



Social Services
and Seniors

Strategic Plan 2009 to 2011



ONE ISLAND COMMUNITY

ONE ISLAND FUTURE



Message From the Minister

Success is best achieved when the members of a team work together and are guided by a clear vision.

The Strategic Plan of the Department of Social Services and Seniors provides staff, management, and our community partners with a clear vision that will guide us as we work together over the next three years. The plan outlines the values we are proud to follow, and the goals we expect to reach between 2009-2011.

Prince Edward Island continues to grow and change, and our department is adapting. The strategies and goals contained in this document reflect our efforts to continue to support social and economic prosperity for all individuals and families in our One Island Community and our One Island Future.

The following pages describe the many ways our staff and our partners will continue to put Islanders first by protecting children and youth and by strengthening families. We are putting Islanders first by helping them meet their basic needs and by offering assistance with obtaining affordable housing, drug cost assistance, and dental care. We are putting seniors and people with disabilities first by supporting them in enjoying a good quality of life.

We are fortunate to have a number of non-government organizations in Prince Edward Island whose committed staff and volunteers play a tremendous role in extending services from Souris to Tignish. As we move forward, we will strengthen our relationships with our partners and improve the transparency and accountability of the work they do.

This Strategic Plan is a roadmap that offers a clear vision of the path that we will travel together. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the department's staff, management and partners for their dedication to meeting the goals outlined in this plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Currie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Honourable Doug Currie, Minister
Social Services and Seniors

Introduction

The Department of Social Services and Seniors cares about people and relationships. We continually focus on identifying ways to improve the self-reliance and safety of all Islanders; assisting Islanders to find their own solutions within the context of their families and communities.

The department was created during the provincial government's program renewal in 2005. It is an amalgamation of staff and programs from four provincial health regions and the pre-existing Department of Health and Social Services.

As the amalgamation of these five organizations progressed, staff and managers decided that a single vision was needed and an ambitious strategic planning initiative was launched.

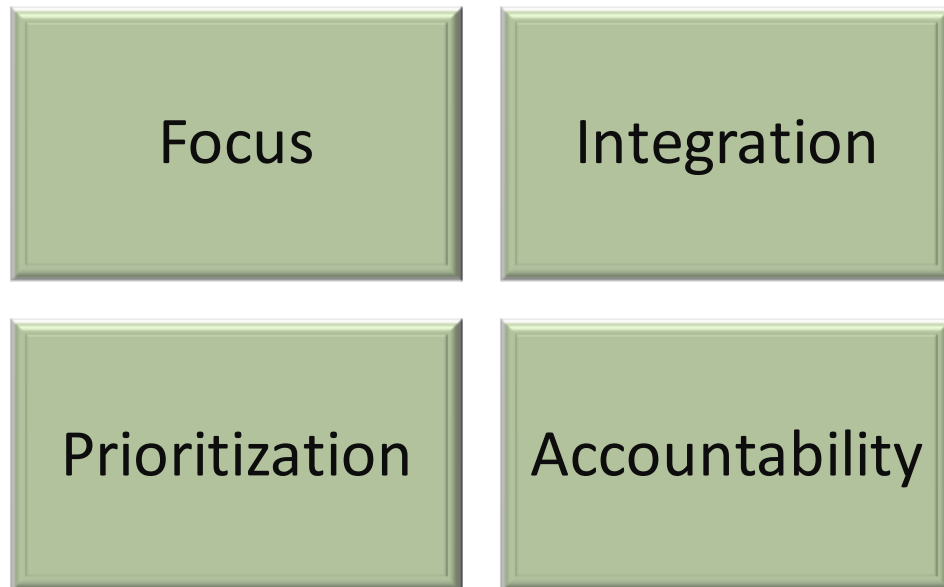
Consultations were held with management. Senior leaders met with staff to discuss priorities. Partners were informed, and their input was welcomed. From this process the department's new mission and vision statements evolved and our strategic direction emerged.

This direction includes a shared mission, vision and values for all staff; four strategic goals that all programs will strive to achieve; operational plans for each of the four divisions; and work plans for each work unit within the divisions.

The strategies and goals included in this document do not address all of the department's responsibilities, only those determined to be key initiatives of this plan.



The four cornerstones of this strategic plan are:



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Focus

The planning process has helped us review current programs and ensure that they fall within the mission, vision, values and goals of the department. Moving forward, this plan will provide the focus we need to continue to improve the self reliance and safety of Islanders.

