

Transitions: Community Networking Guide

**A project of Enhancing Transitions for Adults to Further Education,
Employment and Training
and
The Manitoba Adult Literacy Strategy**

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The Community Networking Guide provides information about developing a community network and how it relates to adult education. Community networking plays an important role in establishing appropriate referral networks.

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Enhancing Transitions for Adults to Further Education, Employment and Training

In 2009, the federal government announced a two-year Strategic Training and Transition Fund to be administered in Manitoba by Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade through the existing Labour Market Agreement and Labour Market Development Agreement. Adult Learning and Literacy submitted a proposal and was approved for a two-year project that would support the Manitoba Adult Literacy Strategy.

The goals of the *Enhancing Transitions* project were to enhance adult learners' transitions:

- from adult programming to meaningful, long-term employment
- to further education and training to support their lifelong career and personal goals.

Enhancing Transitions was administered by Adult Learning and Literacy in partnership with Workplace Education Manitoba. A collection of tools and resources was developed by a project team. The development and testing of transition related materials, structures, tools and lessons was based on research in four case study communities.

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1.0 [Introduction](#)

Has this ever happened to you?

- An adult learner far from home comes to you and says, “I’m depressed. I can’t do this anymore. I need some help.”
- An adult student dies in a traffic accident. The adult program becomes the hub for the emotional outpouring of friends and family.
- An adult learner shows up poorly dressed for the weather.
- An adult learner asks for help in dealing with an abusive partner.

The answer of course, is “yes”: If not for one of those four examples above, then for something very similar. Adult learners in need come to you, and as a result, an informal network event occurs. It happens every semester in every educational setting in the province. As an Education Director, an Adult Literacy Coordinator, a teacher—you are in the front line, and sometimes the answers just are not there. This report is designed to provide you with the tools to provide the answers when they are needed.

1.1 [Background](#)

Young people leave school for a myriad of reasons. Later, as adult learners, they often bring with them needs severe enough to warrant services that are outside the pale of the adult programs to which they have come. In addition, adult learners have often been referred to the centre by outside agencies.

Staff members who first meet prospective adult learners as part of the intake/registration process can, and do, identify referrals such as Workers' Compensation-, Employment Insurance-, and social assistance-referred learners. It is also possible that during the intake interview, other needs such as day-care requirements or transportation are identified.

However, it is the teachers, instructors, paraprofessionals, and educational assistants who form the "front line" in an adult program. As the trust level between adult learners and their daily contact staff increases, it is often apparent to the teacher, to the paraprofessional or educational assistant, that a barrier to successful completion of a course is being raised through no fault of the learner. It is at this time that the staff's daily interactions with learners become keys in the referral process.

It has to be asked how adult learners with needs obvious enough to warrant referral **into** a centre, or with needs that require referral **out** of a centre to one or more support agencies, can best be helped in order to keep their primary goal—the successful completion of education—in both sight and possibility.

Community networking is not a new concept. This report suggests that what is new is having a community network process in place that all staff can recognize as being critical to the success of some adult learners. Intervention, especially early intervention, can only occur if the professional working with the learner understands the signals from the learner, recognizes symptoms exhibited by the learner, and knows the process of

referral through the administration of the adult learning centre or adult literacy program.

The literature and current practices indicate that collaboration with other service providers in the community is essential to effectively supporting adult learners in their journey. Many adult learners face challenges, including income, housing, family, mental and physical health, violence, addiction, and more. Support services are critical to enable them to participate and succeed in their educational upgrading. Effective referrals to the service agencies by adult education programs is an important strategy/tool to ensure that the learners can obtain the financial, psychological, and other assistance they require to attend programs and continue their education. Community collaboration is the foundation for effective referrals and access to support services needed by adults in programs. (Souque)

Because each adult program in Manitoba is different, because the leadership in each adult program is different in time, focus, and responsibility, the need for a community network program has been identified as a key component to enhancing transitions for adult learners to further education, employment, and training. Also identified as a likely need is staff professional development training in community networking.

1.2 [Audience](#)

The intended audience of The Guide:

- Education Directors, Adult Learning Centres (ALCs), and Adult Literacy Coordinators, Adult Literacy Programs (ALPs) in Manitoba.

And through professional development/staff meetings:

- Teachers and adult literacy practitioners
- Support staff at ALCs and ALPs

1.3 [Purpose](#)

The intended purpose of The Guide is to provide the staff of adult learning centres and adult literacy programs with the means to link any of their adult learners with any needed support through a referral network.

1.4 [Rationale](#)

- There is no question that learners enter all adult programs with the intention of increasing their current academic standing.
- There is also no question that many learners have “baggage” that not only comes with them; this “baggage” can impede their learning processes.
- There are many service providers in Manitoba that can help adult learners.
- There is no definitive guide to identify these providers.
- Not all service providers are found in all towns and cities in Manitoba.

1.5 [Current significance of community networking and how it relates to adult education](#)

“It takes a village to raise a child” applies in more ways than one to communities and adult education in the 21st century. Research indicates that more than ever, networking is essential for a healthy and vibrant community.

