

LONDON CMSM

2013 – 2014

ONTARIO WORKS SERVICE PLAN

Submitted by:
Ontario Works,
CMSM for London and Middlesex
May 30, 2013



LONDON CMSM

2013 – 2014 Ontario Works Service Plan

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PREAMBLE / INTRODUCTION

The City of London is the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) for the delivery of the full range of services of the Ontario Works program in the City of London and Middlesex County.

This document represents the service plan for the delivery of Ontario Works in the CMSM for 2013 and 2014, with a focus on employment outcomes.

The development of this service plan was guided by the requirements set out by the Ministry of Community and Social Services (the Ministry). This service plan is consistent with the Ministry's stated vision (May, 2005) for Ontario Works of "a simplified, streamlined social assistance system that treats our most vulnerable with fairness and dignity, and provides effective, integrated employment supports to help them prepare for, find and keep jobs." As the delivery agent for Ontario Works in this CMSM, we share with the Ministry the common goal of improving outcomes for people relying on social assistance. For Ontario Works Employment Assistance, this means providing effective, integrated supports to help Ontario Works participants prepare for, find and keep jobs.

This service plan builds on preceding service plans that have been submitted to the Ministry since the inception of the Ontario Works program in 1997.

Throughout this service plan, we illustrate that our overall approach to service delivery is participant-focused, sensitive to the unique needs of a diverse population, holistic and based on effective partnerships with our community to ensure the most well-rounded and comprehensive services possible.

We are dedicated to each of our participants to help them achieve their individual potentials. As participant needs change and the environment changes, we have adhered to our organizational philosophy of service excellence and continuous improvement and have adapted our approach to address these changes. This service plan sets out our continuing efforts to maintain a service system that is customer friendly and continues to build on creative ways of delivering services.

Section 1: Ontario Works Vision and Mandate

Provincial Ontario Works Vision and Mandate

Vision

To achieve improved employment outcomes for Ontario Works participants by increasing individual employability with the goal of sustainable employment and increased financial independence.

Mandate

To provide employment assistance and financial assistance to people in financial need. The Ontario Works program:

- recognizes individual responsibility and promotes self-reliance through employment;
- provides financial assistance to those most in need while they meet obligations to become and stay employed;
- effectively serves people needing assistance; and
- is accountable to the taxpayers of Ontario.

SECTION 2: Environmental Scan

THE PLANNING AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT FOR THE CMSM

Effective service planning requires consideration and contemplation of the context within which the service planning is being undertaken. This section provides a contextual overview to assist with an understanding of the various ‘environments’ of the London CMSM, including the strategic, organizational, service delivery, and political contexts.

The Ontario Works program in this CMSM is delivered in the urban centre of the City of London by *London Ontario Works*, part of the City of London Housing and Social Services Division, and in the primarily rural County of Middlesex by *Middlesex Ontario Works*, part of the Middlesex County Social Services Department. All service components are delivered by both offices; however, there are differences in delivery which are based on needs of the caseload, history of delivery and community supports and capacity. Descriptions in this service plan will identify where there are differences.

While Middlesex County geographically makes up about 86% of the CMSM, about 96% of the CMSM’s Ontario Works caseload is in the City of London.

The Ontario Works program has been delivered in the London and Middlesex communities in the context of long-standing principles, adopted in 1997, of ensuring a full range of employment services that are accessible, respecting the rights and dignity of participants.¹ These principles continue to provide the foundation for service delivery of Ontario Works in the London CMSM. Service planning and delivery is also predicated on the vision and strategic plans for both London and Middlesex, as outlined below.

City of London Vision, Mission and Results

London’s vision is “The City of opportunity.”

The Mission is “At Your Service: A respected and inspired public service provider.”

Key result areas of “A Strong Economy”, “A Vibrant and Diverse Community” and “A Caring Community” have a direct link to the delivery of Ontario Works.

Ontario Works Mandate

We help individuals and families realize their hopes and dreams. Make a difference. Every person. Every day.

¹ Principles of Ontario Works, Ontario Works Business Plan, July 2, 1997. See Appendix 1 for full text.

Goal

Our goal is to serve individuals and families with respect and dignity while we assist them with navigating and, in many cases, eliminating the barriers that have not allowed them to live with independence.

Values

All work is done using the following values:

- Creativity
- Responsiveness
- Passion
- Respect
- Empathy

Principles for the Delivery of Ontario Works

The City of London continues to deliver Ontario Works services following the Principles adopted by City Council in 1997:

- Assist individuals to plan, choose and follow the most effective route to employment or self-sufficiency;
- Maximize choice, autonomy and responsibility for both individuals and organizations;
- Provide services according to need from a full range of supports, applying resources where they provide the most benefit;
- Support an effective and efficient network that assists individuals to achieve key program outcomes (i.e. earnings, assistance costs);
- Include participating organizations that support the achievement of individual plans, are opportunity-focused, work together effectively with other partners, provide open communication and share appropriate information for tracking referrals and monitoring progress;
- Maintain an active and ongoing planning and evaluation component; and,
- Identify the skills required for General Welfare Assistance recipients to obtain paid employment in the private sector and promote and market General Welfare Assistance recipients in the private sector.

2010 – 2015 Strategic Statement

As a client-centred, community focused professional organization, we engage with individuals and families connecting them to support services and opportunities. Through leadership, strong systems, and our community presence, we achieve a balance of community supports and mandated requirements.

Middlesex County

Vision

Our goal is to provide our citizens with all of the necessary supports to allow them the dignity of self-reliance. We strive to accomplish this by adhering to all of the guidelines and principles of the Ontario Works Act, recognizing at the same time, the uniqueness of our rural way of life.

Mandate

To provide employment assistance and financial assistance to people in financial need. The Ontario Works program:

- recognizes individual responsibility and promotes self-reliance through employment;
- provides financial assistance to those most in need while they meet obligations to become and stay employed;
- effectively serves people needing assistance; and
- Is accountable to the taxpayers of Ontario.

ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS PLANNING CYCLE

Since the submission of the 2010 – 2011 Service Plan, the economic downturn of 2008, labour market changes and instability, along with system changes, have continued to influence the caseload and service delivery. The London CMA continues to have some of the highest unemployment rates in the country. In February 2013, the 9.1% unemployment rate was the fourth highest in the Province and seventh highest in the country. Most recently in 2012, the London CMA remained in the top 2 to 5 regions every month. These factors continue to impact the caseload, which appears to have stabilized at a high level, as well as impacting the supports required by individuals and families who are on Ontario Works.

Analysis of strategies included in the 2010 - 2012 planning cycle indicates that the strategies were timely and effective. Given the economy, baseline and targets for Employment Outcomes have required adjustments for the following four factors:

- Average amount of employment earnings
- Average amount of earnings at exit
- Percent of caseload with employment income
- Percent of caseload exiting to employment

In each of the three years of this (extended) planning cycle, we significantly exceeded the overall Employment Assistance Outcomes. Although the overall results were positive, the month by month results continued to vary significantly. Following a significant drop in 2009, in 2010 and 2011 we experienced growth in average earnings however; in 2012 we again saw a drop. The number of people gaining employment grew significantly in 2010, continued strong in

2011, however, in 2012 we saw a 1.2% drop. Both of these factors are reflective of the slow economic recovery being experienced in the southwest region.

London Strategies Found to be Effective

The Service Strategies (Section 4 of the Service Plan) developed for 2010 - 2012 have been effective and continue to be relevant. It is noteworthy that the City of London's General Business Improvement strategies have provided a solid underpinning in these changing times and the identified strategies continue to guide our work. Despite the economic downturn, we experienced relatively consistent employment results. We believe that this speaks to the ongoing support of our participants and the broad range and depth of supports provided to participants.

Key effective strategies include:

- All aspects of the transformation to the Employment Services Framework 2013 -2018, including staff and contracted agency training, coordination internally and externally, and the Request for Proposal process;
- Work with Purchase of Service partners/contracts is ongoing and meeting expectations of the Service Plan;
- SAIL training for staff;
- Employment focus at each team huddle;
- Focus on Employment Assistance outcomes with Purchase of Service contracts;
- Focus on removing barriers to participants' success;
- Short term skill training resulted in higher employment outcomes as compared to other employment services;
- Enhanced case management performance indicators;
- Increased focus on new applicants; and,
- The programs and supports outlined in the Enhanced Employment Services Plan provided an opportunity to address the needs of more vulnerable participants through a number of pilot approaches. Outcomes of those pilots include:
 - Skills That Work is now included in the menu of purchased employment services
 - Work Readiness Assessments continue to be utilized, however, on a more limited basis primarily by our intensive case management teams
 - Work and Learn resulted in positive education and employment outcomes for the sole support parents, provided additional supports to their children and the learning from the pilot is being incorporated into new programming
 - The expansion to 8 Caseworkers for intensive Case Management continues
 - Integrated Service Delivery for Victims of Domestic Violence provided employment outcomes for some of the participants and the learning from the pilot is being incorporated into new programming

London Strategies That Provide Opportunities During the Next Planning Cycle

- Focus on and coding of terminations;
- Creating an effective link to employers

Middlesex County

In reviewing the previous cycle, almost all of our objectives were adequately addressed:

- We were able to continue the delivery of the Enhanced Employment Services for Vulnerable Persons by utilizing municipal funding once provincial funding ended. Services for more vulnerable clients are delivered by in-house staff, as well as by our Purchase of Service partner.
- We did not achieve increased delivery for residents of the Women's Rural Resource Centre, our local shelter for victims of violence against women. The majority of the residents were still in too vulnerable a position to cope with anything else, therefore supports will be provided once their lives are more stable.
- The Employment Department was expanded through adding a new staff with an employment service background. We are still working through some changes to our service delivery. While we did not add a Job Developer to the team, due to budget constraints, we will be looking to train current staff in this regard, to be used in a limited capacity.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

Political Environment

- Canada has entered a period of fiscal restraint with all three levels of government moving away from fiscal stimulus and pulling back on program spending to reign in the deficits incurred during the recession. The federal and Ontario governments have adopted a strategy of restricting program spending growth to less than the rate of inflation, with the goal of balancing their books over the next few years.
- The Federal budget (March 21, 2013) marked a commitment by the government to return to balanced budgets by 2015-16. The government's strategy is to continue to restrain the growth of direct program spending, which is projected to remain at or below 2010-11 levels, without cutting transfers to persons, including those for seniors, children, and the unemployed, or transfers to other levels of government in support of health care and social services.
- Skills training emerged as a priority in the Federal budget with the creation of the Canada Job Grant, which will directly connect skills training with employers and jobs for Canadians. The Grant will be introduced by negotiating renewal of the \$500 million per year Labour Market Agreements with the provinces and territories in 2014-15. Of the \$500 million set aside for training, \$300 million will go toward the new Canada Job Grant. The provinces will be able to put the remaining \$200 million towards employment

services such as counselling and job search assistance. The Canada Job Grant could provide up to \$15,000 per person for training, which includes up to \$5,000 in federal contributions. Federal contributions must be matched by both provinces/territories and employers.

- The Provincial budget is expected to reflect a commitment to balance the budget by 2017 and will continue to implement the recommendations contained in the report by the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Service. The Commission report recommended holding spending growth in social programs to 0.5 per cent per year. The Throne Speech (February 19, 2013) indicated commitment to new action on job creation particularly for youth and for increasing the number of people with disabilities in the Ontario workforce.
- Within the context of limited spending, there is potential for significant policy change to social assistance, driven by the Provincial Municipal Fiscal Service Delivery Review, Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Service, and most recently, the Commission for the Review of Social Assistance. The Provincial government has indicated commitment to following the recommendations of the Commissions. While many of the changes recommended are longer term, some have been recommended for early implementation. These recommendations may result in changes in the short-term. Some of the recently announced changes will have impact on service delivery in the immediate term. These changes include: elimination of the Community Start Up and Maintenance Benefit, elimination of the Personal Needs Allowance for emergency shelter residents, and the commitment in the Throne Speech that social assistance recipients may keep more of their earned income.
- At the municipal level, Council approved a one per cent increase in the budget. There are no service cuts to Housing & Social Services, largely as a result of provincial uploading of social assistance costs; however, there is no additional funding for service enhancements.
- The City of London's Mission is "AT YOUR SERVICE", a respected and inspired public sector partner. It provides the foundation for continuous improvement in supporting Ontario Works participants.
- London Municipal Council has approved the plan to decentralize Ontario Works services in order for services to be provided closer to where people live and creating connections, alliances and synergies with other related services.
- Local policy for the delivery of social assistance continues to be guided and facilitated by London's Social Policy Framework. This framework provides the means for the implementation of the City's vision of being a "city of opportunity" and the key result areas of "A Caring Community", "A Vibrant and Diverse Community", and "A Strong Economy".
- The London Ontario Works *Employment Services Framework 2013 to 2018* sets out the planned structure of employment service provision for Ontario Works participants in London over a five year period. It provides a framework for service delivery based on community, participants, staff and employment sector key informant input, caseload

demographics, and best practices research including the experience of a sample of Ontario jurisdictions. It is an important tool for strategic planning, assisting employment service providers and London's Ontario Works office in developing service and business plans. The *Employment Services Framework* is designed so that the participant is at the centre of the Ontario Works employment supports program. Strong connections with targeted initiatives and community employment agencies link Ontario Works participants to employers.

- Local policies and practices must also be considered in the context of a rapidly changing policy landscape at the provincial level based on the work of the Commission for the Review of Social Assistance.

London's Economy

London's economy continues to struggle to recover from the recession. Economic growth has been sluggish, with GDP increasing less than two per cent in the last two years, underperforming the province.

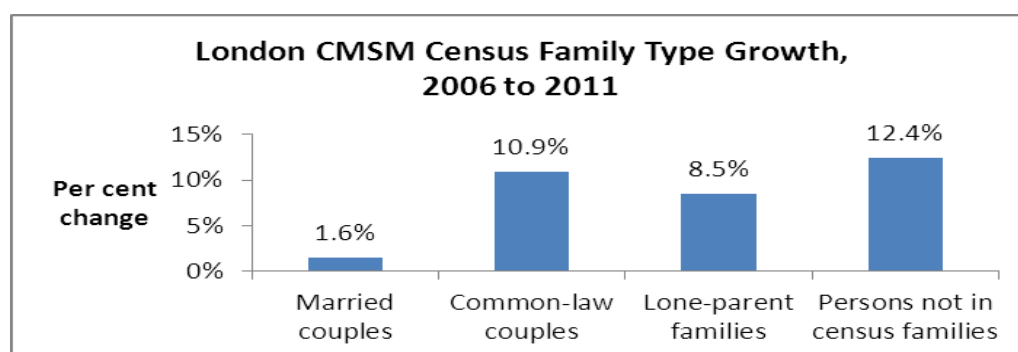
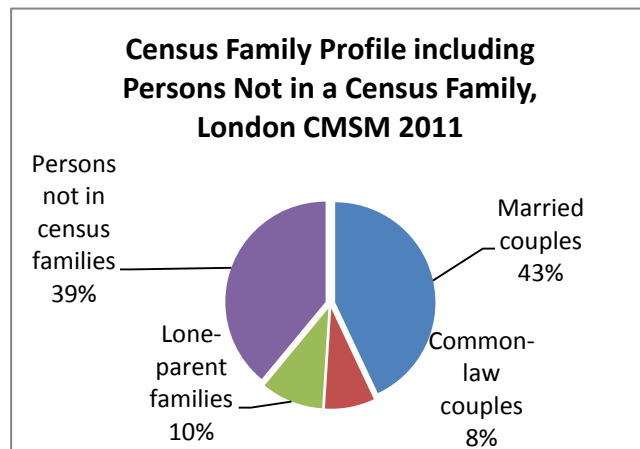
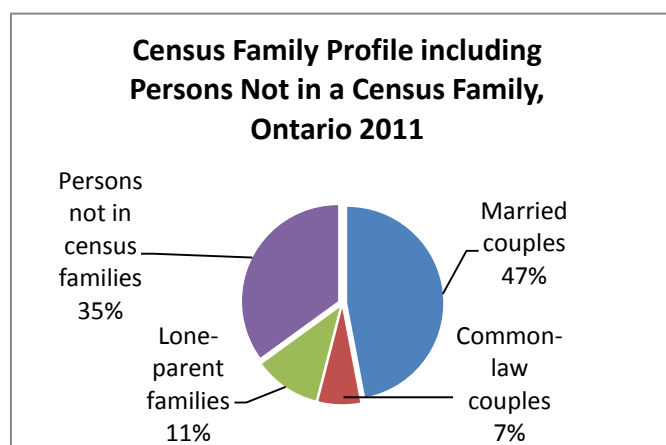
The local economy is expected to continue to grow slowly over the next five years supported by efforts by the Provincial government and local initiatives:

- In March 2013, the Provincial government announced funding for the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund to support economic development in the region. Businesses may apply to receive funding for projects, innovations, and initiatives that will create local and regional jobs. The total fund amount available is limited.
- The City of London has a number of economic development initiatives that capitalize on its location, post-secondary education institutions, and research and innovation strengths in a variety of areas including water treatment, advanced manufacturing, and medical devices.
- The City of London's Investment and Economic Prosperity Committee is developing a 10-year plan that will move London's economy forward faster and ensure long term prosperity for the community. A number of community business ideas have been submitted for consideration as part of the planning and development process and as of December 2012, five recommendations have been endorsed by Council:
 - Development of strategically located, serviced industrial lands
 - Potential redevelopment of London Hydro lands at 111 Horton Street East for residential/commercial use
 - Competing proposals for a mixed use arts centre/residential/or commercial development by the Grand Theatre and Music London
 - Create a medical research fund
 - Fund a joint proposal from two Employment Support Programs for one year on a pilot basis.

