



## Income Assistance Administrators Regional Quarter Meeting

June 20, 2019

9:20 am – 4:10 pm

### DRAFT MEETING NOTES

Smiley's, 702 Circle Drive East, Saskatoon, SK

**Chair:** Shelley Thomas-Prokop, SFNFCI Program Director

**Co-Chair:** Lacey Kaysaywaysemat, SFNFCI Program Coordinator

**Present:**

**ISC Representatives:**

- Jason Yew, ISC—Regina,
- Joanne Harper, ISC—Prince Albert
- Stacey Venna, ISC—Fort Qu'Appelle,
- Alan Leader, ISC—Prince Albert

**IA Workers and Admins:**

- Elsie Keshane
- Katelynn Lowe - Star Blanket
- Charlene Bear - Little Pine
- Cheryl Vermette - Wahpeton
- Leona Whitehead
- Grace Keepness - Pasqua
- Jocelin Sandfly - Big Island Lake
- Judy Constant - James Smith
- Charlene Lumberjack - Kinistin
- Gloria Genaille - Keeseekoose
- Simone Cappel - Muscowpetung
- Audrey Kingfisher - Sturgeon Lake
- Valerie Charles
- Lori Buffalo-Delaronde - Whitecap Dakota Nation
- Jeanette Moberly - Birch Narrows
- Rosalie Kailther - Hatchet Lake
- Ronald M. Bear - Muskoday
- Calla Moore
- Tracey Benjamin - Buffalo River
- Joan Catarat - Buffalo River
- Vanessa Dawatsare - English River
- Jessica McIntyre - English River
- Jennifer Gamble - Makwa Sahgaiehan
- Janelle Chief - Ministikwan Lake
- Sonny Weeseekase
- Stephanie Bouvier - Waterhen Lake
- Philip C. Head - Red Earth
- Diette Kinistino - White Bear
- Rose Ann Iron - MLTC
- Donna Mantee - Piapot
- Harriette Chamakese - Pelican Lake
- Cynthia Cook - Lac La Ronge
- Carma Jimmy - Thunderchild
- Barbara Paddy-Moyah - Thunderchild
- Marguerite Benson - BATC
- Lorraine Cameron - Beardy's and Okemasis
- Shirley Badger - Little Red River
- Patricia Daniels - Mistawasis Nehiyawak
- Vivian Chief - Onion Lake
- Inez Heathen - Onion Lake
- Glenda Littlewolf - Onion Lake
- Alyssa Arcand - Muskeg Lake

**SFNFCI Staff:** Shelley Thomas Prokop, Program Director, Lacey Kaysaywaysemat, Program Coordinator  
Hannah Bird, Summer Student

**Regrets:** Elder, Ernestine Starr

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## 9:20 am – Opening Prayer – Ron M Bear, Muskoday First Nation

### Introduction of SFNFCI Staff and IA Workers

### Review of Agenda

#### Review of IAP Sask. Reform Report—PowerPoint presentation (see appendices)

- 7 month project, visited 12 communities to gather information
- Developed questions for focus group, interviews and surveys
- IAP reform tab on website—posted surveys, FAQ, schedule of events, blog posts etc.
  - Will be posting final report on the website as well.
  - Blog posts are a brief review of the visits to the different communities
- If you want additional info, everything is posted to the [www.sfnfci.ca](http://www.sfnfci.ca) website under the IAP reform tab.
- Engaged Elders from different communities to see how they are effected by income assistance; talked about how life was before I.A, and what communities need to do now. Talked about 5 different topics:
  - The messages we received from the elders was, communities started to divide, changed who we are as indigenous peoples, family visiting stopped, but also said it was good because it helped people who needed it. Said they need more employment opportunities, training opportunities—reoccurring theme for programming across all communities, it is not suitable.
- Engaged Leadership through interviews and surveys—topics discussed were: **infrastructure, support, capacity**. Thought it would be beneficial to learn how to live off of I.A.; budgeting, teaching people about filing taxes, credit scores. Notice people are reliant on I.A.; does not provide transition support, teaching people to live on their own without it. Higher need for all programs to know the policy, people do not understand the policy and need to review it regularly so people understand.
- Client Engagements; Clients express need for programs, safety tickets offered in most communities aren't necessarily relevant—not enough seating for the programs that are offered.
- Rates—cost of food going up & transportation to get food is a big concern
- Capacity—community development and funding for programs,
- Supports and resources—talked about supports being available but not accessible
- Addictions—do not have enough support dealing with addictions
- Also engaged different band departments. Most stated they should have weekly meetings, more help in education and training, addiction support,
- I.A. worker results - From surveys and focus groups
- Success – policy, worker support, client support and communication—interagency networking, social media, radio\*everything in detail online in report
- Report identified resources offered in community; resources they would like in their community
- Youth result (18 & younger), talked about programs supports and resources, want more skill building workshops, driver's licence, increase rate, help those with disability, offer more training
- Overall suggested areas of improvement—details are within report\*
- Next steps: continuing conversations of what we can do in our communities to improve IAP
  - Feedback
  - Distribute info—everyone present received information: annual report, IAP report – IA Workers not in attendance of quarter meeting will be mailed a copy of the Reform Report.

