



STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SERVICES IN BC

Learning from organizations and people with lived experience

August 2026

Territorial Acknowledgement

Today's Conversation



The what



The why



The how (Questions for discussion)

Engagement Goals and Objectives

PURPOSE

Understand how people experience social services and identify practical opportunities to improve coordination across programs, providers and ministries.

The engagement builds on existing reports, engagement findings, and internal/external partner feedback. It will deepen understanding of real navigation experiences and where the system helps or gets in the way.

Engagement Goals and Objectives

Core focus areas

1

People's experience

Hear from people with lived experience, direct service workers, and service providers about what it feels like to navigate access to and transitions between social service programs

2

Service connections

Understand where and how people interact with multiple programs and structural elements that shape coordination and hand-offs.

3

System friction

Map what is working today, where barriers show up, and what enables better referrals and information sharing.

4

Practical improvement

Identify changes that reduce duplication, streamline process, and help staff provide more coordinated service.

Inputs to include

People with lived experience • Direct service workers • Internal staff • Service delivery agencies • Sector partners • Indigenous leadership and service organizations • Leading practices from B.C., Canada, and internationally

Why are we doing this

We have already received feedback through previous reports, reviews and engagements and you. All of these share similar findings. They conclude that the social services in B.C. are fragmented, difficult to navigate and poorly connected, particularly when moving between programs, ministries or life stages.

Examples of Current System Challenges



MEET ALEX

Alex is 17 and has intellectual disabilities. As they prepare to transition from youth to adult services, there's no dedicated navigator available, and the family is experiencing confusion and concern due to limited available government support.



MEET MARIA

Maria is a single parent and their housing at risk because of a financial hardship; they aren't sure whether to start with income assistance or housing supports.

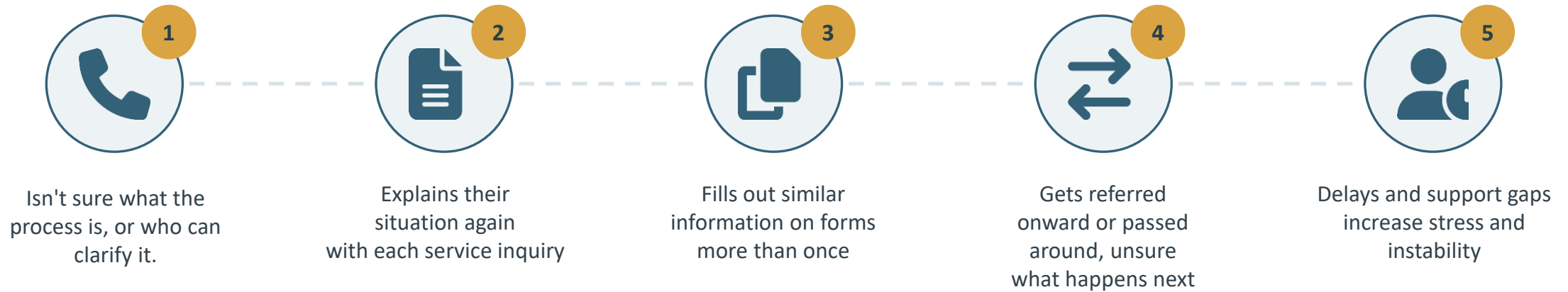


MEET JORDAN

Jordan is 16, in care, and managing mental health and substance use challenges. Moving to adult supports means housing, income assistance, health, and education services each through a different ministry.

A Familiar Pattern Across Experiences

Good programs exist, but the experience of moving between them is still hard.



This isn't about broken organizations or failing staff, many programs do great work individually. The opportunity is to make things easier for people and staff by closing the gaps, simplifying processes, and reducing the need to find workarounds.

Near-Term Opportunities and Future Vision

NEAR-TERM FOCUS

Practical changes that make an impact in the day-to-day and are building blocks to realize the longer-term vision:

- Make existing services easier to find and apply for
- Empower direct service staff to learn about and connect people to available supports
- Improve information sharing, reduce duplication and strengthen coordination between organizations and programs
- Reduce unnecessary administrative steps that add burden and take time away from what matters

LONGER-TERM VISION

Over time, services become organized around people's needs and life events, not organizational structures.

- Integrated access to services meaning fewer doors, handoffs and repeated processes
- Services wrapped around people rather than programs
- Shifting from crisis-driven responses to earlier intervention that improves long-term outcomes
- Community-based services are well supported to provide responsive and locally-informed support

We want to partner with organizations on the **HOW**

Your experience and the experience of the people you serve helps us deepen understanding of the challenges and help identify and prioritize potential action. Organizations are essential partners in shaping how those changes could work in practice.

Today's Conversation: Four Questions to Guide Us

1. WHERE IT'S HARDEST TODAY

Where should government focus first to reduce people's effort and improve service navigation?

2. WHAT'S ALREADY WORKING

What do you think is the most important consideration for better organizing programs and services around people?

3. WHAT WOULD HELP MOST

What 1-2 changes would most reduce duplication, administrative burden and challenges in navigating services?

4. WHAT TO PROTECT

What should government be careful not to disrupt or overlook as it considers opportunities to improve service coordination and navigation?

Engagement Timelines