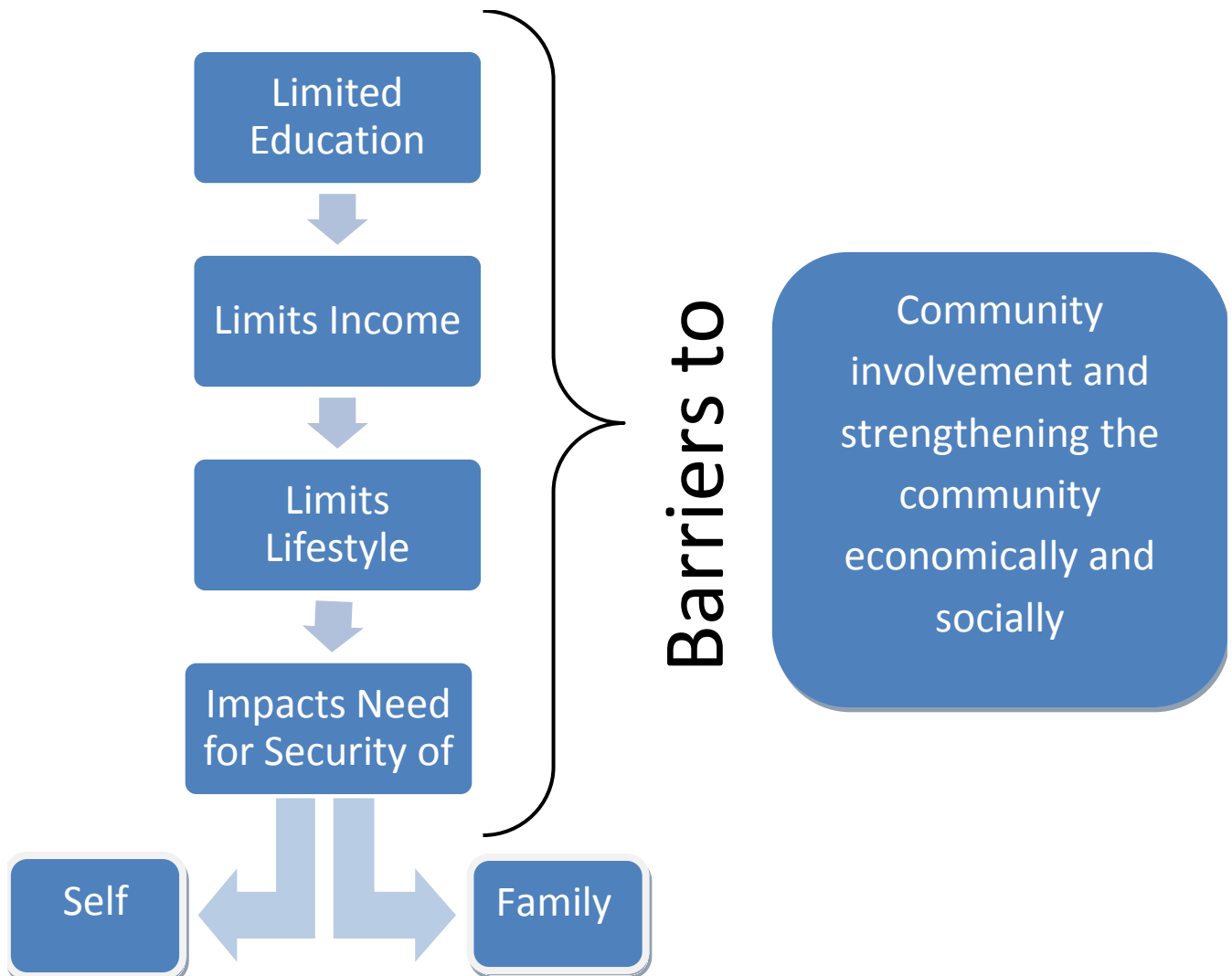
1.5.1 [Networking in today’s networking world](#)

According to Gilchrist (2010), today’s world is characterized by “mutual interdependence” and “everyday interactions” (vii). She adds that, since 2005, “. . . networking appears to be significantly more commonplace, deliberate and computer-mediated” to the point where “. . .being ‘well connected’ is a source of strength” (vii). Networking she says, adds to the life of the community as well as to the well-being of every individual.

People live in, and depend on, communities to the point where not only are communities are seen to appear to be positive, but that communities also depend on “informal networks . . .between people, between groups and between organizations¹” (Gilchrist 1)

Communities are affected by what is happening outside their unofficial borders—such as globalization. There are people within the communities who are, however, outside looking in. This is often through no choice of their own, but comes as a result of limited education which limits income, which in turn limits life style and impacts the need for security of self and family ([See Figure 1](#)).

Figure 1: Limits and Barriers



The intent of this paper is to demonstrate the importance of a local network focused on the needs of the adult learner who has taken the first step in moving back into a main stream of community by registering for courses at the ALC and/or ALP.

1.5.2 [Economic benefits to learners and their communities](#)

The benefits that flow from a local community network focused on education are many. The personal economic gain attributed to the completion of a grade 12 education is well documented in Canada².