Demographic Trends for the London CMSM Area²

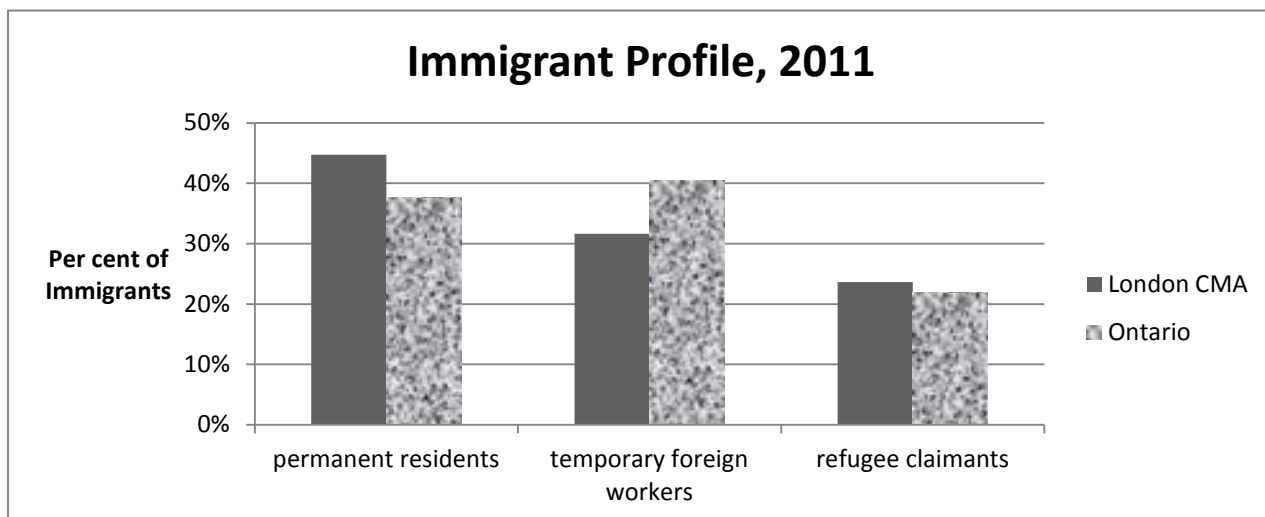
The London CMSM area's population growth rate from 2006 to 2011 was lower than the Provincial population growth rate. Over 80 percent of the population lives in an urban setting. Similar to the Province, the London CMSM population is older in 2011 than in 2006 and growth projections predict that this trend will continue. While the London CMSM population grew by four percent, the number of people age 45 and older grew by more than 12 percent.

The 2011 census family profile in the London CMSM differs from that of the Province and has moved towards more singles (persons not in census families) and common-law families compared to 2006. Compared to the Province, the London CMSM has fewer married couples, more individuals not living in a census family (singles), and more common-law census families. The singles population in the London CMSM grew by over 12 percent and the number of common-law families grew by almost 11 percent. This compares to the lower growth rates of just over 8 percent for lone parent families and less than 2 percent for married couples.

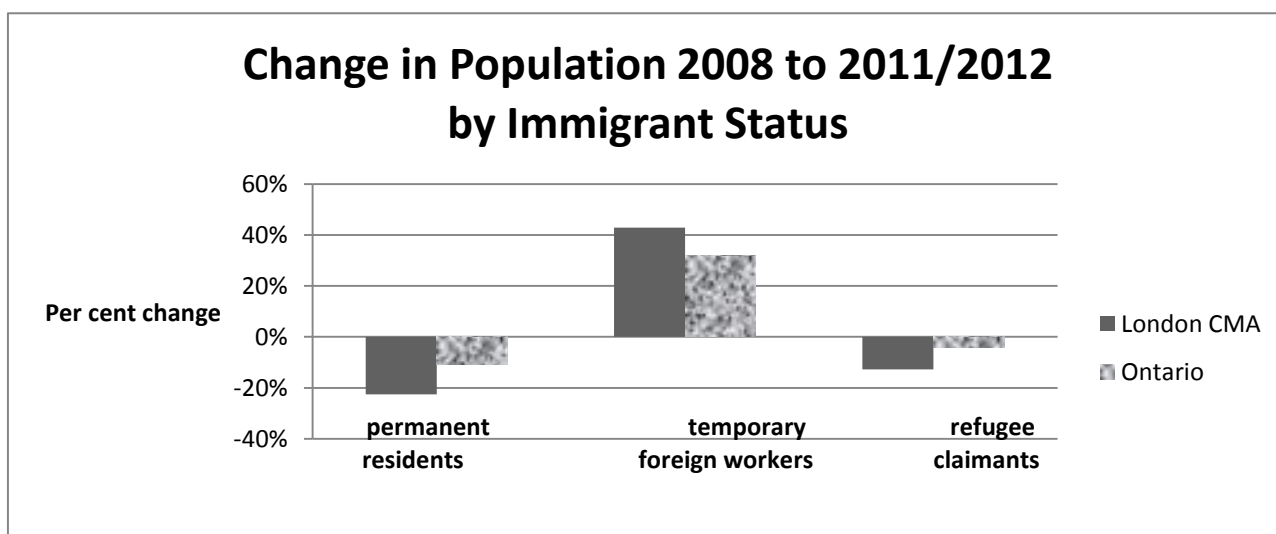


² Statistics Canada. 2012. Ontario (Code 35) and Middlesex, Ontario (Code 3539) (table). Census Profile. 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-XWE. Ottawa. Released October 24, 2012. <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed March 16, 2013).

London's immigrant population³ in 2011 was different than the Provinces with relatively more permanent residents and refugee claimants present on December 1 and relatively fewer temporary foreign workers.



If trends from 2008 persist, London's immigrant profile may resemble the Provincial profile more closely and the number of temporary workers may exceed the number of permanent residents. New federal immigration rules that allow employers to pay temporary foreign workers 5 to 15 percent less than the local prevailing wage coupled with more stringent criteria for permanent residents and refugees contribute to the trends seen in the chart below.



³ Citizenship and Immigration Canada. *Facts and Figures 2011 and 2012*.

Middlesex County

- The sputtering global economy continues to impact our rural communities.
- There have been a number of closings of small manufacturing companies. At the same time, because of the lure of lower taxes, some of our communities that are close to the City of London have actually seen some growth. The unemployment rate for the area remains high. Some new jobs have been created through openings of new businesses.
- No new opportunities have replaced the good paying jobs that Glendale Recreational Vehicles in Strathroy, and Coopers Standard in Glencoe produced.
- The integration of temporary agencies by three large County manufacturers has negatively impacted job retention.

LOCAL LABOUR MARKET

Total employment in the London CMA grew by 2.8 percent with 7,000 more people working in 2012 compared to 2011 but it is expected that there will be 1,000 fewer jobs in 2013 due to the current economic condition⁴. Job losses in 2013 are expected to occur in the Public Administration, Information & Cultural Industries, Transportation and Warehousing, and Primary and Utilities sectors. Employment in the Non-Commercial Services sector is expected to increase the most this year.

Beyond 2013 to 2015, total employment is expected to grow by 1.1 percent each year in both the London CMA and Middlesex County (including the City of London)^{5, 6}. Most of the growth will be seen in Non-Commercial Services which is expected to employ 4,000 more people by 2015 compared to 2012. Both Personal and Business Services sectors are expected to grow by between 1,000 and 1,500 people. Although local employment is expected to improve over the next few years, employment levels are not expected to reach its 2007 pre-recession level until 2015⁷.

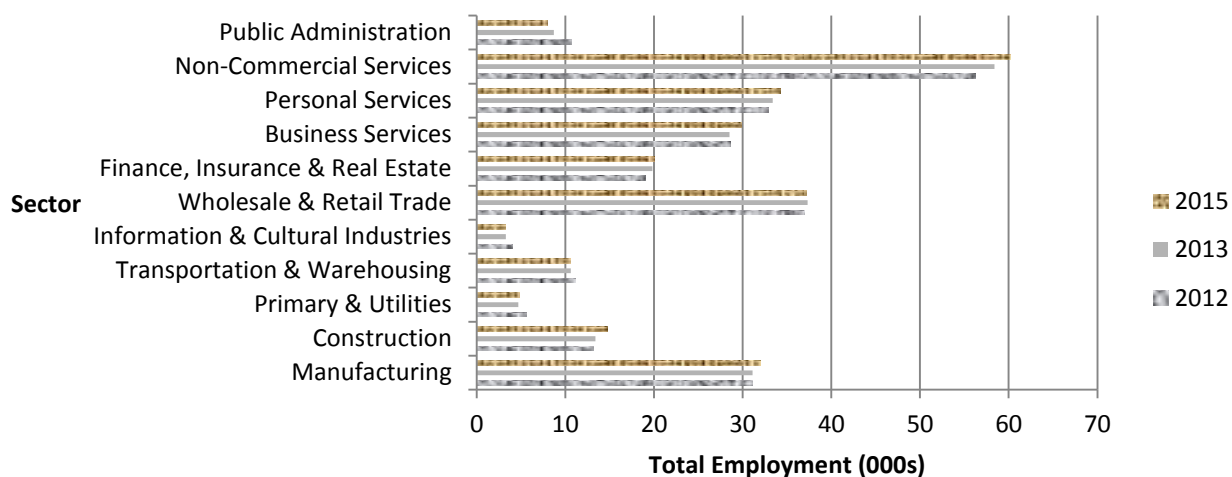
⁴ Conference Board of Canada. Op. Cit.

⁵ Conference Board of Canada. Op. Cit.

⁶ Altus Group Economic Consulting. *Employment, Population, Housing and Non-Residential Construction Projections, City of London, 2011 Update*. September, 2012.

⁷ Metropolitan Outlook 2: Economic Insights into 15 Canadian Metropolitan Economies, Winter 2013.

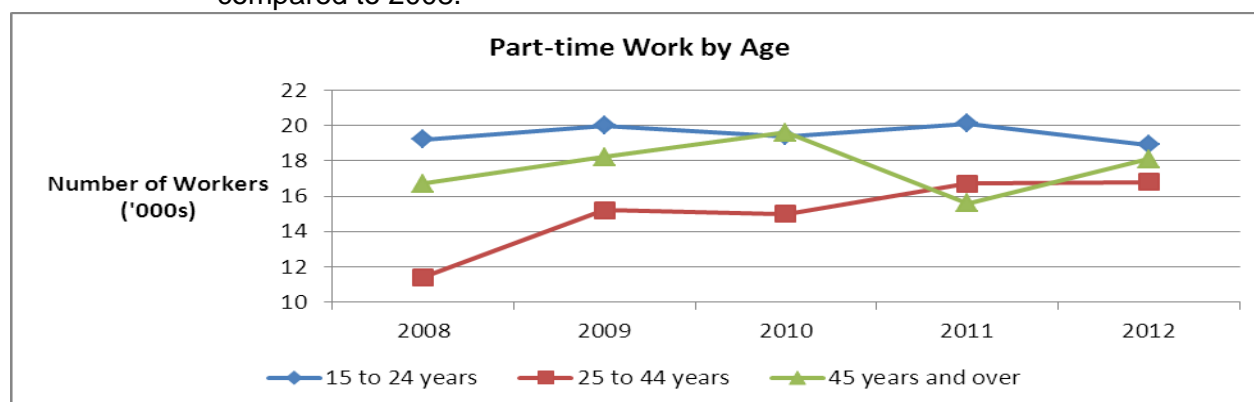
Employment by Sector in London CMA, 2012 to 2015



Source: Conference Board of Canada. *Metropolitan Outlook*. Winter 2013.

Local Employment Trends 2008 to 2012⁸

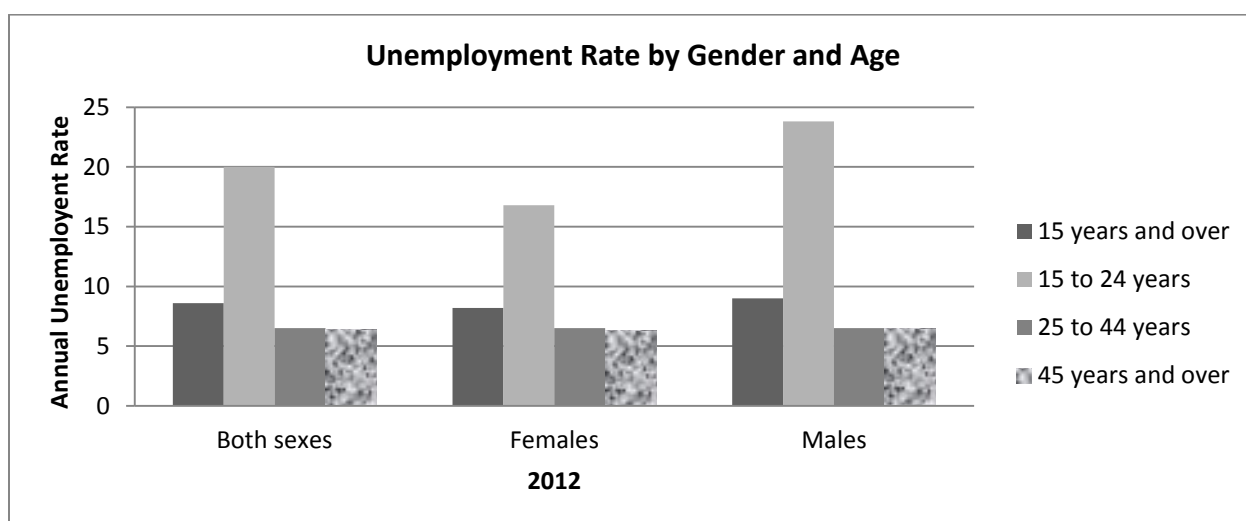
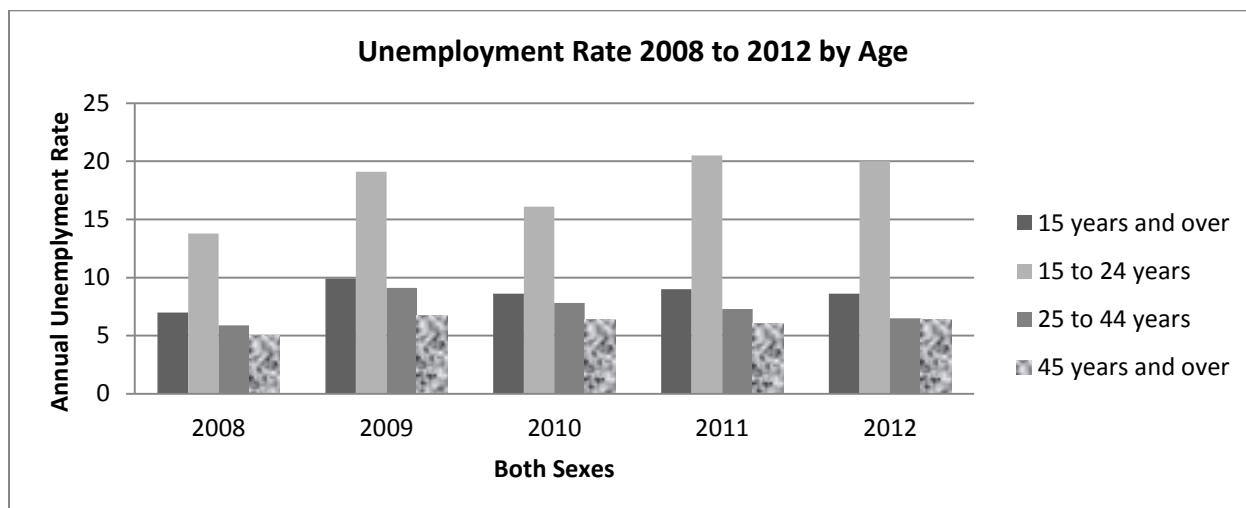
- Part-time work has increased while full-time has declined. Most of the growth in part-time work has been driven by the rise in the number of 25 to 44 year olds working part-time. It is possible that these represent displaced full-time workers and may be involuntary part-time workers.
 - Overall, 10,000 fewer people with full-time work and 6,500 more with part-time work
 - The proportion of jobs that are full-time dropped from 81% to 78%
 - 5,400 more part-time workers are between the ages of 25 and 44 years in 2012 compared to 2008.



Source: Conference Board of Canada. *Metropolitan Outlook*. Winter 2013.

⁸ Statistics Canada. CANSIM Table 282-0110 – Labour force survey estimates (LFS), by census metropolitan area based on 2006 census boundaries, sex and age group, annual (accessed: March 6, 2013)

- The unemployment rate for London's young workers, between the ages of 15 and 24 has remained persistently high. In 2012, one in five youth in the labour market is not employed. The situation for young men is even worse with almost one in four not working.



Labour Market Needs⁹

The community has identified a need for an ongoing, consistent source of reliable, shared employment related data and information that will help connect employers, job seekers, and supporting organizations. The Labour Market Information Knowledge Project is a multi-year project creating an integrated local labour market information knowledge system to meet this need.