Integration

As an amalgamation of different regions and departments, Social Services and Seniors began its mandate with a mix of missions, visions, processes and priorities. We know that our department has a veteran staff with many unique perspectives, and that this is a tremendous asset to our operations. However, we also know that a modern department can excel only if it works towards a cohesive plan.

Prioritization

The Department of Social Services and Seniors touches every Islander's life in some way and the requests to our Department for new services are many and varied. This plan will provide direction for the new initiatives our Department undertakes, allowing us to prioritize initiatives that best help the Department achieve its mission, vision and goals and help Islanders meet their needs.

Accountability

This strategic plan improves our accountability to government, our partners and the citizens of Prince Edward Island. It provides government with a blueprint through which our success can be measured. It provides our partners with the mission, vision and values that will improve collaborative efforts. The strategic plan lays out the goals we hope to achieve in our effort to help Islanders become safe, self reliant and able to meet the challenges they and their communities face.



Overview of the Department of Social Services and Seniors

With approximately 500 employees and a budget of over \$124 million, the Department of Social Services and Seniors is the third largest department within the provincial government. The department consists of four divisions: Child and Family Services; Social Programs; Pharmacy, Housing, Dentistry and Seniors; and Corporate and Financial Services.

Child and Family Services

The Child and Family Services Division's mandate is to provide family violence prevention, child protection, and residential services to vulnerable Island children, youth, families, and communities across the province including the provision of care for children who are the legal responsibility of the province. In addition, this division provides various services including the operation of group homes, adoption services, foster care, and family strengthening.

Social Programs

The Social Programs Division provides services to Islanders in areas such as social assistance, child care subsidies, and disability supports. The Social Programs Division also provides funding to a number of non-government organizations that provide services to the citizens of Prince Edward Island.

Pharmacy, Housing, Dentistry and Seniors

The Pharmacy, Housing, Dentistry and Seniors Division is responsible for the operation of the provincial drug programs and the Provincial Pharmacy, housing services, dental services and the Seniors Secretariat. This division provides public education on seniors' issues and policy advice to government on behalf of the Seniors' Secretariat.

Corporate and Financial Services

The Corporate and Financial Services Division is responsible for the operations of the Minister's and Deputy Minister's offices, financial and audit services, human resources and federal, provincial, territorial and corporate relations within the Department. This division is also responsible for the provision of emergency social services within the province.

Our Mission

To support social and economic prosperity for individuals, families and communities.

The Department of Social Services and Seniors contributes to the well being of individuals, families and communities by working collaboratively to promote the development of healthy, self-reliant individuals as well as supporting and protecting vulnerable members in the Island community.

The Department provides leadership in the delivery of programs and services to achieve results in the following areas:

- social and economic prosperity (skills, knowledge, attitude, resources)
- protection for vulnerable and at-risk Islanders
- delivery of quality programs and services
- leadership and direction for social development
- creation of a work environment conducive to employee engagement



Our Vision

Healthy individuals, families and communities reaching their full potential.

The Department of Social Services and Seniors envisions a prosperous future for Islanders where children, youth, adults and seniors are healthy, safe and secure. Professional and caring staff deliver accessible and equitable programs and services that recognize the individual's inherent worth, dignity and responsibility to themselves, their families, communities and society.

We will provide:

Collaborative, Client-Focused Service Delivery that is:

- appropriate, timely, accessible
- transparent, accountable
- equitable, sustainable
- evidence informed
- respectful, dignifying, caring
- in partnership with communities

A Safe, Healthy and Engaged Work Force that is:

- respectful
- collaborative
- open
- accountable, equitable
- competent, confident
- creative, innovative
- valued
- informed



Our Values

The Department of Social Services and Seniors values:

- treating people with dignity, respect, care and fairness
- working collaboratively with individuals, families and communities
- a service delivery system that is equitable, sustainable, progressive, informed by research and evidence
- open, honest, respectful communication
- accountability
- our employees and working together
- public service



Putting Islanders First Through ...

Goal 1:

Increased capacity for individuals, families and communities to enhance skills, knowledge, attitudes and resources.

The Department of Social Services and Seniors strives to support Islanders at all times and especially through challenging and vulnerable times. We understand that independence and self reliance are important to all Islanders. Our aim is to help people navigate through difficult times in their lives by providing information, programs and services that build on their strengths as individuals.

The Department of Social Services and Seniors values and supports the tremendous contributions that Island communities make in caring for our citizens. These strong partnerships are key to making sure that Islanders have the support that they need when they need it most.

