
Social Development

**ANNUAL REPORT
2020-2021**



**Social Development
Annual Report 2020-2021**

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TRANSMITTAL LETTERS

**From the Minister to the Lieutenant-Governor
Her Honour The Honourable Brenda Murphy
Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick**

May it please your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the annual report of the Department of Social Development, Province of New Brunswick, for the fiscal year April 1, 2020, to March 31, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable Bruce Fitch
Minister

**From the Deputy Minister to the Minister
Honourable Bruce Fitch,
Minister of Social Development**

Sir:

I am pleased to be able to present the annual report describing operations of the Department of Social Development for the fiscal year April 1, 2020, to March 31, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,



Eric Beaulieu
Deputy Minister

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Minister's message

I am very pleased to present the 2020-2021 Annual Report for the Department of Social Development.

This report reflects departmental work until March 2021; one full year after COVID-19 arrived in New Brunswick. The pandemic was difficult for all of us, but the dedicated staff of Social Development have learned and shown time and time again that they are going above and beyond working for those that need our assistance.

It's been a little more than a year where I was sworn in as Minister of Social Development. I take this role very seriously. We have an important responsibility taking care of our most vulnerable citizens and individuals in this province and we continue to strive to improve the lives of families, children and seniors in New Brunswick.

Despite the pandemic, the department has achieved a lot this year. A three-year reform of the social assistance program has been undertaken by the Department of Social Development. To date the reform looked at the best options to continue assisting individuals who can work to become sustainably employed and how to better support those who are not able to work.

We made amendments to the federally funded essential worker wage top-up program. The program includes private sector home care support workers and early learning and childcare enhanced support workers who provide direct client care.

We understand the importance for all New Brunswickers to be able to access an affordable, comfortable home, in a safe and inclusive community. Social Development is working with various private and non-profit landlords to develop innovative and sustainable housing options for targeted populations, such as homeless individuals and families, victims of domestic / intimate partner violence, etc. Social Development continues to support the Housing First approach by targeting rent subsidies for homeless individuals, who are ready to transition into more affordable, safe and permanent housing options.

In October, we made 211 available to those in need. 211 NB, a free, bilingual, confidential resource to help New Brunswickers navigate the network of community, social, non-clinical health and government services was launched by the provincial government in partnership with the federal government and the United Way.

We invested \$15.2M to assist vulnerable populations impacted by the pandemic. The funding comes from the federal-provincial Safe Restart Agreement, which aims to re-open the economy and minimize the impact of potential future waves of COVID-19.

Through a multilateral process and discussions, the federal, provincial and territorial governments committed to shared objectives such as protecting vulnerable populations. The objective of the agreement is to ensure that provinces and territories have the resources needed to reopen the economy while keeping Canadians safe, with a focus on immediate needs.

The department funded three main sectors: long-term care facilities, child welfare and emergency shelters.

- More than \$10.5M is allocated to nursing homes and adult residential facilities.
- A little more than \$3.7M is allocated to Child Welfare and Protection programs. This funding targets group homes, foster homes, respite services and youth engagement services.
- More than \$1.2M is allocated to emergency shelters to help them cover costs associated with the pandemic.

The Department of Social Development will continue to punch above our weight class to ensure that our most vulnerable citizens are safe. I look forward to working with all of you and continuing to improve the lives of many in the year ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bruce Fitch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right from the end of the name.

Honourable Bruce Fitch
Minister of Social Development

Deputy Minister's message

On behalf of the Department of Social Development, I am pleased to present the 2020-2021 annual report which highlights our challenges and successes for the fiscal period ending March 31, 2021. This report reflects the hard work and dedication of staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. Social Development staff and partners ensured the safety of the New Brunswickers we serve while also continuing to innovate to provide quality services.

As part of our commitment to providing seniors with the best care and quality services, 39 applied research projects have been approved under the Healthy Seniors Pilot Project since its inception. These projects are aimed at supporting government and community initiatives that align with and support the efforts of New Brunswick's Aging Strategy.

In addition, we launched Social Supports NB, a user-friendly website containing information on government and community programs and services. The website was launched with a focus on seniors and their families and continues to expand to serve more New Brunswickers.

In order to ensure consistency in terms of service delivery for our clients, the department's regional organizational structure was changed from eight regions to four zones. This change ensures decision making is made with the client and employee at the centre and provides increased consistency in service delivery provincially.

Providing social services to New Brunswickers is only possible through great partnerships with many community partners throughout the province. I am incredibly proud of what the department, through many partnerships, accomplished during the 2020-2021 fiscal year. It is impossible to highlight all the work done to protect those we serve during the COVID-19 pandemic, I can only thank all Social Development employees for their service. As a department we are committed to continue contributing towards a safe, secure, and healthy New Brunswick.



Eric Beaulieu
Deputy Minister

Government Priorities

DELIVERING FOR NEW BRUNSWICKERS - ONE TEAM ONE GNB

One Team One GNB is a new, collaborative approach to how we operate. It represents a civil service that works together as a single unit for New Brunswickers. We have discovered new and innovative ways of doing business, ways that have allowed us to achieve the outcomes needed for New Brunswickers and we are working more efficiently and effectively than ever before. Our new path forward includes a mindset of focus, urgency and results.

We are working every day to improve the way government departments:

- Communicate with one another
- Work side-by-side on important projects
- And drive focus and accountability

STRATEGY AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

The Government of New Brunswick (GNB) uses a Formal Management system built on leading business practices to develop, communicate and review strategy. This process provides the Public Service with a proven methodology to execute strategy, increase accountability and continuously drive improvement.

The development of the strategy, using the Formal Management system, starts with our government's roadmap for the future of New Brunswick that focuses on key priorities and the importance of public accountability.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Our vision for 2020-2021 is a vibrant and sustainable New Brunswick. To make progress towards this vision, we must focus on our government's priorities.

- Energize private sector
- Vibrant and sustainable communities
- Affordable, responsive and high-performing government
- Dependable public health care
- World-class education, and
- Environment

COVID-19 RESPONSE

As part of GNB's priorities this past year, responding to the COVID-19 pandemic was at the forefront. Our department supported GNB in responding to the pandemic by:

Outbreak Management

- The department provided essential Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to New Brunswick's Group Homes, Specialized Placements, Emergency Shelters, Transition Homes, and Long-Term Care Facilities, First Nations Child and Family Services agencies and Community Inclusion Networks, as well as all departmental staff. As of March 31, 2021, Social Development has distributed: 350,480 face shields; 3,056,053 gloves; 459,912 gowns; 8,479,345 masks; and 131,118 containers of wipes.
- Social Development worked closely with Department of Health and Extra-Mural Program to develop Provincial Rapid Outbreak Response Teams (PROMT) to manage outbreaks in long-term care facilities. The department also recruited students from l'Université de Moncton and St. Thomas University to support PROMT. Out of a total of 567 long-term care facilities, only 14 had COVID-19 cases identified, and four experienced transmission within the facility as of March 31, 2021.

- A COVID-19 Readiness Program was created with a team dedicated to supporting long-term care facilities on adhering to Public Health guidance and directives. Work included site visits, infection prevention and control training, resources for the development of operational plans, and follow-ups as part of the department's on-going commitment to ensuring the safety of the residents.
- Social Development worked with the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour to establish training and recruit participants to act as Personal Support Workers during outbreaks.
- To ensure the safety of those most at risk for contracting COVID-19, 241 Alternate Level of Care patients waiting in hospital to be placed were moved to long-term care facilities in April 2020.

