Community-Based Research Project

The *Evidence for Community Employment Services: A Collaborative Regional Approach* Research Project led by the Collective Interchange Co-operative and Canadian Career Development Foundation is one of eight research projects funded to date by the NL Workforce Innovation Centre (NLWIC). NLWIC was established by the provincial government at CNA in 2017 to promote and support the research, testing and sharing of **ideas** and models of **innovation** for workforce development that will positively **impact** employability and employment in the province. Funding is provided by the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour under the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement and NLWIC is administered by College of the North Atlantic. Visit nlwic.ca.

Evidence for Community Employment Services:
A Collaborative Regional Approach

About CCDF

- Non-profit established in 1980
- Small core staff and network of associates and trainers
- Bridging practice, research and policy in order to strengthen all 3
  - Policy
  - Research & Development
  - Capacity Building
- Promoting the value of career development to individuals, employers, communities and governments
- Canadian Council for Career Development (3CD)

It Takes a Community

- Newfoundland and Labrador Workforce Innovation Centre, CNA
  - Newfoundland and Labrador Research and Innovation (NLRI) Program
  - Funding provided by the Department of Advanced Education and Skills (AESL) under the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador LMDA Agreement
- GGI – data analysis
- ARMS – technical support, running reports
- CEC – liaison, coordination
- Collective Interchange Co-op
- CCDF – research protocols, implementation
- **YOU, your organizations and clients** – ensuring the project is meaningful, relevant and doable, advising on content and process, data collection…the heart and soul of this project

Who Should Benefit from a Data Management System?

- Governments
  - need to know their investments are working
- Practitioners
  - need to know that what they are doing is making a difference
- Clients
  - need to be engaged to make change happen; engagement is the #1 indicator of client outcomes (1100 research findings, Norcross, J (2000); The Therapeutic Relationship)

Our Community-Based Research Project

- This project builds on several years of research projects in Canada and internationally

- It all started when a federal funder said…*"Your field hasn't made the case and you'll always be fragile until you can do that."*

- Canadian Working Group for Evidence-Based Practice & International Research Working Group

Series of Canadian Research Studies Looking at...

- What happens when you do the front end assessment of client strengths/needs consistently and comprehensively?

- What impact – what REAL CHANGE – results from our services?

- What impact does better tracking and reporting of progress and outcomes have on
  - Front-line practitioners and our work?
  - The clients' experience?
  - The overall effectiveness of the service system?

Why Action Research?

- Importance of doing research with real practitioners, working with real clients in real delivery settings

- Importance of rigour in building our evidence base

Study #1: The Impact of LMI

Study #1: The Impact of LMI

- Although millions of dollars have been spent on producing LMI, there was virtually no evidence of its impact on users

- It was unclear:

  - How people actually use LMI

  - What (if any) assistance would be helpful

Study #1: The Impact of LMI

RESEARCH QUESTION:

- If client needs are assessed and clients are given LMI consistent with their needs… to what extent are client outcomes different if they receive assistance from a service provider versus using LMI independently (self-help)?

RESEARCH PARTNERS:

- Diverse service providers in SK and NB

Study #1: The Impact of LMI

METHODOLOGY:

- All practitioners were trained in how to conduct a needs assessment using the Employability Dimensions

- Tailored LMI booklets were prepared (CDM and WS)

- All participants in the study:
  - Participated in a needs assessment interview with a trained practitioner
  - Received an LMI package specific to their identified employability need
  - Were randomly assigned to either a self- directed or an assisted group
  - Were given an orientation to the Resource Centre which they could freely use on their own

Study #1: The Impact of LMI

METHODOLOGY continued:

The self-directed clients:

- worked independently for 3 weeks, making use of the materials and the Resource Centre

The assisted clients received:

- two additional AIS (Advice and Information) interviews (20-30 minutes) in weeks 1 and 3 focused on helping them understand, interpret and apply the LMI to their own situations and /or access additional LMI

All clients returned in Week 4 for their exit interview

Study #1: The Impact of LMI

WHAT WE MEASURED (pre-post-pre):

General ability to use LMI

Knowledge

- Clear vision of what I want in my career future
- Knowledge of print and online resources

Skill

- Have effective strategies for keeping myself motivated
- Have a realistic action plan

Personal Attributes

- Optimism about what lies ahead re meeting my career goals
- Confidence in my ability to manage future career transitions

Study #1: The Impact of LMI

RESULTS (Readers' Digest Version!):

