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Literature Review

COVID 19 Recovery & The Canadian Career Development Sector:

Impact and Recommendations for Professional Development

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LITERATURE REVIEW: COVID 19 Recovery & The Canadian Career Development Sector: Impact and Recommendations for Professional Development

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The COVID-19 pandemic tested everyone and all systems to their breaking points. Saku Pinta, in *Rising Together or Falling Apart? The Impact of One-Year of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Manitoba Working Class* (2021) rightly said, "[t]he COVID-19 pandemic is nothing short of the worst global medical disaster that humanity has faced in a century" (p. 3). Building back from this level of medical disaster is not within most of our lived experiences. No one knows, with any certainty, how to move forward to a full and equitable recovery from the pandemic. The complexity is overwhelming, and there is a common sentiment across much being written about this that knowing how to recover from this crisis is like trying to catch smoke with your bare hands, and it's not just the pandemic from which the world is trying to recover. It, coupled with the war in Ukraine, global environmental disasters, and rapidly rising inflation, have additional and significant impacts on the ability of the world to build back better. Undoubtedly, the career development sector has been and will be a crucial collaborator through this recovery period. Attending to the profession's training and mental health needs will be critical to their capacity to respond appropriately.

The literature reviewed for this paper can be categorized into two groups: sources that examined the pandemic's current and emerging socio-economic impacts and those that focused on what CDPs can do to support clients through the recovery period. Across this literature, five core concerns emerged, each with possible responses and requirements for career sector professionals. What follows is a delineation of the five issues with professional development recommendations for the career sector.

1. COVID-19 as the Great Revealer of Systemic Inequity

The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affected vulnerable populations. Racialized groups, women, youth and people with disabilities all had greater infection rates than the general population. Economically, these groups did not fare well. For example, "28% of Indigenous Peoples and 31% of racialized households lived with increased economic insecurity compared to 16% of white households" (Alook et al., 2021, p. 4). The Canadian Human Rights Commission 2020 report to Parliament, *Building Back Better*, stated that the COVID- 19 pandemic amplified inequality and expanded the circle of vulnerability.

In Manitoba, for example, 51% of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) populations were infected (Government of Manitoba, 2021). This infection rate was 1.5-fold higher than expected, "as 35% of people in Manitoba belong to a BIPOC group" (Government of Manitoba, 2021). For BIPOC individuals, intersectional systemic inequalities across race, class, and gender created a heightened risk of exposure and poorer protection from COVID-19 (Bouka & Bouka, 2020). Some of the most significant

outbreaks of COVID-19 occurred in industries (e.g., long-term health care and food and agriculture sectors) where racialized people are disproportionately employed (Bouka & Bouka, 2020). The correlation between infection and job loss rates is also well documented (Alook et al., 2021; Macpherson & Rizk, 2022; Pinta, 2021). During the pandemic, "three industries accounted for 80% of job losses in Canada: accommodation and food services; information, culture, and recreation; and wholesale and retail trade" (Alook et al., 2021, p. 4). In all these industries, racialized workers are over-represented; thus, their risk for unemployment was staggeringly high (Alook et al., 2021).

Likewise, Indigenous individuals were disproportionately affected during the pandemic. They were also overrepresented in occupations which required close contact with the public. For example, of the top public-facing work environments, Indigenous women had the highest share of employment (Alook et al., 2021). Their infection rate was 1.2-fold higher than that of the general population (Government of Manitoba, 2021). Indigenous women also had the highest unemployment rate during the pandemic, and it has taken longer to recover to their pre-pandemic employment numbers (Alook et al., 2021).

The pandemic impacted women globally particularly hard. In recessions before the COVID-19 recession, men had more job losses than women. Statistically, men accounted for more than 80% of job losses in these earlier recessions because recessions tend to impact male-dominated sectors such as manufacturing (LMIC, 2021). The COVID-19 recession was different because it targeted female-dominated sectors (e.g., accommodation and food services, retail, information, culture and recreation) (LMIC, 2021). The press named the phenomenon a "she-cession," and the scale of this change across the history of recessions is significant. In the past three recessions, women's employment fell by less than 250,000 compared to 1.5 million during the COVID-19 pandemic (LMIC, 2021). Not only were women impacted by job loss but also by reduced work hours. In Canada, between October and November 2020, women's total number of work hours dropped by 3.9 percentage points nationwide (Scott, 2021). Women also faced challenges during the pandemic that impacted their ability to access childcare, affecting their ability to return to work. Family violence worsened during the pandemic, further constraining women's lives and their ability to work. The legal system’s current backlog of cases will further challenge women suffering from the trauma of domestic violence. They will likely face multiple barriers in providing for their families and engaging in learning, skills development and work opportunities that will help them develop their careers (ESDC, 2021).