⁹ Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board. *2012 Local Labour Market Plan. Elgin Middlesex Oxford Economic Region.* February 2012.

The 2012 Local Labour Market Plan identified five overarching labour market needs and has developed actions to address these:

- Collaboration – both on labour market information and on workforce planning
- Attracting and retaining talent – youth, new Canadians, Aboriginals, persons with disabilities
- Providing information on career pathways and attracting talent
- Supporting entrepreneurs and small business as they become employers
- Developing Employability Skills and Essential Skills in job seekers

London is similar to Canada and Ontario in that there is a mismatching of skills and jobs. The Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board recently completed (January 2013) the Employer One Survey which for the first time focused on employers and provided valuable insight into the demand side of the region's labour market.¹⁰

The Employer One Survey identified that 42 percent of the hiring in the past year were considered "hard to fill" positions by surveyed employers. The top reasons for these positions being hard to fill were:

- Applicants not meeting skills
- Applicants not meeting qualifications (education level/credentials)
- Applicants not meeting work experience
- Not enough applicants
- Applicants not meeting motivation, attitude or interpersonal abilities

Labour market challenges for selected industries:

- Agriculture – aging labour force, difficult to attract workers with the right skills and difficult to retain those who do have the right skills, not seen as an industry of opportunity and there are many obstacles, including financial, facing entrants to this industry
- Manufacturing – difficult to attract people, particularly young people due to the overall lack of opportunities, low mobility and low job security
- Construction and specialty trades – aging workforce, some of the workers entering the industry lack work ethic and soft skills
- Professional, scientific and technical services – aging labour force and retention of talented and ambitious 25 to 44 year old workers; finding people with soft skills
- Accommodation and food services – high turnover rate, difficult to find good employees given low wages, stigma and physical demands, difficult to find talented, mature, and experienced managers, increased regulation including certification requirements for staff, lack of standardized training particularly among smaller establishments

¹⁰ Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board. Workforce Focus. Vol. 8 Issue 1. March 2013.

Service Implications

Changing social assistance policy, coupled with austerity budgets and an emphasis on outcomes points to increased responsibility and requirement for municipalities to be innovative. Municipalities must be ready to advocate for programs and the people being served. This is particularly true in a labour market that is changing to include more part-time work which is typically more volatile, provides less stability and less financial and benefit supports for workers.

Along with the struggling South West region's economy, London's demographic profile may contribute to caseload pressures. A growth in the number of single individuals and common-law families may have contributed to the growing caseload. Single individuals have been identified as the newly vulnerable in Canada¹¹ and common-law couple relationships tend to be less stable than married couple relationships¹².

With the support of the Province, the London region and City are actively working to improve opportunities for London area workers as well as to implement actions that will help workers gain the skills needed to fill labour market gaps. Ongoing involvement in, and awareness of, these activities continues to be important for London's Ontario Works office.

CASELOAD DESCRIPTION

Caseload Indicators

Data Elements	2012	2013 (f)	2014 (f)
Average monthly caseload for London	10,911	11,000	10,500
Average monthly caseload for Middlesex	483	485	490
Caseload ratio for London	100:1	100:1	100:1
Caseload ratio for Middlesex	112:1	112:1	112:1
Average monthly number of intensive caseload participants for London	439	480	480
Average monthly number of intensive caseload participants for Middlesex	30	30	31
Average monthly number of Addictions team participants, CMSM	323 cases	330 cases	330 cases
Average monthly number of ODSP participating participants, London	195 cases	195 cases	195 cases
Average monthly number of ODSP participating participants, Middlesex	11	11	11

¹¹ Stapleton, J. with Bednar, V. *Trading Places. Single Adults Replace Lone Parents as the New Face of Social Assistance in Ontario.* 2011.

¹² Department of Justice Canada. *The Child-Centered Family Law Strategy, Summative Evaluation.* June 2008.

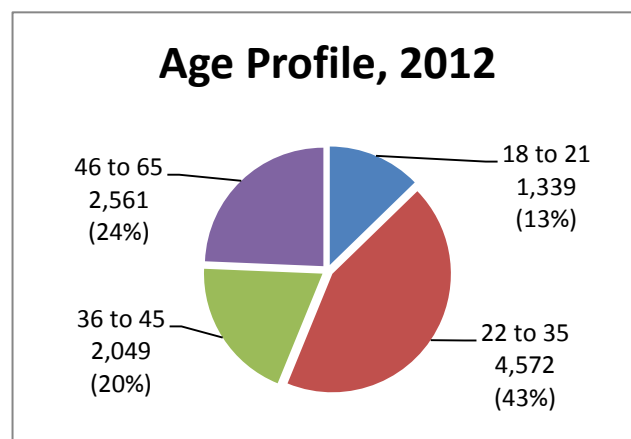
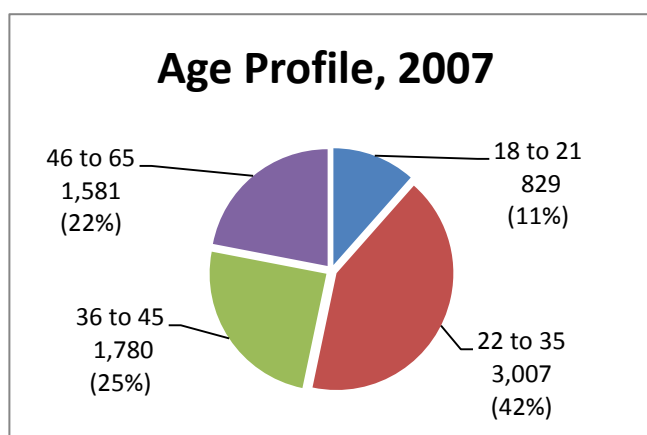
Data Elements	2012	2013 (f)	2014 (f)
Average monthly % of cases on assistance less than 4 months, London	17%	17%	17%
Average monthly % of cases on assistance between 4 months and 11 months, London	25%	25%	25%
Average monthly % of cases on assistance between 12 months and 23 months, London	20%	20%	20%
Average monthly % of cases on assistance on for 24 months or longer, London	38%	38%	38%
LEAP participants, CMSM	148	170	170
LEAP graduates, CMSM	23	26	26

Caseload Trends from 2007 to 2012¹³

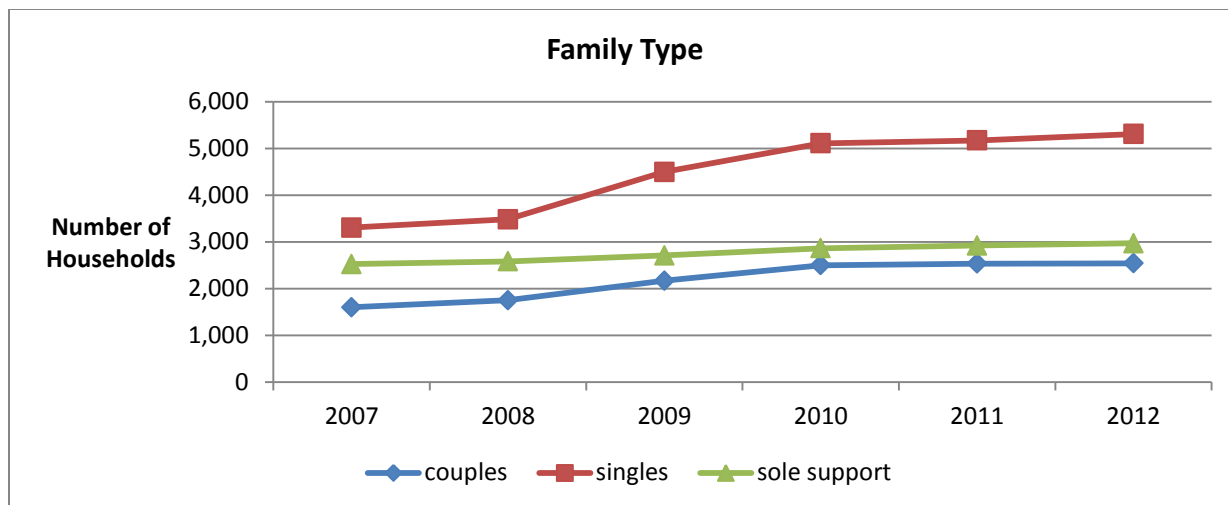
Each year, the City of London analyses and synthesizes caseload data captured in the Service Delivery Model Technology and provides a Caseload Profile report to the community. This report is used by community agencies and the Ontario Works office to identify service priorities and needs and to develop programs in response to the current caseload demographic situation.

A detailed profile of the Caseload is prepared in July of each year. Some of the key trends that emerged from the 2012 profile include a changing age profile, increase in the singles caseload, and a plateauing in the number of children living with parents receiving Ontario Works:

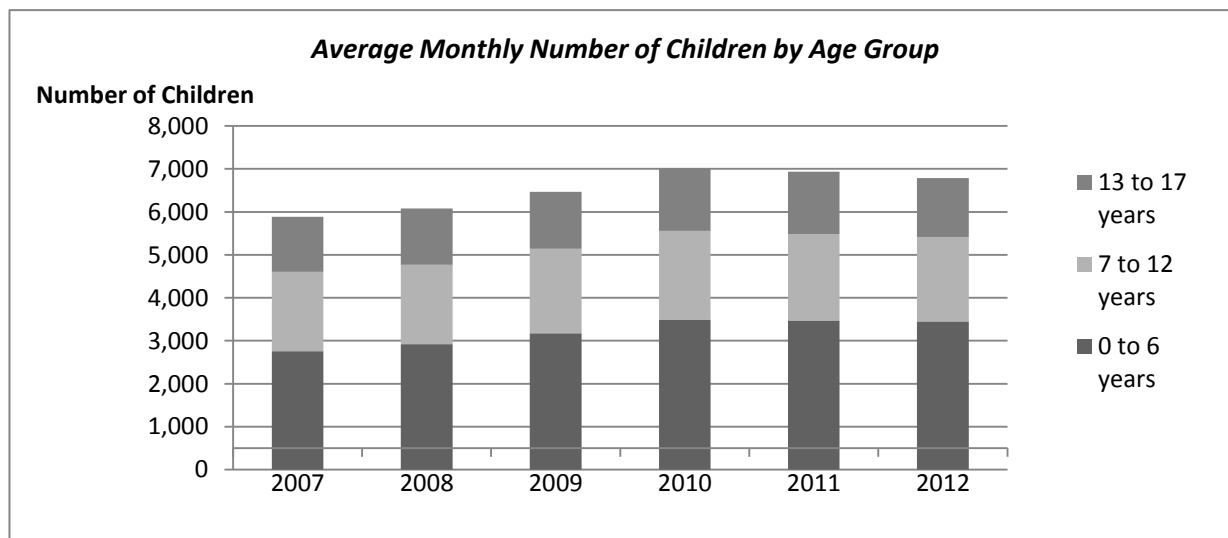
- Changing age profile – the 18 to 21 year old and 46 to 65 year old age groups have increased more than the middle-aged worker group:



¹³ City of London Social Planning and Research. *Profile of London's Ontario Works Participants 2012*. July 2012.



- The number of children living in families relying on Ontario Works has been decreasing slowly over the last three years. In 2012, there were almost 6,800 children, about half under seven years of age, with parents involved in London's Ontario Works program.



Supplementing this data, the City engages in a consultation process with staff and community partners to identify emerging caseload issues for which limited or no tracked data is available. Based on these, in 2012, the following populations were identified as priority for service planning:

- Challenges such as homelessness, addictions, mental health and disabilities
- Limited work experience
- Lower education or training
- Higher education or training
- Criminal records
- Long term Ontario Works, motivated to work but unsuccessful

- New to Ontario Works
- Single individuals
- Older or experienced workers
- Immigrants
- Youth

Service Implications

With the implementation of the new SAMS/SSSMP technology replacing SDMT it will be important to ensure the ongoing availability of caseload data for monitoring and planning purposes.

The relatively high growth in the number of singles on the caseload as well as the relatively high growth in the number of youth and older workers suggests that there may be a need to further investigate what service need differences that may exist for these groups. For example, do youth require more technology focused approaches for connecting with their Caseworker and the Ontario Works program compared to older workers? Can older workers be expected to stay on the caseload longer than younger workers? Are there different motivation considerations for each of these? These are just some of the questions that may be important to answer in order to help Caseworkers develop a relationship that will support these individuals while on social assistance.

The identification of the priority populations as articulated in the Employment Assistance Framework, along with business practice recommendations and new service agreements with Purchase of Service agencies will require that staff receive training and coaching in order that their interactions with Ontario Works participants aligns with the approach and culture of the new Framework.

Administration will need to be supportive of Ontario Works casework and support staff, providing training, change management support, and a supportive workplace as staff will be experiencing significant change over the next few years. Along with the changes that are associated with the implementation of the Employment Assistance Framework, staff will be required to become familiar with new technology to replace SDMT. They will also likely be faced with learning and implementing new policies as changes are announced at the Provincial level. In order for staff to best serve the people who need their support, they will need the support of senior management.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

London and Middlesex have a long history of integrated service delivery that is holistic in its approach with the extensive use of partnerships to deliver services that address many barriers and issues. In both London and Middlesex, Ontario Works services are delivered in partnership

with all levels of government, numerous Ministries, many community-based organizations and co-ordinated through various planning groups. Service capacity and service need differ between the City and the County. Partnerships that work best for our respective communities are noted below.

CITY OF LONDON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A holistic approach is required to ensure successful achievement of employment outcomes. The following provides an overview of the London's key engagement activities, as well as the various supports and protocols in place to support Ontario Works participants.

Planning Committees to Address Systemic Issues

The following planning committees, which include members from service and advocacy organizations, government and consumers, address systemic issues which have an impact on Ontario Works participants:

- Accessibility Advisory Committee – appointed group of community representatives that report to the Community and Protective Services Committee of Council for the purposes of advising and assisting Council and community agencies in promoting and facilitating a barrier-free London for citizens of all abilities.
- Advocates Committee – input and feedback on London's Ontario Works programs and services.
- Age Friendly London Network – a network of citizens and community organizations to implement the Age Friendly London Action Plan, a road map for improving London's age friendliness over the next three years. Through building upon numerous initiatives already underway in London.
- Child Care Advisory Committee – representative group of children's services community agencies that report to the Community and Protective Services Committee of Council providing public input on children's issues and how they affect City of London managed services.
- Child and Youth Network – a large network of broad sector community agencies that have developed the Child and Youth Agenda to address the key priorities of Ending Poverty, Improving Literacy, Increasing Healthy Eating, Healthy Physical Activity and creating a Family-Centred Service System including the issues Safety and Mental Health within the priorities.
- Education & Literacy, Employment & Training Work Group of the Ending Poverty Committee – Under the umbrella of the Child and Youth Network, this work group is addressing strategies to reduce the impact of poverty.
- Funders Group – co-ordination, leveraging and planning for effective services and service system between key local funders, including United Way, City of London, MTCU,

MCSS, MCI, Trillium Foundation, London Community Foundation, Community Futures, CIC, LIHN etc.

- Health Access Group – umbrella group overseeing the delivery of the Health Access Voucher program which works to increase accessibility to over-the-counter medication to low-income families throughout the London community.
- Housing Support Services Advisory Committee – provides direction, support and feedback to the Salvation Army Centre of Hope (Purchase of Service delivery partner) in the implementation of Integrated Housing Support Services for the City of London and ensures public accountability in the delivery of said services.
- Hunger Relief Advisory Committee – coordinating responses to hunger issues including emergency meal programs.
- London Coordinating Committee to End Woman Abuse – coordinating body that addresses issues and concerns about woman abuse and looks at action steps to reduce and eliminate woman abuse.
- London Homeless Coalition – community body providing co-ordinated response to homeless and affordable housing issues.
- London Housing Advisory Committee – serves as a resource, information gathering and advisory body to the Municipal Council on matters pertaining to housing in the City of London.
- London Middlesex Health Alliance – network of services working to meet identified needs, address service gaps, and advocate for change.
- London and Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership Council (LMLIP) – a collaborative community initiative to facilitate the development and implementation of sustainable solutions for integration and supports for immigrants through the development of the LMLIP Strategic Plan. Includes 6 active sub-councils to address: Education, Employment,, Health & Wellbeing, Inclusion & Civic engagement, Justice & Protection Services, and Settlement.
- London Strengthening Neighbourhood Strategy – is a resident driven and implemented city-wide strategy for stronger neighbourhoods that impacts every neighbourhood and contributes to the quality of life for everyone. London residents, community groups and the City of London work collaboratively to action the multi-year plan targeting specific objectives and outcomes over a 5 year period.
- London Youth Service Providers (LYSP) – serves to support and/or work with youth in London and Middlesex by sharing information and referrals amongst LYSP members thereby strengthening knowledge of and referral to youth services and working to address specific priorities, promoting youth and youth services in the London community.
- Networking for Inclusive Communities – forum to exchange information, maximize supports and develop new partnerships to serve immigrants and newcomers to Canada, utilizing existing programs and resources.

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- London CARES – through an integrated, community focused process, this 5 year community addiction response strategy is aimed at improving the health outcomes of individuals experiencing homelessness.

