



**CHAPTER**

**3**

- **THE TRAINING NEEDS  
OF SETTLEMENT  
COUNSELLORS**
- 

# **CURRENT STATUS OF SETTLEMENT COUNSELLOR TRAINING**

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## **THE TRAINING NEEDS OF SETTLEMENT COUNSELLORS**

In this section, we focus on the types of training that settlement counsellors need to do their jobs effectively. We start by examining the current status of training in the field. We then review the five functional areas of settlement work introduced in Chapter 2 and consider a framework for training in these areas.

### **CURRENT STATUS OF SETTLEMENT COUNSELLOR TRAINING COUNSELLOR TRAINING LEVELS**

A survey to assess the training needs of settlement counsellors conducted across Ontario in 1986 found that these counsellors as a group have a high level of formal education. Of the 83 counsellors responding to the survey 62.7% had university-level education, often from countries outside of Canada. This included 22.9% who had post graduate qualifications. (MCC, 1986, p. 1)

However, it was found that settlement counsellors had generally not received training in areas that were directly applicable to settlement work. Although some of the counsellors surveyed had teaching or social work related backgrounds, there was no strong trend towards backgrounds in the human services; many counsellors had completed formal studies that were unrelated to this field of work.

Most counsellors have had to rely on on-the-job training and informal workshops to learn their craft. Skilled counsellors are usually self-taught - building on their own life experiences in the case of immigrant counsellors - and/or have had skilled colleagues to learn from in their workplaces. While these are valuable methods, in some skill areas counsellors continue to feel ill-equipped. For example, counselling is a major job function for most settlement counsellors. Of the 20 participants in the second stage of the CSISW course (all of whom were experienced counsellors) 70% stated on their application forms that they had had no previous training in counselling.

OCASI has also conducted training needs assessment as part of the Annual Professional Development Conferences in 1996, 1997 and 1998, through other OCASI training activities from approximately 600 settlement service counsellors. The main areas in which the 'training gaps' were identified are Settlement counselling skills, Employment counselling, Funding issues, Community Development, Organizational Development, Management skills and working with new technology.

The increasing demand from settlement counsellors for training indicates a prevailing need for more than what is currently available.

## **EXISTING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

Until recently, there have been very few places for settlement counsellors to turn for relevant training. In a study conducted by the Ontario government in 1987 courses offered at seventy-three institutions and agencies across Ontario were evaluated as to whether they provided appropriate training for settlement counsellors. The criteria used to evaluate the courses were:

1. accessibility of the courses - measured by length of the course (preferably 12 weeks or less), time offered (preferably evenings or weekends) and target group (available to the general public)
2. relevance of the courses - measured by whether the content included cross-cultural communication skills, political knowledge, understanding of immigrant issues and practical skills orientation

*(MCC, 1987b, p. 2-3)*

The conclusion of this study was that there was virtually no appropriate ongoing training available in Ontario for settlement counsellors. Training offered in community agencies was relevant but usually only accessible to employees in the particular agency. Training offered in educational institutions was often not relevant. The study concluded that these inadequacies:

“...represent major barriers to the abilities of present and potential settlement counsellors to acquire and maintain the levels of skill necessary to respond fully to the demands of their jobs”.

*(MCC, 1987b, p. 8)*

OCASI, recognizing the lack of training opportunities, and realizing that its member agencies could improve services to immigrants by improving the skills of counsellors in the field, started offering skills training conferences for front-line counsellors and agency administrators in 1982. Beginning in 1987, OCASI's collaboration with George Brown College on the CSISW pilot project was an attempt to combine a community-based approach, which the above-mentioned study identified as the type of training setting most favoured by settlement counsellors, with accreditation from a recognized educational institution. The success of the pilot project led to George Brown College offering in 1990 the first certificate course for settlement counsellors in Ontario.

However, this course has now been discontinued and currently the training options available to people interested in settlement counselling is to do a mainstream social work course and then learn about settlement issues and counselling skills on the job.

## **BACKGROUND ON THE LACK OF TRAINING**

Why has there been historically no training for settlement counsellors? One reason is the low priority given to immigrant settlement by the larger community. Immigrants have always been expected to “get along”, to try and “fit in” with the dominant culture - if necessary, to sacrifice the first generation in each family to the settlement process. As well, one of the principles governing Canada's immigration policies in the past was to select immigrants who would preserve “the fundamental composition of the Canadian population.” (Burnet and Palmer, 1988, p. 39) The easiest way to accomplish this was to recruit white immigrants from Europe, which is what the Canadian government did for many years. As long as immigrants were mainly white Europeans - predominately British - it was easier for the established society to maintain an assimilationist attitude towards newcomers and to ignore their settlement needs.