1. All intervention-delivery combinations produced significant change

   General ability to access and use LMI

   Knowledge about how to use LMI

   Skills for using LMI and taking action

   Personal attributes, e.g., optimism, confidence, and by inference, motivation

2. Assisted use produced greater change across time than independent use

3. 80% of clients attribute change to the program and not other factors

Study #2: The Impact of Career Resources

- Same methodology as Study #1 (just 4 weeks of intervention), but…
  - Included 4 Employability Dimensions
  - Developed tailored career development workbooks for each Dimension (beyond LMI to reflection and personal integration)
  - Assisted group got "regular" service (but with the option to use the Workbook in and between sessions)

Study #2: The Impact of Career Resources

RESEARCH QUESTION:
If client needs are assessed and clients are given career development resources/tools consistent with their needs... to what extent are client outcomes different if they receive assistance from a service provider versus using the career resources independently (self-help)?

RESEARCH PARTNERS:

Diverse service providers in AB and MB

Study #2: The Impact of Career Resources

RESULTS:

- Statistically and clinically significant positive impact across ALL sub-scores and across ALL employability dimensions

- Many clients can benefit significantly from self-help resources when they are matched to their need and they are "launched" – more so than we anticipated!

- This is especially noteworthy given the short intervention period of 4 weeks and the "real-life" setting in which the changes occurred

Study #3: Common Indicators/PRIME

Although our "evidence base" was growing, we had a lot of isolated studies showing isolated positive results. We could never pool the results because each study was using different "indicators" of client change.

Study #3: Common Indicators/PRIME

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- What common indicators are applicable across different client contexts, different client groups, different agencies, and different interventions?

- What statements can be made about service effectiveness by tracking common indicators? Ultimate question: What kinds of interventions in what contexts produce what kinds of outcomes?

RESEARCH PARTNERS:

Diverse service providers in SK, NB and PQ

Study #3: Common Indicators/PRIME

METHODOLOGY:

- Worked with front-line practitioners, managers and funders to develop an online data management tool (PRIME)

- Practitioners trained to use PRIME to do an initial assessment of client strengths/needs, choose interventions based on strengths/needs, track client progress and outcomes

- Used PRIME with ALL clients for periods of weeks/month

Study #3: Common Indicators/PRIME

RESULTS:

- Were able to work with common indicators across diverse settings working with different client groups

- Practitioners found doing the assessment collaboratively was powerful on many levels

- Getting feedback (client, practitioner, office and organization-wide) also very powerful

Questions about earlier research?

This Project

- Phase 1 (June – November 2018): Data mining, tailoring PRIME and preparing to use PRIME

- Phase 2 (November 2018 – November 2019): Use PRIME, data collection

- Phase 3 (December 2019 – November 2020): Research report, reflection on learning and capacity building plan

Learning and Sharing

- What did we learn from Phase 1 – diving into the last 10 years' of ARMS data?

- Today is an opportunity to share our learning so far in this project – something we are keen to do at every step along the way!

Evidence for Community Employment Services:
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Data Overview

