

**QUALITY PROTECTS ACTION PLAN**

**Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut – 2014**  
*Follow-up Report on Child and Family Services in Nunavut – Department of Family Services*

**QUALITY  
PROTECTS  
ACTION PLAN**

**UPDATE TO THE STANDING  
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC  
ACCOUNTS, INDEPENDENT  
OFFICERS AND OTHER  
ENTITIES –  
February 2017**

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### Executive Summary:

The Quality Protects Action Plan was developed by the Department of Family Services to respond to the six recommendations made in the Auditor General's 2014 *Follow-up Report on Child and Family Services in Nunavut*. These recommendations address concerns related to staff recruitment/retention, training for frontline workers, case management, data collection, and community engagement.

This update to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, Independent Officers and Other Entities reports on the progress of the Quality Protects Action Plan, and demonstrates the Department's accomplishments in a number of areas. Most notably, the Department has fully addressed the Auditor General's recommendations relating to workforce management, compliance with key standards, and collecting and sharing basic data regarding children in care. Although many recommendations have been addressed and are marked complete within this report, the Auditor General's recommendations continue to shape the long-term priorities for the Department.

The Department is pleased to report on its progress in increasing parental and community engagement. As demonstrated in the Update, the Department has developed partnerships with community resources and programs to expand its capacity in parental and community engagement. Although the Department has achieved key action items within this area, the Department will continue to explore ways to work collaboratively with parents and build positive partnerships in communities.

The Department of Family Services identifies the Auditor General's recommendations as priorities. As such, the Department will continue to provide biannual updates to Standing Committee until all action items in the Quality Protects Action Plan are complete.

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OAG Recommendation	Department's Response	Action Item	Status	Next Steps	Timeframe
<b>Workforce Management</b>					
<p><b>Recommendation 23:</b>                      In keeping with its previous commitment, the Department of Family Services should build on its work to date and continue to collaborate with the Department of Finance and the regions to ensure that community social service worker positions are filled with permanent staff in all communities. In doing so, the Department of Family Services should monitor vacancies and staffing activity and should address any systemic recruitment and retention issues that affect its ability to sustain capacity.</p>	Agreed. The Department will work with the appropriate government departments to address any barriers to recruitment and retention of community social services workers and supervisors. In particular, these efforts will focus on ensuring that there is appropriate office space, staff housing units and appropriate timeliness associated with the staffing process.	23.1 <sup>1</sup>	Complete	The Department of Family Services has not yet received a seat on the Housing Allocation Committee. However, issues related to frontline CSSWs receiving staff housing have been resolved and the Department is monitoring the housing allocation closely.	
	The Department is working with Nunavut Arctic College to review the Human Services Program to ensure that the program results in graduates who are employable in positions with the Department.	23.2	Complete		
	In the short term, the Department will develop a system to monitor vacancies and staffing activity. This will help the Department to identify whether additional efforts are required to sustain capacity.	23.3	Complete		

<sup>1</sup> A complete list of Action Items and associated descriptions can be found in Appendix A.

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<p><b>Recommendation 27:</b>                      The Department of Family Services should set and monitor workload standards and take steps to ensure that these standards are met.</p>	<p>Agreed. Over the short term, the Department will continue its work to develop workload standards for both generic and standardized caseloads in keeping with recognized best practice standards (where available) and scope of practice within Nunavut. This will entail a review of other provincial/territorial child welfare programs to determine current standards and other relevant professional bodies and associations regarding caseload standards for defined areas of practice.</p>	27.1	Complete		
		27.2	Complete		
		27.3	In progress	The Department is revising the Child and Family Services Standards and Procedures Manual. The revisions will provide greater clarity around the standards and procedures, and give CSSWs tools to better manage their workloads. CSSWs will have an opportunity to review the revised manual and provide feedback. In addition, the Department is undertaking a workload measures project to help identify and implement realistic workloads.	The draft manual will be completed by March 2017. Consultation with CSSWs will follow and the manual is expected to be finalized by Fall 2017.

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<p><b>Recommendation 35:</b>                      The Department of Family Services should track the community social service workers who receive or require statutory training and establish a regular training schedule, to ensure that everyone who needs training completes the program in a timely manner.</p>	Agreed. The Department has worked on updating and improving its mandatory training program with the intention of offering it to all community social workers as required.	35.1	Complete		
	Over the short term, the Department will improve its current tracking system of all community social services workers and their training to capture information such as dates of training completed and types of training completed. The tracking system will include a follow-up system to identify if an individual requires additional training.	35.2	Complete		
	Further, the Department will immediately establish a detailed learning plan process to ensure that all required competencies are met for community social services workers to receive a child protection worker appointment.	35.3	Complete		

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<b>Compliance with Key Standards</b>					
<p><b>Recommendation 50:</b>                      The Department of Family Services should ensure compliance with standards established for case file management, facility inspections, foster home reviews, and the Director's annual audit. In doing so, it should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Ensure that staff, supervisors, and management are accountable for non-compliance with standards; and</li> <li>-Use the results of the existing control processes, such as case audits by supervisors, to take corrective action on deficiencies and to follow-up on whether these deficiencies have been addressed.</li> </ul>	Agreed. Over the short term, the Department will provide a case file standards training program for all supervisory staff, and revise the appropriate Children and Family Services Standards and Procedures Manual to ensure that non-compliance is addressed within the performance appraisal system.	50.1	Complete		
	The Department will establish a random file audit schedule to be implemented at both regional and headquarters offices in the medium term. The findings from these audits will be used to take corrective action in order to address non-compliance with standards.	50.2	Complete		
		50.3	Complete		
		50.4	In progress	A Request for Proposals (RFP) for a case management program has been advertised. Once the RFP is closed, a committee will review the proposals to select a system that will meet the needs of Nunavummiut and the GN.	Award of the RFP is expected to occur by the beginning of FY 2017/18, and the system is expected to be operational by the end of FY 2018/19.

