketing to make the field more attractive and interesting to general population → candidates' core competencies assessed through behavioural based interviewing → new employees attend agency-based training modules. In addition, employees retained after 1+ years (recommended) may be screened for DSW Apprenticeship Program → Agency-Based Training for College Recognition process implemented for full/partial credits →apprenticeship certificate earned → bridge to diploma program.

The benefits and success of assessing employees/students core competencies before entering the DSW Apprenticeship Program may lead to showing the distinct benefits that may influence

change in college application policy/process with regards to application/ selection of students in the DSW diploma program. The need for alignment of the two sectors (DS and education) goes both ways when assessing quality personnel for the DS community.

9) Gather training-related statistics.

Reason:
To effectively assess the impact of training and education in and for the DS sector, agencies and colleges need to gather more statistics to inform the development/ review of HR practices and to assess the return in investment. This will allow for a more accurate two-way conversation to guide coordinated efforts for future recruitment and retention strategies.

Process:
The DSHRS Steering Committee should encourage agencies and colleges to gather more and reliable statistics on the background of their employees/students as follows (list is not exhaustive):

A. Colleges to collect statistics related to DSW graduates from the diploma program including:

- Educational background prior to enrolment in the program;
- Drop out/unsuccessful completion rates;
- Successful completion rates;
- Employment rate after graduation; and
- Field employed in after graduation annually to track retention of graduates in the DS sector (The Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities gathers this statistic only once soon after graduation).

B. Colleges *and* agencies to jointly collect statistics related to DSW graduates from the DSW Apprenticeship Program including:

- Educational background prior to enrolment in the program;
- Drop out/unsuccessful completion rates;
- Successful completion rates;
- Retention rates after certification annually and by graduation year; and
- Number of apprentices that bridge into the diploma program and number that graduate after bridging.

C. Agencies to collect statistics on all new hires including:

- Educational background (domestic and foreign) with a focus on DSW graduates (apprenticeship and diploma programs); and
- Retention rates for all educational backgrounds.

In addition, agencies should collect and track information/ statistics on courses taken by each employee and on training evaluation.

10) Promote the findings and recommendations of this committee.

Reason:
In order for the recommendations of this committee to be implemented in Ontario's DS sector, a "buy-in" from the sector is needed. The proposed list of courses/topics in the training modules will need support from agencies and other stakeholders in order to become consistent practice in the province and to make it an evolving model that will develop professionalism in the sector.

Process:
Support for the findings of this committee should include endorsement and support from agencies, the various umbrella groups in the sector, and the regional HR groups. Maximize the use of the Learning and Development section on the DSHRS website and link with the Awareness and Marketing Committee for promotion. The agency based training modules, if consistent across Ontario, could be used as a tool to attract new personnel by marketing it as something that sets the DS sector apart from other sectors to increase our competitive profile.

The recommended training modules and all the additional recommendations in this report should be presented at provincial DS conferences/forums and be disseminated to all agencies by e-mails and newsletters.

APPENDIX A

Agency-Based Training Committee Members*

Angela Clarke	Family Home & Support Systems Supervisor, Community Living Campbellford/ Brighton
Claire Market	Manager, Human Resources Community Living Essex County
Dean Johnson	Director, Residential and Day Services New Leaf: Living and Learning Together Inc
Doris Maniacco	Manager, Human Resources Community Living Oshawa/Clarington
Janice McFadden	Support Resources Manager Community Living Chatham-Kent
Joe Persaud (Chair)	Regional Executive Director, Kerry's Place Autism Services
Karen McClintock	Manager of Learning and Development, Lambton County Developmental Services
Lucia Pintea	Senior Policy Advisor- Forecasting and Planning Community and Developmental Services Branch, MCSS
Robin Benton	Residential and Program Supervisor, Pathways to Independence
Rosanne Stein	Training Coordinator, Hands TheFamilyHelpNetwork.ca and North Community Network of Specialized Care
Stacey Donaghy	Manager of Learning and Development Reena
Steve Snider	Manager of Educational Services Christian Horizons
Yvonne Harrop	Manager, Staff Training & Development, Community Living Toronto

* As at date of this report.

APPENDIX B: COLLEGE RECOGNITION OF AGENCY-BASED TRAINING

A REFERENCE GUIDE FOR DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES AGENCIES
SEEKING FORMAL COLLEGE RECOGNITION OF AGENCY-BASED TRAINING

Prepared by the
Agency-Based Training Committee in partnership with the Program Standards Committee
THE DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY

November 2010

INTRODUCTION
College Recognition of Agency-Based Training
One of the primary goals of Ontario's developmental services organizations is to provide the highest quality supports to the people we serve. Agencies strive to hire the most qualified employees possible. One challenge is that while the majority of agencies seek to hire candidates who have a Developmental Service Worker (DSW) diploma (as this is seen as the preferred industry qualification), the majority of people who provide direct support do not have this diploma education.