November 30 , 2018

Progress to Date

1 → **2** → **3** → **4**

1	2	3	4
Agreement between ARMS and Community Agencies to Provide Data.	ARMS Extracts all relevant data held by participating agencies and removes all personal identifiers.	ARMS provides the anonymized data to the research team for analysis.	Research team reports on analysis activities, findings, and implications for Phase II.
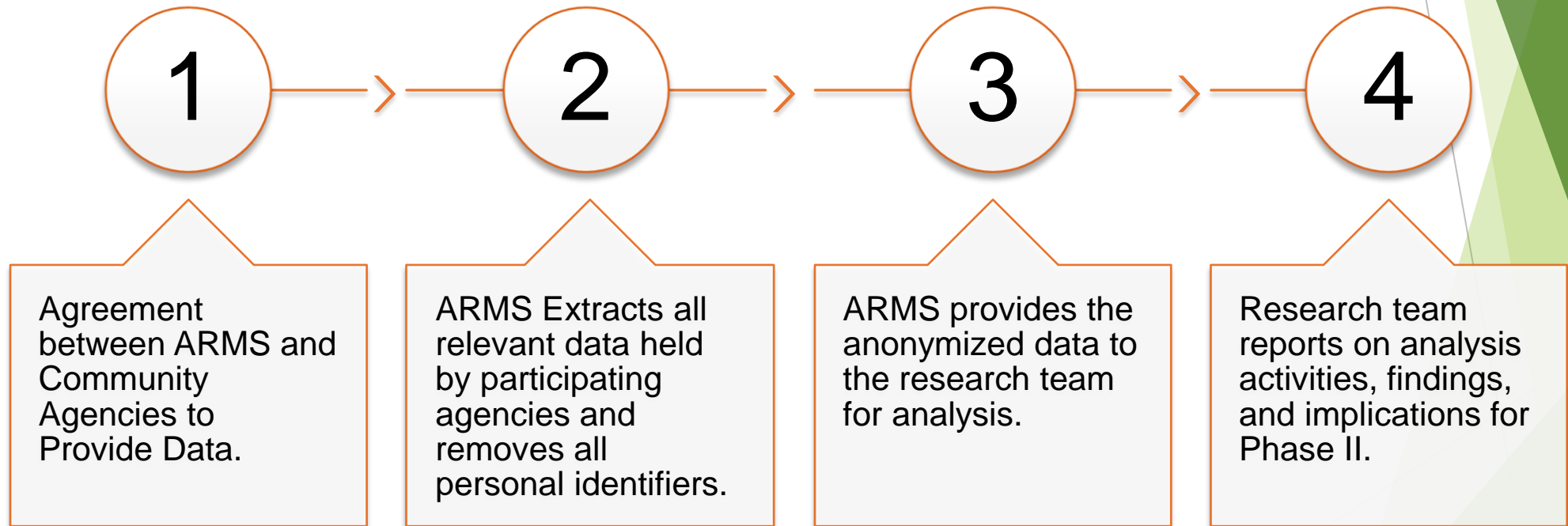
Why are we doing this?

- The main objectives of this analysis is to:
  - Thoroughly understand what data is available
  - To document the challenges and gaps with the data currently available
  - To understand why different groups of clients participate in various service offerings and why they achieve similar and different results

- Throughout this presentation we will be asking for your experience with clients to help identify the information we will need to collect with PRIME to help meet your needs

- This is also an opportunity for you to ask us how we can design PRIME to meet your needs

What data do we have?

▶ Data was extracted for all clients that had at least one intervention by a participating community agency starting between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2018

   ▶ Includes clients of six community agencies participating in the current study

   ▶ Interventions shared with the six participating agencies by community agencies not participating in the current research are included

   ▶ 24.8% of clients were served by more than one other organization, this varied across participating organizations from a low of 5.6% to a high of 70.4%

▶ The nearly half of the clients received services in more than 3 fiscal years

   ▶ For clients in 2008/2009 49.1% were clients in 3 or fewer fiscal years, nearly 30% were clients in more than 5 years.

▶ Result is a comprehensive database that covers:

   ▶ 10 fiscal years

   ▶ 107 offices

   ▶ 8,933 clients

   ▶ 100,442 interventions

   ▶ 14,485 casefiles

▶ Excludes LMDA data from June. 2013 onwards

What are the challenges?

- That's a lot of data!

- On average there were 11.3 interventions per client.

- There were over 300 different intervention codes/names.

- Clients can be receiving services over multiple years.

- Multiple interventions may contribute to a single outcome.

What have we done with this data?

▶ Created three different data files

- ▶ A database for all individual interventions

- ▶ A client level database

- ▶ A database for all casefiles – this was the focus of most of the analysis because outcomes are attached to casefiles

▶ We reduced the 300 plus intervention codes to 10 core intervention types

- ▶ Intakes and Intakes/Assessments

- ▶ Employment Services - (counseling, job search skills, resume preparation, etc.)

- ▶ Group Interventions - (e.g. short workshops and group sessions)

- ▶ Employment Interventions - Graduate Employment Program, Federal Public Sector Youth Internships, Community Coordinator – TWS, Canada Summer Jobs, etc)

- ▶ Training Interventions – (apprenticeship, certification, English or French as a second language, essential skills, generic training, specific training, Skills Link)

- ▶ Outreach Interventions

- ▶ Referrals

What have we done with this data?