The lack of attention paid to the process of settlement has traditionally resulted in low levels of government funding for settlement agencies. This in turn has meant inadequate resources within agencies for staff training, and a lack of long-term planning for staff development. Recent research shows that 72% of immigrant service agencies in Ontario today report their greatest difficulty as lack of funding and staff resources to meet an increasing demand for services from their clients (OCASI Immigrant Services Database, 1989). When agencies are struggling to fulfil the basic service requirements of their clients, devoting staff time and money to training assumes a low priority. As well, agencies find it hard to justify staff absences to funders who judge an agency's performance by statistics on the number of clients seen by the counsellors.

The history of community services has also shaped agency perceptions regarding the need for training of counsellors. In the early part of this century when there were very few agencies serving immigrants, newcomers were informally assisted by family and friends or by the churches in their communities (MC, 1987, p. 4). As community agencies developed, many through the efforts of committed volunteers, settlement work was seen

as a “calling” or a moral duty - something done out of the goodness of one’s heart - more than a professional career for which professional training was needed. This “charitable” view of settlement services - that they are part of the so-called “voluntary sector” - has been internalized by the board and staff of some agencies, who as a result have not given staff development a high priority.

As well, a lack of understanding of the complex nature of the settlement process meant there was little emphasis on helping counsellors develop the special skills required for the job. When settlement work was (and still is, in some cases) seen as a more limited function - for example, as a short-term, reception service for newcomers - the need for training was not seen as critical. As one counsellor has said: “We were not looking at as many aspects of the human being back then.” As our awareness has grown of the real parameters of the work - that settlement counsellors are required to be information specialists, family counsellors, interpreters, crisis counsellors, advocates, and more - a clearer understanding of the need for training has developed.

## **BENEFITS OF TRAINING**

Significant benefits to society follow from providing appropriate training for settlement counsellors. Training front-line staff ultimately leads to a consistently higher quality of service to immigrants. As well, it means greater counsellor effectiveness in dealing with the other side of the settlement equation - the established society. Clearly, in the two-way settlement process described in Chapter 1, if the settlement counsellor is more skilled, there is a greater likelihood of both the society and its immigrant populations having their needs met.

From feedback from course participants in the evaluation phase of the CSISW project we know specifically how counsellors feel training benefits them and their clients. A number of participants commented that one of the most significant outcomes for them of taking the course was the increased confidence they felt in their skills and knowledge as counsellors. Some mentioned that the training reduced their frustration level. As one participant in the second course noted:

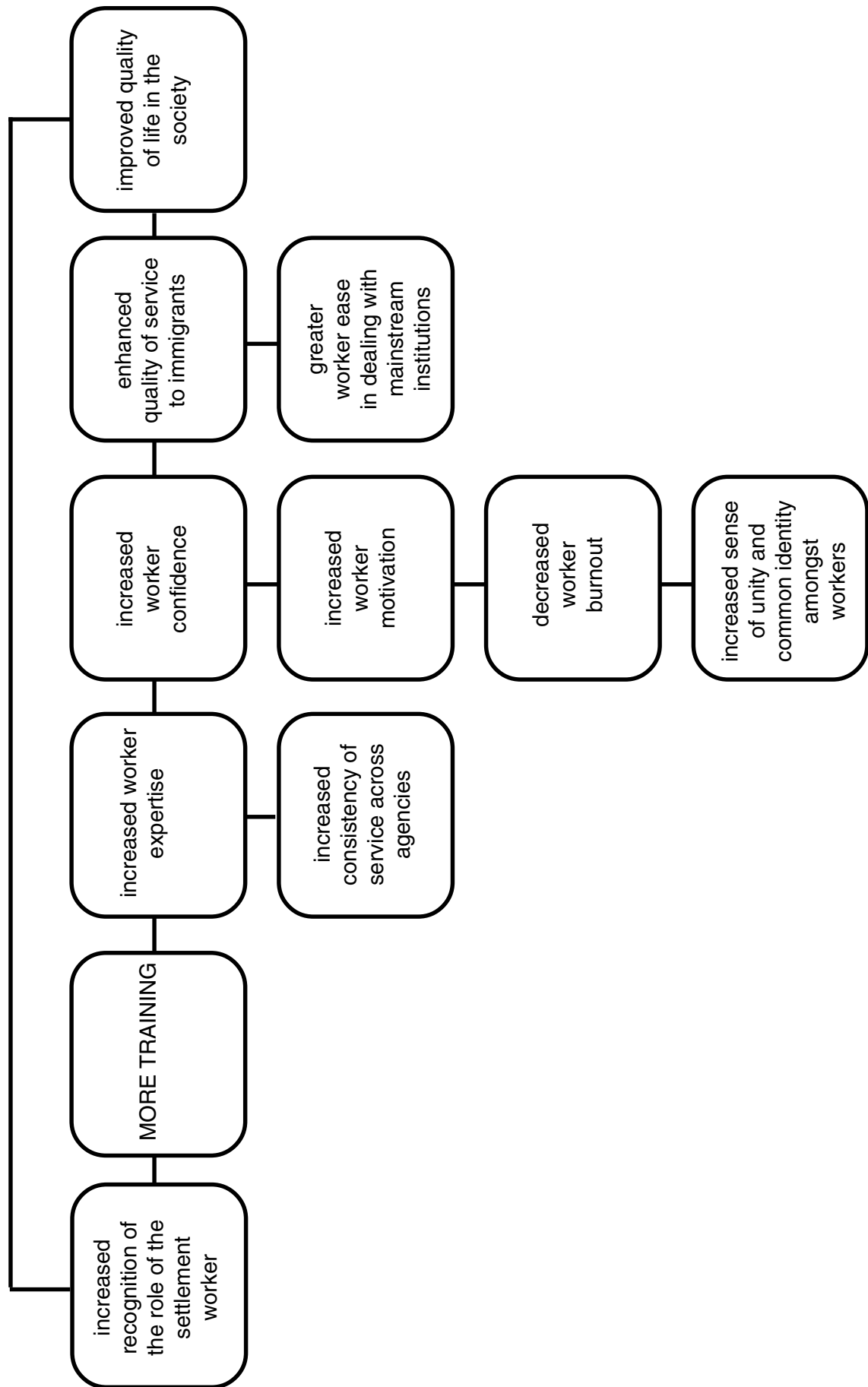
I found [it to be] a very valuable and important discovery that I am not the only one who suffers and struggles in the process of helping clients. Thus I overcame [my] self-doubt and have acquired good confidence in me due to the training.

Other people believed that they had acquired a greater sensitivity to the needs of their clients and were more effective in advocating for clients with established institutions.

From their feedback we know that the feeling of confidence which results from effective training helps reduce the high stress levels among settlement counsellors which often lead to burnout. Comparing experiences and talking about shared problems with other participants in training courses gives counsellors, who often feel isolated in their work, a sense of common purpose and mutual support.

The cumulative effect of these benefits is illustrated in Figure 1.