As a result of significant growth in the field of developmental services in recent years, of growing competition from the health and education sectors and of changes in the general labour market environment, the DSW programs have not been able to keep pace with the demand for graduates. Therefore, agencies have had to make significant investment in recruiting and training their staff. Over the years, many agencies have developed quite evolved processes for research and development toward designing quality training events for their staff. Also, this has lead to the creation of partnerships and collaborative models of training that are recognized by other service providers within the developmental services sector.

The emergence of the DSW Apprenticeship Program has introduced the opportunity for agencies to partner with colleges to have their employees attain formal college certification recognizing their profession. The DSW Apprenticeship Program facilitates a natural and active partnership between agencies and colleges. In order for agencies to realize their return on training investment, we recommend that this document be used to help guide agencies and colleges toward a discussion and process to have formal college recognition for agency-based training.

Presently, there is no formal mechanism to guide agencies and colleges through the process of reviewing agency-based courses. DSW applicants and students that have completed these courses often face challenges when they seek to have this prior learning recognized by a community college. Colleges routinely review and assess courses completed at other colleges where learning objectives and evaluative components are defined. Agencies that structure courses in a manner that aligns with how colleges assess prior learning should have greater success in the process of obtaining course recognition.

For this reason, the purpose of this document is as follows:

> TO GUIDE AGENCIES IN THE PROCESS OF SEEKING FORMAL COLLEGE RECOGNITION FOR AGENCY-BASED TRAINING.

This document outlines important background information which describes the work that was initiated to strengthen the developmental services sector. It also describes the process that colleges use to assess and recognize the prior learning of DSW students and applicants. Finally, this guide provides salient information needed for agencies as they prepare for discussions with colleges around recognition of agency-based training; consideration is also given to developing agency/college agreements.

When a college recognizes prior learning, the student saves time and money. When relevant courses offered by agencies align with the DSW program curriculum, a college can recognize prior learning that students acquire through the successful completion of agency-based training. Agencies will benefit from having qualified employees who are equipped to provide the best possible supports to the people they serve. In addition, colleges will benefit from increased enrollment as any savings in college fees may motivate DS employees to pursue higher education.

OVERVIEW

2007 to Present: Promoting Education, Learning and Development

Early 2007 – Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) Expert Panel on Training
In 2007, the MCSS initiated the Expert Panel on Training for the developmental services sector. The panel consisted of representatives from multiple developmental service agencies, the MCSS, the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU), colleges and universities and families. The panel submitted a list of recommendations to address current and future human resource challenges facing the developmental services sector including the following: "The developmental services sector should have recognized agency training credits towards the Developmental Services Worker program."

2008 – The Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy (DSHRS)
When the Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy (DSHRS) was initiated, six HR subcommittees were established with representatives from developmental services organizations, developmental services agencies across Ontario, the MCSS and other partners.

Both the Agency-Based Training Subcommittee and the Program Standards Subcommittee were assigned very similar deliverables as recommended by the Expert Panel on Training.

The Agency-based Training subcommittee was assigned the following deliverable:
- *Recommendations for consistent agency-based training including a system of credits at colleges and recognition across the sector.*

The Program Standards subcommittee was assigned a very similar deliverable:
- *Identify and review any process to recognize agency training credits towards the DSW program.*

Given the commonalities, the two subcommittees collaborated to produce this document.

Agencies and Colleges Collaborating
In 2009, the DSW Apprenticeship Program was launched in Ontario. This program requires collaboration between agencies and colleges as the student/employee develops on-the-job competencies while gaining academic certification.

As of 2010, there were 12 colleges offering the DSW Diploma program and 10 colleges offering the DSW Apprenticeship certificate (see Appendix B of this document: *Ontario Colleges Offering DSW Diploma and DSW Apprenticeship Programs*).

In 2008 and 2009, members of the DSHRS Steering Committee met with representatives of the MTCU and DSW Program Coordinators to discuss the important role that each party might play in the strategy. To date, representatives of the MTCU and Ontario's colleges continue to play an important role in the work of the Program Standards Subcommittee.

THE COLLEGE PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION (PLAR) PROCESS

College Recognition of a Student's Prior Learning
Upon enrolment, any student has the right to request that the college assess his/her prior learning through an established process at the college called PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition). As people who work in the field are now enrolling in DSW apprenticeship and diploma programs, many are asking colleges to review courses completed that were developed and delivered by agencies.