- First few pages are composite stories; compiled experiences to represent a story, 3 stories, one from a worker, two from clients; help reader see where the program is right now

### **10:30 – 10:45 – Refreshment Break**

- Next week or two—more info will be sent out to communities, to be shared with community. “Full circle piece”, people can see their words being shared are actually doing something.
- Question info sending out, is it only going to people who are on the advisory committee
- Do we send the mini piece packets to I.A., or a particular person? Someone who will distribute info. We need to know how it works in your communities—want multiple ways of getting info out there—we have information of I.A. people who have participated, we will address mini info packets to I.A. person of each band/area represented.
- This is just the start, SFNFCI has presented a baseline of information, and from here we decide which direction to head

### **10:45 – 12 noon Intentions of today’s meeting**

SFNFCI planned group activity. Groups were broken into five categories, each rotating every 5 minutes. Group categories were as follows: Communication, Frequency & Attendance, Responsibilities & Expectations, Communication and Other Activities. The intentions of this activity was to gain feedback for the purpose of developing a terms of reference and clarify further direction for the group.

### **Identified Purpose of Quarter Meetings:**

- \*\*Info Sharing; case files, outcomes, success stories
- Networking
- Retreats
- Updates
- Policy updates and amendments
- Review each chapter in policy in a workshop
- Common practices
- I.A Conferencing
- I.A Support
- Q&A
- Case worker training
- Advocate for clients/programs
- “What’s New”
- Quarterly meetings are good
- All IA Administrators shall attend & portfolio holders
- 2 day meeting/workshop
- Saskatoon Central meeting location DDG/hotel

**Action item:** *Meetings will still be held quarterly, 1 meeting per quarter with one 2 day meeting—1<sup>st</sup> day business, 2<sup>nd</sup> day P.D./self-care, totalling 6 meeting days of the fiscal year.*

### **Frequency & Attendance of Quarter Meeting:**

- \*Quarterly (Preferred)
- Invite SAET workers, pre-employment, admin., leadership, port-councillor, FSIN
- No leadership involvement
- Leadership observe only

- S.A & assistants/case worker
- 2 day meeting/ workshop
- New location—DDC/Hotel W. Cap ( when it opens—2020)
- All IA Administrators
- Meeting every time there is a policy change & how to interpret it
  - Policy changes happen minimum once a year
- “Consult” on policy (every 3 months)
- Rotate IA admin to other communities—gain experience & understand the needs
- No to separation—all have to follow same policy
- Annual meeting where we bring people in (finance, etc)
  - Explain policy & interpretation
- FSO’s come & do workshops with clients
- *\*\*Two 2-day meetings and two 1-day meetings, 6 meeting days/year.*
- *\*\*Every Admin of each band reports who will attend meeting*
- *\*Valuable to have FSO’s at the table*

**Action item:** *as of current, all IA Admins and workers are invited to all meetings. Topic is open for next meeting.*

**Responsibilities & Expectations of Workers at Quarter Meetings:**

- Case management
- Follow-up
- Reporting
- Support—sending out resumes, assisting IA clients
- Being compliant
- Meeting deadlines
  
- Referrals:
  - Addiction workers,
  - Nurse
  - Post sec worker
  - Colleges
  - Doctors
  - Other bands
  - CFS (forms)
  - Mental health
  - Focus on families
  - Section 10
- Networking
- Professional development
- As a group, we are responsible to attend—be on time.
- Share info to others who could not attend
- Problem solving
- General understanding on policy
- FSO’s to be on the same page
- Implement safety for workers on I.A days
- Info communicated back to F.N.