Racialized women and women living with disabilities were the most impacted by job loss and work-hour reductions. As mentioned, Indigenous women have had a slower

return to pre-COVID labour market stats than all other groups. Nardon et al.'s 2022 study of the impact of COVID-19 on skilled female immigrants found that the pandemic exacerbated the void of social and professional support for newcomer women needed to enter and thrive in the Canadian labour market. A core finding in Nardon et al.'s study was that the move to remote service delivery meant the tapestry of informal supports on which immigrant women rely was eroded. The lack of access to both informal and formal support meant that these women experienced increased delayed starts, reversals, interrupted career trajectories and greater precarity throughout the pandemic (Nardon et al., 2022).

Canadian youth (15 to 35 years) were another group significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. A Future Skills Centre (FSC) report (2021), *Making Up Time*, found that almost half of those under 35 years had their work hours disrupted during the pandemic. Comparatively, those 35 to 54 years and those 55 and older had their work hours disrupted 15% to 23% less, respectively, than the younger cohort. This same study found that impacts on work hour losses were more significant for those who are: "Indigenous (45%) (and particularly First Nations); work in the sales and services sector (38%); have a disability (34%); have annual household incomes under $60,000 (33%); are employed in the public sector (33%); have not continued their formal education past high school (32%)" (FSC, 2021, p. 8).

The pandemic also led to more youth not in education, employment or training (NEETs). According to Labour Force Statistics, there were 100,000 additional Canadian NEETs at the end of 2020 than at the start of 2019 (ESDC, 2021). Interruption of work and education was a crucial factor in the experience of the pandemic for youth. One-quarter of youth 18 to 20 years stopped or postponed their post-secondary education, and those under 24 years were more likely than their older counterparts to halt or change skills training (FSC, 2021). Youth in school saw their opportunities for work-integrated learning (e.g., co-ops, practicums, work studies) dry up, preventing them from getting all-important first work experiences that help them transition into the labour market (Khan et al., 2021).

This, coupled with the mental health crisis stemming from the pandemic (see below), points to a tough road ahead for the nation's youth. Youth tend to be the last group to recover in a recession. The 2008 recession had significant scarring on youth as a group, and there are indications that there could be similar impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. Messcacar et al. (2021) predicted that those who graduate during the pandemic will see reduced income for the first five years, or enough to repay the average student loan. First transitions from school to work tend to be the most difficult. Without work experiences to support youth through this transition, they will be vulnerable and need additional intervention via policy, program, and service support.

Lastly, those living with disabilities were also disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Thirty-one percent of those with disabilities (aged 15-64) said their household income decreased throughout the pandemic (ESDC, 2021). One-third of Canadians with long-term conditions or disabilities reported job loss or a reduction of hours (Statistics Canada, 2020). Those with more than one condition or disability reported more job losses (41%) than those with one (31%) (Statistics Canada, 2020). The lack of access to services ordinarily available to support independent living meant that people with a disability were generally more isolated and unable to access the support they needed to keep employment and grow their careers (Jashinsky et al., 2021). Their mental health suffered greatly as a result (Jashinsky et al., 2021). Building back better must ensure that people with disabilities have the resources to support their transition and that employers have the necessary tools and knowledge to be inclusive. This includes being aware of the needs of the high number of people with long-COVID symptoms.

