



Community Support Connections



Risk Management Plan

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Introduction

Risk is unavoidable. It transcends virtually every human situation and is present in our daily lives and within public and private sector organizations.

At Community Support Connections (also known as ‘the agency’ throughout), the Board of Directors is responsible for risk oversight. In addition, the Board of Directors are directly responsible for strategic and leadership risks to the organization. The Board of Directors need to satisfy themselves that effective risk management processes are in place and functioning properly.

This Risk Management Plan, which the agency has adopted, is the result of ongoing thinking and consultation. It takes an organization-wide view of risk, rather than an in-depth analysis of specific risks, which are addressed in other organizational plans, in order to establish where the organization will invest its risk management resources.

Community Support Connections’ Risk Management Framework

Risk management is embedded in and influences everything the organization does. To accomplish Community Support Connections’ vision and mission, the organization develops a strategic plan and related work plans and budgets to ensure excellent and safe service provision. Program evaluation, quality improvement initiatives, policy, and accreditation provide accountability to the Board of Directors, funders and the community at large.



A Risk Management Plan operationalizes policy. It articulates how Community Support Connections defines risk, who is responsible for it, how we identify it, how we measure it, as well as the risk assessment and reporting process. Community Support Connections has chosen to adapt best practices from a variety of sources, including, but not limited to:

1. The Committee of Sponsoring Organizations (COSO) of the Treadway Commission Enterprise Risk Management – Integrated Framework;
2. A Framework for Board Oversight of Enterprise Risk from the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada;
3. Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Framework for the Management of Risk and other sources;
4. Accreditation Canada Standards and Required Operating Practices; and
5. Select documents and ideas from Capacity Canada, Imagine Canada, and a variety of community based workshops regarding risk management in the not-for-profit, charitable, volunteer and health care sectors.

The Context

Community Support Connections views risk management as a shared activity and uses a comprehensive approach to improving organizational performance. The agency is committed to managing risks to the organization, our programs and services, clients, volunteers, employees, independent contractors, independent contractors, donors, funders, partners, and other stakeholders.

Community Support Connections provides a range of supports and services to vulnerable older adults and adults with disabilities in our community. There are risks inherent in all facets of our governance and business operations. There are also significant risks inherent in our program delivery models:

- we serve vulnerable populations;
- with the exception of virtual, online services, the services we deliver are either in community settings or people's homes (thereby not always observable); and,
- many of our services are delivered by volunteers and independent contractors (limiting, in some ways, the performance management strategies available).

With the organization's population served in mind, there are many leading practices in the voluntary and community support services sector that guide our service provision and mitigate these risks. Within the context of our organization's established mission, vision, and values, the Board of Directors approves the Strategic Plan and therefore our direction

and priorities. The Senior Leadership Team then establishes related strategic objectives and sets aligned objectives cascading through our organization.

Strategic Plan 2019 – 2022

In the spring of 2019, the Board of Directors approved Community Support Connections' [2019-22 Strategic Plan](#), which identifies the current priorities for the organization.

Building on the Strategic Plan, the Board of Directors receives and approves the Annual Operating Plan that identifies specific activities, risks, and mitigating strategies related to that plan.

Strategy Map

Delivering Exceptional Client Experiences

Use technology to redirect staff time to personalized service delivery based on clients' needs and feedback.

Develop centralized access to services in alignment with changes in the health care sector.

Collaborate with partner agencies to gain 360 awareness of client needs.

Use new database and point-of-contact technology to continually evaluate and improve services and client satisfaction.



Review and develop organizational culture to build the best environment for staff and volunteers based on respect and professionalism.

Increase our focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Ensure physical and mental health is a priority.

Develop facilities to support improved culture and productivity, now and in the future.



A Great Environment For Staff and Volunteers

Our Community

We acknowledge the diverse needs and backgrounds of our clients, caregivers, volunteers, donors, and staff.

We strive to provide personalized and meaningful customer service in all we do.

