



Peer & Technical Support Planning

Understanding Next Steps



Peer & Technical Support Planning - Overview

Where We Left Off

The project team has completed an initial J-Scan and identified groups for sector and first voice engagements.

As per the direction of the project team, the following initial framing definition of PSP was created guiding the work:

- The Peer Supported Planning pathway (PSP) encompasses peer-led and technical support for planning, including aspects of vision building or capacity building supports related to the planning process. The pathway promotes the principle of choice and will serve as a complementary alternative to existing government-led planning supports provided by the LACs, IPSCs etc. It includes both peer support and technical support with regard to planning.

During today's session, the team is looking for further advice on program components and engagement considerations as we work to define a program framework document.



Today's Objective

- **Align** on the developed engagement plan, groups, and framing questions
- **Discuss** initial findings from J-Scan research and insights from sector conversations
- **Understand** the vision for implementation and launch of peer supported planning in Nova Scotia



Peer & Technical Support Planning – Overview

Based on advice received, the Peer and Technical Support Planning Project team **has adjusted the project pace to better align with concurrent DSP initiatives**. This will allow participants time to engage with IPSC planning supports and community transitions, providing insights into how peer support would complement existing DSP Remedy Supports.

The team has begun engaging with organizations, identifying complementary programs to **understand coordination and program administration requirements**. Engagement with first voice partners, including Regional Advisory Councils and DSP participants, has been postponed until initial PSP program elements are established, **with these sessions expected in late May or early June**.





Peer & Technical Support Planning – Engagements

The project team has begun engagements to inform program design requirements for PSP. Engagements have been divided into two streams as outlined below. The project team is looking for advice on how to best leverage these engagements.

Engagement Objectives

Peer-Supported Planning (PSP) Awareness: Engage with the sector, DSP participants, and their families to share information about a future PSP network and its possible scope of services in Nova Scotia. Assess interest in the program and gather input on key elements participants would like to see incorporated into the program.

Project/Program Framing: Gather insights from interested parties and engagement partners to shape the future scope of PSP in Nova Scotia. This will help define potential requirements for a partner organization to coordinate the program. The collected information will contribute to establishing the PSP Framework Document within DSP.



Established Engagement Streams

Sector Program Coordination Stream – This engagement stream will assess sector capacity, partnerships, and coordination mechanisms to support a sustainable and effective PSP framework through engaging with organizations offering similar programs.

First Voice Program Framing Stream – This engagement stream will explore key themes such as individual choice, support expectations, and overall program outcomes to ensure PSP is shaped around the voices of those it aims to support.



Peer & Technical Support Planning – Engagements

For the Sector Program Coordination, the project team is planning to engage with the following groups:

- Inclusion NS Leadership
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia



Are there any other groups the project team should consider reaching out to to inform program administration?

Engagement Question Topics Include:

- **Identifying** best practices based on the learned experience of each organization for the coordination of peer networks and support systems.
- **Exploring** delivery models of existing peer support programs and how networks and are established/recruited to be involved in the programs
- **Identifying** potential partnerships for the coordination of this program that exist within Nova Scotia.
- **Understanding** barriers and challenges organizations face when providing peer support services, specifically what this means in relation to urban versus rural service provision.



What questions should be top of mind when engaging with these groups?

Are there additional topic areas that the project team should consider when engaging with sector organizations?

How do you perceive the future administration of this program?



Peer & Technical Support Planning – Engagements

For the First Voice Program Stream, the project team is planning to engage with the following groups:

- Regional Advisory Councils (engaging with each region)
- Inclusion NS Family Representatives (~4-6 family representatives)
- DSP Participants & People First
- NS Association of Black Social Workers
- Mi'kmaq Friendship Centre



Are there any other groups the project team should consider reaching out to to inform the program?

Engagement Question Topics Include:

- **Understanding** what kinds of supports would be most desired within the Peer Support Program (group-based services, specific experience planning) to ensure PSP is aligned with the vision of future users.
- **Identifying** key elements of peer support that are deemed most critical to participants
- **Gauging** potential interest to determine the capacity required for the implementation of Peer Support across Nova Scotia, taking into consideration regional and provincial lenses.
- **Understanding** family perspectives to ensure families feel heard and can share their experiences of what would/could benefit their loved one through a peer network in DSP.