Professional Development Recommendations

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted existing inequities in the system and the disproportionate impacts of the pandemic on racialized individuals, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, women, and youth. To support a more equitable recovery, CDPs will need:

- An understanding of the disproportionate impacts COVID-19 has had on vulnerable populations
- "Conscious, careful cultural competence and anti-discriminatory" practices to combat bias (McKenzie & Goddard, 2021, p. 9)
- The ability to create a working alliance with all clients by accessing Indigenized, multicultural and inclusivity training focused on working with diverse clients, supporting an understanding of the impacts of poverty on career development and the systemic barriers many of their clients' face (Collins et al., 2015)
- Sensitivity awareness to "... workers' basic survival needs, knowledge about existing [social and economic] assistance programs, and preparation to serve populations that have reduced occupational choice" (Autin et al., 2020, p.489)
- An awareness of available programs, policies, benefits, and incentives that can help clients have a better economic footing and support navigating the complexities of such benefits so that they can return to schooling, access skills training or get the resources they need to find and obtain work (ESDC, 2021)
- An understanding of career theories and practices that focus on the importance of social and political contexts that impact clients inequitably (e.g., systems theory, ecological approach, emancipation theory) (Drosos et al., 2021)
- To integrate a social justice perspective into practice (Drosos et al., 2021)
- To work with employers to support the development of work-integrated and first-work experiences for youth

- The skills and ethical practices to be able to offer a range of service modalities (e.g., remote, hybrid, face-to-face) to clients, so barriers to service access are minimized
- To make career services a beacon for community connection by hosting and being present at events throughout the community in both virtual and in-person contexts
- To develop networks with support organizations and employers to develop collaborative cooperation for COVID-19 recovery across the community served.
- To know how to support clients in accessing networks that will help them combat the social isolation they experienced during the pandemic but also build meaningful relationships and networks that will support their career growth (Nardon et al., 2022)
- An awareness of EDI techniques to support employers in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce.

2. The Mental Health Crisis

Much of the literature highlights that COVID-19 brought with it a parallel mental health pandemic (Charnock et al., 2021; Macpherson & Rizk, 2022; ESDC, 2021; Nardon et al., 2022; Salmon et al., 2022). Job loss, financial insecurity, loss of childcare, grief, illness, housing and food insecurity, prolonged quarantining, social isolation, rising threats of violence and social unrest mixed to create significantly poorer mental health for populations globally and more significant and disproportionate impacts on vulnerable and oppressed groups (Jenkins et al., 2021, Wright & Chan, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic felt like, for many, "an ongoing 'cardiac stress test' on the world's infrastructures and systems, magnifying our every functional and structural vulnerability, including that of [coping with constant] traumatic stress" (Horesh & Brown, 2020, p. 332). In Canada, Jenkins et al. (2021) found that 50% of Canadians reported that the pandemic negatively impacted their mental health. Over 40% noticed that they were worried and anxious more often. Findlay et al. (2020) cited a Statistics Canada study that noted a 14% decline in the number of people identifying their mental health as "very good" or "excellent" compared to their degree of mental wellness pre-pandemic.

As mentioned in the previous section, racialized and Indigenous peoples, those living in poverty, people with disabilities, women and youth had disproportionate impacts during the pandemic. Jenkins et al.'s (2021) Canadian-based study identified "...differential mental health impacts by gender, sexual orientation, household income, ethnicity, mental health status and disability status...thus documenting widening mental health inequities across structurally vulnerable populations" (p. 145). Key to their study was the finding that in Canada, there was a significant deterioration of

coping strategies across all groups but especially those who experience vulnerabilities due to "...mental health or disabilities, income, ethnicity, sexuality or gender" (p. 145).

Youth had the most significant decline in their mental health among Canadians (ESDC, 2021; Sitounis & Chiara, 2021). British Columbia's Children's Hospital found that "...two-thirds of youth report[ed] struggling with mental health issues, an increase from about one-third before the pandemic began" (Sitounis & Chiara, 2021, p. 2). Research from the Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Unit and the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation found that the highest rates of anxiety and depression came from those aged 18-34 (Sitounis & Chiara, 2021). In their 2022 study, *Pandemic-related Experiences, Mental Health Symptoms, Substance Use, and Relationship Conflict among Older Adolescents and Young Adults*, Salmon et al. found that older adolescents and young adults in Manitoba had more mental health issues than the general population. Over 40% of these youth reported feeling stressed or anxious "quite a bit/a lot," with 57.6% reporting an increase in daily stress/anxiety and 54.2% reporting higher levels of feeling down or depressed (Salmon et al., 2022).