**Figure 1 – BENEFITS OF TRAINING SETTLEMENT WORKERS**



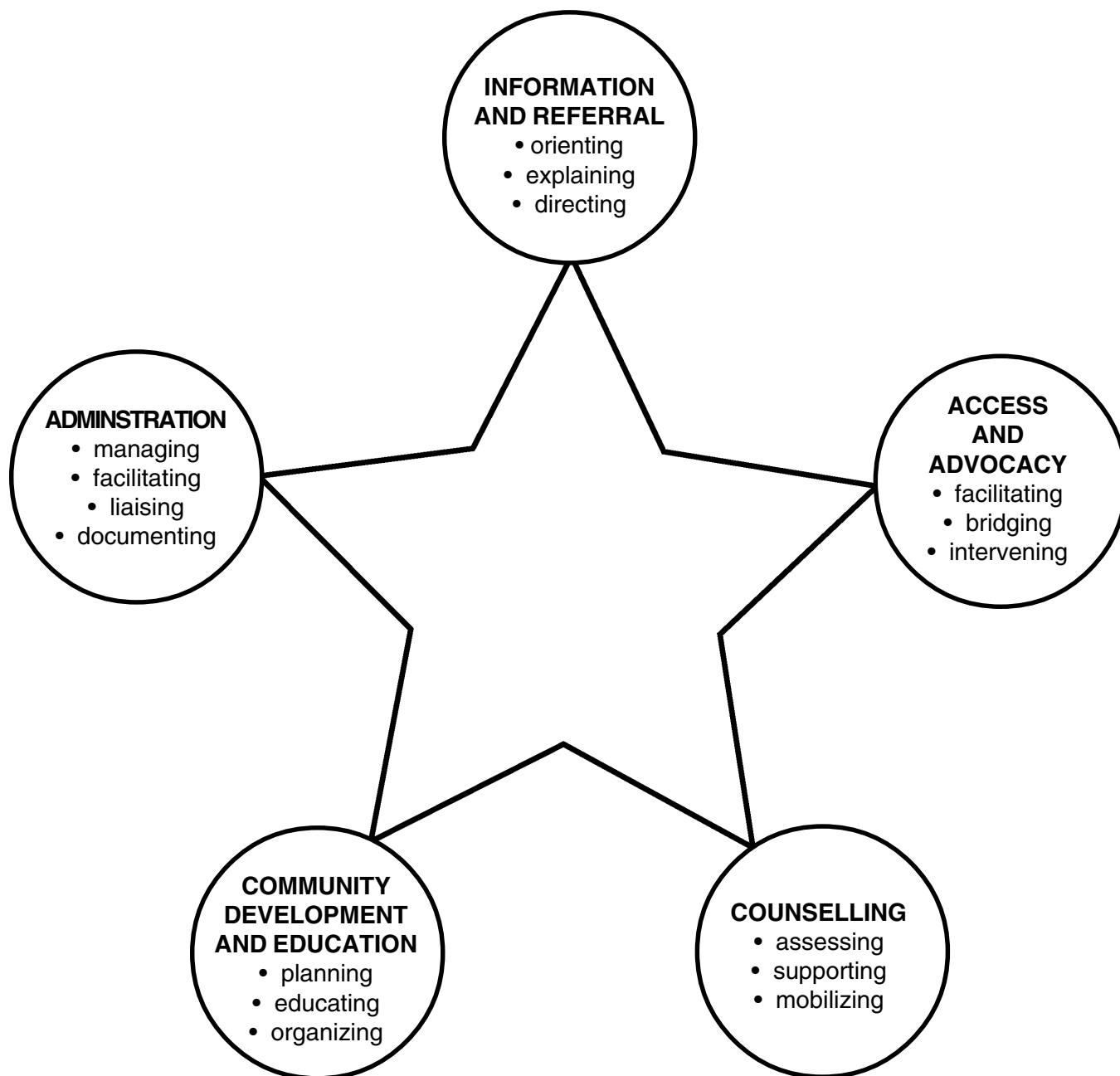
## TRAINING NEEDS

How do we as agencies and institutions interested in addressing the need for settlement counsellor training begin to shape our training agendas? In this section an overview is given of the areas of settlement work in which training is needed.

### FUNCTIONAL AREAS IN SETTLEMENT WORK

In Chapter 2 we looked at a composite profile of the various job functions that settlement counsellors typically perform. These fell into five main areas, as shown in Figure 2. We will refer to these as functional areas. In each functional area, the general nature of the activities is summarized in key words:

Figure 2 – FIVE FUNCTIONAL AREAS OF SETTLEMENT WORK



## **OCCUPATIONAL COMPETENCIES FOR SETTLEMENT COUNSELLORS<sup>1</sup>**

Occupational analysis, or the development of occupational competencies, helps to identify the functions, skills, abilities and values of best practice in a worker (or practitioner) in a specific field. Occupational Competencies describe best practice in employment. Each set of competencies was developed from a process that involved asking experienced practitioners and supervisors a series of questions about what they do, how they do it and why. This process is called “functional analysis”.

Occupational competencies are useful to the immigrant-serving sector because they can:

- demonstrate the varied and complex nature of the work being done
- provide a coherent structure for training
- facilitate career mobility across social services
- enhance credibility of occupational areas
- foster effective partnerships and
- lead to better support among client groups.

The occupational competency framework gives us a map of what work in the community social services looks like. It provides a clear, contemporary indication of the expectations of the workplace. Such a description can help:

- practitioners to determine how they can continue to improve in their work to meet the ever changing needs of their clients and communities
- educators and trainers better understand what individuals need to be able to know and do in today’s workplace, and
- employers in their efforts to create a more flexible and effective workforce - - now and in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> This section has been adapted from the work done by the Multilateral Task Force on Training, Career Pathing and Labour Mobility, British Columbia.

Across all functions and in all roles, practitioners need to understand the essential concepts relating to:

**SETTLEMENT** which include:

- current theories of the effects and adjustments after migration
- processes and stages of individual adjustment to migration
- theories of personal and social change
- the variables that influence settlement
- the impacts of major life changes
- the effects of migration on family and economic life

**CANADIAN SOCIAL ORGANIZATION**

which include:

- theories of organizational behaviour and change
- theories of power
- decision-making processes
- nature and implementation of public policy
- legislative structures as they apply to federal, provincial and municipal areas of responsibility
- general knowledge of Canadian history

**CULTURE** which include:

- definitions of culture
- theories of cultural change
- the existence of variations within cultures
- applications of specific cultural knowledge