- Examined changes in types of interventions provided over time
  - Focus on differences for up to 2012/2013 and post 2012/2013
  - Initial plan was to use only one year from each time period but included all years due to smaller casefile numbers for some types of interventions/combinations

- Examined groupings of interventions
  - Differences in outcomes and the profiles of clients

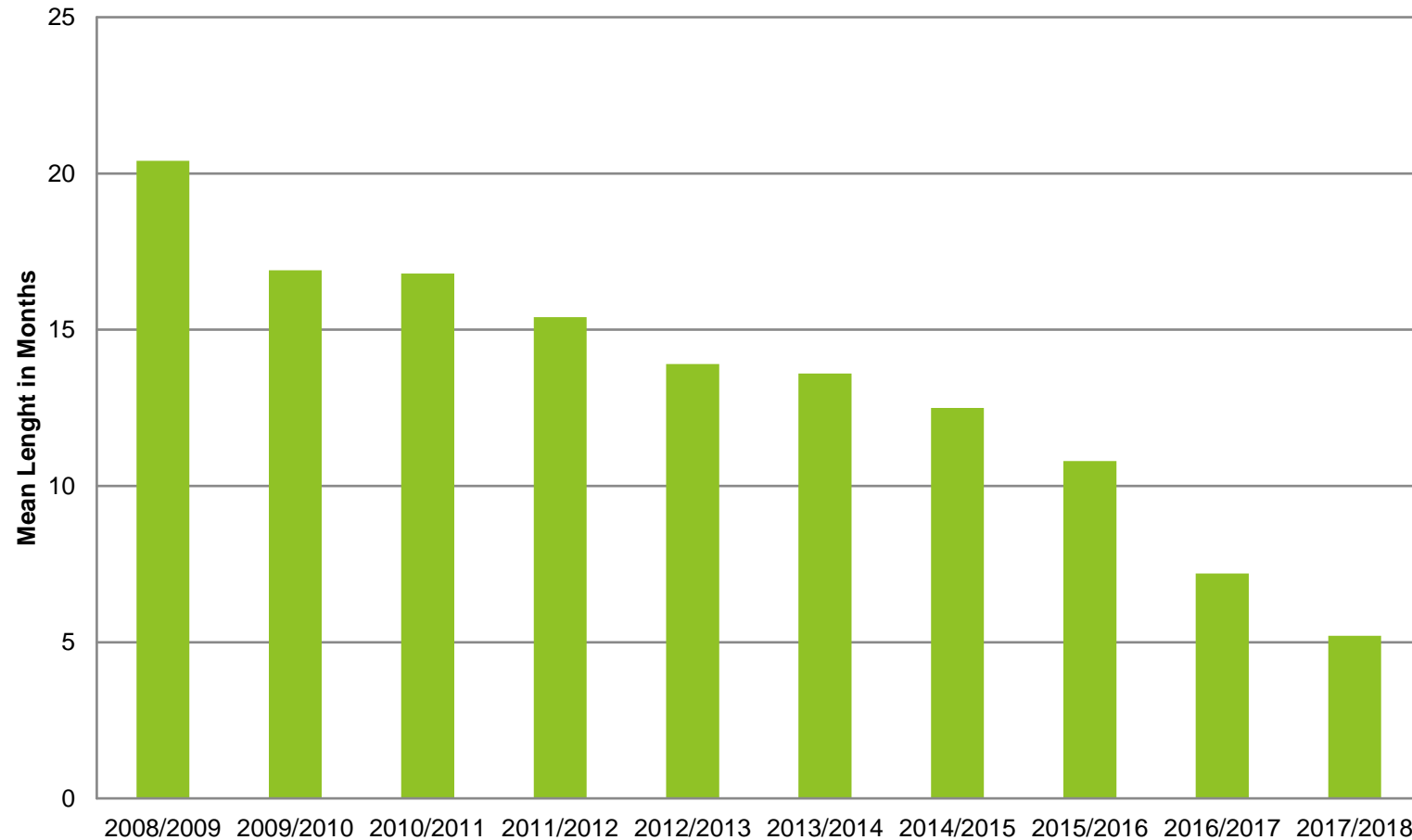- Identified gaps that can be met with PRIME