Employment Sector System Supports and Planning Groups

Planning for and co-ordination of the employment sector in London and Middlesex occurs through the following groups:

- Employment Sector Council of London and Middlesex – integrated planning and support for the employment and training sector to identify needs, share information, plan for services and resources, and promote community growth and development in collaboration with other labour market partners; supports a network of community-based organizations, consumers, labour, employers, funders, service providers, and educators, representing both the rural and urban contexts.
- Employment and Training Funders Group – coordination of employment and training services; includes Service Canada, Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) - Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) Employment Supports, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU), Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration and the City of London.
- London/Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council – is a project of the Employment Sector Council - London Middlesex. The purpose of the Council is to engage a group of local employer executives to lead the development and delivery of an economic action plan designed to better connect skilled newcomers with relevant job opportunities in our local economy.
- London/Middlesex Literacy Planning Group – coordination and annual planning for all services funded by MTCU, Literacy Branch.
- Partners in Employment – organized and integrated service system planning for people with disabilities.
- Ontario Works Employment Advisory Group – To be established in 2013, this group replaces the Ontario Works Purchase of Service Strategic Advisory Group with enhanced membership to situate Ontario Works Employment Programs within the community's broader workforce development network.
- Ontario Works Purchase of Service Operational Advisory Group – co-ordinates services for all London Purchase of Service partners, which include organizations funded by MTCU to deliver services for Social Assistance Recipients and by the Federal government to deliver services for Aboriginal Canadians.

Employer Engagement

Employer connections and workforce development are significant components for a healthy systems approach to meeting outcomes. Our strong systems approach is designed to address

the needs of all Londoners in order to achieve positive Ontario Works employment outcomes, lowered caseloads and to support a vibrant economy. During this planning cycle we will further enhance our involvement with employers, employer facing organizations and economic development through:

- Membership and active participation with the Chamber of Commerce
- Partnership with London Economic Development
- Active support for the work of Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board including continuing the Municipal Director role on the Board
- Supporting the development, implementation and ongoing operation of the Labour Market Information Knowledge System (to be known as Worktrends)
- Active involvement, collaboration and leveraging of the City's Investment and Economic Prosperity agenda
- Maximizing the opportunities developed through the Employment Placement Innovations pilot project

Supports for the Individuals and Families on Our Caseload

In addition to areas covered above, the London engages community stakeholders to support individual participants through the following partnerships:

- Early Child Development – the London CMSM has partnerships with the London-Middlesex Children's Services community (Ontario Early Years Centres, Early Years Council, Middlesex London Health Unit, Children's Aid Society, Child Parent Resource Institute, Investing in Children, etc.) and together work towards providing children the best opportunities for healthy growth and development, the acquisition of life skills and lifetime wellbeing.
- Interpreter Services – London purchases services from Across Languages to provide interpretation services for Ontario Works participants when interacting with the Ontario Works London office. Across Languages' translation services are also utilized to translate key Ontario Works documents into different languages.
- Financial Planning – for Ontario Works participants with extreme debt or chronic personal credit problems, we provide access via Caseworker referrals to the credit counselling services of Family Service Thames Valley. Family Service Thames Valley provides budget counselling, debt management programs, third party mediation and bankruptcy counselling as well as other counselling services to vulnerable and low income Londoners.
- Family Violence – service delivery protocols have been developed with every shelter and a Caseworker assigned to each.
- No Fixed Address Demonstration Project – moves people directly from hospital to home (by-passing shelter). The emphasis is on short term and frequent patients with mental health issues (more commonly on Ontario Works than ODSP).

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- Housing – the Ontario Works office has developed a process directly with the London-Middlesex Housing Corporation to assist tenants to acquire new residences or avoid eviction.
 - Addiction Treatment – London is a pilot site for Addiction Services. Partnerships have been established for the implementation of these services as well as supports for participants who are not part of the Addiction Services Initiative.
 - Criminal Justice/Corrections – liaison between discharge workers and social workers at Elgin Middlesex Detention Centre and a Caseworker to assist in transitioning from incarceration to community living.
 - Mental Health – a Caseworker works directly with Canadian Mental Health Association Housing and support worker and with our local mental health hospitals (Regional Mental Health Centre - London and London Health Sciences Centre) to ensure discharge planning allows individuals leaving care to repatriate to their home communities and avoid reliance on emergency shelters or other high risk living conditions. Our Caseworker also works with the London Health Sciences Centre Preventative and Early Intervention Program for Psychosis (PEPP) program in support of vulnerable individuals with early onset signs of mental illness to ensure the impacts of poverty do not exacerbate their already complex problems.

In addition to these initiatives, London has leveraged its unique organizational alignment structure to build stronger connections between individuals and families receiving assistance and those services and supports which are known to improve the social determinants of health. These include:

- Recreation – liaison exists between City of London Recreation programs, staff, and Ontario Works Managers to maximize supports for integrated service opportunities.
- Child Care – the London CMSM Child Care Service Plan for 2007-2008 covers the many community linkages for London and Middlesex.

Protocols with Government Agencies

Strong, effective partnerships with other levels of government have always been an important component of how London and Middlesex provide supports services and strategic direction/supports for our communities. Given the rapidly changing environment we are facing currently, these will be even more important. However, this current period of fast paced change by all levels of government, the economy and many other sectors will test our partnerships and will require different ways of working together. We are committed to meeting these challenges.

The MTCU's Employment Ontario Employment Services and Literacy and Basic Skills, through their community delivery agents, are pivotal to the CMSM in meeting employment outcomes. The CMSM is actively involved with all MTCU service providers and has developed strong linkages which include referral and information-sharing protocols. The City participates in the London/Middlesex Literacy Planning Group to assist both in the planning of literacy services and

to ensure a direct liaison between Ontario Works and the literacy/numeracy service providers. This also provides a natural liaison between the service providers and the Ontario Works offices.

Partnerships and protocols exist with both school boards related to Adult Education and English as a Second Language programs and services.

Formal and informal relationships exist with Fanshawe College to address workforce development, post - secondary education, English as a Second Language and other system related opportunities.

Service Gaps and Needs

Through the extensive review undertaken as part for the development of the Ontario Works Employment Assistance Framework 2013 - 2018 and involvement in all of the above noted groups and partnerships, we have identified the following areas of focus for this planning cycle include:

- The mismatch between skills and available jobs requires creativity and focus in types training provided to ensure employment success upon completion of training.
- Exploring and delivering supports for people with limited skills to become employed in a labour market that is requiring increasingly higher levels of skills.
- Supporting the varied and emerging caseload profile, including needs of single people on the caseload.
- Flexibility in programming and supports to address the trend of part-time employment.
- The noticeable lack of case management supports available to those with a diagnosis of Moderate Mental Illness, Serious Mental Illness, or those presenting with noticeable signs of apparent mental illness which has been undiagnosed due to the lack of consistent and supportive health care.
- As systems continue to change, particularly with the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU), we will need to be involved in planning and ensure that further gaps are not created for people on Ontario Works.

Middlesex County

County engagement activities include:

- The closure of the GAIN Centre in Strathroy in 2011 created challenges for the continuity of service for County residents. Service is now provided through the Strathroy Library, which adjusted their mandate to provide information services. The Social Services department also has access to two offices in the Library for service delivery. We continue to have a great partnership with the remaining employment resource centres in Lucan, Parkhill and Glencoe. The County is brokering with local municipal libraries to offer an enhanced service similar to the Strathroy model, should the three remaining centres be forced to close due to funding issues.

- The LEADS Employment partnership has been enhanced for delivery to youth through the Skills That Work program. The working relationship with Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.) Next Wave in Strathroy has been strengthened to better serve the 18-24 age group who require more supports.
- Community partners are being engaged on a more regular basis, meeting with them about the launch of certain initiatives, such as the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative. The County also continues to play a lead role in the Middlesex Children's Services Network, working to better integrate the delivery of children's services throughout the County.
- We are looking to partner more with local community groups who are eager to help those in need in their communities, but unsure how to go about it. One proposed initiative is a community garden in the municipality of Lucan/Biddulph, which will likely serve as both a Community Placement for many of our targeted clients (youth and older workers) and the impact of their work will enhance their communities and help them to gain experience and share the bounty of the garden.
- Staff sit on a number of Boards and Committees in the area, including the Middlesex Workforce Development Committee, United Way Advisory Committee, which is completing a needs analysis of the County, joint committees with the Middlesex London Health Unit, Employment Sector Council of London and Middlesex, and the South Western Roundtable Ontario Works Employment Services.
- Continuing partnerships include, the Community Futures Development Corporation, Thames Valley District School Board, Community Employment Choices, Addictions Services Thames Valley, and Family Service Thames Valley.

Section 3: Program Management

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Principles and Results outlined in the City of London Strategic Plan 2011 – 2014 along with our Ontario Works Mandate and Strategic Vision Statement provide the framework for effective service delivery.

City of London Strategic Plan 2011 – 2014

Our Principles

- Community Engagement – Informing, educating and engaging citizens in a transparent and collaborative manner that promotes greater participation in municipal government.
- Good Government – Ensuring decisions are made in an accessible, transparent and accountable manner.
- Respect and Integrity – Treating people fairly and honestly.
- Fiscal Responsibility – Investing wisely to continue building our community while maintaining a solid financial position.
- Supportive and Diverse Workplace – Attracting, engaging, developing and celebrating exceptional people in public service who are representative of our community.

Results

- A Strong Economy
- A Vibrant and Diverse Community
- A Green and Growing City
- A Sustainable Infrastructure
- A Caring Community

Ontario Works Mandate

We help individuals and families realize their hopes & dreams. Make a difference. Every person. Every day.

2010 - 2015 Strategic Vision Statement

As a client-centred, community focused professional organization, we engage with individuals and families connecting them to support services and opportunities. Through leadership, strong systems, and our community presence, we achieve a balance of community supports and mandated requirements.

2013 - 2014 Strategic Focus

- Client Services
 - Ontario Works Decentralization

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- Customer Service including “At Your Service” and Service London
 - Service Innovations
 - SSSMP
 - Employment Innovations
 - Employment Assistance Framework
 - Employment Innovations Projects – Wraparound Individualized Supports and Employment Placement Innovations
 - Employer Facing
 - Leveraging the Broader System
 - Systems Development and Operational Support
 - Continuous Improvement
 - Strengthen Risk and Compliance
 - Discretionary Benefits Transformation

SERVICE DELIVERY RATIONALE

The above noted Strategic Focus has a strong alignment to the Ministry’s overall management and delivery approach, Integrated Social Assistance Management Framework (ISAMF). We share the guiding concepts of Accountability, Organizational Excellence, and Service Excellence through a modernized and comprehensive approach to management and delivery of social assistance with a focus on measurable, consistent and positive client outcomes.

Our Ontario Works Service Delivery Model is based around our shared vision with the Ministry to provide a social safety net that works to reduce or eliminate barriers to individuals leading lives of dignity and independence while providing transitional employment and income support. In addition, the achievement of our employment assistance outcomes, program compliance, and other service delivery targets relies heavily upon ensuring the most effective use of our staffing and other resources.

We are in a period of rapid change which significantly impacts planning and service delivery. Our caseload, though having stabilized, continues to be very high. London Council has approved moving forward with Ontario Works Decentralization which provides opportunities to continue to transform our service system. We continue to respond to caseload needs, environmental, political and economic changes while also leveraging community opportunities that arise.

Intake Screening

The Intake Screening function is done by a dedicated team of nine Caseworkers who take the initial application, do pre-screening, and populate SDMT. In addition, they provide information about immediate emergency supports.

Case Management

The City operates with an integrated case management model, where Caseworkers are responsible for Verification Interviews, Financial, and Employment Assistance supports for a caseload of participants who have an increasingly broad range of needs and barriers toward achieving independence.

The City's delivery model is structured to meet the unique needs of participants, while maximizing staffing resources. This broad range of services and supports under our current structure includes:

- 8 teams of approximately 10-12 Caseworkers per team, delivering Verification Interviews, Financial and Employment supports, eligibility reviews, and Enhanced Verification Process reviews;
- 8 Caseworkers providing Intensive Case Management as a targeted employment intervention for participants with multiple barriers to employment;
- 3 Caseworkers located in the community at two community resource centres as phase one of Ontario Works Decentralization;
- 3 Caseworkers working exclusively with LEAP participants;
- 3 Caseworkers managing a caseload focused on youth which includes Under 18 participants;
- 1 Caseworker managing all participants involved in approved Self Employment activities;
- 5 Caseworkers as part of a dedicated Addictions Services team;
- 6 Caseworkers working directly with emergency hostel clients on Ontario Works providing supports for rapid re-housing
- A dedicated team of 3 Caseworkers supporting individuals experiencing homelessness;
- 10 Job Developers, each aligned with a specific Case Management team, providing Employment Assistance supports to Caseworkers, as well as managing the ODSP participating caseload;
- A team of 5 Community Services Support Specialists provide the Family Support Program functions;
- A team of 8 Community Services Support Specialists handle the Social Benefit Tribunal Appeals, conduct Eligibility Reviews and fraud investigations, and provide support to teams as required.

Emphasis is on quality customer service, with an expectation that all staff will be knowledgeable of, and sensitive to, the individual and unique needs presented by each participant and by the various populations (e.g. immigrants, victims of abuse, etc).

The monitoring of ongoing eligibility is provided by Caseworkers who are supported in their activities by specialized Family Support Workers and our Centralized Business Supports team. In addition to the work done by the Caseworker, the Community Services Support Specialists, Job Developers, and Hostel Caseworkers, have a responsibility to ensure that all relevant

information is immediately provided to the Caseworker so that the Caseworker can take appropriate action. Protocols have been established with all Purchase of Service partners to ensure that information is shared with staff in a timely manner.

Employment Supports

London operates within an integrated case management context utilizing community partnerships and contracts with 13 Purchase of Service organizations for the delivery of employment services. The Employment team is responsible for specialized employment supports to all staff, supports for participants with unique employment needs, liaison and supports to the employment community partners and contract management. Each of the Job Developers carries a caseload of ODSP Spouses and Dependent Adults Participating in Ontario Works. The Employment team also has responsibility for the Employment Resource Centre,

A full range of employment services is delivered, consistent with all legislative requirements. Supports for intensive services are delivered through a Purchase of Service arrangement with established employment agencies in London. Ongoing training and support is provided for staff of these agencies to ensure that the needs of participants and all legislative requirements are met.

In addition to the full range of legislated services, specialized services are developed and delivered in ways to best meet the needs of individuals and families on our caseload. Some examples of these specialized services include wrap around services for intensive participants, addiction treatment, skill training, employment development services etc.

Participation management is the responsibility of the Caseworkers, supported by Job Developers with utilization of the full range of employment benefits being an expectation. Caseworkers identify child care needs and may issue or will work with Child Care Services staff to provide the model of care required and payment of the cost of care.

In 2013–2014, London will pilot two Employment Innovations projects. Employment Placement Innovations will pilot increased flexibility for Employment Placement with Incentives (EPI) piloting an expansion of the current Ontario Works Directives, focusing on a flexible and robust job development and training strategy. Wraparound Individualized Supports will provide customized wraparound supports for individuals with significant employment barriers. Both pilots are designed to explore new approaches to better serve participants with barriers and increase employment outcomes. A formal evaluation will be part of both pilots.

Discretionary Benefits

The Discretionary Benefits team consists of 5 staff who ensure that Discretionary Benefits are issued to social assistance recipients in accordance with the Provincial Legislation and directives, follow the local guidelines, issue purchase vouchers, and recover monies, where

possible, related to funeral expenses. This team also handles approving and issuing some mandatory benefits including dental and vision care.

Coordination with Services in the Community to Provide Emergency Help

In order to provide emergency assistance and to support co-ordination of services, the CMSM does the following:

- Provides London's Ontario Works staff with a list of available community resources for emergency assistance;
- Maintains close working relationships with agencies that provide emergency assistance. Information about this assistance is provided to all staff;
- Provides the calendar (updated monthly) listing free meals offered by churches and other community groups to all staff and also posted in the Customer Service Centre;
- Refers applicants who arrive at the Verification Interview with urgent needs, e.g. food or clothing, to community partners who can provide this;
- Provides all community partners with a holiday emergency services list when London's Ontario Works office is closed for extended periods of time (e.g. December). The information phone line message also indicates what/where emergency services are available; and,
- Ontario Works in both London and the County are active members of the Emergency Assistance Planning groups for their Municipalities.

Ontario Works Decentralization

Since 2006, we have piloted small-scale models of a decentralized approach to delivering Ontario Works services in various community settings. From these experiences, we know through preliminary evaluations and anecdotal feedback that there is a high degree of client satisfaction with the level of accessibility of Ontario Works services closer to their own community. Clients feel less intimidated and more comfortable in a community environment that makes them feel more supported. Staff also indicated a higher level of satisfaction in being able to build better rapport and trust-based relationships with clients. There is also a greater ability for clients and staff to connect more easily with allied services in the community, such as settlement services and employment services, all of which contribute to clients and staff feeling more positive and empowered which in turn leads to better program outcomes.

In order to provide services closer to where people live, create connections, alliance and synergies with related services, and to strengthen outcomes, decentralization of services will be the major focus.

A major transformative focus over the next few years will be the decentralization of our services. This will be a strategic focus of the next two or three service plans and will include a review of service delivery approaches to develop a customer centred, effective and efficient model.