**MULTICULTURALISM, HUMAN RIGHTS AND RACISM** which include:

- Human Rights and Multiculturalism legislation, policies and practices
- definitions and theories of racism including historical perspective
- theories and consequences of stereotyping and bias
- impacts of discrimination
- relationship with other aspects of diversity and equity

**CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCIES**

which include:

- theories and practices of cross-cultural communication
- theories and models of cross-cultural counselling and support
- values, systems and beliefs
- values clarification process

**PROFESSIONAL ETHICS** which include:

- codes of ethics produced by professional association(s)
- relevant legal and/or contractual obligations that guide practice
- role-appropriate boundaries in the working relationship
- client privacy and confidentiality
- impacts of personal values and philosophy on practice
- conflict of interests and their implications

Across all functions and in all roles, practitioners need to have the ability to:

### **THINK CRITICALLY AND ANALYZE INFORMATION EFFECTIVELY**

It is essential that practitioners are able to:

- identify strengths and weaknesses of ideas and proposals
- clarify, assess, evaluate and interpret information in complex environments
- analyze client experiences and situations holistically
- apply assessment and evaluation skills to resources, services and people
- make decisions

### **COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY IN A LANGUAGE SUITABLE TO THE CONTEXT**

It is essential that practitioners are able to:

- receive, comprehend and interpret complex verbal and non-verbal messages
- provide, seek and clarify information with supervisors, co-workers, clients and community members
- demonstrate skills in cross-cultural communication
- write clearly, concisely and accurately to the level of proficiency of high school leaving
- read to interpret and extract information

### **DEVELOP AND SUSTAIN PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE**

It is essential that practitioners are able to:

- act with personal integrity within established professional and organizational code of ethics
- make decisions based on critical analysis
- take responsibility for their own actions
- recognize and assert role and personal limitations
- apply interviewing, assessment and clarifying skills
- apply basic and cross-cultural counseling skills
- locate, access and use resources
- make referrals and conduct follow-up
- demonstrate cross-cultural competence
- promote inclusion of diverse groups
- demonstrate accountability to the organization they work for
- identify and plan for personal growth

Across all functions and in all roles, practitioners need to have the **ability** to:

### **ADVOCATE**

It is essential that practitioners are able to:

- use advocacy skills in a variety of settings to promote integration and organizational change
- think strategically and plan on behalf of others
- initiate and sustain activities and dialogue
- develop leadership skills in self and others
- liaise effectively with practitioners and agencies
- work effectively within various contexts and processes
- apply confrontation, negotiation, and persuasion and conflict resolution skills
- represent constituency within a variety of forums
- select appropriate communication media

### **BUILD AND MAINTAIN EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS**

It is essential that practitioners are able to:

- be self-aware and develop interpersonal skills
- facilitate the exchange of information
- develop trust relationships
- give and receive feedback
- develop and maintain networks and professional relationships
- participate in collaborative team work in the organization
- maintain working boundaries with clients and organization
- liaise effectively with community members and/or families
- work effectively with supervisors and interdisciplinary teams including counselors, settlement practitioners, community developers, advocates and social planners

### **RESPOND TO ISSUES AND PLAN**

It is essential that practitioners are able to:

- identify, inquire about, and evaluate emerging issues or problems
- manage and organize time and professional activities
- set priorities
- conduct research and assessments
- set goals and objectives collaboratively
- develop short and long term action plans

Across all functions and in all roles, practitioners need to **know** or **be able to find out about**:

### **COMMUNITY CONTEXT AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

Practitioners need to have access to in-depth and accurate information about:

- the community or communities they serve, including historical, demographic, and specific barriers
- available and appropriate community resources
- how to access government officials and access systems
- global migration and refugee issues

### **LEGISLATION AND POLICIES**

Practitioners need to know about:

- a variety of complex government systems
- pertinent and relevant local, provincial, and federal legislation
- pertinent and relevant local, provincial, and federal policies and procedures
- advocates and social planners