For Canadians of all ages, the difference in annual income for those who did not graduate from high school and those who did is approximately \$5000. (See Table 1) It appears the really significant jump in earning power occurs when a learner achieves a 2-year college diploma, which results in a 27-40% increase in earnings over the learner who has not graduated from high school. Many adult learners move onto college or university programs. A Bachelor's degree, for instance, increases the earning power is a mind-boggling 60 -96% more than the learner who does not have a Grade 12 diploma.

(See Table 1: [Earning power over lowest group](#))

[Table 1: Education level and earning power for Canadian age groups](#)

Education Level	Age group			
	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
Less than high school	28 832	32 270	34 024	31 686
High school	32 260	38 302	40 123	37 669
Trades or apprenticeship	34 505	40 020	43 549	40 616
College	36 686	44 702	47 504	44 506
University below bachelor	38 559	48 105	52 012	49 964
Bachelor	46 118	59 849	64 111	62 194
Post-bachelor	50 444	67 647	74 241	75 197
Earning power over lowest group				
Less than high school	100%	100%	100%	100%
High school	112%	119%	116%	119%
Trades or apprenticeship	120%	124%	128%	128%
College	127%	139%	140%	140%
University below bachelor	134%	149%	153%	158%
Bachelor	160%	185%	186%	196%
Post-bachelor	175%	210%	218%	237%

Source: [moneyandwealth.ca](#), 2009

² The data used in the tables in this document are taken from Statistics Canada's 2006 census, with actuarial math presented in MoneyandWealth.ca, May 31, 2009, and accessed on September 26, 2010.

The difference in a career income due to education levels is worth noting, as well (See Table 2)

Table 2: Education and earning power over 30- and 40-year careers

Education Level	Career Earnings		Difference in dollars when compared to the “less than high school” learner	
	30 year career	40 year career	30-year career	40 year-career
Less than high school	\$951 260	\$1 268 120	0	0
High school	\$1 106 850	\$1 483 540	155 590	215 420
Trades or apprenticeship	\$1 180 740	\$1 586 900	229 480	318 780
College	\$1 288 920	\$1 733 980	337 660	465 860
University below bachelor	\$1 386 760	\$1 866 400	435 500	601 280
Bachelor	\$1 700 780	\$2 322 720	749 520	1 054 600
Post-bachelor	\$1 923 320	\$2 675 290	972 060	1 407 170

Source: *moneyandwealth.ca*; 2009, table by Dave Normandale, 2010

It is obvious that as personal income rises, so will the economic impact on the local community. People with increased incomes spend more where they live, generating wealth for people in the service industries of the community. Nowhere is this more obvious than in Western Canada, where the economic influence of the weather on farming, or the rise and fall in the price of oil, generate what has become known as “boom and bust” economies. The local community, especially the local business community, therefore, has a vested interest³ in an educationally-based network that assists adults increase their educational levels.

1.5.3 [Diversity in the community](#)

Gilchrist points out that “. . . diversity can be enriching and dynamic, but it also needs careful attention, particularly where inequalities and incompatibilities generate unease and misunderstanding”. (Gilchrist pg 6)

Canada and Manitoba both have rich histories of the immigrant experience, something that continues to this day. “We worship education,” says Mathew, a recent immigrant to Manitoba from Sudan, “because we know it is the key to a successful life in a new land.”

Manitoba also has a large First Nations population, one that is the fastest growing group in the province. Amanda, a First Nations woman, says matter-of-factly, “It seems there is always a cleaning job for people with little education, but I didn’t want to be cleaning all my life, so I went back to school and now I have plans to enter Applied Counselling at Red River College.”

If there is social distrust at any level for whatever reason, the strength of the community is weakened. This distrust can be based not only on ethnic differences, but also on class and income differences.

The reality of a vibrant community life is that there should always be growth.

The component parts of the community—the political, business and the educational leaders, the service agencies—need networking to maintain and grow the vibrancy of where they live.

1.5.4 [The role of the adult program in networking](#)

Because lack of education is a significant barrier to employment, the first step for people is the local adult program.

The weight placed on the adult program can be heavy, for there are sometimes community dynamics that work against the disadvantaged. This is especially true when the impact is economics-based, the one result expected of further education.

If these community dynamics, usually intolerances based on incorrect or stereotypical beliefs, hold “. . . people back from pursuing their ambitions and restricting employment mobility. . .” (Gilchrist 18) then the development of the network to assist the educationally disadvantaged will be an educational process in its own right to others in the community.

1.5.5 [Inter-agency collaboration](#)

Collaboration, by its definition, requires teamwork, usually on multiple levels, to help the adult learner break through personal barriers.