How Colleges Assess a Student's Prior Learning
Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is a process of identifying, assessing and recognizing what a person knows and can do for the purpose of awarding academic credit. Any student has the right to request the PLAR process.
A person's previous work, learning, or personal experience is compared to an existing college course to determine if the person has met the learning outcomes of the course (i.e. Does the person have a passing level of the knowledge and skills that the course teaches or requires?).

For example: A college may utilize a process as follows…
- The student completes a "Transfer Credit Form" (available on the college website) and submits it to the Registrar's Office;
- A fee is paid by the student;
- The student's request is evaluated by faculty; and
- The method of evaluation differs depending on the course.

DSW College Coordinators have the task of assessing whether a given course has equipped the student to meet one or more course learning objectives within the respective DSW programs. Although all colleges are required to assess prior learning when requested to do so by the student, the methods used to do this vary from college to college.

When a coordinator is asked to assess prior learning from an agency-based course, and is not familiar with the content of that course, s/he may have difficulty making this assessment. Presently, students who seek to have their prior learning recognized need to prove the value of agency-based courses completed and their mastery of the course concepts. The DSW Coordinator must select a method to evaluate the skills and knowledge acquired by the student. Assessment methods could include:
- Structured Interviews;
- Portfolio of evidence;
- Case study assignments, learning essays;
- Challenge exams;
- Performance observation, skill demonstration, product assessment, simulations;

- Review of transcripts, licenses and certifications received from other educational institutions/organizations/agencies; and
- Review of agency course program.

How Agencies Can Help Students

As agencies and colleges collaborate to have agency-based courses recognized, the outcome that we anticipate is that students can enter DSW programs with their prior agency-based learning recognized.

When courses are recognized, agencies can provide students with the proper documentation required for the PLAR process (exercises, certificates, portfolios, etc.).

THE BENEFITS OF COLLEGE RECOGNITION

For Colleges…

As agencies and colleges collaborate and share feedback on how best to align training with DSW program curriculum, the process of assessing prior learning will be clearer and more transparent. DSW Coordinators will be able to grant credits to students who have successfully completed training with which the Coordinators are familiar. It is also anticipated that college course enrolment will increase as more developmental service professionals enroll in DSW Apprenticeship Program and/or DSW diploma programs. When agencies ask colleges to provide feedback on their courses, colleges will become more familiar with employee learning needs identified by agencies.

For Students/Employees…

When students/employees are given official agency documentation that a pre-approved course was successfully completed, the student will save both time and money. Students and employees will also benefit from the knowledge that their agency-based training has met college recognition standards; the supporting documentation will offer a greater sense of professional recognition.

For Agencies…

Agencies will benefit from the course development expertise of the community colleges and course content will be strengthened. When agencies share courses, they will do so knowing that the course being offered has been recognized by a community college. As agencies attract and retain employees that come fully qualified, the amount of time and money invested in providing agency-based training will either decrease or be re-invested into other learning and development initiatives (e.g., leadership development, specialized training, etc). These investments will ultimately reap direct benefits for the people we support.

CRITERIA FOR COLLEGE RECOGNITION

Key Questions to Address

The following is intended to guide agencies in their discussion with colleges in the development (and ongoing revision) of courses to be considered for college recognition through the PLAR process.

Is the topic part of the college's DSW program curriculum?

For an agency-based course to be considered for recognition using the PLAR system, a college must currently be offering a course that covers similar subject matter.

Are the purpose and learning objectives of the agency course clearly articulated? If so, do they align with the content of a college course?
Colleges are required to clearly articulate the purpose and learning outcomes for the courses they offer. These are available from the respective college's website or from the college's DSW Program Coordinator.

How is agency learning evaluated?
Evaluative components might include things such as oral and/or written tests, individual and/or group assignments, etc. It can be advantageous to have multiple methods of evaluation since one method is often not sufficient in determining a participant's success in meeting the learning outcomes of the course.

Note: If the college does not deem the evaluations conducted in the agency-based course to be sufficient to indicate that the participant has met the learning outcomes, the participant may be required to complete additional evaluative exercises/activities as developed by the college. This will be indicated on the PLAR application.

What is the length of the course (i.e. hours of in-class instruction)?
Although colleges may not require that an agency-based course be as lengthy as a similar topic taught at a community college, the college may consider whether the course length is sufficient to acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes as outlined in the course objectives. Keep in mind that college standards dictate that assignments completed outside classroom time cannot be recognized towards in-class instruction.

DEVELOPING AN AGENCY-COLLEGE AGREEMENT

After a Course Has Been Recognized by a College
The following items may form the basis for an agency/college agreement. **Note:** This is not an exhaustive list.

Documentation – What Documentation Will the College Require of the Agency?
When students/employees successfully complete an agency-based course, they will need to provide documentation to the college. Students/employees with documentation indicating "prior learning" increase the probability of being exempt (or possibly partially exempt) from having to complete the required college course.

