

## **Day 1 - Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

### **British Columbia's One-stop Employment Services Model: Early Implementation Lessons from EPBC**

10:30am - 12:00pm

The BC Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (MSDSI) launched its new one-stop employment program, the Employment Program of British Columbia (EPBC), in April 2012. The EPBC replaced a range of provincial and federal employment programs with an integrated comprehensive system. Under EPBC, a similar set of services are available to all unemployed BC job seekers in the WorkBC Centres located in 73 catchment areas across the province. All job seekers, regardless of their unique needs, can access services through the EPBC.

In this session, Nichola Manning, Assistant Deputy Minister with MSDSI, will share lessons learned from EPBC's first two years of operations. Nichola will also discuss EPBC's future emphasis and opportunities.

Two WorkBC Centres will describe their implementation experience with EPBC.

The BC Centre for Employment Excellence will report results from a study looking at best practices from one-stop employment services models in other jurisdictions related to access for specialized populations.

#### **Speakers:**

Nichola Manning, Assistant Deputy Minister with MSDSI

Representatives from two WorkBC Centres: Steve Atkinson, PCRS, Vancouver Midtown WorkBC Centre and Shannon Bezo, College of New Caledonia, Mackenzie WorkBC Centre

Susanna Gurr, Managing Director, BC Centre for Employment Excellence

## Can Essential Skills Training in the Workplace Make a Difference?

1:30pm - 3:00pm

Attend this session to hear from several ground-breaking initiatives that train individuals in essential skills training in workplace settings.

Research in the last decade suggested the presence of gaps in essential skills in the Canadian workforce. What are the challenges in improving the essential skills of workers? What are the impacts on investing in essential skills training in the workplace for both employees and employers?

What are the conclusions from **UPSKILL: Essentials to Excel**, a large-scale pan-Canadian evaluation of an innovative approach to integrating Essential Skills training into workplace training? David Gyarmati from SRDC will discuss the implementation and evaluation of this initiative that has enrolled over 100 firms and nearly 1,500 workers in the accommodations sector across eight provinces. Learn about the impacts of Literacy and Essential Skills (LES) training on workers' skills, their job performance, and other outcomes relevant to workers and firm-level objectives.

Val Lockyer, Executive Director, The Training Group at Douglas College, presents insights from two other initiatives addressing essential skills training in the workplace. The **Foundations Workplace Skills Research Project** is a three-year initiative led by the Training Group at Douglas College to test a new model of skills assessment and program delivery focused on the needs of low-skilled job seekers. Foundations is being tested across three provinces. Val will also present results from the evaluation of the **Workplace Training Program** designed to upgrade the transferable skills of 1,200 eligible participants working in the tourism and retail sectors throughout British Columbia.

Speakers:

David Gyarmati, Research Director, SRDC

Val Lockyer, Executive Director, The Training Group at Douglas College

## **The Promise of Social Financing**

3:30pm - 5:15pm

Social finance refers to methods of financing the delivery of employment or social services that promote both social goals and financial returns for investors and entrepreneurs. The ultimate goal for any social finance model is to scale up proven local innovations to efficiently improve outcomes for disadvantaged groups in society.

Learn more from experts in this emerging area.

Molly Harrington, Assistant Deputy Ministry of MSDSI's Research, Innovation and Policy Division will highlight the province's interest in this dynamic field, and the potential of social financing tools and social enterprise to stimulate social innovation in British Columbia.

Closer to home, the Government of Manitoba and the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation have established an Early Childhood Development Innovation Fund, the first of its kind in Canada. The fund will support The Winnipeg Boldness Project designed to dramatically improve the well-being of low-income children and families. Ian Gill, Principal of Cause+Effect, who has been working with the various partners to develop The Boldness Project, will be on-hand to share insights and lessons learned on their journey to putting together a social investment approach for The Boldness Project.

David Butler, Vice-President at MDRC, will share early lessons from the first operational Social Impact Bond (SIB) in the United States, designed to reduce recidivism and improve the lives of 16 to 18 year old adolescents in the New York City justice system. What is the experience of putting a SIB together within a complex and dynamic political and service environment? How do you ensure that the interests of various partners are aligned? What lessons does the New York City experience offer for SIBs elsewhere?

Speakers:

Molly Harrington, Assistant Deputy Minister with MSDSI

Ian Gill, Principal at Cause+Effect

David Butler, Vice-President, MDRC in New York City

## **Day 2 - Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

### **Insights from the Field: Working with the Hard to Employ**

10:30am - 12:00pm

Many individuals face formidable challenges to finding and keeping jobs, including mental and physical health problems, substance use, competencies in essential skills, and other similar disadvantages. When these conditions co-exists, it makes it even more difficult for some of these individuals to be employed—a group often referred to as the “hard-to-employ.” What does evidence from research and practice tell practitioners about working with the hard-to-employ? This session features three speakers.