Table 3: Examples of Personal Barriers

Barrier	Examples
Lack of basic needs	Unemployment Lack of stable or affordable housing
Socio-economic disadvantages	Sole support parenting Living in poverty Needing and using social assistance
Lack of education, skills, experience	No high school diploma limits work choices No Canadian experience limits job types Returning to the work force after years away
Geographic isolation	Difficulty in accessing services Lack of available services Not having a reliable means of transport
Mental health issues	Depression, lack of self-worth, specific illness requiring medication
Addictions issues	Alcohol, drugs (prescription and illegal)

Source: Graham, 2008

Graham (2008) states that “as a result of these barriers, clients need to be referred to a broad range of services and agencies before they can be successful in achieving their employment goals” (1). It can also be said that referrals may be necessary before adult education learners are successful.

That there are problems with collaboration should come as no surprise. One of the biggest issues is **lack of effective communication**⁴.

Graham (2008) agrees, identifying “**Reluctance on the part of some employment agencies to refer clients in an increasingly competitive environment**”⁵ as a key barrier. Reluctance to refer means lack of communication. The adult client is the loser.

⁴ Emphasis is the author’s. Source is Knitzer, Cauthen, and Kisker, 1999.

⁵ Emphasis is the author’s

1.5.6 [Relationship-building strategies](#)

A community network has to begin somewhere: **a small core group with the interests of the clients at heart**—such as the administration/staff of an ALC or and ALP—is recognized in this report as being the “starting point”. In order to meet the needs of the adult learners, the next step is to build strategically from the starting point.

- What services and agencies are available for the learners’ situations/needs?
 - What local agencies are already involved with adult learners?
- How is contact initiated and then maintained?
 - Are there formal or informal arrangements in place among local agencies?
- What are the identified strengths and weaknesses of the agencies?
- How is collaboration encouraged and maintained in order to achieve success for the individual learner in need?
 - Is there a timetable that needs to be followed?
- What type of reporting and recording process is needed?
 - The Canadian Privacy Act of 2004 limits the sharing of personal information.
 - Who has access to the information
 - What information is shared?

2.0 [Community networking as a transitional tool for adult learners in Manitoba](#)

There is reason to believe that community networking for the adult learner can be identified as being systemic, on-going, and for many learners, critical throughout their time in an adult learning situation. **From intake until graduation, community networking may be the one thing that keeps some adult learners in education.**

2.1 [At intake/registration](#)

The process of community network referrals may begin with the registration process at an adult program.

The learner may have been referred by an outside agency, such as Employment Insurance, Workers' Compensation Board, or others.

Throughout the intake interview/registration process, ALC staff should:

- Ensure that the adult learner realizes that the information provided in the process is confidential, and will be shared only on a “need-to-know” basis.
- Ask if there are barriers that can affect the adult learner’s attendance or successful completion of, or transition from, the program, such as, but not limited to:
 - Child care needs
 - Part-time work
 - Workers’ Compensation
 - Employment Insurance
 - Court or other aspects of the Justice system
 - Health issues
 - Addictions issues
 - Other service agencies’ needs
 - Income support
 - Family Services

- Ask about future plans specific to employment/career/post-secondary education plans in order to:
 - Note possible needs for career/educational counselling
 - Skill/career assessment is an important part in making referrals. Adult learners often do not identify their needs accurately.
- Indicate that there will be a **follow-up interview** before the end of the first month/six weeks of school:
 - To update the registration information
 - To make any changes in the intake information as a result of one month of school
 - To keep the administration apprised of new needs/plans on the part of the learner.

2.2 [Adult learner/teacher interaction: recommending the adult learner for referral](#)

Adult learner/teacher interaction

As the comfort level and trust factors between learner and staff increase over time, the risk-taking/sharing of personal information on the part of the learner can occur.

It is important to remember that the learner is an adult and by definition, needs to make decisions for assistance on a personal level.

One successful method is a referral form that is simplicity in itself: a single sheet, with six items of information:

- The learner's name
- The referral name and date
- Reasons for referral
- Presenting problem line [a checklist]
- Additional information

- The learner's signature

The learner is presented with the form AFTER a discussion that includes the question:

What do you think would help you at this time?

This occurrence can:

- happen at any time
 - conversation before or after classes
 - direct or indirect reference in an assignment
 - "gut feeling" on the part of the staff member due to change in the adult learner's demeanour or behaviour
- require attention
 - immediately
 - later that day
 - later that week
- require attention from the Education Director/Adult Literacy Coordinator

It is critical that the learner's risk-taking/sharing not be ignored or forgotten.

2.2.1 [Reporting of need-for-referral based on oral sharing by a learner to instructor/staff](#)

- Assure the learner of the need-to-know process
- Summarize the need-for-referral with the learner
 - make notes
- Complete the necessary referral form for submission to the Education Director/Adult Literacy Coordinator

2.2.2 [Reporting of need-for-referral based on written sharing by a learner through an assignment](#)

A learner may state, or hint at, a situation through a turn-in assignment. As a teacher:

- Mark the assignment as objectively as possible
- Copy pertinent points that raised concern
- Use a “sticky” such as a post-it note requesting a conference with the learner
- At the conference, explain concerns and ask for clarification
 - Assure the learner of the need-to-know process
 - Summarize the need-for-referral with the learner
 - make notes
 - Complete the necessary referral form for submission to the Education Director/Adult Literacy Coordinator [See Appendix 2]

2.3 [Committees: A key tool/strategy for networking](#)

Once a need for referral has been identified, even tentatively, it is necessary for the information to be shared. **It is not the job** of the teacher, paraprofessional, or educational assistant to refer the adult learner to anyone other than the administration of the centre. However, the person referring the adult learner has become an important part of the process, due to the trust factor between learner and professional.⁶

No matter the formality of the committee, it is essential that there be a willingness to work together to improve services through collaboration. (Souque)

⁶ “Professional” in this sense refers to anyone who is paid to work with, or interact with, the adult learner in whatever capacity.