Adapted Essential Services

- Family Group Conferencing (FGC) utilized Zoom for Health Care during the pandemic to continue Family Group Conferences. Four FGC Virtual Champions developed training for their coworkers, and tools on how to use Zoom for their clients.
- The training for new Social Workers pivoted to online/Zoom training to ensure all Social Workers had the tools needed to perform their jobs effectively.

Additional Funding

- The department made amendments to the federally funded essential worker wage top-up program to include private sector home care support workers and early learning and childcare enhanced support workers who provide direct client care.
- The department invested \$15.2M to assist vulnerable populations impacted by the pandemic, of which, more than \$10.5M was allocated to nursing homes and adult residential facilities. The funding comes from the federal-provincial Safe Restart Agreement, which aimed to re-open the economy and minimize the impact of potential future waves of COVID-19.

Vaccinations

- Social Development worked with the Department of Health and other partners on a vaccination program for long term-care facilities as part of the first priority group for the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. By March 31, 2021 first dose clinics for all long-term care facilities were completed.

Highlights

During the 2020-2021 fiscal year, Social Development focused on government priorities through:

Focus on Seniors

- The Aging in Place Framework was developed with a collaborative vision between the Departments of Social Development and Health to ensure the right community care and supports are in place to maximize the number of years seniors are healthy and living at home. A collaborative working committee with membership from both departments was formed in September 2020 and key priority initiatives were identified with clear targets and desired outcomes for seniors, focusing on key themes: seniors aging in place as long as possible, an enhanced focus on home supports, integrated health and social care, optimize care in community settings, and seamless and timely transitions.
- The Campbellton Nursing Home, which was placed under the management of a provincially appointed trustee last year to improve the operation of the 85-bed facility, is now back in the hands of a local board of directors. 31 new employees were recruited and hired under the trustee to bring staffing levels up to standard, and community participation on a new board of directors was sought through a public expression of interest.
- Thirty-nine (39) applied research projects were approved under the Healthy Seniors Pilot Project. These projects aim to support healthy aging for seniors in their homes, communities and care facilities. The pilot project is aimed at supporting government and community initiatives that align with and support the efforts of New Brunswick's Aging Strategy and other government priorities, including researchers, non-profit organizations, businesses, First Nations communities and municipalities.

Improving Access to Information

- 211 NB, a free, bilingual, confidential resource to help New Brunswickers navigate the network of community, social, non-clinical health and government services was launched by the provincial government in partnership with the federal government and the United Way.
- The department launched [Social Supports NB](#), a user-friendly website containing information on government and community programs and services including housing, health services and home care. The website also includes the [Financial Help Calculator](#) to help families and individuals determine how much they will likely contribute towards the cost of in-home support through the Long-Term Care Program and the Disability Support Program administered by the department.
- Social Development launched the "Proud to Help" social media campaign to promote the important work done by the department in income assistance, disability support, housing, and supports for seniors.

Increased Funding

- Social Assistance rates for single individuals were increased by five per cent on May 1, 2020. At this time, it was announced that these rates would be indexed to inflation each year thereafter beginning in April of 2021.
- As part of its efforts to build vibrant and sustainable communities, the provincial government is investing \$6 million over three years in the Rising Tide project. The group has a plan, supported by the City of Moncton and the provincial government, to purchase and renovate properties that will provide 125 affordable housing units for current users of homeless shelters in Moncton. The project also includes funding for the creation of up to seven community case managers, each of whom would serve about 15 clients.

- The Department of Social Development committed \$1.4M towards the John Howard Society's development of a housing project in Fredericton for individuals experiencing homelessness. The project involves the conversion of the existing City Motel into 20 bachelor-style apartments, 12 peer-supported housing units, a 24-bed homeless shelter, meeting rooms, a restaurant, and clinical and outreach offices.
- In March 2021, the provincial government announced a \$12.4M investment to fund wage increases on April 1, 2021 for workers in the human service sector, including home support workers, community residence workers, special care home workers, and family support workers. This wage increase implicates over 10,000 workers.

Performance Outcomes

CLIENT EXPERIENCE

DESCRIPTION OF PRIORITY

Client experience is the result of each interaction a client has with the department – whether in-person, online or by telephone. Clients of Social Development include New Brunswickers receiving services, as well as our partners within the community and government. Client experience speaks to what we care about, what our organization is focused on, and what we strive to deliver daily.

Outcome: Enhance client experience by providing personalized, timely, supportive services.

IMPORTANCE OF PRIORITY

The client remains at the centre of everything we do, and we strive to provide an environment where the people we serve can reach their full potential and have a rewarding experience.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Success for client experience looks like:

- Increased opportunities to provide feedback
- Improved communications and collaboration
- Reduced burden when interacting with the department
- Expanded technological options to interact with the department
- Improved integrated, holistic supports

WHAT INITIATIVES OR PROJECTS WERE UNDERTAKEN IN THE REPORTING YEAR TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME?

Social Supports NB Website

The new [Social Supports NB](#) website went live in July 2020 and has continued to expand the content available since its launch. Social Supports NB was conceptualized as a site to benefit all clients and to encompass the full service offering of the department. There were 22,824 users and 73,876 page views as of March 31, 2021, with the most popular information accessed being the financial help calculator, long-term care, help at home, and emergency fuel.

Social Supports NB is used by the public, service providers, and the department's employees. The website has proven to support clients in finding the right information quickly and easily with its modern design and enhanced search functionality. The website has been adapted based on client feedback and ensures that clients can access the information they need more quickly, easily and all-in-one place to enhance their experience.

In a survey of front-line staff (i.e. Discharge Nurses, Extra-Mural Program staff, Community Service Providers, SD Needs Assessors and Screeners), 55 per cent were familiar with the Social Supports NB website, and 40 per cent had used the website.

EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

DESCRIPTION OF PRIORITY

Our responsibility is to always focus on our interactions with work colleagues to make each day a positive experience for everyone. We strive for an employee experience that includes healthy workplace culture, opportunities to learn, grow and be involved, work-life balance, be recognized, and reach our full potential as employees of Social Development.

Outcome: Strengthen Social Development to be an employer of choice.

IMPORTANCE OF PRIORITY

Employees that are equipped with the right tools, skills, training and information to do their jobs well will result in a rewarding experience for everyone and make each day a positive experience for our colleagues as well as our clients.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Success for employee experience looks like:

- Improved talent management approach
- Technology is leveraged to improve employee experience
- Enhanced internal information sharing
- Employee wellness and engagement is supported
- Improved access to resources and training supports

WHAT INITIATIVES OR PROJECTS WERE UNDERTAKEN IN THE REPORTING YEAR TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME?

Employees Working Remotely

The arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in New Brunswick changed the way we needed to provide services and ensure employees had the ability to work from home to continue to do their jobs well. The department was successful in quickly adjusting the way it worked to ensure essential services were uninterrupted.

By providing the necessary technology and tools, and the ability to work from home where possible, staff were able to continue to provide essential services. The flexibility to choose work location contributed to a better work-life balance.

As of March 31, 2021, approximately 87% of the department's employees had the tools they needed (i.e. laptops, cell phones, virtual private networks) to work remotely.

QUALITY SERVICES

DESCRIPTION OF PRIORITY

Quality services speaks to the services and resources we offer to New Brunswickers. Our responsibility is to focus and ensure that the services we offer provide the best outcomes for New Brunswickers, ensuring we have the right tools and resources available. We hope to deliver a positive experience through quality services.