What strategies work for the hard-to-employ? Learn about the collective lessons from a 10-year study that evaluated innovative strategies aimed at improving employment and other outcomes for groups who face serious barriers to employment. David Butler, Vice-President at MDRC, will share final results from the Hard-to-Employ Demonstration and Evaluation Project. Three of the eight models tested in the project led to increases in employment.

The Case Coordination Project (CCP), a three-year demonstration project, was designed to provide one-on-one supports delivered via a case coordination model to long-term unemployed residents in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside to address their special employment needs and to re-enter work. The CCP evaluation examined the effects of an intensive, individualized holistic approach to dealing with employment issues in one of the most impoverished communities in Canada. Susanna Gurr, Research Director at SRDC, will discuss the project’s lessons in terms of both implementation and working with individuals with multiple barriers.

So-called “unmotivated” clients: What to do when they walk through your door? Dr. Debbie Samsom, President at Back in Motion, offers tools and techniques to enhance practitioners’ knowledge and skills for working with clients who present behavioural and emotional challenges. Learn to effectively apply these techniques to create a positive environment for employment counseling that benefits both the client and the career development practitioner.

Speakers:

David Butler, Vice-President, MDRC in New York City

Susanna Gurr, Research Director, Social Research and Demonstration Corporation

Dr. Debbie Samsom, President, Back in Motion

## **What Have We Learned from Recent Innovations in Youth Career Development?**

10:30am - 12:00pm

Engaging and nudging high school students to make informed decisions for their future, even in good times, is hard to do. Learn about two new high school-based innovations that have been tested with thousands of students in several provinces within carefully designed experiments to find out what works. What lessons do these experiments have for the skills disconnect for youth. Reuben Ford, Research Director at SRDC, describes the approaches and their impacts on participants' post-secondary outcomes.

Chelsea Chalifour, Project Director leading the development of BC's 10-year youth employment strategy at the BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, will describe a new multi-ministry initiative for youth employment. The strategy will align with the Province of BC's commitment to ensuring BC youth have real opportunities and make successful transitions into the labour market.

### Speakers:

Dr. Reuben Ford, Research Director, SRDC

Chelsea Chalifour, Project Director, BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training

## **Foreign Credentials Recognition Loans Pilot Project: Pathways, Pitfalls and Opportunities**

1:30pm - 3:00pm

Employment and Social Development Canada launched the Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR) Loans Pilot in 2012. The FCR Loans Pilot is unique in its application of microloans to an educated clientele of immigrants in an advanced economy. The program aims to reduce the financial barriers in the FCR process and improve employment prospects for internationally-trained workers (ITWs) in their field through loans provided by community organizations and financial institutions.

SRDC has been commissioned to design and implement a research framework that will guide the collection of evidence on what works in the different models implemented by community organizations and, more broadly, on the financial and other barriers faced by ITWs in Canada. The program is being delivered by nine different service providers across pilot sites in Canada. In British Columbia (BC), the program is being delivered by S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

Attend this session to learn more about how a microloan program can work in a developed country and what the research will tell you about: who receives loans, how much they receive, how the money is used, how it affects their FCR activities, employment, and other outcomes, and how is it operationalized. Hear about the project from researchers, the service provider in BC and program participants.

Panel presentation from:

S.U.C.C.E.S.S.: the service provider in BC

Internationally Trained Workers: program participants (to be confirmed)

Jean-Pierre Voyer, President and CEO, Social Research and Demonstration Corporation

## **Effective Use of Labour Market and Career Information: Beyond the Numbers**

1:30pm - 3:00pm

Labour Market Information (LMI) is key in the career development process, but the mass of information and numerous sources of LMI can be daunting in the busy world of career practitioners. How do you, a career practitioner, make sense of currently available LMI and use it to enhance your clients' knowledge to help them make informed career choices?

This session will expose you to the several labour market and career information sources from government and community agencies. Representatives from WorkBC, BC Stats and Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) will inform you about the information available from their agencies. To make sense of the numbers and to use LMI as a career counselling tool, authors of the *Making Career Sense of Labour Market Information* guide will share some simple concepts and resources to apply LMI in real world situations in order to improve the career development process.

### Speakers:

Lynette Sawyer and Deanna Young, WorkBC Research and Innovation, BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training

Scott Graham, Manager of Research & Consulting, Social Planning and Research Council of BC

Denise Lloyd, Engaged HR, Co-Author of Association of Service Providers for Employability and Career Training's (ASPECT) *Making Career Sense of Labour Market Information* guide