2.3.1 [Informal committee:](#)

- Probably the most common form of “committee” meeting
- Involves the teacher/teachers/staff and the administration of the Centre
- Usually involves meeting with the learner about a specific issue
- Commitment to the issue and to follow-up are essential for success

2.3.2 [Rural and Northern Manitoba: Adult programs](#)

Much of the community networking in rural and Northern Manitoba can likely be completed with “informal” committees. “Everyone knows everyone” is a truism in a small town, especially with professionals in various service agencies. Phone calls, even a walk across the street are more likely than formal once-a-month meetings.

There are often one or two people in each Centre who are “pipelines” of information. These people are not “gossips” but are community members who are aware of what’s happening in the community, and who are trusted by adult learners. These people are conscious of situations often long before the Education Director / Literacy Coordinator hear of situations where intervention may be necessary.

It is recommended that the Education Director / Literacy Coordinator and staff establish a trusting relationship with these people.

2.3.3 [Formal committee:](#)

Within the terms of reference for the Enhancing Transitions Project, the formal committee is recognized as being one of three, with the first 2 being most likely in the rural area:

1. Networking between ALP and ALC when these programs are not co-located.

- This network is both logical and essential since the adult learner from the ALP is most likely to continue further education by enrolling in the ALC.
 - To make the transition from ALP to ALC as seamless as possible, it is necessary for the ALC to have as much information about the learner as possible.
 - Due to federal privacy laws, it will be necessary for the ALP administration to implement a waiver form/system in conjunction with the adult learner that allows referral information to be shared with the ALC.
2. A formal network among various education-focused groups in the community.

It is recommended that an educational community network be established wherever an adult program is located.

The following groups should be invited to join and to meet regularly: once a semester to once a month, depending on need.

- ALC Education Director
- ALP Coordinator
- School Division personnel, such as
 - Superintendent
 - Work Education Coordinator
 - School Board member
- Post-secondary representative such as from
 - Red River College
 - Assiniboine College
 - Universities with satellite services in rural areas

3. Networking between ALCs, ALPs, and Community Services

For adult learning, the key point is simply this:

Information about services and collaboration must be exchanged so that referrals are

- Multi-directional
- Do what they are meant to do:
 - help the learner by providing the services necessary to keep that adult in the programming.

2.4 [Manitoba service agencies](#)

The list of service agencies available to Manitoba residents is long. In 2010, the Enhancing Transitions Project was able to identify more than 70 “agencies” in 14 categories that could be involved in the life of an adult learner.

Broadly speaking, service agencies are categorized as providing help with

Addictions	Employment	Mental Health
Housing	Education	Service Clubs
Aboriginal Support	Law and Justice	Local Arts
Local Business	Local religion	Financial Support
Local Supports/charities	Disability Support	

2.5 Where to begin

Once the ALC and ALP staff have agreed to make the move to making the community network a priority, the following steps are recommended:

2.5.1 [Identify your community partners](#)

For the staff of the ALC/ALP, identification of community partners is the first step.

- Manitoba communities may have ‘branch’ offices of the service agencies in the town where the learning centre is located, or located in a hub “close” to the town. Staff should use the checklist found in Appendix 4 to identify those services known to them, and to identify the contact person at each of the services.

Contact the service agencies that are directly involved with learners currently in the adult program.

- By mail
- Hold a meeting of service agency representatives and adult program staff to discuss parameters of the community network concept.

2.6 [Committees as a tool for the adult program](#)

A committee is but one strategy that can be effective to achieve a successful network.

The key is simple: **there must be willingness on the part of the participants to work together and to collaborate in order to improve services to the adult learner.**

2.6.1 [Definition](#)

The word “committee” is generic: other terms that work just as well include *task forces, working groups, coalitions, teams, and partnership agreements*. The important concept is that people agree to meet and to talk about their learners and what they need to be successful.

2.6.2 [Why a committee?](#)

Any committee requires a mandate/purpose—the reason for its being. All involved agencies with adult learners should have the same aim: collaboration to improve transition of learners into further education, training, or employment programs. There are 8 components to a committee:

Mandate	Membership
Meeting schedule	Reporting Process
Code of conduct	Evaluation of activities
Committee Support	Program Support

2.6.3 [Purpose](#)

Depending on the needs of the adult learner, the purpose of any network can be fine-tuned.