- Positive participation
- I.A workers have voice
- Sharing better practices
- Positive role models
- Distribute “minutes” (meeting notes) in timely manner
- Update email I.A workers
- Provide executive summary to share with Chief and council, and general public
- Someone to lobby software:
  - Ferris
  - 360
  - Xyntax
  - AIS
  - Excel
  - **\*\*on agenda for next meeting\*\***

**Action item:** *All IA Reps/Admins/Workers to attend meetings. Share meeting information with staff and leadership back home (when necessary), share best practices at group meetings. Topic is open for further discussion and clarification.*

**Communication for Quarter Meetings:**

- Email
- Fax
- Website
- Phone calls/texting
- Smoke signals
- Meetings
- Networking
- Letters
- Collaborating one-on-one
- Social media
- Telecommunication
- Local radio station
- Individual I.A worker, each community due to no communication from Rep.
- Board for urgent matters
- Emails—everyone and FSO’s, FSIN
- Need FSIN support
- No rep include all I.A workers
- Include “minutes” (meeting notes) to I.A workers
- Network with neighboring communities
- Visit other I.A workers compare work, etc.
- I.A software should be the same?
- Have better access
  - Re: El crosschecks! **\*\***
- Access to information with province
- Data share—resource center **\*\***
- Identify chain of command—deal with issues **\*\***

**Action item:** *All communication for group meeting will be by email to all IA Reps/Admins/Workers/Delegates that were identified on the IAP group contact list. All contact*

*information will be shared and updated every quarter meeting to ensure contact info is correct. Meeting notes along with up-coming meeting notices will be posted to SFNFCI website on the IA tab.*

**Other Activities for Quarter Group:**

- Training:
  - Mediation
  - Debriefing
  - Self-care training
  - Team building
  - Guest speakers from INAC—head
  - How to Cope with ‘Compassion’—Trauma
  - Motivational Interviewing
  - Professional Development
  - Addictions (Alcohol, drugs, gambling)
  - H.A.R.M. Reduction workshops
  - Jordan’s Principle
  - Grief and loss
  - CFS—interagency
  - Communication training
  - Case management training (PES, E&T)
  - Dragon Nine
  - Life skills
  - Software training for ASAP, AIS, etc.
  - Deescalating irate clients
  - Respectable workplace for clients
- Guest Speakers:
  - Motivational speaker
  - Bring people in from the Industries (Mining, forestry, etc.)

**Action Item:** *Other activities for quarter group to be discussed at next meeting.*

**Noon – 12:45 Lunch**

**12:45 – 1:15 – Group Bingo, 3 prizes awarded**

**2 pm – 3 pm MSS – discussion on changes to provincial program**

- Motivational interviewing—counselling services, allows much more time with clients, implementing as we go.
  - Feedback: client engaging more, client being more accountable, enjoying time they have with workers. Putting responsibility on the client
- In synch, new database system, replacing old program
- More than 60 provisions for SAP alone, each one requires someone to bring a receipt, takes away from the ability of the worker to spend any time with the client.
- **July 15** is target date for new SIS program—went live on website
  - New program will be implemented
- SAID Will not change.
- Clients on SAP or TEA will stay on those programs until they conclude in the summer of 2021, or until clients move to the new program or don’t need income support