Outcome: Improved client outcomes by monitoring and modifying services.

IMPORTANCE OF PRIORITY

We will deliver a positive experience through quality services. These services will be continuously monitored and assessed to ensure they generate positive outcomes for our clients and the population of New Brunswick.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Success for quality services looks like:

- Aligned community care and supports
- Infrastructure and partnerships are leveraged
- Improved consistency, efficiency and effectiveness of services
- Reduced barriers and increase innovation
- Increased collaboration with service providers
- Evaluated and adapted services.

WHAT INITIATIVES OR PROJECTS WERE UNDERTAKEN IN THE REPORTING YEAR TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME?

Social Assistance

Social Assistance rates for single-person households were increased by five per cent on May 1, 2020. It was also announced that beginning in April 1, 2021, social assistance rates for single-person households will be indexed yearly to the Consumer Price Index.

Approximately 15,550 single-person households were impacted by this increase.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

DESCRIPTION OF PRIORITY

Financial responsibility means that we are providing the best services possible while being accountable to our budget.

Outcome: Improved shared financial responsibility.

IMPORTANCE OF PRIORITY

It is important to spend wisely and to utilize and share available resources to the best of our ability. It is important for each of us to ensure that we use the tax dollars we are entrusted with to get the best results for our clients.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Success for financial responsibility looks like:

- Increased financial understanding and accountability
- Available resources are leveraged
- Re-aligned financial resources to meet outcomes
- Increased strategic investments to support long-term outcomes
- Ensured accountability of partners and service providers.

WHAT INITIATIVES OR PROJECTS WERE UNDERTAKEN IN THE REPORTING YEAR TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME?

Outcomes-Based Contracts

The department has invested public dollars with organizations that align with our stated priorities, strategies and that can deliver outcomes for our clients. We are developing and testing outcomes contracting for GNB within Social Development. All five program-area branches of Social Development had client outcomes developed to ensure the programs we contract services for are aligned with results we desire for our clients.

As of February 15, 2021, a total of 210 priority contracts had Ministerial Exemptions put in place to properly procure the services with outcomes and reporting requirements. Contracts for the extension year all have outcomes identified.

As of March 31, 2021, Social Development's expiring service contracts were reviewed and prioritized by highest priority and largest impact for outcomes inclusion. Seven contracts had outcomes and measurements included, and an additional 13 contracts were under negotiations regarding outcomes and reporting.

Overview of departmental operations

VISION

Strong Partnerships for Better Lives.

MISSION

Working together with individuals, families, and community partners to improve people's lives.

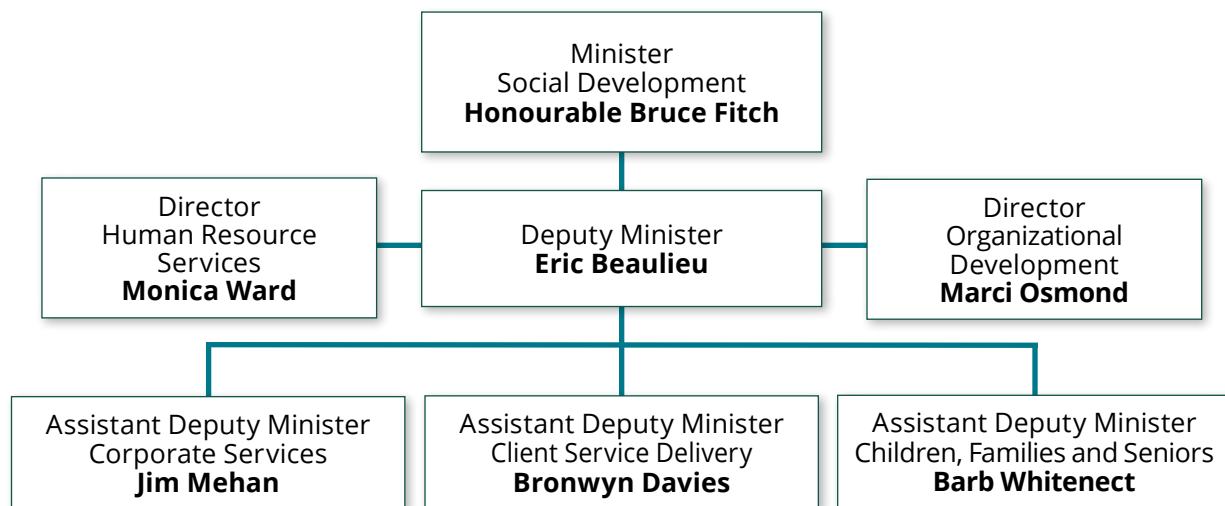
Four strategic themes define how the department will achieve its vision of 'strong partnerships for better lives' and frame the department's goals and objectives. These strategic themes are client experience, employee experience, quality services, and financial responsibility.

The Department of Social Development manages programs and services designed to provide protection and care for individuals and families, while also fostering independence and self-sufficiency. The department works with service providers and community partners who also play an important role in contributing to a safe, secure and healthy New Brunswick.

The department is structured in three divisions as seen on the following organizational chart that integrates in a team-based approach to support the citizens of New Brunswick.

HIGH-LEVEL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

As of March 31, 2021



Division overview and highlights

CLIENT SERVICE DELIVERY DIVISION

The **Client Service Delivery Division** is responsible for delivering Social Development's programs and services to clients of the department, managing day-to-day client relations and operations, establishing and managing relationships with community partners, and maintaining performance excellence. The division consists of four zones and the Client Service Delivery Support Branch.

The **Zones** are responsible for the delivery of programs and services in core business areas to individuals and families. The core business areas include child welfare and youth services, housing and homelessness, income support, disability support services, long-term care and nursing home services.

The **Client Service Delivery Support Branch** is responsible for delivering provincial services through single entry access points and for providing a range of key executive and operational supports. Services provided include: After Hours Emergency Social Services; Post-Adoption Disclosure Services; Provincial Social Development Record Checks and Exemptions; Provincial Territorial Child Welfare Protocol Coordination. Family Group Conference, Immediate Response Conference and Child Protection Mediation Services were transferred to the Children and Youth Services Branch in the Fall of 2020. Key executive and operational supports include: Ministerial and Executive correspondence, liaison and support; Social Development website responses; Medical Advisory Board coordination; Emergency Social Services, Integrated Front-End, Intelligent Computer Exchange (ICE) Telephony Platform Business Owner.



Highlights

Client Service Delivery Support Branch

- ♦ The design and implementation of a new provincial toll-free number for screening and intake services that replaced the previous eight regional numbers.
- ♦ The design and implementation of a new ICE Telephony Platform for screening, intake and After Hours Emergency Social Services.

CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND SENIORS DIVISION

The **Children, Families and Seniors Division** is responsible for program design and development, as well as the interpretation, implementation and monitoring of programs related to child welfare and youth services, disability supports, income supports, health services, housing and homelessness, long-term care, nursing homes and adult residential facilities. The division designs programs that are supported by regional service delivery and works with partners across the province. The division consists of five branches: Child and Youth Services, Income Support, Housing and Homelessness, Adult Client Support Services, and Adult Community Resources.

The **Child and Youth Services Branch** is responsible for designing, implementing and monitoring strength-based programs and services to help protect and promote the safety and wellbeing of children and youth. The branch works in partnership with colleagues, other departments and community-based services to ensure timely and culturally responsive services and resources that result in the best outcomes for children and youth. Ultimately, the vision of the branch is for safety, wellbeing, a sense of belonging and lifelong connections for every child/youth in NB.