For the adult learners' educational needs:

This network is restricted to other educational institutions/agencies that provide services to learners in the area. This would include:

- Any ALP
- Any ALC
- Any college/university satellite/contact
- The local high school(s)

For the adult learner involved with community services:

Interagency information exchange about services and collaboration that will:

- facilitate multi-directional referrals,
- improve access for learners needing services which will help them continue with their program of studies.

2.7 [Resources and Tools](#)

There are four key resources for the adult program staff to consider:

2.7.1 [Staff training](#)

The referral process requires training in recognizing learner needs, as well as putting the needs information and referrals together with other staff.

2.7.2 [Sharing of referral information](#)

Formally and informally encourage the sharing of referral information in order to develop contacts and resources for particular client groups, such as newcomers to the adult program, and with partner agencies.

2.7.3 [Introduce and/or push for new services](#)

Some services may be inaccessible for some learners due to issues such as transportation or day care. Recognition of need can lead to new partnerships that meet the needs of some adult learners.⁷

2.7.4 [Resource manual](#)

- Having a list of local services with contact names and numbers as well as a summary of what each agency provides is a time-saver.
 - The manual should be arranged by topics for easy reference.
- Many agencies have websites with contact information.
 - Print the main home page of each agency and store it in the manual
 - Update the home page every 3 months, because
 - Services change
 - Contact information changes
 - Agencies lose funding

⁷ For instance, car dealerships often have shuttle services that are busy at the start and the end of the day. A community network system may be able to access that shuttle service at a certain 'down time' for adult learner transportation to the local library, workplace tour or other activity.

2.8 [The role of the local media in community networking/public relations](#)

For purposes of this report, “local media” is defined as any printed/published or airwave/broadcast information designed for an audience limited by geographic region. In areas other than Winnipeg, local radio stations are a particularly important source of news and information:

Having the editor of the paper and/or a key local radio personality in a local community network can be helpful in both getting the news out, **and** getting additional resources into the centre.

2.8.1 [The community newspaper](#)

- The value of a column about adult education in the local community newspaper cannot be underestimated. First of all, it is local news, it is positive/good news, and the stories virtually write themselves.
- While any member of the ALC or ALP can, and should be encouraged to, write stories, all stories about the adult program should be sent out under the name of the Education Director/Adult Literacy Coordinator.
- Any story using the name of any learner should be written with the express permission [written and signed] of the adult learner.

2.8.2 [The local radio station](#)

Interviews, stories, announcements: all can be on-air, and at no cost, or little cost.

2.8.3 [Sourcing the stories](#)

Once the community connection is made with local media, it is necessary not only to get a story for publication, but to have a plan that keeps stories flowing to the media sources.

- 1 Involve every staff member. Every adult learner has a story, every classroom has a story. It's just a matter of finding it.
- 2 Involve the learners. Ask for samples of writing, from school assignments through to personal poetry and stories. Write an introduction; add a conclusion that demonstrates the value of the ALC program.
- 3 Write a story from the perspective of the adult learner's contribution to the economy of a community.
- 4 Write a story explaining what is happening with one of the community network agency contacts, and how that is helping adult learners. End the story with a conclusion that states “. . .now that we seem to have made a difference in XYZ, it's time to focus on . . .”. And see if anyone reaches out to you.

2.9 [Public relations handouts in the community](#)

Flyers and informational cards promoting the adult program may not appear to be community networking, in that they are advertising. However, if one person comes in to register as a result of any promotion, then a link to the educational network in the community and that learner has been established.

3.0 [Conclusions](#)

3.1 The Intake Form.

The intake/registration form is the first key component of a successful adult learner community networking system.

3.2 The need for referral to a service agency after the intake/registration process is possible and probable with the changing needs of the adult learner.

3.3 The staff of an ALC or ALP must be committed to the process of collaboration in order for it to be successful.

- 3 . 4 Some professional development time will be needed to implement community networking at the local ALC or ALP.
- 3 . 5 Successful community networking through an ALC or ALP will require time at staff meetings for discussion.
- 3 . 6 Time is necessary for staff of the ALC or ALP to meet to discuss the identified needs of the adult learner.
- 3 . 7 There are a number of issues and obstacles facing the formation of a successful working collaboration.
- 3 . 8 The sharing of the economic impact of education through the local print media would likely impact the community.
 - 3.8.1 It is likely that some adults would be encouraged to register at the local ALC or ALP if economic figures could reach them: flyer, story, posters around town.

4.0 [Recommendations](#)

4.1 The intake form

- The intake/registration form should have space for notation of:
 - service agency involvement
 - employment/career/post-secondary plans
 - service referral recommendations

4.2 There needs to be a process in place for referral to an agency after the intake/registration process due to the changing needs of the adult learner.

- This process is to be started by the staff member with whom new information has been shared by providing that information to the Education Director/Adult Literacy Coordinator
- Referral to the appropriate agency is done through the Education Director/Adult Literacy Coordinator

4.3 Time for informal/formal meetings re: adult learners and their needs must be built into the ALC or ALP schedule.

4.4 Professional development through Adult Secondary Education Council (ASEC) conferences is a possibility to reach large numbers of adult educators.