Developing Sustainable Community Resources

Increase and diversify revenue streams through fundraising, social enterprise, and other emerging opportunities.

Train volunteers, board members, and staff in donor stewardship best practices, supported by new technology.

Partnerships and alliances to facilitate growth in a changing environment - explore shared resources and projects with other agencies.

Evolution of volunteer recruitment and retention strategies to adapt to changing trends.

Drive brand awareness in the community.



Focus customer service on client preferences.

Produce meaningful program reviews using new developments in technology and best practices across the sector.

Redevelop resource and workflow models based on capacity unleashed by technology.

Create new partnerships to identify and adapt to changes in sector and our community.



Driving Innovation and Adaptation

Definitions

The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (2001) offers the following definition of risk:
“Risk refers to the uncertainty that surrounds future events and outcomes. It is the expression of the likelihood and impact of an event with the potential to influence the achievement of an organization’s objectives”.

The various definitions of risk also depend on how outcomes are characterized. For some organizations, risk has been affiliated only with adverse consequences without taking into consideration the upside (or opportunities) to risk. In addition to consequences, one school of thought asserts that, when assessed and managed properly, risk can lead to innovation (Hardy, K. 2010).

- a. **Risk Management:** is a systematic approach to setting the best course of action under uncertainty by identifying, assessing, understanding, acting on, and communicating risk issues. Integrated risk management: is a continuous, proactive and systematic process to understand, manage, and communicate risk from an organization-wide perspective. It is about supporting strategic decision-making that contributes to the achievement of an organization's overall objectives.
- b. **Opportunity:** is a time, condition, event, or set of circumstances permitting, or favourable, to a particular action or purpose.
- c. **Residual Risk:** is the remaining level of risk after taking into consideration risk mitigation measures and controls in place.
- d. **Risk-informed Approach:** is a way of managing that builds risk management into existing governance and organizational structures, including business planning, decision-making and operational processes. It also ensures that the workplace has the capacity and tools to be innovative while protecting the public interest and maintaining public trust.
- e. **Risk Response:** refers to the continuum of measures of risk mitigation or control that are developed and implemented to address an identified risk.
- f. **Risk Tolerance:** is the willingness of an organization to accept or reject a given level of residual risk (exposure). Risk tolerance may differ across the organization, but must be clearly understood by the individuals making risk-related decisions on a given issue. Clarity on risk tolerance at all levels of the organization is necessary to support risk-

informed decision-making and foster risk-informed approaches.

g. **Uncertainty:** is the state, even partial, of deficiency of information related to understanding or knowledge of an event, its consequence, or likelihood.

Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone at Community Support Connections has some responsibility for Risk Management beginning with the Board of Directors, who are responsible for risk oversight. Each of the Committees of the Board have specific responsibilities associated with Risk Management, as outlined in the diagram below.



The Executive Director, in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, reviews all operational risks. Directors have key responsibilities for the execution of risk management within the organization. All employees support the organization's risk management philosophy, promotes compliance with its risk appetite, and manages risks within their role responsibility that is consistent with risk tolerances identified organization wide.

All employees, while supporting risk management, will act in accordance with established policies, guidelines, directives, and protocols.

Risk Appetite

Community Support Connections is not averse to taking risks and pursuing beneficial opportunities, but will do so thoughtfully and in an informed manner. The agency considers risks and benefits in relation to the achievement of organizational Mission, Vision, and Values, and strategic directions. The organization aims to create a culture that balances responsiveness and innovation with appropriate risk management strategies and practices.



Community Support Connections may be exposed to many risks, all of which have the potential for disrupting the agency's services, causing casualties, and damaging/destroying the agency, public and/or private property.

The likelihood or the probability of hazard occurring can be classed in terms of:

- **Low** probability when an incident is not likely to occur but is plausible;
- **Moderate** probability when an incident is likely to occur once within a period of time; or
- **High** probability when an incident is likely to occur frequently within a period of time.