This branch includes: Child Protection, Children in Care, Children's Resource Services, Kinship, Adoption, Birth Parent Services, Youth Engagement Services, Post-Guardianship, Family Supports for Children with Disabilities, Collaborative Approaches and services under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*. The branch is also a partner in Integrated Service Delivery, as well as the Provincial Complex Case Committee, which are multidisciplinary partnerships intended to improve services to children and youth deemed at-risk or having complex social, emotional, physical, medical and/or mental-health needs.

Programs and services under this branch are child and youth focused and are based on the best interest of the child. Priority is given to strengthening family engagement by including family involvement strategies such as Family Group Conference and Immediate Response Conference to give voice to children, youth and families. If a child can no longer remain living safely in the parental home, the department works closely with family to prioritize children and youth living with kin. As well, the department works in collaboration with other departments and not-for-profit organizations in developing and supporting various placement options along the continuum of care for children and youth.

The **Income Support Branch** is responsible to provide individuals and families in need with financial benefits and supports. The branch is also responsible for planning, designing and monitoring programs and services to support individuals and families, and to help them achieve and maintain self-reliance and, where appropriate, with self-sufficiency program services to enhance their potential for employment. This branch includes: The Transitional Assistance Program, Case Management Services for Social Assistance Clients, Career Development Options for Social Assistance Clients, the Extended Benefits program, Special Needs Benefits and Family Support Orders Services.

Health Services is responsible for the day-to-day operations, planning, designing and monitoring of the department's Health Services Program. The Health Services Program offers a number of health and medical benefits, and services to Social Development clients that have an active health card. Health Services programs include: Mobility & Adaptive Equipment Loan Program; Dental Program; Hearing Aid Program; Medical Supplies/ Services Program; Orthopedic Program; Ostomy/ Incontinence Program; Prosthetic Program; Respiratory Program; Therapeutic Nutrients Program; and the Vision Program. Health Services is also responsible for Healthy Smiles, Clear Vision and the NB Cleft Palate Program. Specific client groups eligible through health services include: Social Assistance recipients and their dependents, Health Card-Only clients (individuals with extensive health needs who are unable to cover the cost of services), clients served within the Child and Youth Services Program, Long Term Care clients residing in Adult Residential Facilities, Nursing Home clients, and Mental Health clients residing in facilities.

The **Housing and Homelessness Branch** is responsible for the planning, design and monitoring of all departmental housing and homelessness programs and services. These include the following: Public Housing, Rent Supplement and Rural and Native Housing Programs; Non-Profit and Cooperative Housing Programs; Homelessness and Transition Houses; Homeowner and Emergency Repair Programs; Affordable Rental Housing Program; Rental Rehabilitation Assistance Program; Home Completion and Home Ownership Assistance Programs; Property Management and Loans Administration. The branch is also responsible for the development of new housing programs to address systemic gaps and identify opportunities for improvements related to existing policy and program delivery.

The **Adult Client Services Support Branch** is responsible for planning, designing and monitoring programs and services provided to adults with a disability and seniors. The Seniors and Healthy Aging Secretariat falls within this branch and functions as the point of contact to facilitate the central alignment, coordination, planning and liaison for matters and issues related to seniors and healthy aging within government. The programs and services under the branch include: Adult Protection Program; Disability Support Program; Long Term Care Program; Home Support Services; Adult Day Centres; Employment & Support Services; Home First initiatives; Healthy Seniors Pilot Project; Age-Friendly Communities Recognition Program; and The Healthy Aging Champions Program. This branch also delivers training for adult and senior services and programs throughout the province.

The **Adult Community Resources Branch** is responsible for monitoring quality and compliance of licensed adult residential facilities and nursing homes throughout the province who provide care across the continuum. Adult residential facilities include special care, community residences, memory care and generalist care. The department's objectives are to improve residents' quality of life, help safeguard their dignity, and ensure that appropriate, quality residential services are provided as efficiently as possible within available resources. This is accomplished by ensuring compliance with all relevant acts, regulations under the acts, and departmental standards and policies. The purpose of this monitoring is to enhance accountability, effectiveness and efficiency in the planning and delivery of these services to adults and seniors. The branch is also responsible for providing operational support to licensed nursing homes through funding, advisory services, and management of capital repairs, renovation and replacement projects. The direct provision of nursing home services to residents is the responsibility of each nursing home.

Highlights

Child and Youth Services Branch

- ♦ The Kinship Care Model and the Transfer of Guardianship was introduced in the legislation in April 2020, providing more options for children and youth to remain with kin.
- ♦ The department was pleased with the advancement of continuum of care options for children and youth, such as Kinship Placement, and child-specific placements. Stakeholder sessions were held to help with the development of Professional Care Homes. Foster Families received a rate increase of 25%.

Income Support Branch

- ♦ Social assistance rates for all single individuals were increased by 5% on May 1, 2020. In addition, each year going forward, the rates for single individuals on social assistance will be indexed to the New Brunswick Consumer Price Index every April.

Housing and Homelessness Branch

- ♦ The provincial government invested \$6M over three years in the Rising Tide project. Rising Tide Community Initiatives Inc. is a newly established non-profit organization in Moncton with a core mandate of stimulating the development and sustainability of affordable housing for those experiencing or at the risk of homelessness and will create 125 affordable housing units throughout the city.
- ♦ Social Development has committed \$1.4M towards the John Howard Society's development of a housing project in Fredericton for homeless people. The project involves the conversion of the existing City Motel into apartments for homeless people that will offer 20 bachelor-style apartments, 12 peer-supported housing units, a 24-bed homeless shelter, meeting rooms, a restaurant, and clinical and outreach offices.

Adult Client Services Support Branch

- ♦ In an effort to help seniors and adults with a disability, their families and caregivers navigate the many care options available, Social Development has launched the Social Supports NB website, a user-friendly website that contains information on government and community programs and services including housing, health services and home care.
- ♦ The Aging in Place Framework is a collaborative vision between the Departments of Health and Social Development. The work of the Aging Strategy continues through this framework which has taken high-level strategic recommendations and created measurable initiatives that will facilitate reporting and clear communication of progress to stakeholders.

Adult Community Resources Branch

- ♦ Request for proposals were released for a new nursing home in the Acadian Peninsula. This will add 60 new beds to the northeast region of the province.

- ♦ An agreement was reached between the New Brunswick Association of Nursing Homes and the New Brunswick Council of Nursing Home Unions, which represents members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) at 51 of the province's 68 nursing homes.

CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION

The **Corporate Services Division** supports the success and accountability of the department's finance and budget management, contract management, information technology, operations management, policy, analytics, research, evaluation, planning, continuous improvement and client experience strategy. The division consists of Finance and Administration, Policy and Analytics, Digital Transformation, and the Chief Experience Officer.

The **Finance and Administration Branch** is responsible for working with management to ensure the department's financial resources are spent within GNB's fiscal framework. The branch provides information and advice to ensure consistency in budgeting, contract administration, financial reporting and administration. It performs internal audits for the department's programs and services. The branch is made up of four units: Budget and Financial Reporting, Internal Audit, Accounting Services and Contract Administration.