A college-agency agreement might indicate the agency will provide students/employees with approved documentation (e.g., a certificate, a letter on agency letterhead signed by an authorized person, copies of assignments or tests, and other evidence of their course work). Agency documentation might include details such as:
- Name of the organization (agency letterhead);
- Name of the course;
- Name of the instructor;
- Date(s) of the course;
- Hours of instruction (i.e., 9am to 4pm);
- Brief course description;
- Name of the student/employee;
- Grades and other evaluative components;
- Name and contact information of the agency training/education representative; and

- Any information detailing previously agreed upon college recognition of the agency-based course.

Note: Applicants are required to pay a fee to the college for a PLAR.

Course/Curriculum Revisions
Once an agency-based course is recognized by a college, the agency and college will need to establish a process to maintain this recognition in light of agency-based course revisions and college curriculum revisions.

Instructor Qualifications
A college may request information related to instructors used or steps agencies take to qualify an instructor to teach a particular course (e.g. internal and/or external certification, credentials, etc). When employees are required to train and evaluate their peers, the agency should take reasonable steps to help the instructor maintain objectivity and thereby avoid the appearance of bias and/or conflict of interest.

The Use of Marketing/Branding Information
Once a college has recognized an agency-based course, an agency may wish to seek formal permission to include college logos and/or other marketing and branding information in internal or external communications and vice versa.

CONCLUSION
There are numerous mutual benefits associated with agencies and colleges building strong collaborative and cooperative partnerships. These formal partnerships begin with a foundation of mutual respect and flourish as they grow.

It is recognized that each service agency and college has unique characteristics; partnerships that might exist between the two are equally unique. This paper does not intend to dictate to the reader how these relationships should exist; instead it is meant to provide information and guide agencies and colleges as they move forward.

The agency-based training/college partnerships will require ongoing dialogue. Agencies and colleges are striving toward the same goal–to equip developmental service professionals with the skills and knowledge they require to serve the people they support as effectively as possible.

APPENDIX A: EXAMPLE OF COURSE OUTLINE TEMPLATE

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

OUTLINE OF TOPICS:

EVALUATION PROCEDURES:

LEARNING MATERIALS:

CLASS FORMAT:

APPENDIX B: ONTARIO COLLEGES OFFERING DSW DIPLOMA AND DSW APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

Ontario colleges offering the DSW diploma program:
- Algonquin College (Ottawa)
- Cambrian College (Sudbury)
- Centennial College (Toronto)
- Confederation College (Thunder Bay)
- Fanshawe College (London/Simcoe)
- Georgian College(Orillia)
- Humber College (Toronto)
- La Cité Collégiale (Ottawa)
- Loyalist College (Belleville)
- Northern College of Applied Arts and Technology(Timmins)
- St. Clair College (Windsor)
- St. Lawrence College(Cornwall)

Ontario colleges approved to provide the DSW Apprenticeship Program:
- Algonquin College
- Fanshawe College
- Humber College
- Centennial College
- Loyalist College
- Lambton College (Sarnia)
- Georgian College
- Mohawk College (Hamilton)
- St. Clair College
- Confederation College*
- Cambrian College*
- La Cite Collégiale *

No DSW classes for 2010-11 (as of Sept 23 2010)

List provided by Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2010

APPENDIX C: A LIST OF SOME DSW COURSES
The following is a list of course topics (in alphabetical order) found on the websites of some Community College DSW apprenticeship and/or diploma programs. For more detailed information, please visit the website of a community college in your area. Please note that the courses listed below do not represent a list of ALL DSW courses offered by ALL colleges. In addition, course names will vary from college to college.

- Abnormal Psychology/Dual Diagnosis
- Applied Teaching Strategies
- Augmentative Communication
- Basic Pharmacology
- Business Writing Skills
- College Writing Skills
- Community & Developmental Services
- Community Living
- Community Orientation
- Counselling in Developmental Service Work
- Counselling Skills
- Developing Interpersonal Skills
- Developmental Disabilities
- Developmental Psychology
- Educational Strategies
- Field Placements
- Health and Wellness
- Health Promotion in Developmental Services Work
- Human Growth and Development
- Human Sexuality
- Humanities: An Introduction to Arts and Science
- Interpersonal Communication in Developmental Services
- Intervention Strategies
- Intervention Techniques
- Interviewing in Developmental Services Work
- Introduction to Developmental Disabilities
- Person-Centred Planning
- Person-Directed Planning
- Professional Communication for Developmental Services
- Professionalism in Developmental Services
- Reason & Writing for Human Services
- Recording Skills
- Responding to Abuse
- Sign Language and Augmentative Communication
- Teaching Strategies
- Understanding Human Behaviour