The proposed decentralized model of delivering Ontario Works for the future is based on five Ontario Works centres. It includes continuing to provide services through smaller scale satellite locations and other arrangements that meet unique needs in our community. The administration / back office support functions can be located in any one of the five Ontario Works centres, whichever provides the greatest flexibility and creates the best efficiencies.

The space in each Ontario Works centre will be designed to:

- Create a positive 'personal face' for Ontario Works
- Be inviting, accessible and client / family friendly
- Optimize client experiences and engender feelings of trust, confidence and faith in the services we provide
- Facilitate the development of cohesive and collaborative relationships between the caseworker and the client
- Accommodate varying levels of utilization of the centre and a high level of uncertainty in demand for our services
- Be secure and safe for staff, clients and visitors.

The type, mix and level of services provided at each location will depend highly on the needs of the community that each Ontario Works centre is intended to serve, reflecting also what other services and resources exist in that community. Each Ontario Works centre will provide a full array of Ontario Works services (full time access to caseworkers for initial and ongoing Ontario Works financial and employment eligibility supports). As well, each centre will have a range and variety of related services such as employment, family support, housing support, intensive case management and other specialized supports depending on the needs of the community. These related services could be provided full time or in a rotating way across the other Ontario Works centres in the city.

We will also provide walk-in services and identify opportunities for synergy with other programs based on the needs of each community. Accordingly, we will actively seek out partnerships with employment services, immigration and settlement services, education, housing supports, health services, recreational programs, library services, counselling and other services that meet the unique needs of the community being served by each Ontario Works centre.

A transformation of this size requires a carefully planned and staged implementation plan so as to maximize resources and minimize financial impact. This would allow for the gradual transition from the current centralized model of service delivery to a decentralized model. It would also allow us to vacate unencumbered space quickly and strategically transform our services in a planned and thoughtful way. The proposed timeline includes establishing a location in the north east quadrant of London by the end of 2013 and to establish a location to serve the south west quadrant by expansion of a city-owned facility, the South London Community Centre by the end of 2014. The plan would continue with an additional site added each year.

Middlesex County

- Initial intake screening is provided by the City of London Intake Screening Unit. The client and computer file is then transferred to the County where an in-person Verification Intake appointment is scheduled with a front line Middlesex Caseworker.
- Since the last Service Plan, Middlesex County has added an Employment Manager and a new Employment Caseworker for in house delivery of employment services. Although program delivery is still being developed, early results are very encouraging. The new Caseworker has a caseload that includes addictions services clients and clients with multiple barriers to employment.
- The Eligibility Verification Program is currently delivered by a dedicated worker, however this is currently under review to ensure best use of resources.
- Unusually high staff turnover has been experienced in the past 2 years through retirement. The Senior Social Service Worker position was re-introduced to support the new Caseworkers to assist with everyday questions regarding legislation, local policies, and the computer system.
- Staff will offer Ontario Works participants the most suitable child care option(s) available through the Day Nurseries Act, Ontario Works formal and informal care, Early Learning and Child Care initiative to support their employment plans and goals. Program supports are provided by a Senior Worker dedicated to Children's Services and a dedicated Case Assistant who supports the program.

Emergency Shelters

Other than the Women's Rural Resource Centre in Strathroy, there are no established emergency shelters in Middlesex County. If someone presents themselves as being homeless, safe passage would be arranged to the nearest established shelter (usually within the city boundaries). If someone absolutely refuses to go to an organized shelter, we arrange temporary shelter at a local motel, and then assist the client in finding more permanent housing.

OVERSIGHT STRATEGY

The City of London is in the process of formalizing a compliance and risk management framework to ensure that the Ontario Works program is delivered in accordance with legislative requirements, program directives and standards as well as to establish appropriate controls to mitigate identified risks.

The following processes are currently in place:

- Monthly reviews are conducted on each Caseworker's files. These are targeted reviews and may be based on recent changes to legislation, directives, identified issues, technology changes, etc.

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- SDMT reports are reviewed regularly and identified issues are followed up with staff
 - Paylists are reviewed and approved daily; random compliance reviews are also conducted by Managers
 - Purchase of service agreements are monitored and tracked

The City of London has a Finance and Business Supports Team under the direction of the City Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer that is primarily dedicated to support the Ontario Works Program. This team is comprised of managers and staff that provide business support to Ontario Works for all financial information, business systems and financial processes including leadership for the development and implementation of strategic and business plans, budgets, performance measures, and payment administration. Although this team receives its formal direction through the City Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer, this team is located on site with Ontario Works and is fully integrated with the Ontario Works management team in order to effectively support the Ontario Works service plan.

Risk & Areas for Improvement

As mentioned above, the City of London is in the process of formalizing a compliance and risk framework which will accompany a continuous improvement plan for Ontario Works Service Delivery. The framework will be designed to complement the Integrated Social Assistance Management Framework (ISAMF) and will incorporate the principles and concepts laid out in ISAMF.

In addition to this proactive approach, any issues (e.g. compliance, conflict of interest, performance), identified are immediately referred to the Compliance Manager for review and appropriate action steps.

Subsidy claim submissions are processed by trained staff in the Finance and Business Supports Team. Staff are supervised by qualified accounting managers with professional accounting designations. Proper control files are kept monthly for all Ontario Works expenditures and include detailed supporting spreadsheets, reconciliations and checklists to ensure subsidy claims are complete, accurate and in accordance with the Subsidy Claims Preparation Guide. Subsidy claims are reviewed by an accounting manager and authorized by the Senior Finance and Business Administrator as well as the Ontario Works Administrator.

The City of London's Internal Audit function is provided through a purchase of service with the accounting firm of PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC). In March, 2012, this team performed an internal audit of the following processes performed for Ontario Works:

- Accounts payable
- Processing of Ontario Works Payments
- Ontario Works Subsidy Claims
- Provincial child care reporting

- Other Federal/Provincial programs reporting

PWC reported each process to be “satisfactory” noting this to be their highest rating. They found no concerns with any of the processes listed above although they did identify a few recommendations for improvements to consider. A report of their audit findings was publicly available in June 2012.

In addition to the subsidy claim process, the Finance and Business Supports Team leads the internal budget development and monitoring process. Several internal budget monitoring reports are distributed on monthly and quarterly basis which include both financial and service indicators to control expenditure levels and ensure service plan outcomes are achieved.

PWC reported in their internal audit report findings recommendations for improvements to consider as they relate to financial reporting provided through the Ontario Works Provincial system. They recommended that the City of London continue to actively work with the Province to ensure that upgrades are implemented to Ontario Works financial reporting that facilitate data extraction and reporting that will realize efficiencies and cost savings in addition to improved reconciliation of claim information to City of London financial records.

Middlesex County

Accurate Service Data in Computer with Required File Documentation:

- The Ontario Works Manager continues to monitor data reports for compliance, follows up with staff and reports to Director monthly on steps taken.
- The Ontario Works Manager reviews files on a random basis to ensure appropriate documentation is in place.

Consistent and Accurate Recording of Computer Termination Codes:

- To enhance accurate monitoring, clients on the suspend list are contacted by the worker over the first two business days to elicit information as to why income statements have not been completed and sent in, so as to collect accurate information on participant exit, and to offer Employment Health Benefits in the event there is a voluntary withdrawal due to employment.

Policy Manuals:

- Staff meeting minutes and policy memos ensure that information is current and up to date.
- Policies are updated as necessary and memos provided to staff as necessary.
- The Ontario Works Manager continues to develop and maintain local business practices and associated performance expectations.

Business Processes Manual:

- An external consultant has been engaged to develop a Business Processes Manual. This will ensure consistency amongst staff in service delivery.

Training:

- A professional advisor delivers complex training requirements.
- All information received regarding the computer system (SAMS) is relayed to staff as soon as possible. All efforts are being made to keep staff interest and enthusiasm high.
- Funds have been allocated in the 2013 budget to cover any back-fill that may be required to ensure that standards are being met during the intensive training leading to go-live of SAMS.
- Ongoing training is being offered to staff in various ways at monthly staff meetings, including inviting guest speakers to address motivational aspects of the job.
- Employment and Child Care staff training is focusing on ensuring that service delivery is effective and in full compliance with Provincial requirements.

ANALYSIS OF RESOURCES

Background/Impact

Adequate Provincial funding to support Ontario Works is absolutely critical to achieve desired employment outcomes.

The CMSM for the City of London and Middlesex County has long approached our role with a focus on investing our municipal funding and Provincial subsidy in programs and services that have been consistently providing the highest returns possible on our tax payer investment.

To meet the CMSM's responsibility to the taxpayer and to the people served, the Ontario Works program is delivered in a way that is co-ordinated, outcome focused, effective, and fiscally accountable with a participant-centric approach that leverages supports and resources. The CMSM continues to make the best use of all available funding to ensure the best and most effective programs and services can be provided. We are supportive of the changes implemented in 2011 to streamline administrative funding to CMSMs supporting a more equitable allocation of resources. The two year funding allocations was helpful in planning municipal budgets. Planning for 2013, however, has been challenging and delayed in the absence of information on available 2013 – 2014 Provincial funding.

We are very encouraged with the Provincial support received for our proposed innovative pilot employment projects. We have commenced the recruitment of resources required to begin this initiative.

In 2012 the Province implemented a Maximum Cost Sharable Amount for Discretionary Benefits. This change took place in July 2012. The City of London was able to accommodate this funding change in 2012 without a budgetary impact to the City and without making changes to the program. It is still early to project the full year impact of this funding formula for 2013 and we will need to continue to monitor this program carefully.

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- The department has 3 Management staff, a Director, a Manager of Social Services and a Manager of Employment Services. The balance of the staff in the Social Services Department include:
 - 4 Income Support Caseworkers for Ontario Works and Eligibility Verification Process
 - 1 Senior Social Service Worker
 - 2 Employment Caseworkers
 - .5 Eligibility Review
 - .5 Family Support
 - 1 Childcare Senior Worker
 - 4 Case Assistants (1 Employment, 1 Childcare, 1 Discretionary Benefits and cheques and report production, 1 Intake Scheduling and client supports)
 - 1 Financial Administrative Assistant
- Support is provided through the County Treasury department by the Treasurer and a Financial Analyst who ensure that reported numbers equate to the actual expenditures from the General Ledger account
- External resources include a purchase of service agreement with LEADS Employment Services to deliver supports to residents seeking employment and increased employability skills. Partnership also exist with a number of agencies such as Community Employment Choices, Next Wave (Y.O.U.), the three remaining employment resource centres in the County, the enhanced services at the County Libraries.

OVERVIEW OF LEARNING SUPPORTS

SAIL concepts continue to be ingrained in new Caseworker training as well as any training and professional development offered to staff. The focus for 2013 will be on training new staff on the new Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) and the training team will be working on incorporating SAIL concepts into the staff training for the new technology.

The City of London is committed to ensuring that all staff receive training related to respect, service, and safety at work. In addition to corporate training provided, in 2012 all Ontario Works staff received the Foundation course, *Prepare*, offered through the Crisis Prevention Institute

and several managers have been certified to train all of the remaining modules offered through this program. In 2013-2014 staff will continue to receive training through this program to enhance the Foundation learnings.

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- Ongoing SAIL training is being offered to staff in various ways, such as round table discussions about relevant topics (i.e. self-care), watching instructional videos and debriefing of content and affect, inviting guest speakers to address motivational aspects of the job, etc.
- Staff are invited to make suggestions for subjects for staff meeting in order to identify training topics.
- A full day session on Appreciative Inquiry is planned for 2013.
- Staff have the opportunity to attend OMSSA conferences to increase knowledge of service delivery and current trends.
- Employment staff regularly attend employment conferences to learn new aspects of employment supports, including support addiction.
- Most of the training opportunities in 2013 will involve the migration to the new computer system later in the year. We are striving to keep staff informed and engaged as this will be an all-consuming event.

STRATEGY TO DELIVER FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES

London is a designated community for French language services. The London plan for the delivery of services in French includes the following key components:

- To provide access to client services in French:
 - Continue to build on community partnerships to provide relevant services including providing interpreter and translation services
 - Finalize the Job Evaluation process and then hire a Bilingual Caseworker
 - To designate other positions as bilingual when the opportunity becomes available through permanent vacancies
 - Continue providing access to French services in the community, including a contracted partnership with Collège Boréal to deliver employment services
- For Communication with stakeholders including correspondence, telephone and over the counter services:
 - Letters submitted in French receive a French response through the use of professional translation services
 - Provide web based linkages to community providers of services in French.
 - Once bilingual staff has been hired, will provide a recorded message in French advising how to access French language services

- Signage:
 - Continue the process of posting information about office closures in French
 - Longer term plan includes creating permanent bilingual signage
- Translation of written materials:
 - Continue with the practice that is currently in place for translation services and for written material
 - Continue to use Ministry issued form letters for customers whose first language is French
- Complaint resolution:
 - Will review the feasibility of implementing a complaint resolution process for French Language Services
 - Review processes in place to determine necessary next steps.

BUSINESS PRACTICES

Business practices are continually being reviewed to meet evolving and new business needs. A review of all business practices will take place during 2013 in preparation for the implementation of SAMS in the fall of 2013.

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- Closer liaison will be developed between the Ontario Works and Treasurer's office to tighten fiscal reporting.
- The frontline team will be streamlined to better support Ministry standards of verification timelines.
- Continue to develop and release the Business Processes Manual to ensure that all staff understand roles, service responsibilities, timelines and rationale.
- Due to the closure of the GAIN Centre, staff are now providing services in the remote communities.

Section 4: Outcome Strategies

SERVICE STRATEGY RATIONALE

The London CMSM has always focused services on supporting participants to increased employment, getting, and keeping jobs. The Ministry's Employment Outcomes approach is consistent with our focus.

In planning our services for 2013 to 2014, we have identified a set of broad strategies, as well as the key resources required, in order to achieve successful employment outcomes. This information is presented in summary form for London and Middlesex and is followed by a set of charts that identify each of the broad strategies (listed separately for London and Middlesex), with specific corresponding action steps and measurable indicators. As noted in the charts, each strategy will address more than one of the Ministry's outcome targets.

Areas of focus for London include:

- Ontario Works Decentralization
- Innovative approaches with employers
- Longevity of the caseload
- Educational needs of the caseload
- Needs unique to specific subgroups (for example: first time recipients, recently unemployed, immigrants, sole support parents, single males and youth)
- Complex and intensive needs including addictions, mental health, and other specific populations with greater needs
- Housing stability including programs directed at people experiencing homelessness

For context, we have also included the following overview of more general business improvement activities that we are undertaking in our respective offices that will contribute to the overall achievement of our employment outcomes.

General Business Enhancement Activities: City of London

- Focus on progression of the service delivery culture that includes continued staff accountability and a shift towards a more client centred outcome focus.
- Focus on relationships as the foundation of good customer service.
- Focus on a customer-friendly philosophy that it is an intrinsic component of our service system.
- Continue to provide Supportive Approaches through Innovative Learning (SAIL) training for all staff and infuse SAIL philosophy and skills into all activities.
- Continue to implement training, coaching, leadership and performance measurement opportunities in order to achieve the most person-friendly environment.

-
- Build on human resource strategies to continue to strengthen our organizational leadership and customer service and to avoid gaps in customer service.
 - Continue to build internal and external relationships with a common goal toward achieving employment outcomes.
 - Ensure a broad range of programs and services that meet individual participant needs and are reflective of the caseload mix.
 - Continue to promote Manager and front-line staff accountability for achieving outcomes.
 - Continue to implement participant-centred community partnership approaches (e.g., Addictions).
 - Establish a system that ensures Caseworkers meet each of the four key responsibilities: Intake, Eligibility, Employment and transition to independence (Termination).
 - Remove system barriers that may impede an Ontario Works participants' efforts to access employment supports he/she requires;
 - Continuously review service delivery model to identify areas for improvements
 - Provide Manager support to facilitate continued progression in culture shift towards a more client-centred outcome focus.