4.5 Community networking as a professional development/staff meeting topic is necessary at each ALC or ALP.

4.6 Local service providers need to be contacted with the express idea of becoming part of the ALC or ALP community network.

4.7 The more public relations is used for ALC or ALP, the more effective the community network is likely to be.

5.0 Appendices

5.1 List of service providers in Manitoba

1. Addictions

- Addictions Foundation MB

2. Employment

- Service Canada
- Aim for work
- Employment MB
- Employment and Income Assistance
- Family Services
- Employment Services
- Job Quest: Career Services
- Market Abilities
- Options for Employment
- Partners for Careers
- Workplace Education MB
- Employment Insurance
- Workplace Safety Office

3. Mental Health

- Regional Health Authority
- Anxiety Disorder Association of MB
- Community Mental Health
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Mental Health Crisis Services
- Mood Disorders of Association of MB

4. Housing-related

- Association for Community Living
- Community Futures
- Neighbourhoods Alive

5. Aboriginal Support

- Band Council
- Local Band Office
- Local Friendship Centre
- MB First Nations Aboriginal Resource Centre

6. Law and Justice

- RCMP
- Local Police Force
- Probation Officer

7. Education

- Adult Learning Centre
- Adult Literacy Program
- School Division
- School Division Resource Centre
- Post secondary institution
- Campus Manitoba
- Private School

8. Service Clubs

- Rotary Club
- Kiwanas
- Shriners
- Lions
- Royal Canadian Legion

9. Local Arts

- Local Library
- Local Arts Council

10. Business

- Chamber of Commerce
- Workplace Education Manitoba

11. Disability Support

- Society for Manitobans with Disabilities
- Community Futures
- CNIB Canada

12. Immigrant Support

- English as an Additional Language
- Settlement Support

13. Financial Support

- Social Assistance
- Banks
- Credit Union

14. Local Support Groups

- Food Bank
- Thrift Shop
- Family Crisis Centre

15. Other

-

5.2 Sample Referral Form

Learner's Name: _____

Referred By: _____

Referral Date: _____

Reasons for Referral:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Additional Information:

Learner's Signature: _____

Staff Signature: _____

Date of forwarding to an agency: _____

Director's / Coordinator's Signature: _____

5.3 Service Identification Form

Potential sources of help for Enhancing Transitions in your local community

Kinds of Help Needed	Potential Source of Help	Potential Source of Help	Potential Source of Help	Potential Source of Help

5.4 [Key components of effective inter-agency collaboration](#)

- **Governance structures should**

“ . . . focus on visioning, strategic planning, policy and practice changes, monitoring, and financing. While each community shapes its system of care differently, a governance or organizational structure must emerge to address these issues and clarify the roles of authority, responsibility, and mutual accountability. Agreeing on core values, common goals, and strategic plans allows partners to develop a common language, appreciate the knowledge and experience of others, assume the best intentions, and respect diverse perspectives” (De Carolis, Southern, & Blake, 2007).

- **Management structures should**

promote interagency collaboration at administrative and frontline levels both within and between organizations. At these levels, strategic plans are implemented, training and cross-training are coordinated, and interagency protocols for information sharing and case coordination are established. Monitoring and evaluation processes [are needed] that ensure partners receive regular and relevant information regarding the impact of their efforts. This allows collaboration participants at governance, management, and practice levels to assess their effectiveness and adjust their plans based on outcomes (Dickinson, 1996).

- **Communication structures should**

create an open and credible process and identify and address challenges to implementing collaborative processes (Dickinson, 1996).

5.5 [Essential elements of collaboration](#)

Morrison (1993) suggests “. . .partnership or collaboration is about sharing information, accountability and communication”.

The Interagency Collaboration Guidebook: A strategic planning tool for child welfare and Part C agencies (2003) provides the following as essential to successful collaboration:

- **Recognition and Definition:** there must be a shared recognition on the part of all involved of the need for collaboration as well as a shared definition of the meaning of the partnership.
- **Clear Concrete Goals:** the basis of any successful collaboration comes from everyone involved understanding the objectives as described.
 - Collaboration must be seen as being mutually beneficial.
 - Reasons for collaboration must be clear
 - Costs—such as time spent in meetings must be seen as outweighing the perceived costs—time lost, for example.
- **Formal structures:** these are necessary in order to stabilize collaborations
- **Effective informal relationships:** these are considered as important as the formal structures. Role clarification, trust development, anxiety sharing, conflict resolution and identification of resources and needs can all benefit from the informal relationship-building process.
- **Policies and Procedures:** Once guiding principles are established, staff must know and understand what is expected of them by their own learning centre, and what they can expect from service agencies.
- **Shared responsibility:** one organization cannot be perceived as being dominant in the partnership.
- **Coordination mechanism:** Skills and resources found within a collaborative process are used appropriately when there is a mechanism for coordinating the responsibilities of the partnership.