Professional Development Recommendations

The rising mental health crisis stemming from the pandemic has implications for the career development sector. With the strain on mental health services, those in career and employment services are seeing increasing numbers of clients needing support. This emerging epidemic requires CDPs to be attuned to these needs. As mental health resources become overwhelmed, this may mean that CDPs may, appropriately and within their scope of practice, provide a supportive bridge until their clients can access mental health resources and programs. CDPs need to be supported in this work by:

- Knowing the signs of mental illness or pain that clients exhibit, especially symptoms of anxiety and depression (Osborn et al., 2022).
- Enrolling in an ethical practice course and ensuring they know when client's needs are beyond their scope of practice and when to refer (Como et al., 2021)
- Knowing and communicating their scope of practice to clients
- Having a toolbox/library of resources on where to refer clients for additional mental health support
- Having access to mental health first aid training, training on promoting mental health through career development (e.g., Redekopp and Huston, 2020) and on safe interventions to support clients' mental well-being (Como et al., 2021)
- Being aware of self-care strategies that can help clients and themselves in coping with recovering from the pandemic (e.g., mindfulness, intellectual stimulation, self-compassion, meditation) (Autin et al., 2020)
- Integrating trauma-informed approaches into practice (Autin et al., 2020; Wright & Chan, 2021)

- Knowing available worker protections and how-to/coach clients to advocate for them with employers (Autin et al., 2020)
- Be aware of strategies to support remote workers in finding social connections outside work and maintaining boundaries between work and home time (Autin et al., 2020).

3. Living with a New Level of Labour Market Uncertainty

In 2019, Canada's unemployment rate was at a record low of 5.4% (Evans, 2019). By May 2020, unemployment reached 13.7% (Canadian Press, 2020). The employment-unemployment rollercoaster continued with each wave of COVID-19 infections. Today, Canada has a record-low unemployment rate of 5.2%, causing the tightest labour market Canada has seen in decades (Statistics Canada, 2022). However, if inflation continues to rise, a recession may result, which could cause a turnaround in the labour market, with unemployment rising sharply.

CDPs will need to be attuned to labour market changes and how this level of change is impacting their client's ability to make informed decisions. Osborn et al. (2022) found that this level of labour market uncertainty that resulted in response to the pandemic has contributed to a decrease in career decision ambiguity tolerance (i.e., how a person reacts to uncertain situations) in individuals, especially those with lower incomes. The lower the tolerance, the more likely individuals will feel stuck, not knowing which steps to take, leading to career paralysis or indecision. Osborn et al. state that combined with "... the numerous mental health, social, and career challenges as a result of COVID-19 and the interactions among them precipitate an additional need for career counsellors who are aware of the nuanced ways in which the pandemic has affected and may continue to affect diverse groups" (Osborn et al., 2021, p. 53). Similarly, Wright and Chan (2021) recommend that those working in the career development sector focus on approaches that build client resilience, especially those that are strengths-based and support the development of coping strategies.

The pandemic also brought with it what media outlets called the Great Resignation. With the shift to remote work and the stress resulting from the pandemic, many workers (young and old) decided to implement a career change. It also expedited the boomer generation's shift into retirement, creating a tighter labour market and a significant knowledge drain on many sectors. The Great Resignation trend cuts across all sectors but most prominently in the trades, transport and equipment operators, sales and service occupations, occupations in education, law and social, community and government services, health occupations, business finance and administration occupations and management occupations (Government of Manitoba, 2021). If a tight labour market continues, CDPs may need the competencies to meet an increasingly urgent demand from employers for support in recruitment, retention, anticipating

digitalization, managing affected workers, future disruptions and retraining and redeploying staff. Canadian employers were already facing challenges with worker churn and upskilling their workforces before the pandemic. The pandemic accelerated these challenges, and the career development sector is being turned to for a response. For many CDPs, supporting employers with their challenges will be new and require intensive training.

Finally, because all sectors are impacted by worker churn, the career sector is likely also experiencing churn. As a result, many new hires in the career sector may need foundational and additional training to support their entry and retention in the sector.

Professional Development Recommendations

To help clients handle labour market uncertainty, the career sector will need to ensure that CDPs:

- Can promote and support career adaptability to help clients recognize their strengths, capacity for resilience, self-efficacy, and confidence (Osborn et al., 2022; Wright & Chan, 2021)
- Know the full employee life cycle, from recruitment to onboarding to exit
- Are equipped with the language of business, helping them to see and address employer concerns from the employer's vantage point
- Have the ability to network with employers, highlighting how CDPs can help employers solve their staffing problems.