Overview of Findings

Number of Casefile Starts Over Time

Casefile Starts By Fiscal Year
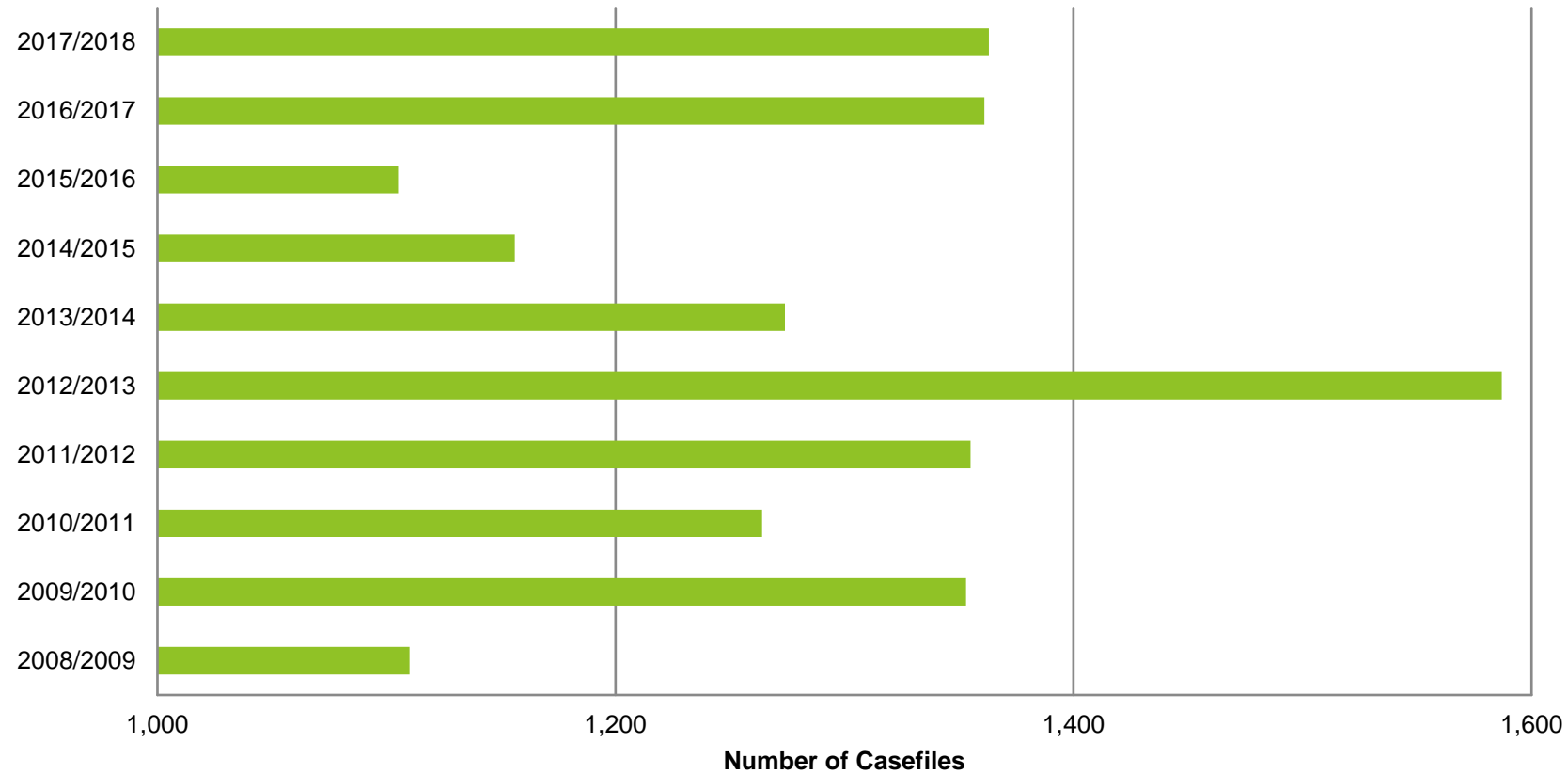
Mean Length of Casefiles Over Time
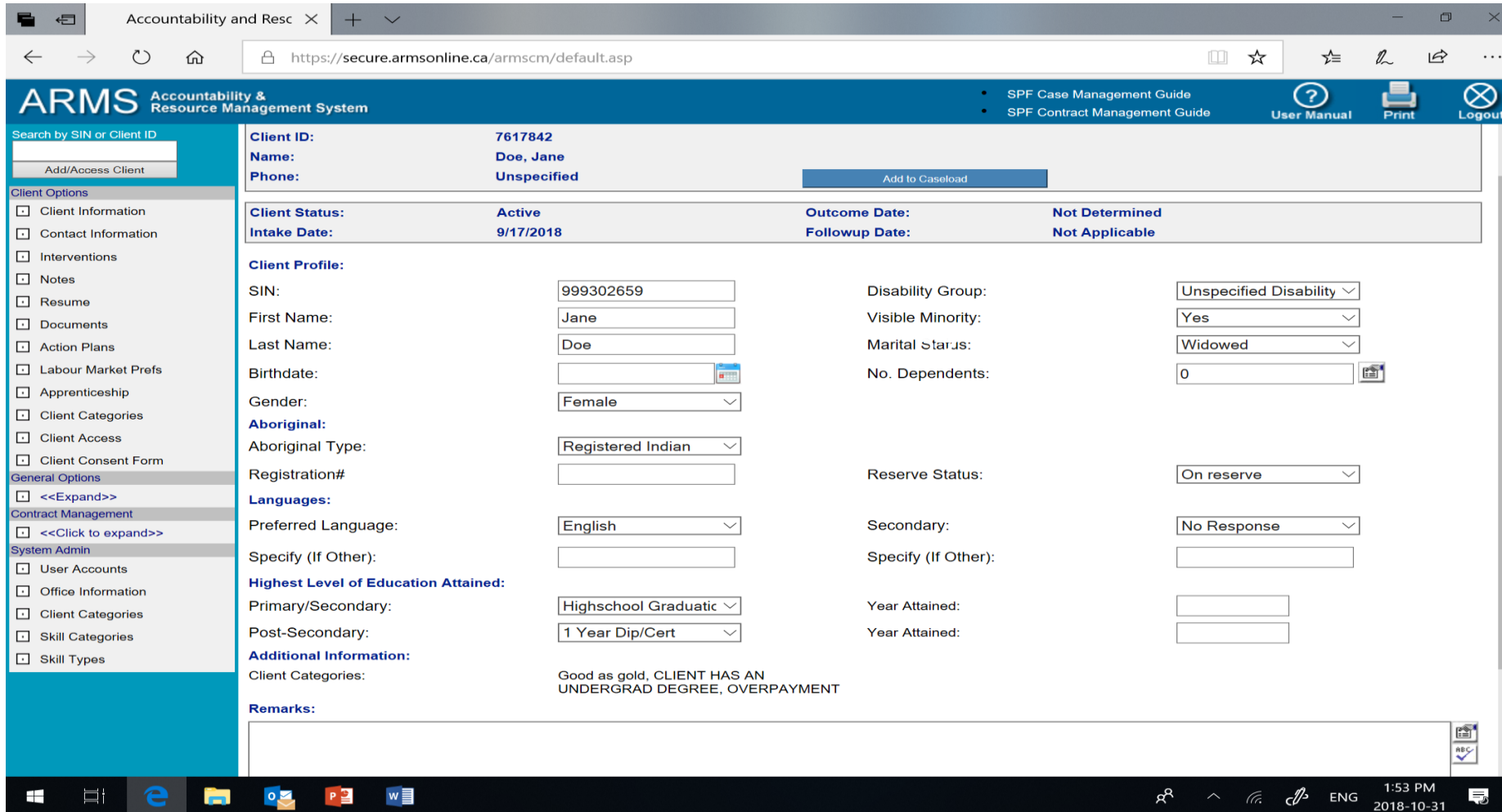
Mean Casefile Length In Months