5.6 [Potential problems/barriers to successful collaboration](#)

People-centered organizations operate within established regulations and parameters. If the agency is government-supported in any way, then there is a specific set of policies and rules in place; by law, by regulation, by policy, by budget, by past experience. For staff at an adult learning centre who are strongly pro-learner, Morrison's (1993) identification of potential obstacles is worthy of note:

- **Unique Agency Structures and Systems.** All agencies have unique histories, cultures, and priorities. Expectations about responsibility, accountability, and supervision vary greatly across agency lines.
- **Selective communication.** Information is power, and the sharing of that information can be threatening to one or more groups in a collaborative process.
- **Perceived differences in Status and Power.** There is a sense of real and perceived power based on type of employment, professional training, occupational status, as well as the "usual suspects" of gender, race, class, language and public image. These issues must be considered as threats to successful collaboration.
- **Conflicting professional and organizational priorities.** Conflicting commitments, diverse professional perspectives and different past professional experiences all make identifying collaborative priorities difficult.

5.7 [The authentically-connected referral network](#)

“Building an integrated service model based on community partners must begin from the clients’ base, taking into account their values, and building on the strengths of their culture to create referrals that are appropriate and effective for their particular needs . . . True collaboration is a higher order of referral than either cooperation or coordination. *Referral* is a term that is used to mean many different things. Whereas a traditional referral is unidirectional (e.g., the client is sent for services to an outside agency), an authentically connected referral network is multidirectional (See Figure 1) and incorporates the ideals of collaborative relationships, accountability, cultural competence, client-centered services, and holistic assessment” (ncbi.nih.gov)

Figure 1: Characteristics of Authentically Connected Referral Networks

- Multiple agencies work as equal partners with each other and with the client; referring agencies make the initial contact to the referral source and keep abreast of client progress.
- Clients and agencies have mutual responsibility and trust; interagency accountability and data sharing exists.
- Communication mechanisms for timely information dissemination are accessible to all agencies and stakeholders.
- The full range of stakeholders is identified, including local community services, and feedback is elicited from all of them.
- Relationships among providers are collaborative and flexible in the assumption of multiple job tasks related to client needs.
- The network is client-, vision-, and mission-driven.
- Change and growth of the referring organization are demonstrated as a result of the referral process; dynamic network.
- The network is open to new paradigms, approaches, use of technology on behalf of clients (e.g., electronic portfolios), and individualization of client treatment plans and services.
- There is ongoing provider training and involvement in continuing education and staff development.
- Shared assessment of network effectiveness is ongoing.
- Cross-training of staff among collaborating agencies is ongoing.
- Accountability is results- and progress-based, with interagency negotiation of shared outcomes.
- The referral process is concurrent.

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5.8 [Workshops in the Community](#)

For Adult Learners

All adult learners have the desire for advancement in further education, employment, and training. The ALC or ALP can assist by networking with Employment Assistance Services for workshops in work-related topics, providing advertising/additional information, space if needed, and even blending parts of the workshops into course content.

Workshops could include:

- Employment readiness [including how to search for a job, résumé and cover letter writing]
- Career decision making
- Life Skills/Employment Maintenance
- Basic Employment Readiness Workshops

5.9 [Components of any committee](#)

There are eight components to all successful committees:

- 1 A mandate or purpose.
 - a. This should be presented in the form of a statement that sets parameters.
- 2 Membership.
 - a. This should include the number of members, their responsibilities/accountabilities.
 - b. The terms of office should be clear. No one wants to be a member of anything for life.
 - c. Length of assignment to the committee
 - d. The number of representatives per organization
 - e. Guidelines for expansion
 - f. Process for establishing sub-committees if necessary
 - g. Guidelines for termination or replacement of members, dependent on the formality of the committee.
 - h. Appointment/recruitment/nomination
 - i. This depends entirely on the formality of the committee. At the very formal level, a committee can be mandated with set meetings and paid per diems. The most informal committee is one that is self-created by people with common interests who get together regularly to exchange information.

3 Meetings

- a. It is essential that the frequency of meetings be identified, understood, and accepted by all members of any committee. ⁸
 - i. There is no such thing as a meeting for meeting's sake.
 - ii. Depending on the formality of the committee, it may be necessary to determine
 - Substitution of members
 - Quorum for voting
 - Operating procedures
 - Rules of order

4 Reporting

- a. Representatives of agencies will have some form of reporting back to their own, usually in an informal manner.

5 Code of conduct for committee members

- a. Professional conduct is standard.
 - i. Members of a committee must treat information confidentially.
 - ii. It is possible in a formal committee that a conflict of interest may arise.

6 Evaluation or review of activities/achievements

- a. Members of a committee must have a sense of "doing something positive", or the committee's purpose will begin to fade.
- b. Members will have to be accountable to their own agencies.

⁸ See *Meetings, Bloody Meetings* by John Cleese at <http://www.rctm.com/5618.htm?mediaid=1>

7 Committee Support

a. Administrative support. Someone has to

i. Call the meetings

ii. Keep records or minutes

iii. Arrange for meeting space and refreshments

8 Program support

b. Each meeting must be chaired

c. Each meeting must have an agenda

d. Guest speakers, if desired, must be contacted and planned for in whatever way necessary

6.0 [References](#)

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