Digitalization, Hybrid Work, Automation and the Digital Divide

McKenzie and Goddard (2021) argued that the Canadian labour market took a giant leap forward as the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the digitalization and automation of labour market transformation. Reliance on remote work and e-commerce that emerged during the pandemic launched the digitalization of the economy and labour market that had been predicted, pre-pandemic, to occur by 2030. Thanabalasingam (2021) reported that in 2021, Canadian e-commerce sales were nearly 100% higher than in February 2020, and eight out of 10 Canadians said that they will continue to make online purchases rather than visit brick-and-mortar shops. He argued that some of the pandemic-induced changes (e.g., shopping online, businesses set up to deliver services virtually, and remote work) would remain in place post-pandemic (Thanabalasingam, 2021). At issue is the readiness of Canada to shift to this new reality.

Canada was already behind in positioning workers for a digital and automation revolution. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Advisory Council on Economic Growth stated in 2017 that at least 10% of the Canadian workforce would face job loss and the need to retrain if they were not going to

respond adequately to the emerging digitalization trends (McKenzie & Goddard, 2021). Similarly, another OECD report (2020) projected that 45.6% of jobs were vulnerable to automation in Canada, with 15% being at high risk because machines could easily replace their tasks.

McKenzie & Goddard contend that in Canada, the consequences of pandemic-induced digitalization acceleration means that:

- The shift to hybrid and remote work and the growth of the "delivery economy" will ultimately impact low-wage service jobs. Jobs in retail, public transportation, and food and beverage sectors will decrease as jobs in distribution, and last-mile delivery will grow
- The adoption of automation in the manufacturing sector will negatively impact the availability of manufacturing jobs which are typically well-paid, unionized positions
- High-skilled jobs have grown, mid-skills jobs have declined, low-wage jobs are flat, and there is no clear career pathway from low to high-skilled jobs. This labour market development is a factor in the polarization between the haves and have-nots
- The acceleration of digitalization of work has not been equal and has further entrenched the polarization of workers in the labour market.
- Skilled workers will be needed, and learning pathways must accelerate to meet the need
- Wages and working conditions will become employers' recruitment, retention, and inclusion focal points.

These transformative changes will require almost all workers to develop new skills, including foundational digital skills (OECD, 2020). Despite the considerable need for these skills, far too many Canadians do not have access to the tools to develop them. A Tamarack Institute survey of youth and employers, *The Future of Work,* found that 41% of employer respondents required stable internet for their employees to work remotely (Nimigon, n.d.). Still, only 27% reported providing it to their employees (Nimigon, n.d.). The digital divide is predicated on three critical factors: affordability, access, and know-how. All are interconnected. There is evidence that access to high-speed internet might be increasing, yet affordability is a critical barrier as most low-income Canadians spend upwards of 9% of their income on telecommunications (ESCD, 2021).

Professional Development Recommendations

Moving forward, CDPs can support clients through the digital transformations in the labour market by:

- Continuously learning about changes in the labour market and being aware of ways to support clients' career planning based on what occupations will be in high demand and what skills those occupations require
- Developing an awareness of micro-credential options and how to map for competency and identify skill/training gaps (Gooch et al., 2022; McKenzie & Goddard, 2021)
- Developing a learning plan for themselves that includes foundational and career development sector-specific digital skills
- Knowing how to work with clients and employers through changes in work environments (e.g., remote and hybrid) to displace stress, increase work-life balance and enhance workplace connections so that workers do not become isolated (Como et al., 2021).

The Rising Gig Economy

Canada's gig economy has been growing over the past two decades. Jeon et al. (2019) reported that 5.5% of working Canadians worked in the gig economy in 2005; that percentage rose to 8.2% in 2016. With the rapid digitalization of the labour market, the number of Canadians participating in short-term contracts or freelance work increased dramatically. Payments Canada (2021) reported that 13% of working Canadians now do gig work, and 37% of Canadian businesses employ gig workers. Pinta (2021) cited a 2021 Ceridian (a large human resources firm) report that found that 70% of Canadian employers intend to hire more freelance and contract workers in the next two years. If these intentions are acted upon, Pinta argues, employers are likely to be less inclined to employ full-time staff.

