

Ministry of Training, Colleges
and Universities

Ministère de la Formation et des
Collèges et Universités

Programs Branch

Direction des programmes

Mowat Block, 23rd Floor
900 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1L2

Édifice Mowat, 23^e étage
900, rue Bay
Toronto (Ontario)
M7A 1L2



MEMORANDUM TO: Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Service Providers and Support Organisations including Regional Networks

FROM: Jen Liptrot
Director, Programs Branch
Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

DATE: January 7, 2016

SUBJECT: Update on the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program Evaluation

OBJECTIVE

This is to provide an update on the LBS program evaluation and request stakeholders' participation in the upcoming evaluation consultations.

Update on the LBS Evaluation

As [announced](#) in October 2015, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) is undertaking an evaluation of the LBS program, and has hired an independent evaluation firm, Cathexis Consulting Inc., to conduct this evaluation.

At this time, all evaluation planning work has been completed, and the evaluation field work will commence in January 2016.

In early January, MTCU will e-mail notices about upcoming evaluation consultations to all LBS support organisations and service providers. E-mail and mail notices will also be sent to a representative sample of past LBS and e-Channel learners.

Following MTCU's notices, Cathexis will contact stakeholders to invite them to participate in evaluation consultations.

Upcoming Evaluation Consultations

Over the next few months, the following evaluation consultations will take place:

1. Key informant interviews with LBS support organisations and service providers

January 2016

The intent of the key informant interviews with LBS support organisations is to understand the services and support they are providing, how community needs are identified and responded to, and their perspectives on the leadership of LBS by MTCU. All LBS support organisations will be invited to participate in the key informant interviews.

The intent of the interviews with LBS service providers is to understand what supports they are receiving and still need, the impact of key changes to the program, including introduction of the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF), accuracy and usefulness of reporting requirements, and their perspective on MTCU's leadership of LBS program.

The consultant will invite a group of eight service providers, who have been randomly selected from each region, stream and sector. To guarantee the interviewees' confidentiality, the consultant will provide the Ministry with aggregated interview findings without disclosing the names of service providers participating in the interviews.

It is important to note that this small number of interviews is not the only way service providers will be included in the evaluation. An online survey will be distributed to all service providers. Also, the consultant will conduct in-person consultation visits with a group of service providers across the province.

2. Interviews with representatives of community services and education/post-secondary programs

January 2016

During the month of January, the consultant will conduct interviews with community service and education/post-secondary program representatives in different regions and communities.

The intent of the interviews with these organisations is to understand how partners work with the LBS support and delivery network.

MTCU requested LBS regional networks to provide lists of community partners outside of the LBS delivery network, who work closely with the LBS service providers in the context of regional planning and service coordination, as well as learner referrals in and out of the LBS and provision of wrap-around supports to learners.

3. Survey of LBS service providers

January 2016

The intent of the LBS service provider survey is to understand service providers' delivery challenges and successes, as well as their unique perspectives of the LBS program, the OALCF, and the effectiveness of the LBS program in supporting learners to complete their goal paths, gain competencies, and improve their outcomes.

4. LBS learner surveys

January – February 2016

The consultant will conduct two surveys, the LBS learner survey and e-Channel learner survey.

The intent of the surveys is to capture in-depth information about perceptions, expectations, experiences of learners with the LBS program and its delivery.

The LBS learner survey will be conducted by telephone with options to complete in the official language of choice, as well as in alternate formats (i.e., Braille, online, mail, TTY, Skype, ALS interpreter support). The e-Channel learner survey will be conducted online.

5. In-person consultation visits to service provider sites

January – March 2016

The consultant will conduct 15 - 20 in-person consultation visits to service provider sites across the province.

The intent of the in-person consultation visits is to understand the alignment of service delivery with components of the OALCF, with a focus on information and referral processes and materials, and learner assessment practices and processes.

The service providers were selected randomly to represent all sectors, streams and regions of the LBS network.

6. LBS learner discussion groups or interviews

January – March 2016

The consultant will conduct discussion groups and interviews with current LBS and e-Channel learners.

The intent of the discussion groups and interviews with the learners is to understand the types of activities they have done in the program and what is and is not working well.

The consultant will work in collaboration with service providers to select a discussion group or interview format based on their knowledge and expertise related to their learners.

BACKGROUND

The Ministry is undertaking an evaluation of the LBS program, and requests that LBS service providers and support organizations participate in the upcoming evaluation consultations.

The evaluation is expected to be completed in summer 2016.

Evaluation findings will be used to inform continuous improvement of the LBS program.

NEXT STEPS

Beginning January 2016, Cathexis will contact LBS support organisations and service providers to request participation in the evaluation consultations. While participation is voluntary, input is critical for the evaluation.

Responses will remain confidential and will not be attributed to any individual or organization in any reports that result from this study.

For additional information please contact Jasur Teshaev, Program Evaluation Coordinator, at Jasur.Teshaev@ontario.ca or (416) 325-4570.

Thank you for supporting this very important evaluation.