What questions should be top of mind when engaging with these groups?

Are there additional topic areas that the project team should consider when engaging with first voice groups?

Do you have any initial thoughts on peer requirements for those in the “mentor” role?

Peer & Technical Support Planning – J-Scan Insights



Below are a few high-level concepts from the J-Scan that could help inform the program design requirements of the Peer and Technical Support Program in Nova Scotia.



Topic: Regional Peer Support Hubs

It has been seen across the conducted research that successful peer support groups are rooted in community. Having regional peer support hubs could make peer support relevant and accessible across the province and help members of various communities empower each other.

Reference: Side by Side Cymru (Wales)



Topic: Virtual Resource Repositories

Online resources designed to empower families and peers would allow people to gain access to the skills and resources they need to support relationship development and peer networks in communities. This also helps standardize the tools and strategies across peer support groups.

Reference: Partners for Planning (Canada); Purple Orange (Australia)



Topic: Specialized Peer Support by Topic Area/Needs

Imagine More's shows the benefit of having peer support centred around a particular need or topic area. They have peer support groups based on topics such as planning for finding employment, gaining access to education, or self-managing one's NDIS.

Reference: Imagine More (Australia)



Topic: Group Based Peer Support

While the concept of a microboard may not be applicable to DSP, the idea that peer support comes from multiple people within a person's life reduces the constraints that would exist by solely relying on one peer. Having an extension of group-based peer support would help establish community connections.

Reference: Vela Microboard Association (Canada)

Peer & Technical Support Planning – Sector Conversations



Through initial conversations with organizations offering similar programming, we have heard the following items regarding the coordination/administration of peer-supported programs. Key to note that this is based on early conversations with 2 sector organizations



The project team spoke with the ISANs who run a peer-based life skills program to help newcomers during the settlement process.

Initial Takeaways Include:

- Two-way benefits for both peer mentees and peer mentors who were involved in the program.
- Administration requirements and coordination perspectives around program oversight.
- How to recruit peers into the network and what components the team should consider.
- Group-based peer supports around specific settlement experiences.



The project team spoke with the executive director at InclusionNS. They highlighted their work in coordinating family-to-family connections across Nova Scotia by leveraging existing family networks.

Initial Takeaways Include:

- The importance of natural community connections in expanding peer networks.
- Ensuring alignment between peers/networks and messaging, along with objectives from DSP.
- Opportunities to engage with inclusionNS families to inform program elements.

As DSP works to build out the coordination requirements for the program, what items should be front of mind for the project team?

Peer & Technical Support Planning – Implementation Vision



The Remedy Notes: *An additional safeguard enhancing independent planning and support coordination (including navigation) is through an external technical and peer support person centred planning capability. (pg. 123)*

As the project looks to implement a future peer-supported planning program the project team is looking to gain insight around the following implementation considerations:

- Should the project team consider a phased/regional program launch or pursue full-scale implementation of the Peer Support Program? What are your thoughts on how this program is rolled out?
- Based on the array of services being established, how do you see the Peer Support Program fitting in alongside other programs and roles across DSP? (CLFs, LACs, IPSCs)
- Do you have any thoughts on the potential barriers that the team might encounter during the implementation of the Peer Support Program?
- How will we measure success for this program? What key metrics or outcomes matter most?





Peer & Technical Support Planning – Next Steps

As the Peer and Technical Support Planning Project moves forward, below are the project team's next steps:



Complete and synthesize feedback from Sector Coordination Stream engagements: Analyze input into key components for PSP program design.



Establish initial program design requirements for PSP: Define core program objectives, service components, and PSP elements to create a program foundation document.



Conduct engagements and working sessions with the First Voice Stream: Collaborate with lived experience representatives to validate and refine the PSP program design.



Establish a guiding program framework document: Create a blueprint that outlines program requirements, peer support standards, administration requirements and implementation steps.