The **Policy and Analytics Branch** is responsible for developing departmental policy and legislative proposals and providing ongoing support and advice in the interpretation and application of departmental legislation. The branch is the departmental lead on several interdepartmental tables, and represents GNB on intergovernmental forums related to seniors, housing, and social services. The branch is also the departmental lead on legal matters and on the department's response to inquiries and investigations by the Ombud, the Integrity Commissioner, the Child and Youth and Senior's Advocate, and the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission. The branch is also responsible for all privacy related issues, Right to Information requests and coordination of legislative activities. The branch also facilitates the appointment process for Agencies, Boards and Commissions.

Digital Transformation Services provides strategic leadership intended to transform how we deliver value to citizens by improving end-to-end processes that benefit the business while offering better citizen experiences through innovative products and services. Aligning to the GNB vision "One Team, One GNB",

the Digital Transformation Services team works on enterprise change both across GNB and within Social Development to improve experiences for all NB citizens.

The **Chief Experience Officer** is responsible for improving client experiences within the department to improve outcomes for New Brunswickers. The Experience Office works across the department to simplify, integrate and deliver quality experiences and effective services for clients.

Highlights

Finance and Administration Branch

- ♦ The branch led the development of two major procurements for Nursing Home Services: Two 60-bed request for proposals in Saint John and Moncton were successfully tendered and negotiated; and one 190-bed request for proposal was successfully tendered and in negotiations.
- ♦ The branch assisted in the procurement of emergency/urgent services during the pandemic, such as additional workers for special care homes, pandemic planning services, and vaccination services.

Policy and Analytics Branch

- ♦ The branch launched an online survey and Discussion Paper and hosted targeted engagement sessions with stakeholders to obtain feedback to assist in the development of new child welfare legislation.
- ♦ As of January 1, 2021, the branch assumed the Co-Chair role of a national social services committee which operates under the umbrella of the Ministers/Deputy Ministers Responsible for Social Services forum for which NB is also the Co-Chair for 2021-2022.

Digital Transformation Branch

- ◆ An online application was developed to provide citizens a convenient option to apply for the Canada Housing Benefit on the Social Supports NB website. Providing the ability for clients to apply for a program online is the first step towards the development of a client portal.
- ◆ Social Development staff across the province were provided with modern technology solutions to support efficient service delivery to citizens during and after the pandemic.

EMPLOYEE SUPPORT

As a strategic business partner, the **Human Resource Services (HRS)** Branch provides support and consulting services to management and staff to increase organizational effectiveness and to maximize performance through our people. We endeavour to create and sustain a vibrant, healthy, safe, and high performing workforce that provides excellent service to the citizens of New Brunswick. Comprised of two business units, Employee Relations Services and Human Resource Strategy and Programs. The HRS team members work collaboratively to meet its mandate and objectives, while supporting the strategic goals of both the department and the Government of New Brunswick.

The Human Resource Strategy and Programs (HRSP) unit supports and reinforces the strategic goals and vision of the Department of Social Development through the provision of a broad range of results-focused, organizational and human performance interventions and services designed to create departmental and employee excellence. The HRSP unit is responsible for strategic workforce planning and succession management, performance management, leadership development, HR-related training, and the development and implementation of health, safety and workplace wellness programs. In addition, the unit coordinates the reporting of departmental workforce information.

The Employee Relations Services unit serves as the primary vehicle for the delivery of HR services to the department. The consultants and staff in this unit have the lead role and responsibility for employee recruitment, selection, job classification, evaluation and the establishment of linguistic profiles. As well, members of the team are directly involved in labour relations including, but not limited to grievance handling, labour-management committees, contract negotiations,

Chief Experience Officer

- ◆ Over the last fiscal year, Social Development heard from over 500 clients, families, and potential applicants about their experiences. Based on this feedback, the [Social Supports NB website](#) was launched and has had over 20,000 site visits.
- ◆ In October 2020, 211 was launched to provide timely access to information to New Brunswickers about many services that can help them, with over 6,000 calls received.

collective agreement and legislative interpretation, conflict resolution and mediation, employee discipline, and performance management.

The **Organizational Development Branch** was created in the Fall of 2020. Organizational Development's mandate is to develop, implement, and standardize a learning and development framework inclusive of culturally appropriate services across the department to support employee engagement, recognition and to improve organizational effectiveness. This includes a comprehensive internal communications strategy; onboarding that allows staff to connect to the organization's culture, values, and strategy; applying a cultural lens to programs and services; identifying opportunities for professional development and skills development; and increased collaboration with, and support for, community partners for training opportunities.

Highlights

Organizational Development Branch

- ◆ The team provided department-wide training and ongoing support and coordination for the timely and appropriate implementation of new federal child welfare legislation: *An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis Children, Youth and Families* that came into force January 1, 2020.
- ◆ The Organizational Development team organized and facilitated a mental fitness webinar series with Howatt HR, providing support and guidance to Social Development staff.
- ◆ The department's internal intranet site was re-designed allowing for improved information sharing with staff.

- ♦ Internal Communications created the “Social Development Heroes” feature on the department’s intranet to recognize those who stepped up by volunteering to assist the Provincial Rapid Outbreak Management Team (PROMT), along with those who helped with the distribution of personal protective equipment to the department’s partners.
-

Financial information

Expenditures	Budget	Actual	Variance Over (Under)	% Over (Under)	Note
Corporate and Other Services	11,084.7	12,283.4	1,198.7	10.8	1
Income Security – Service Delivery Costs	19,349.6	21,700.0	2,350.4	12.1	2
Income Security – Benefits	216,376.0	187,757.6	(28,618.4)	(13.2)	3
Child Welfare	149,901.6	155,777.0	5,875.4	3.9	4
Seniors and Long-Term Care	770,486.2	763,236.5	(7,249.7)	(0.9)	5
Housing	99,124.7	102,006.8	2,882.1	2.9	6
Other Benefits	55,783.0	48,920.0	(6,863.0)	(12.3)	7
Total	\$1,322,105.8	\$1,291,681.3	\$(30,424.5)	(2.3)	

Numbers are expressed in thousands.

Special Purpose Account Expenditure	Budget	Actual	Variance Over (Under)	% Over (Under)	Note
CMHC Funding Account	\$2,665.0	\$2,827.0	\$162.0	6.1	

Numbers are expressed in thousands.

Capital	Budget	Actual	Variance Over (Under)	% Over (Under)	Note
Nursing Home – Capital Program	\$12,000.0	\$9,905.9	\$(2,094.1)	(17.5)	8

Numbers are expressed in thousands.

Revenues	Budget	Actual	Variance Over (Under)	% Over (Under)	Note
Return on Investment	1,800.0	2,056.3	256.3	14.2	
Licences and Permits	33.0	28.0	(5.0)	(15.1)	
Sale of Goods and Services	17,890.0	18,903.6	1,013.6	5.7	9
Miscellaneous	9,375.0	8,089.1	(1,285.9)	(13.7)	10
Conditional Grants – Canada	54,554.0	48,348.3	(6,205.7)	(11.4)	11
Total	\$83,652.0	\$77,425.3	\$(6,226.7)	(7.4)	

Numbers are expressed in thousands.

Special Purpose Account Revenue	Budget	Actual	Variance Over (Under)	% Over (Under)	Note
CMHC Funding Account	\$692.0	\$109.8	\$(582.2)	(84.1)	12

Numbers are expressed in thousands.