**Figure 3 – A FRAMEWORK FOR TRAINING SETTLEMENT WORKERS**

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL	ACCESS AND ADVOCACY	COUNSELLING	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION	ADMINISTRATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• information management</li> <li>• keeping up-to-date on changes in relevant legislation/government programs and services</li> <li>• understanding institutional structures and routes to accessing services</li> <li>• understanding institutional terminology and jargon (e.g. health, legal, social welfare)</li> <li>• accessing community services and resources</li> <li>• designing orientation programs for newcomers</li> <li>• survival life skills for newcomers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• detecting systemic causes for client difficulties</li> <li>• human rights legislation/complaints procedures</li> <li>• employment standards legislation and employment equity programs</li> <li>• appeal procedures related to legislation, policy and programs</li> <li>• understanding the role of workers in mainstream institutions</li> <li>• cultural interpretation (see Chapter 1, Endnote 6)</li> <li>• negotiating skills</li> <li>• writing skills for communicating with institutions</li> <li>• professional ethics for settlement workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• counselling values, goals and processes</li> <li>• interviewing skills</li> <li>• client assessment/priority-setting</li> <li>• crisis intervention</li> <li>• family counselling</li> <li>• case coordination</li> <li>• Cross-cultural group work</li> <li>• mental health issues</li> <li>• employment counselling including working with foreign trained professionals, job search, access to training and re-qualification)</li> <li>• counselling for special needs – seniors, youth, torture victims, assaulted women, children at risk</li> <li>• running support groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• outreach strategies</li> <li>• community needs assessments</li> <li>• program planning and evaluation</li> <li>• group facilitation</li> <li>• training techniques</li> <li>• networking/coalition building</li> <li>• social action strategies</li> <li>• leadership development</li> <li>• anti-racist education</li> <li>• Civil participation and political literacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• client documentation</li> <li>• report-writing</li> <li>• writing grant proposals</li> <li>• fundraising</li> <li>• researching and contacting non-traditional funding sources</li> <li>• Volunteers: recruiting, training and supervision;</li> <li>• team-building</li> <li>• Board/staff relations</li> <li>• time management</li> <li>• stress management</li> </ul>

## A FRAMEWORK FOR TRAINING SETTLEMENT COUNSELLORS

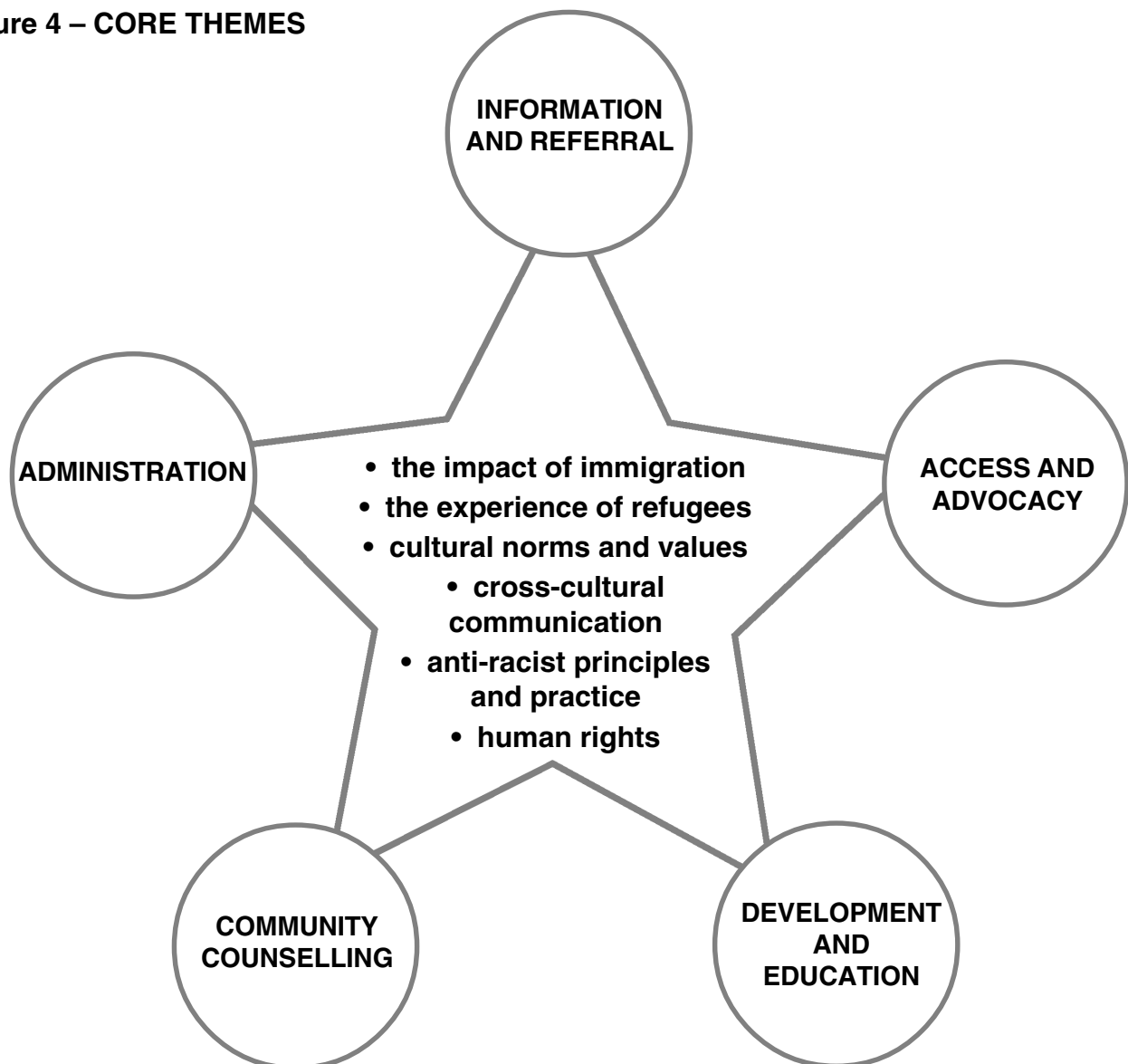
In Figure 3 an overview of possible training topics related to job functions is presented in a framework for training. Settlement counsellors in needs assessments conducted in the community over the last few years have identified these topics.