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Service priorities focus on identified needs and opportunities. The areas to be addressed include:

- There is a lack of services in the County for youth and older workers, therefore a strategy will focus on providing more services for both groups and increasing their engagement in their communities.
- Community groups have expressed a desire to work collaboratively with the County to explore joint opportunities that will enhance their communities and provide learning opportunities for citizens. This connects with the focus on youth and older workers and also helps to address the systemic barrier created by lack of transportation.
- Job Retention by participants continues to be an area for improvement. Enhanced training for staff around job development and supports is the strategy that has been designed to address this concern.
- The focus will also continue on home based business to provide successful outcomes and address the transportation barriers

Key aspects of service delivery include:

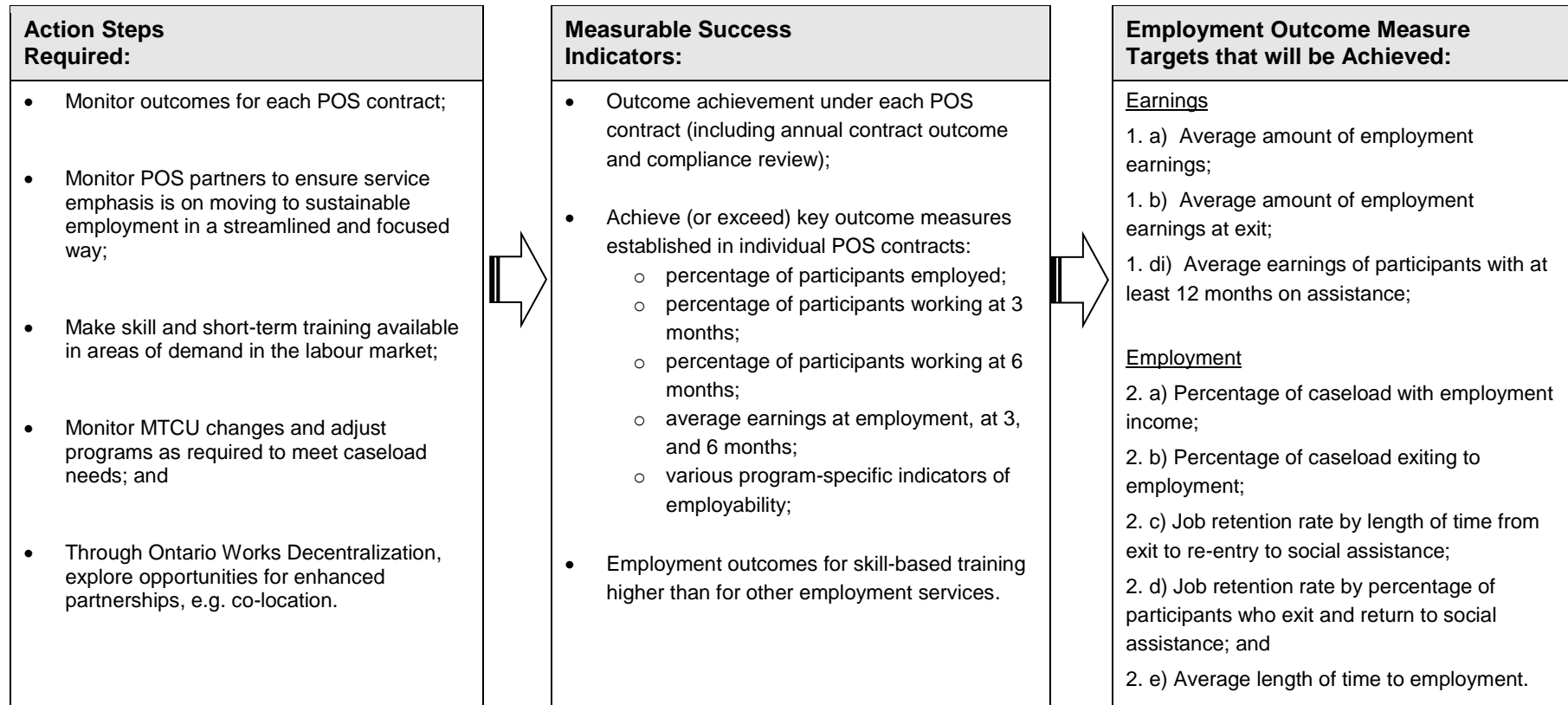
- A more proactive approach to our Addiction clients through service integration delivery to one Employment Caseworker's responsibility.

LINKING OF STRATEGIES TO OUTCOME MEASURES

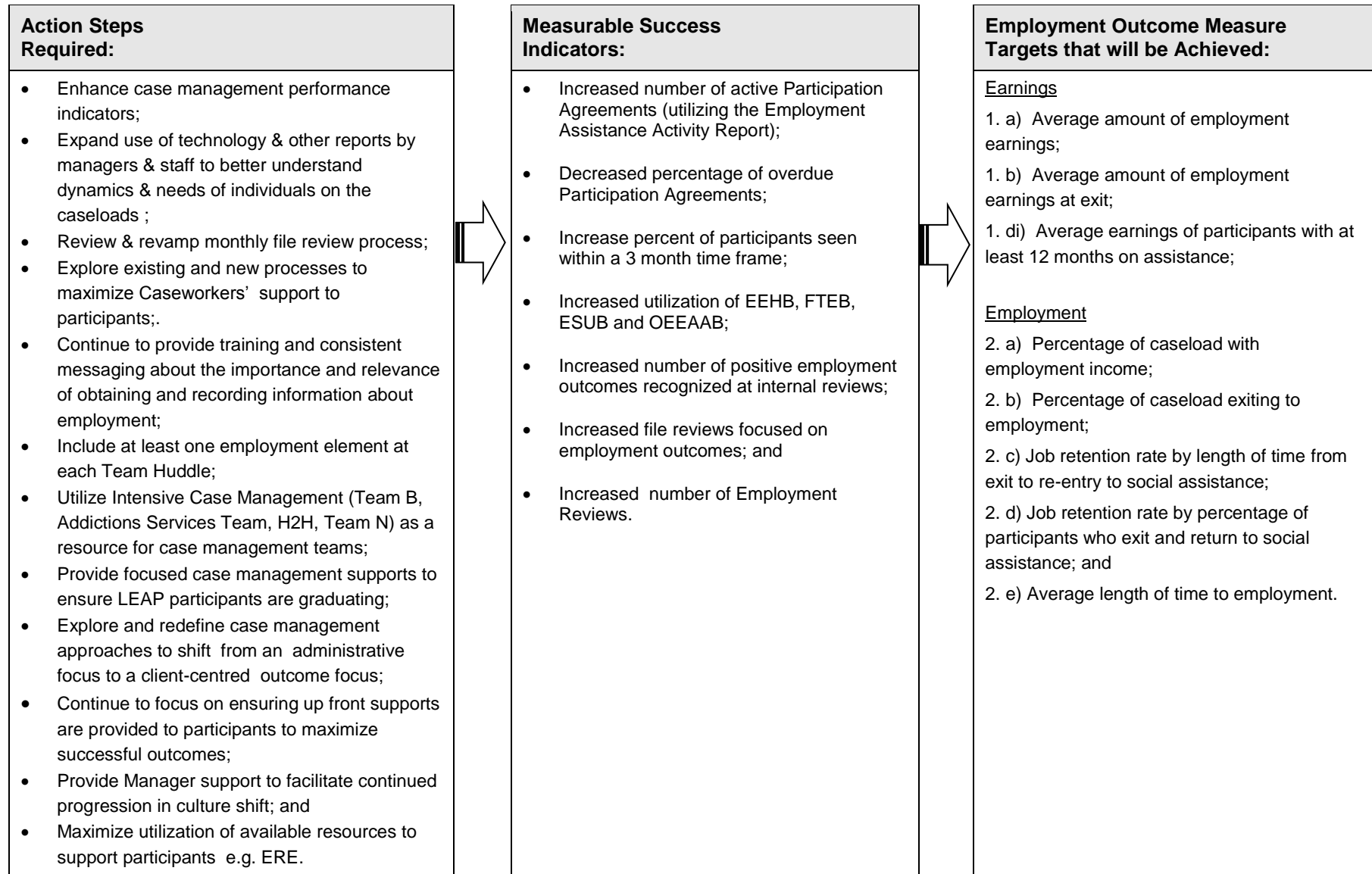
The following is an overview of the strategies and resources that will assist us in achieving the Ministry-set outcome measure targets. Following this overview, we have provided the specific action steps and indicators that will be measured to achieve the outcome targets. The information for London and Middlesex is presented separately to reflect local needs.

City of London Strategies:	Ministry Outcome Measure Targets:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize the Employment Assistance service delivery framework that is individual and family centred, includes a broad range of services and responds to emerging needs; • Clarify expectations and performance in Caseworker role to ensure enhanced accountability and a shift towards a more client centred outcome focus; • Place as much emphasis on transition to independence (termination) for Ontario Works participants as we currently do at time of intake. • Focus Employment Assistance efforts on Ontario Works participants who are more employable and who have recently been granted assistance; • Focus services on areas of need as identified by caseload demographics, community needs and priorities and labour market opportunities and realities; • Create an effective link to employers in this community; and • Continue to enhance Intensive Case Management model with special populations. 	<p><u>Earnings</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a) Average amount of employment earnings; 1. b) Average amount of employment earnings at exit; 1. di) Average earnings of participants with at least 12 months on assistance; <p><u>Employment</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. a) Percentage of caseload with employment income; 2. b) Percentage of caseload exiting to employment; 2. c) Job retention rate by length of time from exit to re-entry to social assistance; 2. d) Job retention rate by percentage of participants who exit and return to social assistance; and 2. e) Average length of time to employment.
Resources Required:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our staff • Purchase of Service organizations • MTCU Services: Employment Ontario, Apprenticeship and Literacy and Basic Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCI – Bridging programs • London Economic Development Corporation • Community partners involved in various planning bodies and groups • City of London support services such as Technology Services

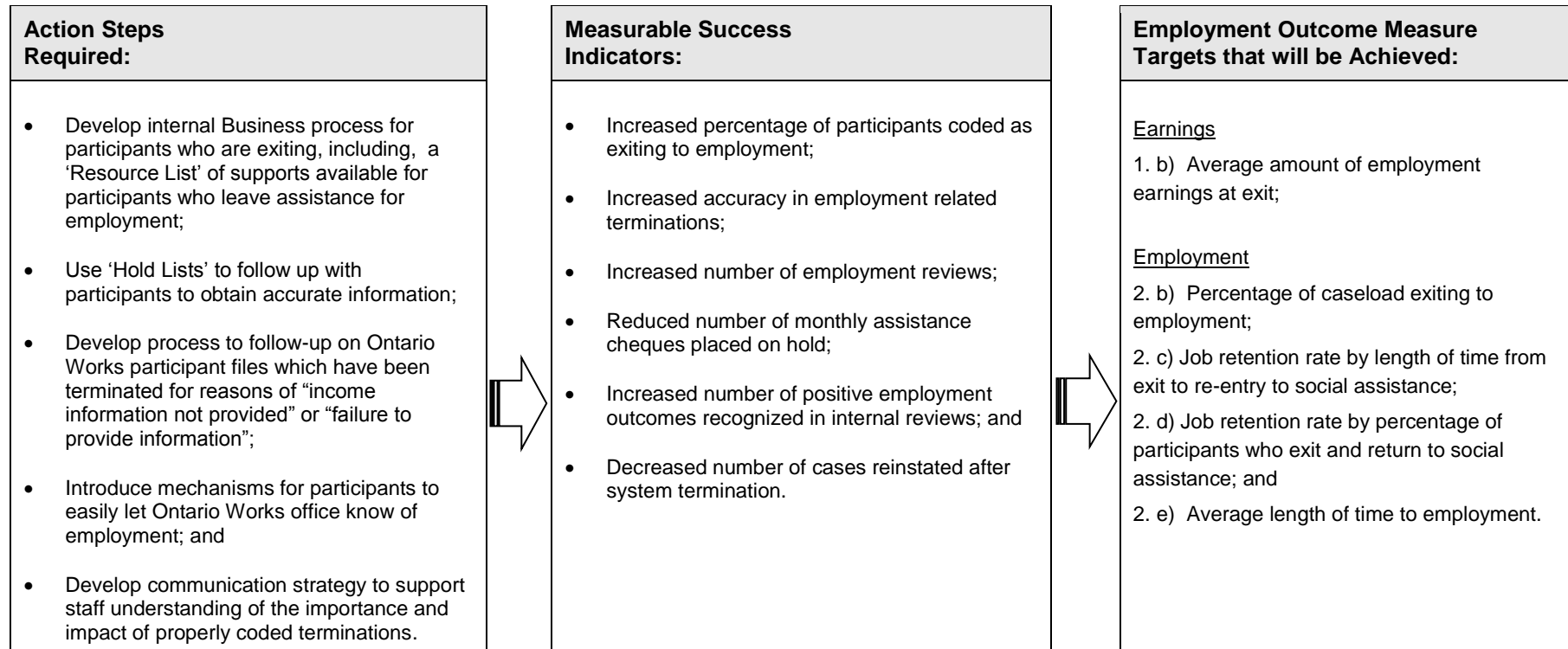
LONDON STRATEGY #1: Utilize the Employment Assistance service delivery framework that is individual and family centred, includes a broad range of services and responds to emerging needs.



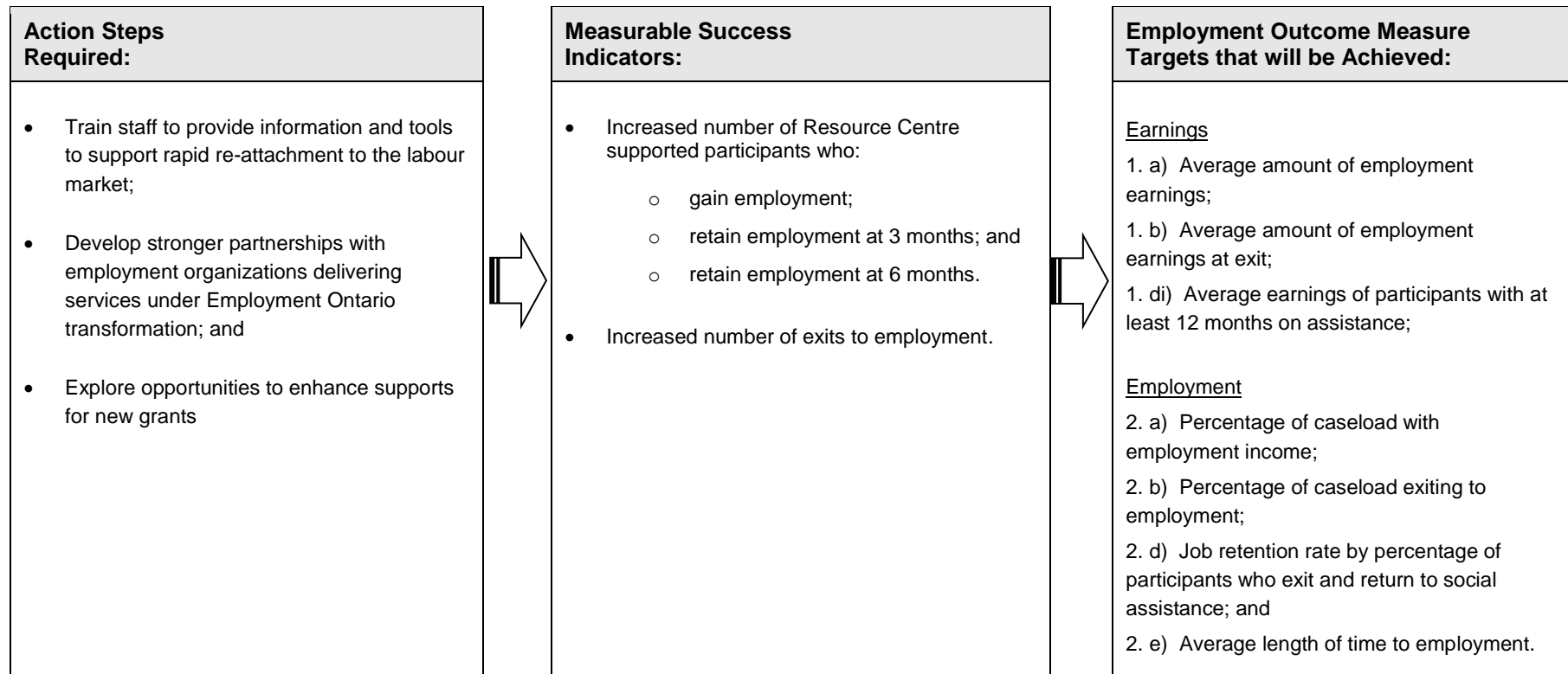
LONDON STRATEGY #2: Clarify expectations and performance in Caseworker role to ensure enhanced accountability and a shift towards a more client centred outcome focus.