Strategy 1.1 Increase collaboration with our partners, both public and private.

- 1.1.1 Work diligently in all divisions to involve our partners, respecting their knowledge and experience.
- 1.1.2 Develop and maintain communication strategies that enhance partnerships.

Strategy 1.2 Enhance the quality of policy, program and service delivery including the application of relevant planning tools and resources.

- 1.2.1 Departmental policy will reflect the diverse needs of Islanders.

Strategy 1.3 Ensure processes and resources are in place for policy development within the department.

- 1.3.1 Identify policy needs.
- 1.3.2 Identify and implement required resources for policy development.

Strategy 1.4 Improve public communications.

- 1.4.1 Implement the requirements of the *French Language Services Act*.
- 1.4.2 Improve provincial website content.
- 1.4.3 Enhance departmental educational resources.
- 1.4.4 Develop new educational resources where appropriate.
- 1.4.5 Develop an inventory of educational resources in alternate formats (large print, plain language, braille, audio).

Strategy 1.5 Create current resources that educate the public on the programs and services provided by the department.

Putting Islanders First Through ...

Goal 2:

Improved safety, security, dignity and social and economic prosperity of children, youth, families and seniors.

Islanders need to have their basic needs met in order to fully take part in and contribute to their own success and to the success of their families and communities. The Department of Social Services and Seniors has a role to play in making sure that all Islanders live in a safe and secure environment where they are free from abuse and neglect. Our role is not to *do for* Islanders but to work together to connect people to social supports and resources to help achieve their full potential.

Strategy 2.1 Identify and address the impacts of increased immigration demands on service delivery in all divisions.

2.1.1 Implement translation services for Department programs.

Strategy 2.2 Provide adequate, appropriate placements and services for children in the care of the Director of Child Welfare.

Strategy 2.3 Provide and support a continuum of resources for youth.

Strategy 2.4 Promote early identification and prevention for children, youth and families.

Strategy 2.5 Research and analyze information regarding Social Assistance rate structure models in other jurisdictions to inform decision making.

Strategy 2.6 Build stronger partnerships with other service providers both internal to and external to our Department.

Strategy 2.7 Improve existing Seniors and Family affordable housing units where appropriate.

Strategy 2.8 Improve the accessibility and equity of the Provincial Drug Programs.

Strategy 2.9 Increase awareness of family violence including the abuse of older adults.

Strategy 2.10 Finalize a business continuity plan and develop a Departmental plan for pandemic and all hazard emergencies.

Putting Islanders First Through ...

Goal 3:

Modernized service delivery that is responsive, client focused, coordinated and effective.

Delivering the right service at the right time to meet the changing and unique needs of our clients requires ongoing consideration of priorities. The Department of Social Services and Seniors strives to provide programs and services that make the most effective and efficient use of our all of our resources, including staff, budget and technology. We will continue to work with our community partners to make sure that the services that are available to Islanders are meeting their needs and are not being duplicated.

Strategy 3.1 Develop a set of key indicators for each of the divisions.

Strategy 3.2 Implement efficiencies in work practices where applicable.

3.2.1 Research modernized IT solutions for improved service delivery.

Strategy 3.3 Partner in the review of the Child Care Subsidy Program policies.

Strategy 3.4 Explore partnership options for the development of life skills, pre-employment and employment programming.

Strategy 3.5 Follow up on the release of the Disability Services Review final report.

Strategy 3.6 Modernize the Provincial Drug Programs.

Strategy 3.7 Develop unique strategies for Seniors and Family affordable housing as well as housing for persons with disabilities.

Strategy 3.8 Develop a risk management structure that supports all staff .

3.8.1 Research best practices in risk management for government departments.

3.8.2 Develop policies based on this research.

Strategy 3.9 Implement a Department wide, integrated strategic planning cycle.

Putting Islanders First Through ...

Goal 4:

Improved human resource practices and management.

The Department of Social Services and Seniors is a department that is about people. Our Department employs caring, committed professionals who deliver high quality human services to a wide range of Islanders. We value leadership, innovation, respect and open communication. We promote wellness in our workplaces and encourage our staff to have balance between their work and their families.

Strategy 4.1 Improve communications within the Department.

Strategy 4.2 Implement a Department wide performance development action plan.

Strategy 4.3 Improve employee continuing education opportunities and participation.

Strategy 4.4 Explore and enhance opportunities for recruitment and retention of social workers.

Strategy 4.5 Develop a staff training and mentoring program.

Strategy 4.6 Develop a succession plan for Departmental staff.