The framework for training does not presume to be definitive; rather, it is suggestive and should stimulate further thinking on what other areas of training need to be added. It can therefore be used as a tool for building programs or as a departure point for discussing other models for training.

### CORE THEMES FOR TRAINING

There are certain concepts or themes that are so central to settlement work that they need to be integrated into training in each of the five functional areas of settlement work. Integrating these themes into the diagram presented in Figure 2 gives us Figure 4, in which these concepts are shown at the core of settlement service. The core themes should underlie all training for settlement counsellors, to enable them to develop the attitudes, knowledge and skills which they need to work towards the goals of settlement.

Figure 4 – CORE THEMES



Those designing training units should ask themselves:

How do the core themes relate to the area of training we are developing?

How do we make sure that the themes are integrated into our training content and methodology?

The following are examples of how this can be done:

1. A workshop on the role of institutional counsellors (under ACCESS AND ADVOCACY on the framework for training) can include an anti-racist perspective by discussing with settlement counsellors strategies they can use if they or their clients encounter difficulty accessing services because of racist attitudes on the part of workers in institutions.
2. Training in family counselling (under COUNSELLING on the framework) can examine the impact of immigration on the family and prepare counsellors to help families experiencing conflict arising from this source.
3. A team-building workshop (under ADMINISTRATION on the framework) can help members of an agency staff explore the cultural norms and values that influence the working dynamic, and heighten their awareness of cross-cultural communication issues that affect staff relationships.

## **CHOOSING TRAINING PRIORITIES**

The framework for training offers a broad spectrum of choices for those developing training workshops, courses or programs for settlement counsellors. Where to focus on the spectrum will depend on many factors, related to the variables mentioned in the “What determines the scope of services?” section of Section 1 - for example, the needs of clients in the community, the skills and experience levels of counsellors, the mandate of the agency.

Counsellors who are new to the job, for instance, will often need immediate and intensive work in the first functional area - Information and Referral - to survive in their jobs. Without knowledge of the system and how it works, it is difficult to begin serving clients. On the other hand, counsellors in communities most affected by systemic racism may urgently require training in the Access and Advocacy area, along with increased skills in Community Development and Education.

A comprehensive training program could progress through the five functional areas in the order in which they appear in the framework, or it could combine areas in an order which suits particular training objectives. For example, Information and Referral and Access and Advocacy would be a logical pairing when the aim is to stress an advocacy-based approach to all services. Training in the Counselling area could be combined with work on Community Development and Education when the objective is to build awareness of the counsellor’s role as a gatherer of information on community needs and problems.

The following are questions that may help those involved in planning training decide on their priorities.

1. What barriers do members of our immigrant community face when interacting with the established community? To what extent is the established community able/willing to access the human resource potential of our community? What types of training would help our settlement counsellors to become better facilitators of this interaction?
2. What are the needs and expectations of our clients related to the role of our agency and of our settlement service staff that our counsellors have difficulty addressing? What type of training would help our counsellors overcome these difficulties?
3. What do we see as the most important job functions of our counsellors? Do they have the skills, knowledge and understanding to handle these responsibilities well; if not, what training do they need?
4. Are we fulfilling our agency’s mandate? If not, is there further training that would enable our counsellors to be more effective in carrying out the mandate?
5. Which of these questions for us is the most important?

## **CONCLUSION**

Settlement counsellors need training. And for groups who are in a position to pioneer new programs for settlement counsellors, a challenging opportunity exists to fill the current gap in training. In this section we have suggested a framework which can be used for categorizing the training needs of settlement counsellors and choosing priorities.