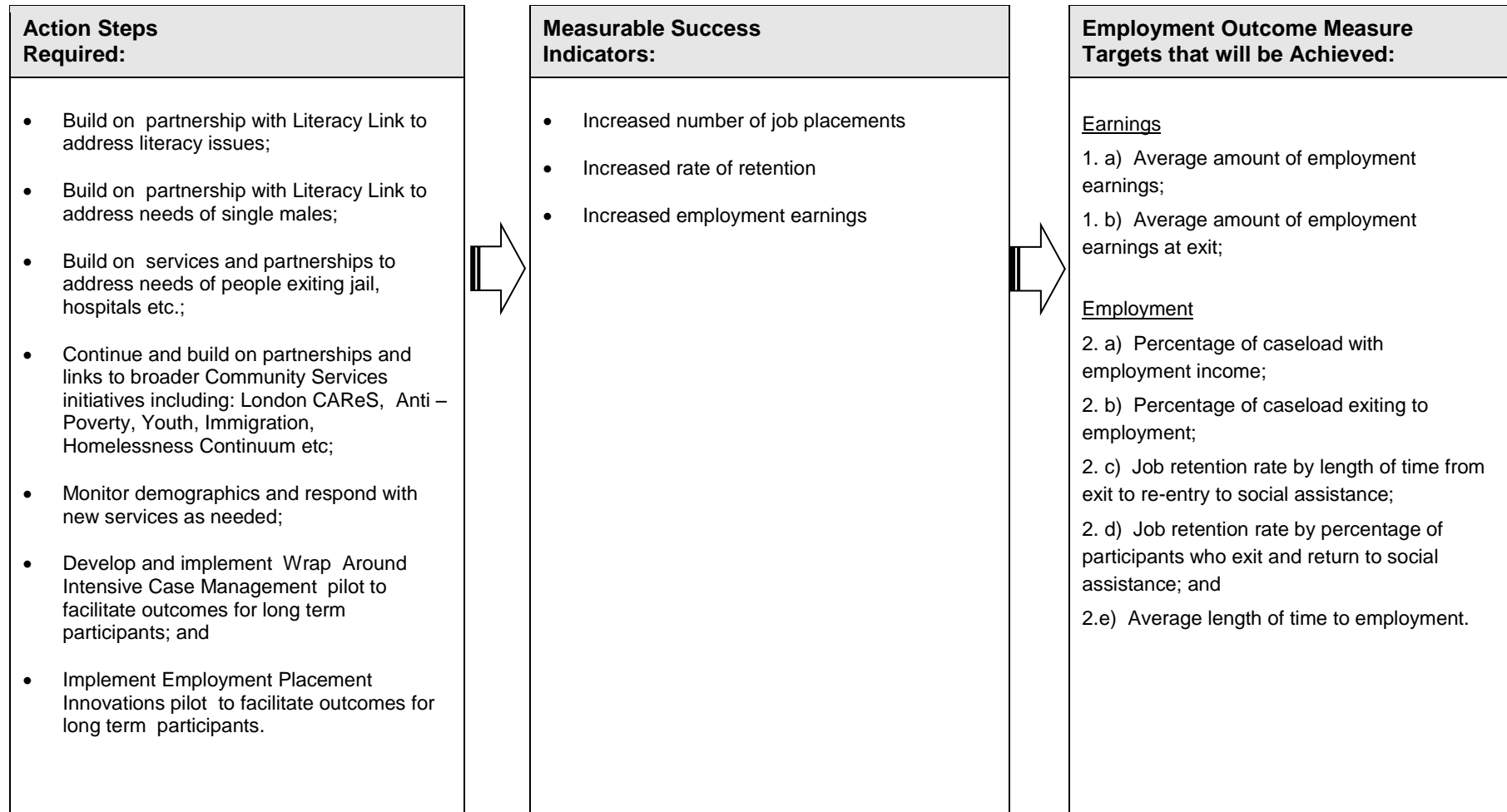
LONDON STRATEGY #3: Place as much emphasis on transition to independence (termination) for Ontario Works participants as we currently do at time of intake.



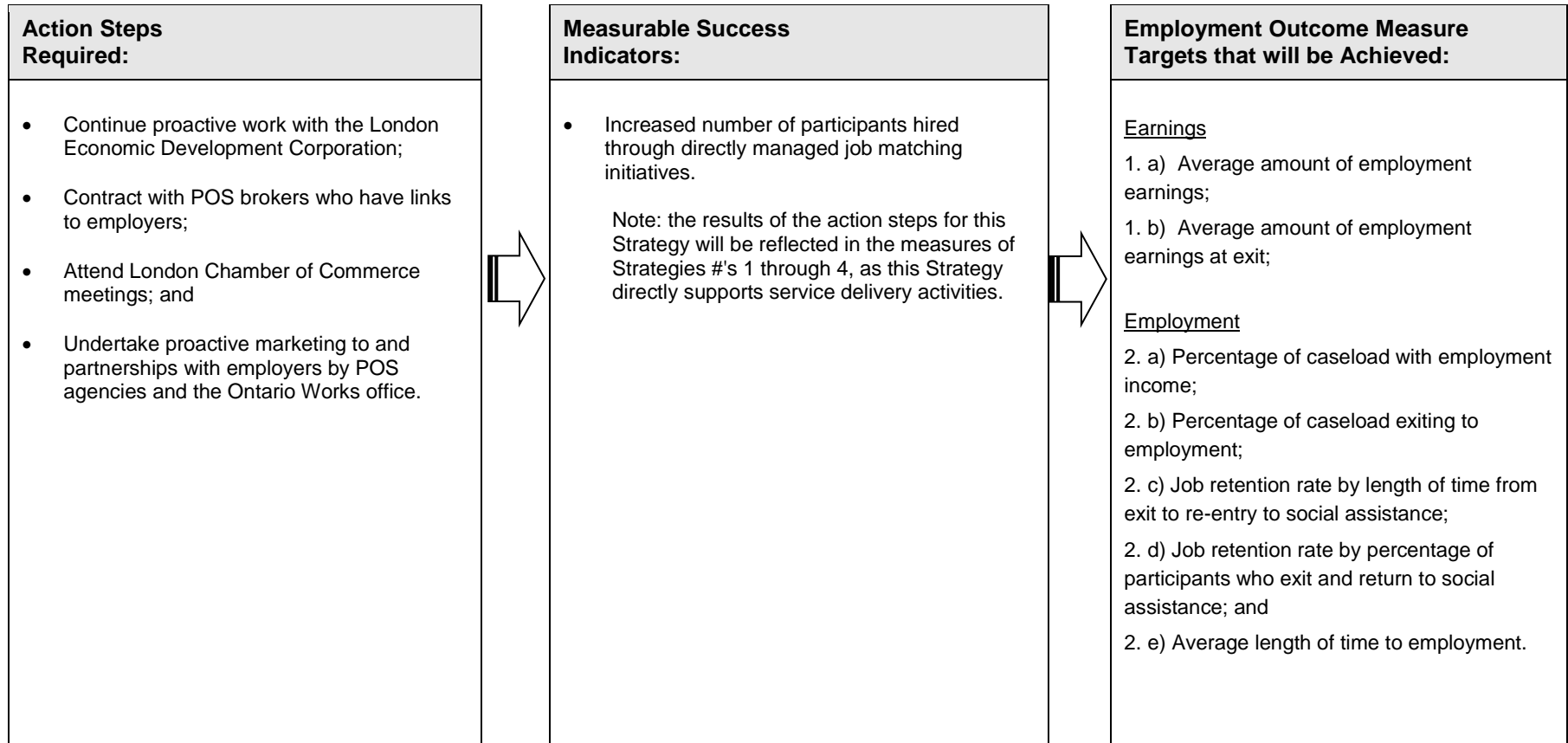
LONDON STRATEGY #4: Focus Employment Assistance efforts on Ontario Works participants who are more employable and who have recently been granted assistance.



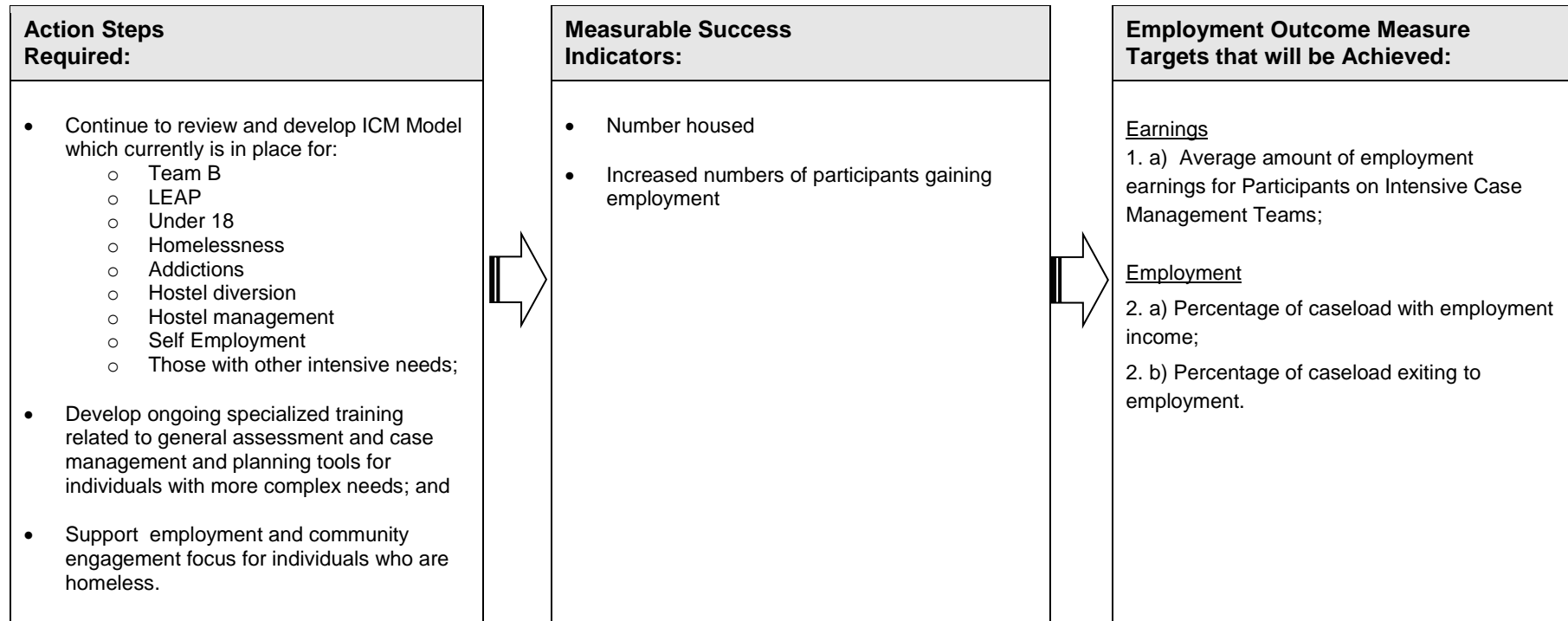
LONDON STRATEGY #5: Focus services on areas of need as identified by caseload demographics, community needs and priorities and labour market opportunities and realities.



LONDON STRATEGY #6: Create an effective link to employers in this community.

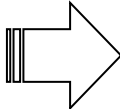


LONDON STRATEGY #7: Continue to enhance Intensive Case Management Model with Special Populations.

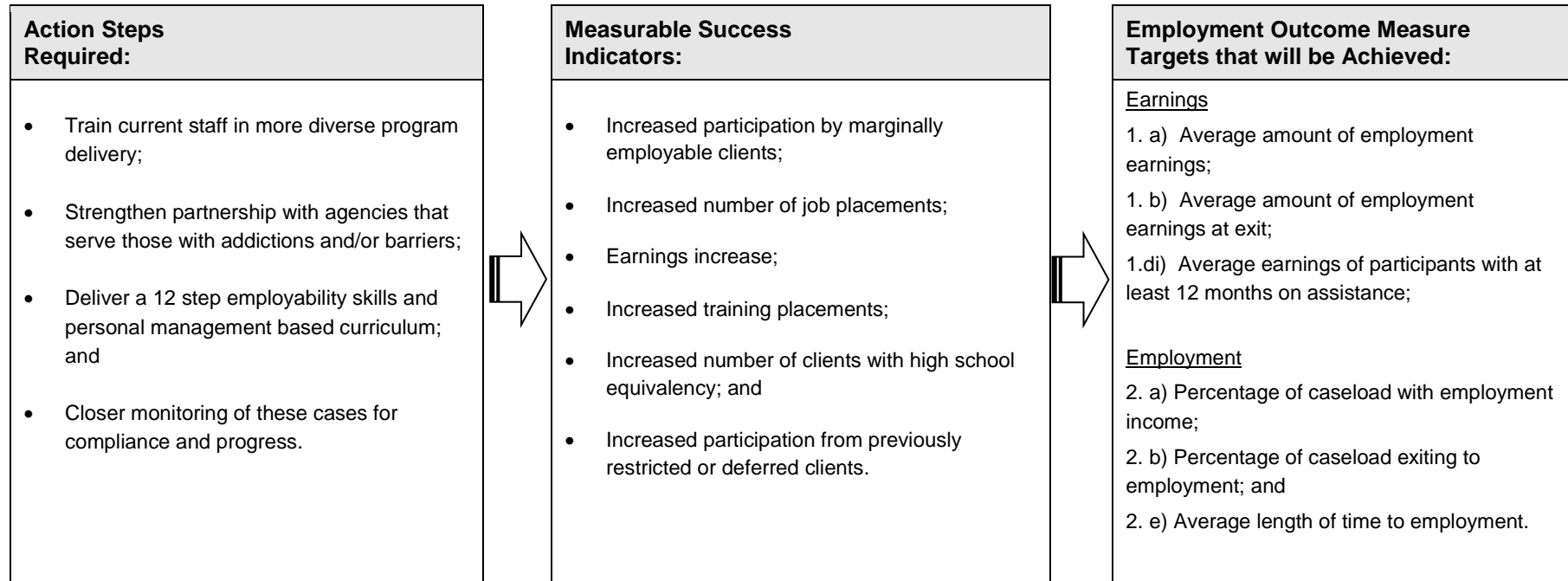


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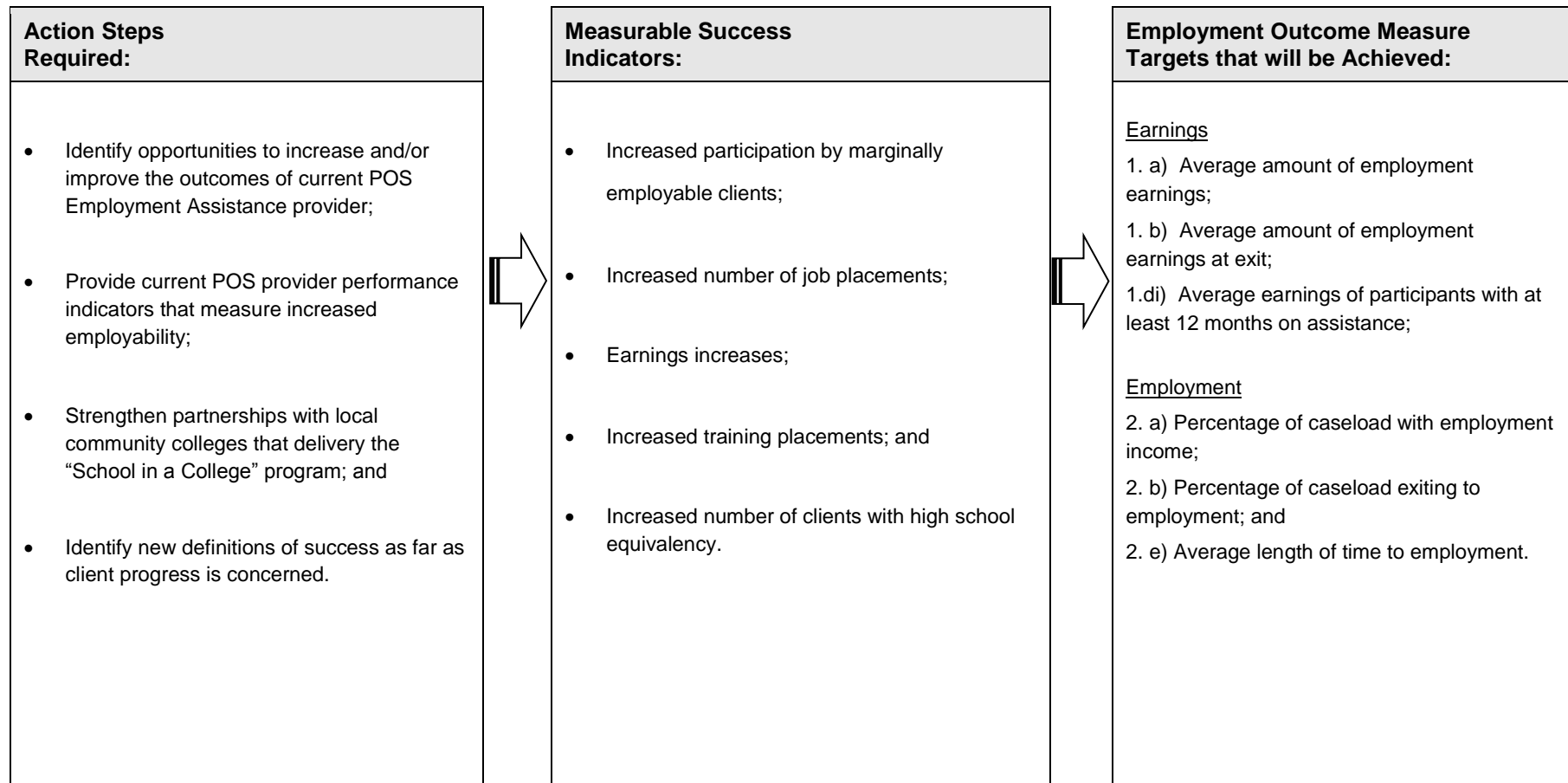
<p>Middlesex County Strategies:</p>	<p>Ministry Outcome Measure Targets:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the level of in house delivery of service to clients with addictions and/or severe barriers to employment • Strengthen our partnerships with education and employment agencies to better serve our residents • Focus employment strategies on youth and older workers who share common barriers of low self-esteem and lack of hope • Better engage local community groups to partner in locally driven Community Placement activities • Enhance our employment staff's skill-set, especially re job coaching to attain better job retention results for our residents 	<p><u>Earnings</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a) Average amount of employment earnings; 1. b) Average amount of employment earnings at exit; 1. di) Average earnings of participants with at least 12 months on assistance; <p><u>Employment</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. a) Percentage of caseload with employment income; 2. b) Percentage of caseload exiting to employment; 2. c) Job retention rate by length of time from exit to re-entry to social assistance; 2. d) Job retention rate by percentage of participants who exit and return to social assistance; and 2. e) Average length of time to employment.
<p style="text-align: center;">Resources Required:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our staff • Purchase of Service organizations • Joint opportunities with Federal and Provincial Ministries • County Economic Development Department • Local business partnerships • Local Boards of Education • Community Colleges • Women's Rural Resource Centre • Local Community groups and churches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Chamber of Commerce • Community based employment support agencies • Training resources both local and afar • Internal compliance review resources • Employment and training boards • Partnership with our IT department • Youth Opportunities Unlimited • County Treasury department • SEARCH



