

**Homemaking Providers Sharing Session across OHE
Meeting Notes
30 Jan 2025**

Attendees:

Jennifer Lalonde, Chair (Ottawa West Community Support, OWCS), Joanna Chisnell (Marianhill), Bianelle Sylvain (Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre, EORC), Heather Marriott (Community Care Northumberland), Catherine Pink (Community Care Peterborough), Gina/Regina Wilman (Community Care Central Hastings), Tracey Ferguson (Community and Primary Health Care), Brenda Packer (The Good Companions), Cindy Weese & Lancia Simmonds Abiola (VON), Laura Huffman (Rural Frontenac Community Services), Kerri Daley (Community Care City of Kawartha Lakes), Laura McGugan (Community Care for Seniors Prince Edward County), Laura Paas (Rural Ottawa South Support Services), Kate Tysick (Community Home Support Lanark County), Colleen Taylor (The Olde Forge, Ottawa), Joanne Pine (Curve Lake First Nation), Browen Weeks (Southern Frontenac Community Services), Maureen Glowaski (Haliburton Highlands Health Services), Stephanie Diskinson (South East Ottawa Community Health Centre), Ayaan Mohamed (Community Care Durham), Reem Haddad & Chris Cobus (CSS Shared Resources).

1. Welcoming Remarks and Introductions

Jennifer Lalonde welcomed everyone in attendance and encouraged them to share their names, agencies and locations with one another in the chat.

2. Meeting structure

Jennifer explained the format for today's meeting, which was to both start and end with the whole group, while the bulk of time would be spent (30 minutes) in two smaller groups discussing topics of relevance to each group identified at the last meeting.

3. Breakout Rooms (30 minutes):

Breakout Room #1 – Brokered Worker model of service – facilitated by Chris Cobus.

- Round table of introductions.
- Recap of variations in service delivery identified at last meeting – counting 'matches' vs 'jobs'; need to validate functional centers and clarify expectations re: units of service.
- Risk Management – service arrangement (using a list/registry of independent companies/brokered workers) vs 'managing' brokered workers. All participants seem clear on differentiating between "brokered workers" and "paid staff", however, some are involved in setting rates, obtaining payment from clients, reimbursing brokered workers, and/or requiring monthly reports from brokered workers on jobs done/hours worked. Discussed risk and current mitigation strategies applied to avoid being perceived as employing brokered workers. **Action:** Laura McGugan to share waivers requiring signatures from both clients and brokered workers.
- Insurance was briefly discussed. Agency insurance not covering Brokers Workers.
- Recruitment of Brokered Workers – turnover of Brokered Workers sometimes high, and it's difficult to find people interested in the work, especially since COVID. Hard to find people willing to do housekeeping at an affordable rate when nearby Air B&B hires at \$100/hr. Challenges faced with the excessive amount of time required to obtain Vulnerable Persons Check/Police Check. Chris referenced the form noted in the recent OHE newsletter, developed in collaboration with Police and VON's use of Orders Canada – Back Check. Another agency indicated they designed their letter of request to Police to clearly indicate why a vulnerable persons check is needed, e.g., ask Board members to be on list of 'back-up MOW drivers so Police see the potential of direct client contact. Kingston Police respond within ½ hour, having set-up a department to specifically address these police checks. OCSA advocating for members re: challenges experienced.

- Setting of rates for work done. Some agencies remove themselves from any involvement in setting rates to mitigate risks. Others set a minimum per hour rate and acknowledge to clients that rates may vary among brokered workers.
- Agency subsidies: No subsidies offered in general. One agency indicated that they will assist with the cost, if the situation is deemed to be a health hazard, e.g., job requires major initial clean-up.

Breakout Room #2 – Paid Staff model of service – facilitated by Jennifer Lalonde

- Group shared again how their program works. It was agreed that it would be helpful to have a chart noting who does what... with the following headings:
 - Where are your clients predominately – rural, urban, suburban
 - Who do you serve – target audience
 - Co-pay
 - Waitlist
 - How often is service provided
- Action:** Chris to work on creating a chart for circulation among Break-out Room #2 participants.
- Waitlists are not a major concern. Clients are brought onto service based on available workers.
- There was a robust discussion on retention and recruitment. General consensus is that recruitment is better when staff can set their own hours. Good success with people looking to supplement income – retired, young families etc.
- There was discussion about offering or charging surcharges in harder to serve areas.
- It was agreed that we would hold off on any discussion about harmonization of rates.

4. Plenary Topic (discussed in full group):

In Home Risks (dealing with hoarding, bugs, behaviours)

- Increase in frequency of having to deal with hoarding and bugs. Not a lot of options available to assist. Also an increase in behavioural concerns, especially since COVID.
- Caredove referrals not ‘flagging’ more complex concerns, leaving CSS agency to discover and deal with these. **Action:** Chris to flag this to Shared Resources Team.
- Some agencies acknowledged they participate/are connected to a “Situational Table” or “Hoarding Action Response Team” and able to draw on other community resources to assist, e.g., Social Services have provided money to help with major clean-ups; Police have assisted with clients in situation involving mental health concerns. **Action:** agencies involved in these tables asked to share information on how they work (South East area, VON & Prince Edward County Community Care for Seniors).

5. Meeting Evaluation:

There was difficulty placing a couple of participants in break-out rooms, due to last minute registrations/changes in participants emails.

Discussion of common topic in larger group was most helpful.

6. Next meeting: 27 Feb 2025 at 10 am. Action: Invite to be circulated.

To convene without Break-out Rooms and continue discussion of common topics: In-Home Risks, Police Checks, and IPAC.