Types of Interventions in Each Casefile

Percentage of Case Files with at Least One Intervention Type by Early and Current Fiscal Years		
	2008/2009 -2012/2013	**2013/2014 - 2017/2018**
Employment Services	89.3%	87.7%
Group Interventions	11.7%	24.5%
Employment Interventions	14.8%	14.2%
Training Interventions	25.2%	19.0%
Outreach Interventions	1.0%	2.2%
Referrals	15.9%	17.4%

Client Profile - Information Screen in ARMS

Client Profile - Findings

- The client profile below focuses on the casefiles for the most recent 5 years, key changes from the first 5 years will be noted.
  - Female clients outnumber male clients − 54.4% versus 45.6%.
  - Overall the clients are relatively young, the average age was 33.4, 45.5% under 30
    - 1 in 4 clients were under the age of 25 − 24.1%.
  - More than half of the participants were single − 52.9%, 17.5% were single parents.
  - Indigenous clients accounted for 5.5% of the clients.
  - 22.8% did not have a high school diploma.
  - The percentage of clients identifying themselves as a person with a disability more than doubled from the early fiscal years to more recent fiscal years − 15.2% versus 30.5%.
  - The largest increase was for the psychiatric category − 4.2% to 10.4%.
  - 1 in 3 clients were receiving Income Assistance − 33.4%, 19.3% were EI recipients
    - Includes overlap between IA and EI
- Profiles can vary substantially between service providers

