

SECTION: Access Coordination

POLICY: AC 04

REVISED: August 2022

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August 2018; December 2016; January 2012

SERVICE COORDINATION

PREAMBLE:

Contact Brant's role as an Access Agency has always given us the mandate for service coordination, supporting a **'single agreement for service'**. This was further strengthened in 2013 when Contact Brant was identified as the lead to oversee implementation of the ***Transition Planning Protocol and Procedures for Young People with Developmental Disabilities*** to support an integrated transition plan for youth with a developmental disability.

In 2016, Contact Brant was named the **Service Coordination Agency** for Brant by the province through the Special Needs Strategy. As a result, Contact Brant is accountable for **Coordinated Service Planning** in Brant, as outlined in Ministry's *Policy and Program Guidelines*, and the Coordinated Service Planning contract. The goal of Coordinated Service Planning is to improve service experiences and outcomes for children and youth with multiple and/or complex special needs and their families. This is done through the support of a Service Planning Coordinator who will connect them to the multiple, cross-sectoral services they need as early as possible, and monitor their needs and progress through a documented Coordinated Service Plan that takes into account each child/youth/family's goals, strengths, needs, as well as all of the services that the child/youth is and will be receiving.

As a result of coordinated service planning, parents and children/youth with multiple and/or complex special needs will:

- Know who is accountable for developing and monitoring their child's coordinated service plan;
- Not have to repeat their stories and goals to multiple providers;
- Have a single service plan that is responsive to their child's goals, strengths, and needs;
- Experience a family-centred process that recognizes that each family is unique; that the family is the constant in the child's life; and that they have expertise on their child's abilities and needs;
- Know that providers will be communicating about the needs and goals of their child working toward a set of common goals identified in the plan; and
- Have a clear point of contact for coordinated service planning.

In 2022, Contact Brant was named the Lead Organization for the Ontario Autism Urgent Response Service for the Hamilton-Niagara Region. The primary responsibility of staff is service navigation and coordination of the Urgent Response Service Plan.

Additionally, the Brant ***Community Coordinated Service Planning Protocol*** identifies the importance of service collaboration to ensure that services for individuals/families are:

- Coordinated and complementary
 - Avoid duplication and contradiction
 - Consistently work towards meeting the individual and family goals in a manner that is consistent with their values and preferences.
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The community Protocol, similar to Coordinated Service Planning expectations, outlines that each staff involved in provision of services takes a role in establishing links among service providers and informal supports, across all sectors, and ensures coordination of the overall implementation of the individual's single plan of care.

This policy outlines expectations for Contact Brant employees regarding service coordination based on the expectations set out by the Ministry for Coordinated Service Planning. Resource Coordinators are considered to hold the responsibilities of staff performing Coordinated Service Planning functions.

POLICY:

Contact Brant employees will lead coordinated service planning for children, youth and their families by working with partner organizations in the various sectors to ensure a documented coordinated service plan that takes into account the child/youth and families' priorities, strengths, needs, and services.

Contact Brant employees will provide family-centered services and supports.

PROCEDURES:

1. Contact Brant's Service Principles outline the family centered practice expected by all staff. The Coordinated Service Planning Memorandum of Understanding that Contact Brant signs with each partner agency further defines family centered practice, and is to be respected and implemented by all Contact Brant employees:
 - Each family is unique and is the constant in the child's life; the family is the expert on the child's abilities and needs.
 - The strengths and needs of all family members are considered.
 - Strengthen the capacity of families to function effectively by focusing on solutions.
 - Engage, empower and partner with families throughout the decision-making and goal-setting processes; respect family choice and provide them with the tools to make informed decisions, including providing clear and accurate information.
 - Provide individualized, culturally safe, flexible and relevant services for each family. (Cultural safety includes but is not limited to linguistic preferences and cultural practices. It also takes into account a way of interacting with children, youth and families that is trauma informed and considers historical and political influences.)
 - Staff-family relationships are characterized by partnerships and collaboration based on trust, respect, and open/on-going communication.
2. According to the *Coordinated Service Planning* Coordinating Agency Role, Contact Brant will lead the implementation of Coordinated Service Planning in Brant, ensuring that families of children and youth, birth to exit from school with multiple and/or complex special needs, have an identified Service Planning Coordinator and a written Coordinated Service Plan that builds on the child/youth's strengths and recognizes their service needs.
 - 2.1. The Ministry defines a Service Planning Coordinator: May be primarily a provider of another program or service (e.g., Contact Brant Resource Coordinators) or may be providing coordinated service planning full time (e.g., Contact Brant Service Planning Coordinators).
 - 2.2. The responsibilities of a Service Planning Coordinator (including Resource Coordinators) are:

- Facilitate the active participation of the child/youth and family in coordinated service planning, including goal setting.
 - Be knowledgeable and available to discuss the child/youth and family's concerns, if applicable, regarding the service plan.
 - Assist the family in navigating and accessing appropriate services and community processes.
 - Explore flexible and innovative approaches for service delivery to meet the needs of the child/youth.
 - Where the primary service coordination responsibilities shift to another staff, support a 'warm transfer' and support the family in the process.
 - With appropriate consent, develop, or support the development of, a written strengths-based Coordinated Service Plan driven by the priorities of the child/youth and family that addresses the needs of the child/youth and family, including transition planning.
 - Facilitate the coming together of relevant providers in the children's services, education, and health sectors to develop and maintain a single coordinated service plan for the child/youth and their family.
 - Monitor, review, and update the Coordinated Service Plan, in collaboration with the family and relevant providers in the children's services, education, and health sectors, as the child and family's needs and services change.
 - Document the Coordinated Service Plan using the community-developed Coordinated Service Plan template.
 - Ensure regular reviews at least every 6 months, and as required or upon request.
 - If identified as the Service Planning Coordinator, act as the family's primary contact, and facilitate communication amongst Family Team members.
 - Facilitate working relationships with providers in the children's services, health and education sectors in order to enable their regular contribution into coordinated service planning, and obtain and share relevant information regarding services for the child/youth.
 - Ensure registration of each child/youth in EMHware and clearly identify the Service Planning Coordinator ("Service Coordinator"); ensure each client's Coordinated Service Plan and updates are in Attachments in EMHware.
 - Provide consistent verbal and written community-developed information about what families can expect from service coordination and the role of Contact Brant as the Coordinating Agency.
3. Contact Brant employees will meet expectations of the Access mandate outlined in the provincial framework, *Making Services Work for People*, to support families not having to repeat their story, as well as a coordinated service plan for each child, youth and family.
- 3.1. Contact Brant employees will provide Coordinated Information - reliable, accurate, objective and comprehensive information regarding services to support families to make informed decisions.
- 3.2. Contact Brant employees will support a 'Single Agreement for Services' which is the establishment and implementation of a single service plan for each child and youth, age 0 – 18, that incorporates all services. Service staff will primarily accomplish this

through Intake and Referral, using the strengths-based Common Tool for Intake, and on-going support to the family and involved service providers to coordinate services.

- 3.3. Case Resolution is part of the service coordination continuum – Contact Brant will facilitate the Case Resolution process to review and plan for a coordinated service plan for complex needs children and youth who are at risk, as well as transitional aged youth.
- 3.4. If a child/family calls back to identify that they feel their situation has changed and cannot wait any longer for services, the Resource/Service/Urgent Response Coordinator will update their intake with any new information and assess whether the child's priority has changed. The child will then be reconfirmed as waiting for service or prioritized for immediate service, as appropriate.
- 3.5. When Contact Brant is notified of a vacancy in a service, the Resource Coordinator/ Service Coordinator will contact the prioritized child/family on the waiting list, according to the protocol with each service provider and program, to confirm their intention to utilize the service.
- 3.6. Once services are accessed, a child/family may request other services and supports, may identify services are not meeting their needs, or may have exhausted community supports. The Resource/Service/Urgent Response Coordinator will identify alternate options for the family and case manager. As well, Contact Brant staff will work with service providers in a family-centered approach to support the coordination of services and develop appropriate community plans.
- 3.7. The Resource Coordinator/Service Planning Coordinator will facilitate, and participate, as appropriate, in case conferences, RPAC's, and Case Resolution meetings to support community coordination and planning for a child.
4. According to the *Transition Planning Protocol and Procedures for Youth People with Developmental Disabilities*, Contact Brant leads the implementation of transition planning for youth with developmental disabilities starting at age 14.
 - 4.1. Resource Coordinators and Service Planning Coordinators will ensure each youth with a developmental disability age 14 and older is informed at least annually about the importance of planning for the future for their life in the community. Staff will also support community staff in ensuring planning focuses on each youth's strengths and priorities for the future as well as having the integrated Transition Plan (Coordinated Service Plan that includes transition plans) in Attachments in EMHware.
 - 4.2. Urgent Response Coordinators should inform youth and families they are working with about transition planning and connect with the local Contact Agency.
5. Contact Brant staff will keep abreast of community supports available for children, youth and families to be able to provide accurate information on services both within Brant and out of area.
6. Contact Brant staff will ensure that all service coordination contacts, planning, and meetings are appropriately documented in the client's electronic file.