Notes on significant variances:

1. Over budget due to salaries as well as costs associated to responding to the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. Over budget due to higher than anticipated overhead costs.
3. Under budget due to average caseload and average cost per case in Transitional Assistance Program being lower than expected.
4. Over budget due to increasing costs related to Group Homes.
5. Under budget due to savings in Adult Residential Facilities as well as in the Disability Support Program.
6. Over budget due to increasing operation and maintenance costs in public housing, as well as increased cleaning costs due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.
7. Under budget due to lower uptake in the Seniors Home Renovation Tax Credit, and the Child Tax Benefit and Working Income Supplement. As well, the grants awarded under the Healthy Seniors Pilot project were lower due to the slowdown caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic.
8. Under budget due to fewer capital projects being completed due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.
9. Over budget mainly due to client turnover and reassessments related to rents in public housing units.
10. Under budget mainly due to reduced SA overpayment recoveries as well as lower HEAP recoveries.
11. Under budget due to projects under HSPP being pushed back as a result of Covid-19, which resulted in less revenue being claimed.
12. Under budget due to lower than anticipated interest revenues and recoveries on loans and guarantees.

Summary of staffing activity

Pursuant to section 4 of the *Civil Service Act*, the Secretary to Treasury Board delegates staffing to each Deputy Head for his or her respective department(s). Please find below a summary of the staffing activity for 2020-2021 for Social Development.

Number of permanent and temporary employees as of Dec. 31 of each year		
Employee type	2020	2019
Permanent	1,326	1,346
Temporary	191	230
TOTAL	1,517	1,576

The department advertised 56 competitions, including 24 open (public) competitions and 32 closed (internal) competitions.

Pursuant to sections 15 and 16 of the *Civil Service Act*, the department made the following appointments using processes to establish merit other than the competitive process:

Appointment type	Appointment description	Section of the <i>Civil Service Act</i>	Number
Specialized Professional, Scientific or Technical	An appointment may be made without competition when a position requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a high degree of expertise and training - a high degree of technical skill - recognized experts in their field. 	15(1)	0
Equal Employment Opportunity Program	Provides Aboriginals, persons with disabilities and members of a visible minority group with equal access to employment, training and advancement opportunities.	16(1)(a)	6
Department Talent Management Program	Permanent employees identified in corporate and departmental talent pools, who meet the four-point criteria for assessing talent, namely performance, readiness, willingness and criticalness.	16(1)(b)	5
Lateral transfer	The GNB transfer process facilitates the transfer of employees from within Part 1, 2 (school districts) and 3 (hospital authorities) of the Public Service.	16(1) or 16(1)(c)	18
Regular appointment of casual/temporary	An individual hired on a casual or temporary basis under section 17 may be appointed without competition to a regular properly classified position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(i)	0
Regular appointment of students/apprentices	Summer students, university or community college co-op students or apprentices may be appointed without competition to an entry level position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(ii)	0

Pursuant to section 33 of the *Civil Service Act*, no complaints alleging favouritism were made to the Deputy Head of Social Development and no complaints were submitted to the Ombud.

Summary of legislation and legislative activity

Name of Regulation	Effective Date	Summary of Changes
Regulation 2020-21: Children's Services and Resources Regulation under the <i>Family Services Act</i> http://laws.gnb.ca/en/showfulldoc/cr/2020-21//20210617	April 1, 2020	Creation of new regulation regarding various types of children's services and resources.
General Regulation 95-61 under the <i>Family Income Security Act</i> http://laws.gnb.ca/en/showfulldoc/cs/2011-c.154//20210617	May 1, 2020	a. Repeal and replace Schedule A of Regulation 95-61 to increase the monthly assistance rates by 5% for all single person units, effective May 1 st , 2020; and, b. Add a provision to Regulation 95-61 to index the monthly assistance rates for single person units to correspond with the change in the New Brunswick Consumer Price Index, to be completed annually on April 1 st .
Regulation 2002-24: Exclusion Regulation under the <i>Electronic Transactions Act</i> http://laws.gnb.ca/en/showfulldoc/cr/2002-24//20210617	May 5, 2020	This Regulation was repealed.

The acts for which the department was responsible in 2020-2021 may be found at: <http://laws.gnb.ca/en/deplinks?subjectnumber=21>.

Summary of Official Languages activities

INTRODUCTION

The department has developed an action plan that includes strategic activities for each of the four sectors of activity found in GNB's *Plan on Official Languages – Official Bilingualism: A Fundamental Value*.

FOCUS 1

Ensure access to service of equal quality in English and French throughout the province:

- A comprehensive review of the department linguistic profiles was done. Human Resource Services and Senior Management reviewed and structured linguistic teams to ensure that there was enough capacity in guaranteeing that clients are being served in their language of choice. Gaps were addressed with short-term plans for “cover off” and long-term plan for improving the linguistic team capacity through the hiring process and second-language training.
- As part of the onboarding process, new employees are required to complete the mandatory e-learning modules for Language of Service and Language of Work offered through the GNB Knowledge center.

FOCUS 2

An environment and climate that encourages, for all employees, the use of the Official Language of their choice in their workplace:

- As part of the annual Employee Performance Management process, employees must confirm the preferred language of communication at the onset, in addition to reviewing the policy.
- There is a section on the Intranet including information on second-language training and links to tools and resources to help employees practice their second Official Language.

FOCUS 3

Official bilingualism remains a fundamental value conveyed by GNB and its employees. The following activity was completed:

- The department gathered information and compiled status updates through its established accountability and monitoring mechanisms to complete the section in the department's annual report dealing with Official Languages.

FOCUS 4

Ensure Public Service employees have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the *Official Languages Act*, relevant policies, regulations, and the province's obligations with respect to Official Languages:

- The department regularly distributed information regarding Official Languages policies and guidelines to staff through the quarterly newsletter or other communication tools.
- Employees are often reminded of their obligations under the *Official Languages Act* as well provided them with the links for the e-learning modules Language of Work and Language of Service found on the GNB Knowledge Center. Completion rates were tracked for current employees and new hires.

CONCLUSION

Implementation of the department's Official Languages Action Plan has heightened employees' awareness of the responsibilities of the *Official Languages Act* in day-to-day work, and in the quality of programs and services provided to the public. The department continues to promote both the Language of Service and Language of Work policy through its newsletter and onboarding process.

Summary of recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General

SECTION 1

Name and year of audit area with link to online document	Recommendations
	Total
Risk of Contamination in Public Housing Units – 2020 Vol. III https://agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2020V3/Chap8e.pdf	2

Implemented Recommendations	Actions Taken
8.17 We recommend Social Development work with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure to more aggressively address radon remediation in public housing units.	<p>Social Development has currently tested over 27% of the approximately 4,600 public housing units in New Brunswick. Social Development increased the 2021-22 budget by \$150,000 annually to \$750,000 to target radon testing and remediation. This will allow testing of 425 units per year which would decrease the amount of time to completion of all NBHC units to eight years (2028).</p> <p>Limiting Factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Testing takes 90 days to complete and can only be completed in the winter months (because it needs to be done when windows are more likely to be closed so the test evaluates the highest possible Radon concentration in the unit). This leaves a 120-day period to complete the tests (Dec-March). - Radon remediation is a specialized industry and requires contractors who are certified to perform the work. The availability of contractors is the limited which in turn limits the number of units that can be remediated.
8.21 We recommend Social Development notify public housing unit tenants in a timely manner of test results indicating a presence of radon and the remediation process being undertaken.	<p>As of November 2020, tenants of all units that have tested positive have been notified in writing. All tenants of the remaining units will be notified in writing within 60 days of positive test results being received by the Department. Additionally, all positive units will be “flagged” within the HousingNB database and new tenants will be advised of their unit’s status as it pertains to the presence of radon and radon mitigation systems.</p>