Casefile Outcomes

Outcomes by Early and Current Fiscal Years − Unspecified and Missing Excluded		
	2008/2009 -2012/2013	**2013/2014 - 2017/2018**
Employed	80.1%	72.7%
Self-employed	1.7%	.7%
Unemployed	10.5%	12.1%
Return to School	7.2%	14.3%
No longer in the labour force	.5%	.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%
Total Case Files	3,955	2,451

Outcomes by Client Profile

▶ Single parents had outcomes similar to individuals who self-identified as a person with a disability.

  ▶ Single parents 57.2% were employed/self-employed, 24.3% were unemployed/out of the labour market and 18.5% returned to school.

  ▶ For persons with a disability 59.5% were unemployed/self-employed, 25.8% were unemployed/out of the labour market and 14.7% returned to school.

▶ Individuals who self-identified as a member of an Indigenous group had a similar percentage employed/self-employed, 72.1%, as individuals who did not, 74.4%,

  ▶ Lower return to school (8.1% compared to 14.8%)

  ▶ Higher unemployed/not in the labour force (19.8% compared to 10.8%).

▶ Clients with a university degree had higher employment/self-employment, 84.9% and the lowest unemployment/out of the labour market percentage of all client profile categories − 3.1%

▶ Clients without a high school diploma had low employment/self-employment, 57.9%, high return to school, 18.7% and high unemployment/not in the labour force, 23.4%.

▶ Clients on IA had low employment/self-employment, 58.5%, high return to school, 16.7% and high unemployment/not in the labour force, 24.7%.

  ▶ Do any of these findings surprise you?

40

What Types of Combinations of Interventions Were Used

▶ An analysis of combinations of interventions was undertaken.

▶ The resulting categories for this service typology were beginning with the grouping with the most possible combinations of interventions to the least:

  ▶ All Training Intervention- exclusions, includes all combinations with training

  ▶ Employment Interventions excluding only Training interventions

  ▶ Group Interventions excluding only Training Interventions and Employment Interventions

  ▶ Referrals excluding Group, Employment and Training interventions

  ▶ Employment Services excludes all other interventions except Intakes/Assessments

  ▶ Intakes/Assessments only

Combinations of Interventions

Percentage of Intervention Combinations for Casefiles by Early and Recent Fiscal Years		
	2008/2009 -2012/2013	**2013/2014 - 2017/2018**
Employment Services excludes all other interventions except Intakes	48.7%	42.6%
All Training Interventions no exclusions	25.2%	19.0%
Employment Interventions excludes only Training Interventions	10.5%	12.4%
Group Interventions excluding Employment and Training interventions	4.7%	11.8%
Referrals excluding Group, Employment and Training interventions	7.1%	9.0%
Only Intake/Assessment Interventions	3.7%	5.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Employment Services Only

▶ The largest segment consisting of 42.6% of the casefiles in recent fiscal years

▶ Prominent client profile features
  ▶ Second highest percentage married or equivalent – 41.0%
  ▶ Second highest percentage no dependents – 73.1%
  ▶ Second highest percentage with no disability – 75.7%
  ▶ Second highest percentage not an Income Assistance recipient – 75.5%

▶ Outcomes
  ▶ Highest employed/self-employed – 79.7%
  ▶ Slightly lower unemployed/not in LF – 9.6%
  ▶ Slightly lower return to school – 10.5%

What types of client groups do you think best benefit from only employment services?

Training Interventions

- Casefiles with Training Interventions were the second largest segment consisting of 19.0% of the casefiles in recent fiscal years
  - 91.9% Employment Services
  - 48.3% included Group Interventions, 20.0% Referrals
  - 9.6% Employment Interventions
- Longest duration – 42.0% greater than 1 year
- Prominent client profile features
  - Highest percentage females – 64.5%
  - Second highest percentage with dependents – 41.4%, slightly higher single parents – 23.9%
  - Highest percentage member of an Indigenous group – 10.4%
  - Highest percentage HS grad – 40.5%, second lowest percentage with university degree – 9.3%
  - Higher percent IA recipient – 43.6%
- Outcomes
  - Employed/self-employed similar to overall percentage – 71.8%
  - Slightly lower unemployed/not in LF – 9.7%, slightly higher return to school – 18.0%
- Question for you
  - Are females typically overrepresented in your training interventions?