- If new applicant, can apply online, through phone, will go into SIS program. People on SAP will stay on SAP until they can be transition to SIS.
- Adult benefit is for essentials. Will be provided to each adult in household. In addition, shelter benefit monthly is intended for rent/mortgage will depend on situation
  - Social services will no long be paying directly to SaskTel, etc. **It will now be the client's responsibility**
  - Flat rate for clients
  - Benefit for child care
  - Health and safety, travel benefit, household and safety benefit, short-term emergency
  - Clients will have individualized plan, based on needs identified through motivational interviewing
- Household budgeting information provided
- New information technology system being developed.
- New program fundamental change, new way of working toward independence, will monitor program & listen to feedback, will adjust as we go along,
- Letter sent to each chief and council—to tribal council, FSIN, PIAT advisory board. Minister wants to build provincial advisory board for social issues
- Want to be more client friendly
- How to improve the service
- As a new program, it's going to need to be tweaked—a lot of unknowns as of right now
- **Rates published June 19, 2019: CBC online article – included in appendices**
- Q: With regards to interviewing training: who does it, and is it possible for the workers from communities to come and get the training?
  - Training from Vancouver, would it be feasible to have them participate? Yes, but we do not know what that looks like, will need to sit down to discuss the option. It is not outside the realm of possibility
- Flat rates: Does not have the numbers on him currently; basic allowance & shelter rates will probably be on CBC website:
  - \$285 for adult benefit for single
  - \$575 for shelter benefit in Saskatoon and Regina
  - Can earn up to (\$325) before it affects benefits Family \$500, single \$400
- In regards to flat rates; utility companies that are not getting paid, what is the procedure?
  - There will be an emergency fund, but process has not been established yet.
- Housing issues, someone moving unable to because they are being denied because they have a house on the reserve—if we send a referral, they should honor that referral
  - Ministry has assured they will pick-up clients who are moving off-res due to housing shortages
  - Ministry offers a list of higher-ups to deal with issues \*chain of command
- Policy is online, if you want a copy of sap said policies, they are all available online.
- One thing unique: flat rate gives client opportunity to tell ministry when they want their payment; beginning month, midmonth, biweekly—to help clients manage their money
- Two benefits:
  1. Adult basic benefit
  2. Shelter benefit
- Under “special benefits”, will take in account different heating needs for different communities—ministry is aware and accommodating various needs.

- Q: When Gov't looks at making changes to policy, any thought of doing a pilot or something before they roll it out?
  - Thought about it, but the database is so old, that it wouldn't allow changes
- Do you have a desk IA can contact directly?
  - Have list of managers, directors, and maps to distribute to workers.
- Child tax and GST exempt from ()
- Opportunity for client to apply from smart phone or computer to make application. If they come into office, will be directed to telephone or put onto a computer to do application online. There will be an assistant to help with filling out form
- Client got denied because she was told that she has a house on the reserve. Why would a worker deny a person applying for funding? Client does not own house, house is owned by band > ISC
- Ratio of clients to worker?
  - Still trying to figure it out, but they know there will be a reduction in caseloads
- 2 documents attached: 1) SIS Backgrounder 2) 003 REGINA-#1025832

### 3: 00 – 3: 45 pm – Question and Answer period with Jason

- What is going to happen first quarter of (fsi)
  - **Program at headquarters level is currently setting up due date the same as q1, q1 does not need to be submitted until q2 is due (October 15)**
- Want to put together a working group of vendors, Ferris, 360, etc. are going to be trouble shooting their DCI's—does not have a list of who they would like in the group
- Do you want q1 and q2 combined?
  - **No, submit them separately**
- On the report for dci are the other bands reporting their s.a.t dollars?
  - **Short answer, we don't really know that. Cannot tell by looking at DCI.**
- Carbon tax issues:
- Q: Can you pay the carbon tax on the utility bill?
  - **It is reimbursable. Keep paying it.**
- Work experience: client is placed in work experience setting, we top up to 12/hr, once done, "PES" reimburses employer salary. Cost sharing the salary for work experience.  
Question: We have been placing our clients in businesses on reserve. How do we handle clients who would like to be placed in a business off-reserve?
  - **The same way as on reserve but they will have to pay taxes.**
- We pay that employer, does the band get reimbursed for that?
  - **Should not be a problem with that.**
- Q: New DCI: if I pay \$\$ to an employer, then I have to show that?
  - **In this case, it is month by month.**

### Closing prayer: Ron Bear

- **Next meeting set for September 19 & 20, 2019 (Thursday and Friday) 2 day meeting**
- **Following meeting December 5<sup>th</sup>—1 day meeting**
  - 5-7 business days to get meeting notes out to everyone
- Everyone provided with 1 copy of report;
  - SFNFCI is going to send out extra copies to each band for people to distribute to those who think will be interested



- Appending 2 attachments from Jason on MSS discussion on provincial changes to program along with service map and web link. See attached appendices.
  - SIS Backgrounder
  - MS Service Map
  - Web link: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2019/june/18/income-support-program>