Name and year of audit area with link to online document	Recommendations
	Total
Update on Nursing Home Planning and Aging Strategy – 2020 Vol. II https://agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2020V2/Chap4e.pdf	6

Implemented Recommendations	Actions Taken
4.35 We recommend the Department of Social Development review the 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan to ensure targets are clear, realistic, achievable and properly resourced to meet the planned outcomes in a timely manner.	The department agrees with the recommendation to review the existing plan. As reported, challenges such as staff turnover, competing priorities, and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in delays. The department has reviewed the 2018-2023 NH Plan, an updated plan has been prepared, which includes each project with status of projects underway and estimated timelines for the remaining projects.
4.45 We recommend the Department of Finance and Treasury Board revise the ASD Advisory Services unit's Standard Operating Procedures to include formal documentation standards for financial models and other analyses completed by the unit. The standards should, at a minimum, require retaining documentation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - roles and responsibilities of individuals involved; - all sources of inputs and assumptions used; - the review of financial models; and - adherence to the Standard Operating Procedures. 	The ASD Advisory Services Standard Operating Procedures have been revised to include documentation for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - additional details on the roles and responsibilities of individuals involved; - additional details for sources of inputs and assumptions used; - the review process for verifying financial models; and - a post-project checklist and process to verify that the Standard Operating Procedures were adhered to.
4.46 We continue to recommend the Department of Social Development evaluate whether there is an economic benefit to providing nursing home beds under the for profit operated model versus the traditional model. This should include a comparison of actual costs and quality of service.	The department analyzed and developed an RFQ/RFP model approach for nursing home services. This RFQ/RFP model was rolled out in 2014-15 for the procurement of 60 nursing home beds, and the contract was awarded during 2015-16. This approach was found to be more cost effective for a 60-bed nursing home than the traditional model. The approach (model) used to evaluate the options was supported by the AG auditors. The department monitors the cost of services of each nursing home annually and a model will be developed to measure the financial performance of the homes as part of this analysis. With respect to the quality of care, indicators will be developed based on inspections and data from the LTCF tool that is being reported to CIHI. Although homes have begun to report data to CIHI to be leveraged for this exercise, work is necessary to interpret and validate the quality of that data for this purpose. The department recognizes there is a need to provide a long-term comparison of the costs and quality of service of all Nursing Homes and will look to formalize the reporting and communication plan.

Implemented Recommendations	Actions Taken
<p>4.73 We recommend the Department of Social Development develop performance indicators with specific targets for each action item under the Aging Strategy, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders.</p>	<p>The department agrees with the recommendation to develop and report on specific targets under the Aging Strategy. In order to facilitate this, the department in collaboration with the Department of Health, implemented an Aging in Place Committee in 2020. The committee has identified key priorities and desired outcomes for seniors and developed an Aging in Place Framework identifying 13 initiatives to be implemented between Fall 2020 and March 2022, to help achieve these outcomes. It includes actionable milestones and indicators and targets for tracking progress. This Framework has taken high level strategic recommendations and created measurable initiatives that will facilitate reporting and clear communication of progress. The Aging in Place Framework also includes a plan for stakeholder consultation to ensure efforts are aligned towards common outcomes for seniors. Examples of indicators that will be tracked include: Increase % of 65+ clients receiving home/community-based care; and reduce median time from contact to placement.</p>
<p>4.74 We recommend the Department of Social Development develop a formal process for monitoring action items under the Aging Strategy and verifying implementation.</p>	<p>The department agrees with the recommendations to develop a formal process for monitoring and verifying implementation. Although the department continues to monitor the implementation of all actions, the department, through the Aging in Place Framework, and in collaboration with the Department of Health, will implement a formal process for communicating and reporting against actions in the Framework. This process will verify implementation and evaluate the outcomes. Decisions to continue or not to continue actions, based on outcomes, will be tracked and included in the communications and reporting.</p>
<p>4.88 We recommend the Department of Social Development publicly report actual outcomes compared to planned or expected outcomes under the Aging Strategy and the Nursing Home Plan. Reporting should provide explanations for gaps between plans and results.</p>	<p>The department agrees with the recommendations to develop a formal process for monitoring and verifying implementation. Although the department continues to monitor the implementation of all actions, the department, through the Aging in Place Framework, and in collaboration with the Department of Health, will implement a formal process for communicating and reporting against actions in the Framework. This process will verify implementation and evaluate the outcomes. Decisions to continue or not to continue actions, based on outcomes, will be tracked and included in the communications and reporting.</p>

Name and year of audit area with link to online document	Recommendations
	Total
Group Homes and Specialized Placements – 2019 Vol. II https://agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2019V2/Chap3e.pdf	16

Implemented Recommendations	Actions Taken
<p>3.53 We recommend the Department of Social Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – develop and implement Child in Care practice standards to specifically address children taken into temporary care; and – develop and implement standards for specialized placements. 	<p>The department accepts this recommendation and implementation is in progress. The department is conducting an ongoing review of existing standards, competencies and practices to ensure alignment among and between all resources for children in care and to make them more outcome-based and measurable. The Child Specific Placement Standards and the Kinship Care Model standards have been finalized and implemented. Standards for Children in Temporary Care are currently being finalized. The department is reviewing existing specialized placements and complex cases for opportunities and best practice.</p>
<p>3.59 We recommend the Department of Social Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – include in their standards, specific key performance indicators for each standard; – set a minimum level of performance in line with the performance indicator(s) specified; and – update monitoring procedures to include guidance in measuring the performance indicator(s) for each standard. 	<p>The department accepts this recommendation and implementation is in progress. The department's vision of safety, wellbeing, a sense of belonging and lifelong connections for every child/youth in NB was developed in August 2020. Specific outcomes were identified to achieve this vision. The department is conducting an ongoing review of existing standards, competencies and practices to ensure alignment among and between all resources for children in care and to make them more outcome-based and measurable. The department is reviewing best practices from other jurisdictions through participation on the National Sub-Committee on Placement Resources. The Child Specific Placement Standards were finalized and implemented in Spring 2020. The department will explore developing a standardized template tool for key performance indicators.</p>
<p>3.66 We recommend the Department of Social Development integrate key procedures, guidelines, policies and standards into their current and future standards.</p>	<p>The department has implemented this recommendation. The Kinship Care Model standards, completed in April 2020, move the interim policy on Kinship Services into practice standards. Standards for Professional Care Homes that include procedures, guidelines and policies have been drafted and are currently being finalized.</p>
<p>3.67 We recommend the Department of Social Development revise the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Children's Residential Services Practice Standards for Child in Care Residential Centres; and – Children's Residential Centre Service Standards for Operators to increase integration with policies, guidelines, procedures and other mandatory standards. 	<p>The department accepts this recommendation and implementation is in progress. In 2021, the department is planning a review of standards, competencies and practices to ensure alignment among and between all resources for children in care and to make them more outcome-based and measurable. The Department intends to engage key stakeholders in this process. The Department has re-structured and introduced a Placement Resource-focused team in Child and Youth Services.</p>
<p>3.95 We recommend the Department of Social Development develop and implement standardized service level agreements across all regions for all specialized placement facilities.</p>	<p>The department accepts this recommendation and implementation is in progress. The department is working to develop a contract template for specialized placements with the contract administration team in 2021. A senior administrator has been assigned to this project to develop a dashboard and ensure the project is completed in 2021.</p>