Employment Interventions

- Third largest segment – 12.4% in 2013/2014 to 2017/2018
- Excludes Training Interventions but can overlap with all other interventions
  - 67.7% Employment Services (substantially lower other interventions)
  - 28.2% included Group Interventions (substantially lower than Training Interventions), 28.9% Referrals
- Prominent client profile features
  - Second highest percentage person with a disability – 46.7%
  - Highest percentage dependents – 42.5%, highest percentage single parents – 32.3%
  - Second highest percentage females – 58.9%
  - Highest percentage Income Assistance recipient – 54.2%
- Outcomes
  - Employed/self-employed similar to overall percentage – 73.3%
  - Second highest unemployed/out of LF – 17.2%, Lowest return to school – 9.5%
  - Relatively strong employment results considering nearly half of the clients reported a disability
- Question for you
  - What type of client groups do you think benefit best from Employment Interventions?

45

Group Interventions

▶ Similar in size to Employment Interventions – 11.8%

▶ Excludes casefiles with Employment Interventions and Training Interventions. Overlaps with:

  ▶ 94.3% Employment Services, 8.7% Referrals

▶ Highest percentage casefile duration over 1 year to 2 years – 30.5%

▶ Prominent client profile features

  ▶ Highest educational attainment – 56.6% have a university degree

  ▶ Highest percentage married – 43.4%, lowest percentage single parents – 5.8%

  ▶ Highest percentage without a disability – 85.6%

  ▶ Highest percentage not on IA – 82.7%

▶ Outcomes

  ▶ Employed/self-employed similar to overall percentage – 73.6%

  ▶ Lowest unemployed/not in LF – 8.0%, second highest return to school – 18.4%

▶ Question for you

  ▶ What features of Group Interventions are most useful to clients with high educational attainment?

Referrals

- Slightly smaller than the previous two groups – 9.0%

- Overlaps only with Employment Services

  - 89.2% Employment Services

- Prominent client profile features

  - Highest percentage person with a disability – 66.5%

  - Highest percentage single – 67.1%

  - Lowest levels of educational attainment – 40.4% Non-HS grad

  - Second highest percentage Income Assistance recipient – 44.8%

- Outcomes

  - Substantially lower employed/self-employed – 56.8%

  - Highest unemployed/not in LF – 21.1%

  - Highest return to school – 22.0%

- Questions for you

  - What types of client groups do you think best benefit from referrals?

What did we learn?

▶ After some fairly extensive analysis of the existing data there is one overall conclusion.

▶ We can describe a lot and explain a little.

▶ This research highlights the need for PRIME to:

　▶ Understand how clients are matched to services and who may best benefit from different types of programming;

　▶ To improve service delivery and the client experiences; and

　▶ Provide up-to-date information on results in order to meet client needs and adjust the services provided.

What can we do with the Prime data?

► Analyze how client and practitioner assessments change over time

  ► Level of agreement between client and practitioner assessments of need and progress

  ► How initial and subsequent needs assessments (client and practitioner) are related to positive labour market outcomes?

► Measure how the use of PRIME has affected the provision of services and interventions

  ► Any changes in time spent with clients, amount of follow-up and use of additional services and interventions

Phase 2: PRIME

✓ Collects and analyzes a much richer, wider range of data (initial strengths and needs, progress and outcomes)

✓ Supports quality service by providing coaching, cues, checklists and tools/resources tailored to different participant needs

✓ Can be used collaboratively with participants (avoiding the need to enter data after meeting with participants, promoting participant self-awareness and supporting a shared understanding of needs/priorities)

✓ Follows the natural process of service delivery, so can be a "companion" throughout the full service delivery cycle

✓ Is based on 6 years of research in partnership with front-line service deliverers across Canada

Phase 2: Using PRIME as Companion Across Service Delivery

✓ Initial Assessment

✓ Action Planning

✓ Update Progress

✓ Update/Extend Action Plan to Reflect Progress/Change

✓ Capture Outcomes From Beginning to End of the Journey

Next Steps

Research Partner agencies just completed 2.5 days of intensive training and are now about to jump right into Phase 2, using PRIME with every client from initial assessment all the way through to closure, capturing progress and outcomes along the way

Phase 3: December 2019-November 2020

Return to principle of learning and sharing:

- Share Research Report – what did we learn?
- Reflection on Learning & Action – What do we want to do based on that learning?

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