Part I of the guide has described the context in which settlement counselling takes place. In Part II, a series of training modules is presented which serve as tools for developing the skills and knowledge of counsellors providing settlement counselling.

## **FOLLOW-UP TRAINING ACTIVITIES**

The activities below are based on the discussions of the training needs of settlement counsellors in Chapter 3. They can be used in a workshop setting with either of the following groups:

- settlement counsellors who are interested in further exploring the nature of their work and their training needs
- program developers who are planning training courses for settlement counsellors

### **ACTIVITY 1 - EXPANDING THE FRAMEWORK FOR TRAINING**

**To the trainer:**

In small groups, ask participants to list all the activities they have carried out in their jobs in the last week. If the group is composed of program developers, ask them to list the activities of the settlement counsellors they are planning training for. Have each small group then compile a master list on flipchart paper of the most common job functions mentioned. This is the equivalent of a job description for settlement counsellors based on the group's collective experience.

Have the small groups then come together to post their flipcharts and compare results. Help the group to identify the major categories of work done and name the categories. Post the names of the categories that have been agreed to at the front of the room.

Once the categories have been established, ask the whole group to brainstorm the types of training counsellors need to be effective in each category. List the training needed under each category.

Introduce the group to the Framework for Training Settlement Counsellors (Figure 3) in Chapter 2. Compare it to the data generated in this workshop and have participants discuss how the framework should be adjusted or revamped to reflect participants' experience of settlement work.

### **ACTIVITY 2 - INTEGRATING THE CORE THEMES**

**To the trainer:**

After participants have read "Core themes in training" in Chapter 2, have them explore ways that these concepts could be integrated into all aspects of their work, and into training for their work. First review the core themes with the group and discuss any revisions or additions they would like to make.

Then divide the group into five smaller groups, and assign each group one of the five functional areas in the Framework for Training Settlement Counsellors (Figure 3 in Chapter 2). Have each small group develop several concepts for training sessions in the functional area that their group has been assigned (for example, Information and Referral). Using the training topics suggested in the framework (or other topics generated by the group), the group integrates them with one or more of the core themes. (For example, a group might look at how the core theme of human rights could be integrated into some of the topics under Information and Referral.) Each group should create a minimum of two or three ideas for training sessions in their functional area.

If time allows, have each group develop one of these concepts into a mini training session and deliver it to the larger group.

## ACTIVITY 3 - DISCUSSING PRIORITIES FOR TRAINING

To the trainer:

Have participants review the following list of questions that were supplied in Chapter 2 as a tool for helping groups decide on their priorities for training. (If possible also ask them to re-read “What determines the scope of services?” in Section 1 as background.) Ask the group to comment on the appropriateness of these questions, and add any others they think are important. Invite discussion on question 5.

1. What barriers do members of our immigrant community face when interacting with the established community? To what extent is the established community able/willing to access the human resource potential of our community? What types of training would help our settlement counsellors to become better facilitators of this interaction?
2. What needs and expectations of our clients do our counsellors have difficulty addressing? What type of training would help our counsellors overcome these difficulties?
3. What do we see as the most important job functions of our counsellors? Do they have the skills, knowledge and understanding to handle these responsibilities well? If not, what training do they need?
4. Are we fulfilling our agency’s mandate? If not, is there further training that would enable our counsellors to be more effective in carrying out the mandate?
5. Which of these questions is the most important for us?

Divide the group into four smaller groups (or more, if further questions were added to the list by the group) and have each small group respond to one of the questions from 1 to 4. Leave time for small groups to report the results of their discussions back to the larger group.

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### ENDNOTES

- i. A related initiative elsewhere in Canada is The Settlement Counsellors’ Training Project hosted by the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (Training and Occupational Review Committee) and Grant McEwan Community College in Edmonton, Alberta. This is a part-time program for counsellors in the field, which began in February 1989. In addition, the Refugee Community Counsellors Program was developed at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Manitoba to train immigrant social service counsellors to work within the existing social service system.
- ii. Changes in immigration regulations in the 1960’s and 1970’s ended openly racist selection practices. These changes resulted in large increases in immigrants from sources other than Europe, including Asia and the West Indies. (Burnet and Palmer, 1988, p. 41)
- iii. The Occupational Competency Framework is taken from the final report of the Multicultural Task Force on Training, Career Pathing and Labour Mobility, BC. June 1998.
- iv. The training topics on the framework for training are taken from settlement counsellor training needs assessments conducted by OCASI, George Brown College and the Ministry of Citizenship, between 1985 and 1990. It includes additional training ‘gaps’ identified by settlement service providers as part OCASI’s annual professional Development Conferences and other training programs during the period 1996-1998.