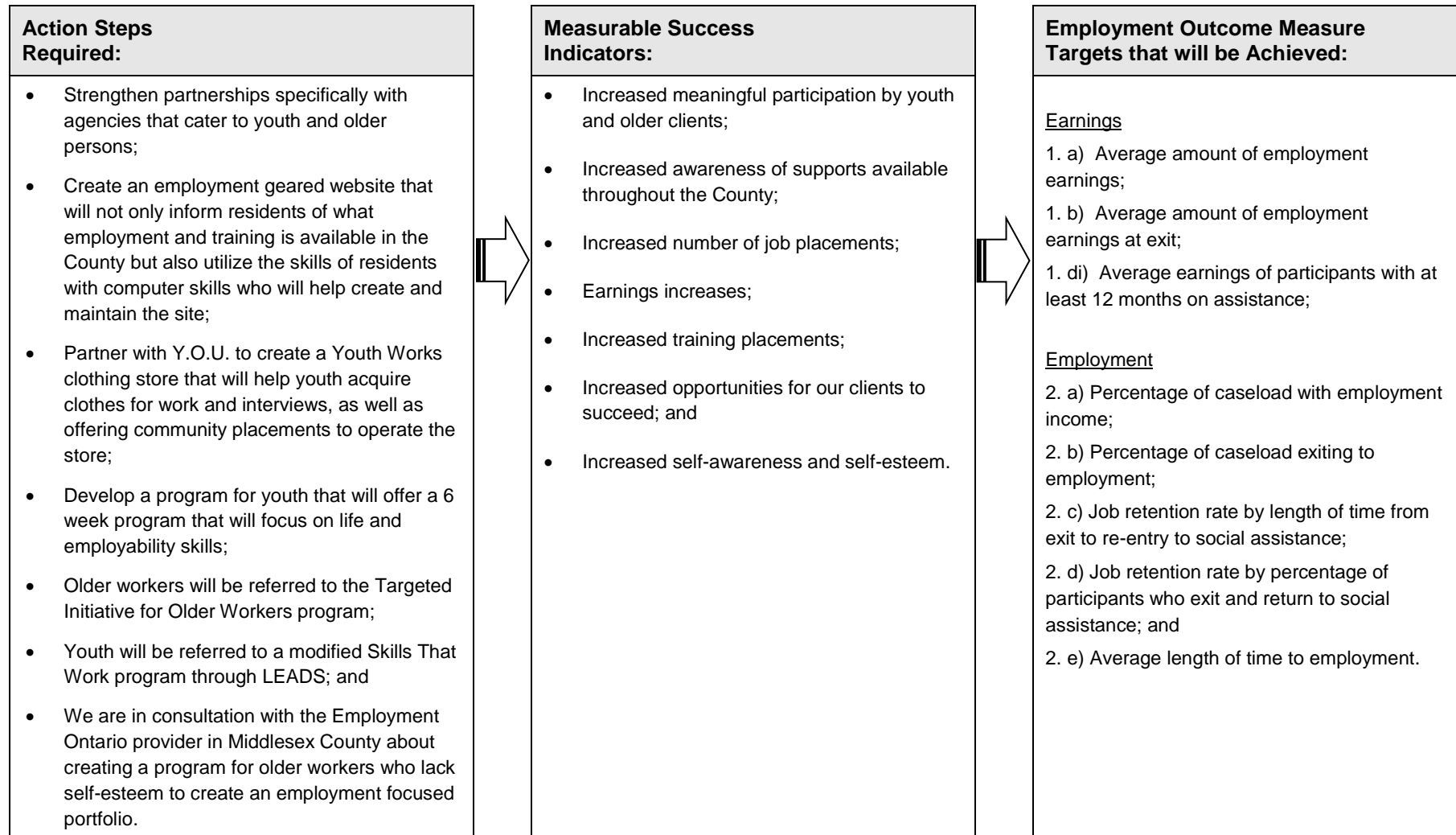
MIDDLESEX STRATEGY #1: Expand the level of in house delivery of service to clients with addictions and/or severe barriers to employment.



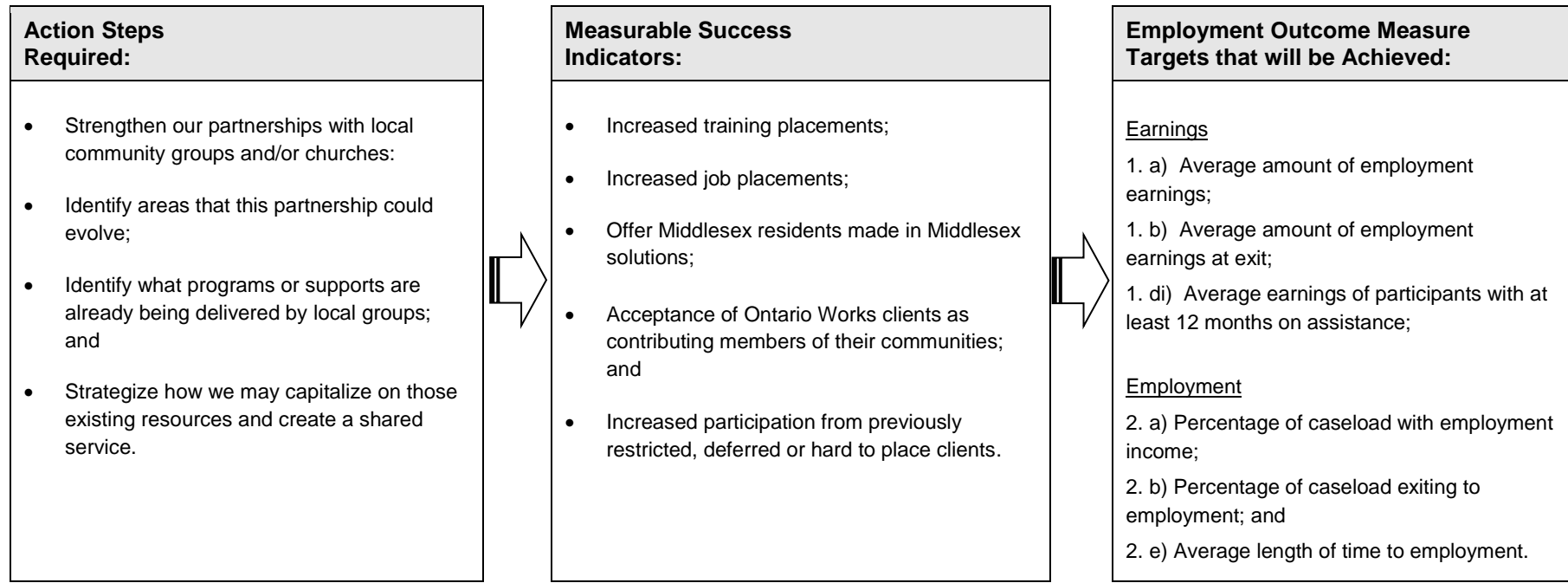
MIDDLESEX STRATEGY #2: Strengthen our partnerships with education and employment agencies to better serve our residents.



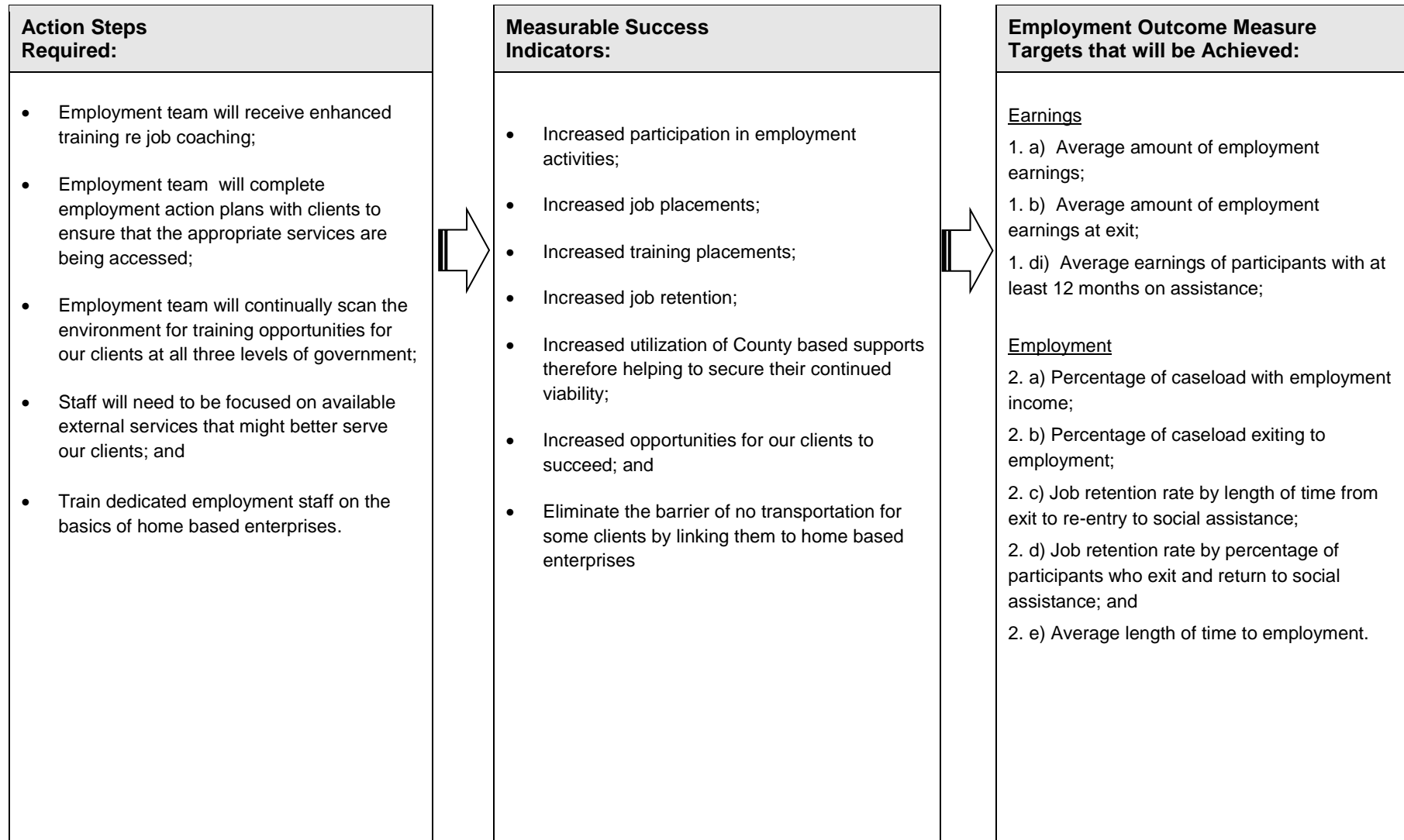
MIDDLESEX STRATEGY #3: Focus employment strategies on youth and older workers who share common barriers of low self-esteem and lack of hope.



MIDDLESEX STRATEGY #4: Better engage local community groups to partner in locally driven Community Placement activities.



MIDDLESEX STRATEGY #5: Enhance our employment staff's skill-set especially re job coaching to attain better job retention results for our residents.



ACTION STEPS and RESOURCES

Resources and action steps noted in charts above.

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- Continue to develop innovative strategies regarding home based employment opportunities for clients that experience barriers with transportation in rural communities.
- Delivering “In House” employment programs to clients that have identified with having multiple barriers to employment. A 12 step employment and personal management based curriculum will assist clients to focus on what steps are required for them to move towards sustainable employment.
- Develop partnerships with organizations to increase Community Placement opportunities for youth aged 18-24 and for clients that have identified as having limited employability skills to employment, e.g. community gardens, long term care facilities.
- Develop a partnership with Next Wave Youth Centre to create “Youth Works” clothing store within the Centre, which will provide youth access to free clothing for interviews and employment until they are financially independent and off assistance. The clothes will be donated, cleaned, ironed and supervised by an Ontario Works youth as part of a Community Placement.
- Develop a program tentatively called “Youth on the Go”. The 6 week program will focus on life and employability skills that may include: cooking meals on a budget, problem solving, coping with a crisis, interview etiquette, and emotional intelligence in the workplace. Partnering with Next Wave to assist in the delivery of the program will enhance employment services in the community for this vulnerable group.
- We will need to strengthen our partnerships with community agencies that are already working with youth to better understand their needs, strengths and weaknesses.
- Refer Older Workers (50-64) to the local Employment Ontario delivery agency to determine eligibility for Targeted Initiative for Older Workers (TIOW) program.
- We are in consultation with the Employment Ontario provider about creating a program to assist older workers who have identified as having low self-esteem, to create an employability focused portfolio. This will help to produce self-awareness of their past and current skill set. This may lead to an increased sense of self-worth and enhanced creativity.
- We have begun discussions with our IT department in conceptualizing an employment focused website that will be linked to the County of Middlesex website. A working group of youth will be formed to offer input in the content. The site will be maintained by the Middlesex County IT department.

STAKEHOLDER LINKAGES

A holistic approach is utilized to ensure successful achievement of employment outcomes, which is outlined in detail in Section 2 “Community Engagement”. We leverage the following:

- Strong, effective partnerships with other levels of government, including the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU) and the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration.
- Purchase of Service contracts with thirteen employment organizations to deliver services that are targeted to identified caseload needs and outcomes.
- Protocols and linkages with MTCU's Employment Ontario Employment Services and Literacy and Basic Skills.
- Partnerships and protocols with both school boards related to Adult Education and English as a Second Language programs and services.
- Formal and informal relationships exist with Fanshawe College to address workforce development, post-secondary education, English as a Second Language and other system related opportunities.
- Employer connections and workforce development activities - During this planning cycle we will further enhance our involvement with employers, employer facing organizations and economic development.
- Specific partnerships with community organizations to support unique individual participants, e.g. housing, mental health.
- Planning Committees to address systemic issues.
- Employment sector system supports and planning groups.

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- Contacts will be made with community groups to partner in the delivery of local projects that will benefit our clients from the experience gained, and help the community in the delivery of whatever the project is.
- We will continue to engage community partners when changes come to the delivery of Social Services to determine if there are ways that these partners can mitigate some of the impact on residents.

ADDRESSING SERVICE GAPS and INCREASING EMPLOYABILITY STRATEGIES

The Ontario Works Employment Assistance Framework 2013 - 2018 provides a robust approach to address the ongoing and emerging needs of the caseload taking a holistic approach to employment services. It is built upon London's holistic approach to service delivery, where we acknowledge and address the many intricately linked factors that are required for success (as noted in section 2 under Community Engagement). We anticipate that

new needs may be identified over the course of this planning cycle and these will be addressed within the context of the Framework, our community partnerships and planning activities wherever feasible. The Strategies and Action Steps noted above have been developed to include responses to the service gaps identified on page 25. The addition of the Employment Innovations pilots, Wrap Around Individual Supports and Employment Placement Innovations, provides opportunity to address both the mismatch between skills and available jobs and to provide supports for people with limited skills to gain employment. We will continue to work collaboratively with other levels of government to address and minimize systemic gaps.

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- New programs will be developed to cater to the specific needs of youth and older workers.
- Small rural communities feel isolated and unable to assist their own residents in need. We will work with these groups to help create local projects that will engage the disengaged in their own communities.
- Continue to expand the delivery of home based enterprises to those without transportation.
- Education will continue to be encouraged for all who have not yet completed grade 12.
- Referral to Fanshawe or Lambton College for the “School in a College” program for those LEAP clients or others who are unable to attend a regular high school.
- Youth will be referred to a modified Skills That Work program through LEADS, to enhance success as they move towards employment.
- Youth will also be referred to programs through Y.O.U. at Next Wave where new skills will be acquired.
- Candidates will be supported in specific skills training, such as Personal Support Worker courses, food handling, CPR, first aid, and customer service.
- Supporting the services in the community for clients that have identified or have been diagnosed with Addictions. Partnering with Addiction Services Thames Valley to ensure communication, consistency in delivery of care, and financial assistance is being observed.
- All ancillary supports (i.e. child care, transportation, clothing, etc.) will continue to be offered to increase employment outcomes.

MONITORING SERVICE STRATEGIES

This plan has been developed by the Ontario Works management team each of who have accountability for the achievement of outcome targets. Our approach to ensure success includes:

- Each strategy has a lead who will support, monitor and adjust activities as required to ensure success of the strategy and achievement of outcomes.
- Outcomes will be monitored each month and communicated to the entire management team.
- The senior management team will formally review strategies and outcomes on a quarterly basis and make adjustments as required.

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The plan was developed by the Employment Manager and the Director of Social Services. All reported monthly attendance reports will be initially reviewed by the Employment Caseworker. Any anomalies will be reviewed with the Employment Manager. The monthly statistical reports will be reviewed by the Employment Manager who will in turn report the results to the Director. Any required changes will be discussed, reviewed and finalized at the weekly Management meeting that includes the Director, the Employment Manager and the Social Services Manager. Those changes will be communicated to staff at weekly employment team meetings, monthly full staff meetings, or immediately via email depending upon the urgency.