Gig work can be decent and lucrative, and it can also be precarious and low paying. It can be an opportunity for career growth as well as stagnation. There is a deep divide among gig workers across these lines. For those working in low-skilled gig work, gig work tends to be precarious, stagnating, and low-paid. The Manitoba Federation of Labour found that "... more than 23,000 workers were making the minimum wage or less in 2021 and those making a lower amount included gig economy workers", whose pay is not legislated by the government (Froese, 2022, n.p.).

The rise in the gig economy will impact career paths across all ages but more so for youth. A 2019 Bank of Canada survey found that 58% of those aged 17-24 were "participating in some form of gig work, nearly double that of Canadians in general" (Jackson, 2021, n.p.). The Tamarack Institute survey mentioned above found that "[o]ver half the youth surveyed stated they were or are part of the gig economy. Thirty percent of youth stated the gig economy was 'desirable' while 66% stated it was either 'very undesirable' or 'somewhat desirable'" (Nimigon, n.d., p. 15).

Canada and the world's governments are playing policy catch-up to the growth of gig work. Legislation on what constitutes an independent contractor versus an employee is being developed and/or refined. The Canadian government is looking into expanding employment insurance benefits for independent contractors. It is an evolving process that CDPs need to be aware of to support their clients who gig.

Building careers through gig work also takes refined career management skills. Being "self-employed" in this sector means that work seekers need an in-depth self-awareness, especially about one's skills and strengths, and resources and connections, to ride the ebbs and flows of contract work. Critical skills needed to thrive in gig work include:

- Being resourceful
- Maintaining networks and developing relationships with potential contractors
- Communication and social skills
- Marketing and image management
- Administration – budgeting, scheduling, hours tracking, equipment purchasing
- Developing portable/transferrable skills
- Investing in lifelong learning
- Developing foundational and sector-targeted digital skills
- Agility and flexibility
- Entrepreneurship
- Boundary management (i.e., life-work balance) (Ashford et al., 2018; Forbes, 2019, 2020; Kost et al., 2019; World Bank, 2019; World Economic Forum, 2016).

CDPs will need to be able to support their clients in developing these skills, and they may need to develop these skills for themselves as the labour market evolves.

Professional Development Recommendations

The core skills required to navigate gig work can be challenging to develop without the assistance of CDPs. The growth of the gig economy will require CDPs to:

- Have access to up-to-date training on labour market information and work search strategies that focus on supporting clients to take advantage of opportunities in the gig sector
- Recognize that youth will likely gig at the beginning of their transitions from school to work so being able to assist them in building the career management and opportunity awareness skills to use gig work as a ladder instead of a slide will be critical

- Support clients in skill mapping and have ready resources for digital learning, micro-courses and micro-credentials to help them know and build their skills (Gooch et al., 2022).
- Develop knowledge of and the skills to access gig work interfaces (e.g., Uber, Task Rabbit, Door Dash, GigWork)
- Develop knowledge and awareness of government policies and programs that provide employment support to gig workers and independent contractors.
- Have a toolkit that includes collaborations and referrals to mental health agencies to help individuals struggling with the precarious nature of the gig economy (Petriglieri et al., 2018).

COVID-19 recovery will be challenging. Undoubtedly, the career development sector will be crucial in building back better. The papers in this review that focused on career practice during recovery emphasized the need for career development professionals to work on multiple levels to be effective. This means that the career development sector needs to be prepared to focus on the specific needs of individual clients, meet the growing needs of employers, have connections with policymakers to understand and influence resources and programming and understand the broader community context to be effective (Drosos et al., 2021). This is a tall order without access to targeted training. Growing the available training for the sector will be a critical task for the sector's professional bodies worldwide.

One final and noteworthy message across the literature was an overarching recommendation, given the inequitable impact of COVID-19, to return to the historical roots of career development by including a foundational social justice perspective in practice and ensure that advocacy continues to be a core part of it. Austin et al. (2020) stated, "[i]t is imperative that our professional associations take an active, collective role in political advocacy [...] for [policies and program] which result in the most social and economic protections of the unemployed" (p. 489). As such, it will be imperative for the sector's professional associations to support the development of the competency of advocation for its board and members.

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