<p>3.101 We recommend the Department of Social Development develop and implement a documented strategy to address group home capacity and service delivery challenges facing the Province. This strategy must align with current Provincial child welfare strategies.</p>	<p>The department has implemented this recommendation. In February 2020, a stakeholder engagement session was held to explore a provincial strategy to enhance placement resources for children in care. The concept of Professional Care Homes was well supported as resource for children with complex needs. A follow-up stakeholder engagement session was held in March 2021 to discuss implementation of Professional Care Homes in 2021. The model includes competencies, standards and outcomes and was announced in April 2021 with plans for the first home in Fall 2021. This model aligns with Child Protection System Enhancement efforts. In March 2021, the Department tabled a plan to address the lack of appropriate placement resources and effectively monitor care standards and practices. The Department will continue to engage stakeholders, ISD and the Network of Excellence in the strategy to strengthen the continuum of care.</p>
<p>3.108 We recommend the Department of Social Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - forecast regional and provincial demand for placement services; and - standardize resource planning procedures to be used by regions and implemented provincially. 	<p>The department accepts this recommendation and implementation is in progress. The department will be developing tools to track progress against performance indicators and to forecast demand for placement resources (provincially and by zone). This will include reviewing the Children's Residential Services Practice Standards for Child Care Residential Centres and Child Care Residential Centres and Child Care Residential Centre Service Standards for Operators for best practices. The department will also explore opportunities to align with other processes underway within the department to enhance capacity for efficient forecasting and planning.</p>
<p>3.115 We recommend the Department of Social Development design and implement case planning procedures for regional personnel, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - standardized content requirements supporting achievable outcomes for children taken into care; and regular case plan review and revision requirements to conform with standards. - regular case plan review and revision requirements to conform with standards. 	<p>The department accepts this recommendation and implementation is in progress. Standards for Children in Temporary Care are currently being finalized. As part of the complex case review, the Department is looking at how child specific placements can be standardized across the province. The Department has assigned a senior administrator to lead this project.</p>
<p>3.121 We recommend the Department of Social Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - comply with standards and jointly develop care plans with group home and specialized placement Operators; - standardize requirements and documented procedures for care plans to include objectives and actions that align with Department case plans; and - set specific requirements for regular review of care plan changes by Department social workers. 	<p>The department accepts this recommendation and implementation is in progress. The department is exploring assessment tool options to guide service providers toward well-defined measurable goals and outcomes in care planning for children and youth. The department is committed to the ongoing review of Permanency Planning and other Family Engagement Strategies to ensure the best possible outcomes for children, youth and families.</p>

<p>3.131 We recommend the Department of Social Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure required training is completed in regional offices, group homes and specialized placement facilities before caseloads are assigned to personnel; and - provide cultural awareness training across regional offices, group homes and specialized placement facilities. 	<p>The department has implemented this recommendation. In collaboration with the Departments of Health, Public Safety and Education and Early Childhood Development through the Network of Excellence, the department coordinates trauma-informed care coaching. The department provides CORE training system for staff which includes cultural understanding and Indigenous Awareness Training. A training dashboard is being developed. The department has solidified a partnership with the Department of Health to provide clinical wrap-around supports to children placed in Professional Care Homes in Fall 2021. The department will engage with the NB Association of Youth Residential Services to identify training needs and support learning and application of key concepts related to trauma-informed care. The department is partnering with Education and Early Childhood Development to provide access to online learning for Group Home Staff on Applied Behaviour Analysis for working with children on the autism spectrum.</p>
<p>3.138 We recommend the Department of Social Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establish independent living and transition to adulthood planning requirements and documented procedures to be completed well in advance of the child's anticipated transition date; and - require regular reviews of the preparation for independent living plan by Department social workers in conjunction with Operators of group homes and specialized placement facilities. 	<p>The department accepts this recommendation and implementation is in progress. The department is working to evolve the Disability Support Program with the goal of creating a smooth transition for clients as they become adults. The department is also reviewing existing specialized placements and complex cases to identify opportunities to provide a more consistent, high level of service across the province and has assigned a senior administrator to the project. This includes working with providers to ensure shared accountability for achieving positive outcomes for children and youth. The department will explore how to enhance the existing Independent Living and Transition to Adulthood planning process in the review of Group Home Standards. As part of the plan to reform social assistance in 2021, the department is looking to explore barriers for employment for youth and young adults living with a disability and opportunities to provide support.</p>
<p>3.145 We recommend the Department of Social Development evaluate options to improve or replace the NB Families information system with the aim of increasing efficiency and effectiveness in case management practices.</p>	<p>The department is committed to the ongoing review of NB Families functionality for improved monitoring and reporting and implemented changes in 2020 and again in 2021.</p>
<p>3.146 We recommend the Department of Social Development collect and maintain high quality residential placement capacity and service capability data from group home and specialized placement Operators for use in Department planning, monitoring and reporting processes.</p>	<p>The department accepts this recommendation and implementation is in progress. In 2021, the department will be developing measures to collect and maintain high quality data for use in planning and monitoring, and to increase transparency by providing more regular reporting to the public. The department will also be exploring a digital option to facilitate the sharing of data between operators/providers and the department.</p>
<p>3.154 We recommend the Department of Social Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - document responses and actions taken to address feedback and concerns raised when reviewing Operator completed evaluation forms; and - follow-up on Operator feedback and the results of actions taken to address issues identified in the annual review. 	<p>The department accepts this recommendation and implementation is in progress. The department is conducting an ongoing review of existing standards, competencies and practices to ensure alignment among and between all resources for children in care and to make them more outcome-based and measurable. This will include reviewing the Children's Residential Services Practice Standards for Child Care Residential Centres and Child Care Residential Centres and Child Care Residential Centre Service Standards for Operators for best practices.</p>

<p>3.160 We recommend the Department of Social Development design and implement documented procedures for monitoring and evaluating the performance of specialized placement facilities.</p>	<p>The department accepts this recommendation and implementation is in progress. The department is conducting an ongoing review of existing standards, competencies and practices to ensure alignment among and between all resources for children in care and to make them more outcome-based and measurable. The Child-Specific Placement standards were approved in April 2020 and next steps include developing Child-Specific Placement standards for operators. The department will be developing measures to collect and maintain high quality data for use in planning and monitoring, and to increase transparency by providing more regular reporting to the public. As part of the complex case review, the department is looking at how child specific placements can be standardized across the province.</p>
<p>3.164 We recommend the Department of Social Development publicly provide current statistical information on child welfare programs and publicly report on program performance.</p>	<p>The department accepts this recommendation and implementation is in progress. The Kinship Care Model Standards, completed in April 2020, move the interim policy on Kinship services into practice standards. The Department will be developing measures to collect and maintain high quality data for use in planning and monitoring, and to increase transparency by providing more regular reporting to the public.</p>

SECTION 2

Name and year of audit area with link to online document	Recommendations	
	Total	Implemented
<p>Advisory Services Contract – 2017 Vol. I https://agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2017V1/Chap2e.pdf</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>13 *3 recommendations to be implemented by Service New Brunswick</p>
<p>Nursing Homes – 2016 Vol. I https://agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2016V1/Chap2e.pdf</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>3</p>

Report on the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*

As provided under section 18(1) of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*, the chief executive shall prepare a report of any disclosures of wrongdoing that have been made to a supervisor or designated officer of the portion of the public service for which the chief executive officer is responsible. The Department of Social Development did not receive any disclosures of disclosure(s) of wrongdoing in the 2020-2021 fiscal year.