



**Northwest Regional Centre of Responsibility (COR)
Situation Analysis – February 2021
Strategic Priorities for 2021**

Background

The Ontario government's policy framework for people with clinical needs who come in conflict with the law, *A Provincial Strategy to Coordinate Human Services and Criminal Justice Systems in Ontario*, was approved in June 1997.

Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committees (HSJCCs) were established in response to the above Provincial Strategy to better coordinate services for people with complex needs in conflict with the law. Regional and local/district committees were established to improve and coordinate service planning and communication between health, criminal justice, and developmental service organizations. Given the composition and mandate of the HSJCCs, it was ideal to transform the local/district/regional structure and incorporate principles of a situation table model.

In 2016-2017, this transformation resulted in the launch of the North West Community Mobilization Network. The Network consists of the Northwest Regional Centre of Responsibility (formerly known as the Northwest Regional HSJCC), the Kenora Rainy River HSJCC, and people with lived experience and engages several local Situation Tables in the Northwest Region.

It is understood that these Terms of Reference will apply primarily to the Northwest Regional Centre of Responsibility (COR).

Purpose

The purpose of the COR is to support current and future Situation Tables and assist in supporting an integrated, coordinated and seamless service delivery system that meets the needs of at-risk people and optimizes the mobilization and delivery of community services in the Northwest Region.

Objectives

The primary areas of focus include:

- Establishing key partnerships among the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care, Criminal Justice, Adult/Youth Mental Health and Addictions Services, Social Service, Education, Data and Research Sector, and between local/district committees in the Northwest Region.
- Discussing and finding solutions to systemic issues emerging from district/local committees or Situation Tables within the Northwest region, in compliance with the issue management framework.

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- Enhancing local Situation Table development and maintaining partnerships with Situation Tables in the Northwest region.
- Engaging in collaborative analysis of data from local Situation Table discussions and identifying trends, deficiencies and gaps in service, as well as any operational barriers, which will inform the identification of opportunities for systemic change.
- Highlighting persistent regional issues, providing recommendations for strategic action, and participating in a planning session for the purpose of reporting to the Provincial HSJCC.
- Coordinating regional training and educational opportunities for all sectors involved in serving the target population.
- Sharing promising/best emerging practices.

Current Situation

What follows is an overview of the NWCOR's current reality and a macro level assessment of the situation the organization is working within. This is a critical step in the process to determine the path forward and strategy for the NWCOR. This assessment is in part based on the complete environmental scan and SWOT analysis and augmented by additional information and perspectives shared while doing this work.

1. At a high level, there are several key external pressures to keep in mind while reviewing the following and they are:
 - a. The funding of the NWCOR and the Coordinator position has not been secured for the long-term.
 - b. An increase in mental health and addictions issues is being experienced across the region and this increase is only expected to continue.
 - c. The challenges in recruiting and retaining staff across the system are resulting in staffing shortages and put the provision of existing services at risk, let alone launching needed new programming.
 - d. There is overlap of mental health related services across the region, which is driving the need to collaborate and partner more effectively to make best use of resources.
 - e. The creation of OHT's and the restructuring of how health care is led, funded, and delivered across the region is creating both uncertainty and opportunity for the NWCOR.



2. The NWCOR has Terms of Reference, a clearly defined Purpose and as noted above, objectives and primary areas of focus. The working group has identified the potential need to revisit and clarify the mandate and focus of the NWCOR and communicate it affectively to all partners across the region.
3. The NWCOR enjoys committed leadership from its key partners and strong support from the provincial HSJCC. Notwithstanding the uncertainty around funding, the Coordinator is in place and actively engaged with the work of the NWCOR and a very wide range of initiatives. The organization is committed to making data driven decisions and through its community of practice initiative, is building learning and information sharing capacity, which in turn is expected to enhance collaboration across the region.
4. There is confusion between the two parallel 'streams' of regional Situation Table support and HSJCC issues. Is the structure of the NWCOR convoluted, or is this an unintended consequence of the focus of the last three years of work and increasing demands on all involved? Should we examine and determine if our model is the right one for the work that we are mandated to do? Is the NWCOR trying to do too much, and as a result creating confusion and duplication with other tables?
5. The recurring themes of the growing and urgent need for mental health and addictions services in the region, the lack of sustained core funding from the LHIN and the unknown impacts the OHTs will have on the work of the NWCOR, and the expressed need to perhaps simplify and align priorities efforts, are a reality that needs to be addressed.
6. It appears as if there is a significant need for increased advocacy work on behalf of the region and specific to regional issues and needs, and for this to be done in concert with the PHSJCC. This work may be specific to issues such as provincial pre-budget consultations, or longer sustained efforts at all levels of government and community regarding current and future pressures and service needs.
7. A review of the 2019-20 Committee Work Plan shows a lot of work has been committed to. Is this work plan still relevant given the current situation, and if so, what are the most important items in that work plan that the NWCOR should focus on for completion and/or implementation?

Conclusion

This is a high-level assessment of the current situation of the NWCOR itself, and of the pressures it is facing, based on the Working Groups input and work done to-date. These conclusions and observations do not preclude any key issues and potential action items identified in the SWOT or Environmental Scan/Lessons learned but are intended to serve as the starting point for the next steps. In planning for the future of the NWCOR the following questions are critical:

1. Does the NWCOR need to revisit and renew its mandate?
2. How do we make the NWCOR more effective and successful in its work?
3. What is most important to do right now?



The Path Forward – Strategic Priorities for 2021

The final step in the 2021 planning effort was for the Working Group to consider and identify the key strategic priorities for the NWCOR. The following priorities have been identified by the working group work through the completion of an environmental scan, a SWOT analysis, a review of the NWCOR's mandate and primary areas of focus, the situation analysis above, and the development of the 2021 work plan within the HSJCC planning and reporting requirements (strategic priorities 1 & 2 are linked to initiatives in the 2021-2022 work plan, 3 & 4 are in addition to).

The NWCOR will:

1. Identify potential sources of core funding for the sustained operation of the NWCOR over the long-term, including a description of what sustained operation entails, annual operating costs and budget requirements, and for what period. Prepare and submit required funding requests and operating plans to the identified funder(s) with the goal of successfully securing sustained core funding by March 2022.
2. Develop and implement a strategy to ensure that mental health and addictions services, as well as the contribution of the NWCOR as part of the Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committees are recognized during Ontario Health Team planning efforts and are part of OHTs being formed and announced across the region. This work is to be underway and contributing to the creation of OHTs by fall 2021.
3. Address the 'state of confusion' that exists between the two parallel streams of regional Situation Table support and COR issue identification and management. This work will include both the assessment of the issue, as well as a plan which when implemented, will resolve the issue and ensure both activities will be done successfully going forward. This work will be completed by the fall of 2021.
4. Develop and begin the implementation of an advocacy, government, and community relations plan focused on all three levels of government. The objective of the plan will be to both inform and educate policy and decision makers tied to specific objectives and asks, as well as key events and activities of the 2022 government budgets planning cycles. The plan should be in place and ready to implement prior to Christmas 2021.

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For/The NWCOR Strategic Plan Working Group

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