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<b>Basic Information on Children in Care</b>					
<b>Recommendation 57:</b> The Department of Family Services should ensure the timely and consistent collection and sharing of basic information about the children in its care by closely monitoring community reporting and taking corrective follow-up action as required.	Agreed. Over the short term, the Department will ensure that all basic information about children in care is included in the headquarters tracking system being developed. Headquarters will actively follow up with regions who fail to report according to standards.	57.1	Complete		
	The Department will work to secure resources to implement a client information system across Nunavut in the medium term.	57.2	Complete	See Action 50.4 for Next Steps.	See Action 50.4 for Timeframe.

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<b>Community Engagement and Input</b>					
<b>Recommendation 63:</b> As we recommended in our 2011 audit, the Department of Family Services should actively engage parents and communities in developing strategies for keeping children safe. These strategies should include specific actions, timelines, and resources to address challenges in their communities.	Agreed. Over the short term the Department will expand its regional reporting system to include information on services, activities and resources to support child safety through parental engagement and community development.	63.1	Complete		
	In the medium term, the Department will review and expand the current training resources available to staff to promote parental engagement and community development work.	63.2	Complete		
		63.3	Complete <sup>2</sup>	In collaboration with the Ilisaqsivik Society, the Department is delivering Parenting and Community Engagement Training for CSSWs.	Training sessions will begin Winter 2017.
				The Department is providing funding to the Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre to deliver four training sessions of its Inunnguiniq Parenting Facilitator Training Program.	The training sessions are expected to be complete by March 2017.

<sup>2</sup> While community engagement is ongoing in the Department of Family Services, the status of this action item reflects complete because key actions, which will ensure increased and sustained community and parental engagement, have been accomplished. For example, the Inunnguiniq Parenting and Child Development Working Group was established under the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. The Working Group, with representatives from Inuit Organizations, not-for-profit organizations, and multiple GN Departments, will work to support and strengthen community initiatives to revitalize inunnguiniq practices. This directly addresses Recommendation 63 and as such, for the purposes of this report, the action item is marked complete.



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#### Appendix A

**Recommendation 23:** In keeping with its previous commitment, the Department of Family Services should build on its work to date and continue to collaborate with the Department of Finance and the regions to ensure that community social service worker positions are filled with permanent staff in all communities. In doing so, the Department of Family Services should monitor vacancies and staffing activity and should address any systemic recruitment and retention issues that affect its ability to sustain capacity.

**Action Item 23.1:** Improve recruitment, training, and retention of staff.

**Action Item 23.2:** Establish interdepartmental committee to work with Nunavut Arctic College to review Social Services Worker Program.

**Action Item 23.3:** Develop a tracking system to monitor vacancies and staff activity.

**Recommendation 27:** The Department of Family Services should set and monitor workload standards and take steps to ensure that these standards are met.

**Action Item 27.1:** Gather current caseload data from all regions within Nunavut.

**Action Item 27.2:** Conduct interjurisdictional review to gather child welfare workload information to enable Department to develop workload standards.

**Action Item 27.3:** Amend the Child and Family Services Standards and Procedures Manual.

**Recommendation 35:** The Department of Family Services should track the community social service workers who receive or require statutory training and establish a regular training schedule, to ensure that everyone who needs training completes the program in a timely manner.

**Action Item 35.1:** Revise and implement training program.

**Action Item 35.2:** Expand tracking system for statutory appointment to include types of training received and dates of completion.

**Action Item 35.3:** Amend processes and standards to ensure training dates and competencies are regularly collected.

**Recommendation 50:** The Department of Family Services should ensure compliance with standards established for case file management, facility inspections, foster home reviews, and the Director's annual audit. In doing so, it should: a) Ensure that staff, supervisors, and management are accountable for non-compliance with standards; and b) Use the results of the existing control processes, such as case audits by supervisors, to take corrective action on deficiencies and to follow-up on whether these deficiencies have been addressed.

**Action Item 50.1:** Establish a case file standards training program and review standards to ensure clear accountabilities for compliance with case management.

**Action Item 50.2:** Review and revise current regional file audit process, schedule and reporting. Expand tracking system for statutory appointment to include types of training received and dates of completion.

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**Action Item 50.3:** Establish an annual schedule of audits for HQ to complete in each region.

**Action Item 50.4:** Implement a Client Information System (CIS) that monitors case documentation and compliance performance for each client served.

**Recommendation 57:** The Department of Family Services should ensure the timely and consistent collection and sharing of basic information about the children in its care by closely monitoring community reporting and taking corrective follow-up action as required.

**Action Item 57.1:** Establish a manual Child in Care Tracking system for HQ to gather information on all children in care.

**Action Item 57.2:** Prepare a Business Case to establish a client information database.

**Recommendation 63:** As we recommended in our 2011 audit, the Department of Family Services should actively engage parents and communities in developing strategies for keeping children safe. These strategies should include specific actions, timelines, and resources to address challenges in their communities.

**Action Item 63.1:** Expand the monthly regional reporting system to include more information on staff engagement work in the community.

**Action Item 63.2:** Consult with staff to determine what additional training is required in order to support expanded practice in community development, parenting support, and early intervention.

**Action Item 63.3:** Examine community resource programs currently working in Nunavut and develop expanded working relationships.