The impact or the consequence or severity of the hazard occurring can be classed in terms of:

- **Low** impact when an incident is likely to cause little to no significant injury, illness or trauma, damage to property and/or the environment and/or disruption to the agency's' normal business operations;
- **Moderate** impact when an incident is likely to cause significant trauma or casualty, limited damage to property and or the environment or significant disruption to a portion of the agency's normal business operations
- **High** impact when an incident is likely to cause mass medical illness, trauma or casualties, extensive damage to property and/or the environment and/or extensive disruptions to the entire or a significant portion of the agency's normal business operations.

November 2020 Results

The Senior Leadership Team identifies and groups a variety of risks, associated level of risk, and current mitigation/control strategies which is used to update the heat map (see Appendix A).

Red - are external/strategic risks, which are the responsibility of the Board of Directors and ED

Blue - are financial risks, which are the responsibility of Board of Directors and staff

Green - are operational risks, which are the responsibility of the ED

This Risk Management Plan focuses on risks that have both a **high likelihood** of occurring as well as a **high impact**, which can be found above the line.

Risk Response

Community Support Connections selects risk responses concurrent with risk level - avoiding, accepting, reducing, or sharing risk, and then develops a set of actions to align risks with our organization's risk tolerances and risk appetite. Responses to lower likelihood/impact risks (risks that fall below the line in the map) are identified in the preceding chart and their mitigation strategies for them can be found in Appendix A. Responses to higher likelihood/impact risks (risks that fall above the line in the map) are further discussed below.

Higher Likelihood/Impact Strategic/Reputational Risks (red on chart)

- Are the combined responsibility of the Board/ED. In November 2020, the high priority risks identified include:

3. Legislative Changes
4. Trends in volunteering and philanthropy
5. Any major negative event

The strategic plan and annual operating plan address items 3 and 4. Trends in volunteering and philanthropy are addressed in detail in the annual operating plan, regularly monitored by staff and addressed in Executive Director reports to the Board. Trends in philanthropy are further addressed in the Fundraising Plan.

Our improving data management is enabling us to better track and understand the impact of the changing face of volunteerism on Community Support Connections. Similar to nation-wide trends, newer volunteers tend to be more mobile, shorter term, and more interested in projects and skill development opportunities than our traditional long term volunteers who began volunteering when they retired and kept at it for 10, 20, 30 and 40 years, often picking up increased shifts or rides over the years. We've had some success with groups, corporate volunteers, and student placements. We engage in a variety of traditional volunteer recruitment activities (volunteer fairs, booths at public events, speaking engagements, networking, etc.) and are experimenting with, and will measure, the effectiveness of different strategies. We're also focusing internally to ensure the volunteers we do recruit have an amazing experience with Community Support Connections.

The Emergency Preparedness and Pandemic Plan, Annual Operating Plan, and Emergency Leadership and Succession Plan, together, provide a framework for addressing item 5. The pandemic has necessitated significant changes to our operations. The Senior Leadership Team conducts ongoing reviews and exercises of the Emergency Preparedness and Pandemic Plan, considering different major negative event possibilities at each exercise. None of these exercises could fully prepare us, however, for the reality of the pandemic and the extraordinary changes to our operating and funding models.

Financial/Fiduciary Risks (blue on chart)

- Are the combined responsibility of the Board/ED. In November 2020, the high priority risks identified include:

14. New and increasing costs in a 0% base funding environment

These items overlap with strategic risk #1 – inability to generate sufficient revenues – and have been the subject of much board attention and activity in recent years. They are addressed in the Strategic, Annual Operating, and Fundraising Plans. Continued innovation and maintaining excellent relationships with funders as well as evolving our fundraising plans are the primary current mitigation strategies. Social enterprise development is also being developed.

Operational Risks (green on chart)

- Are the responsibility of the Executive Director – with regular reporting to the Board of Directors. In November 2020, the high priority risks identified include:

20. Managing Change

21. Failure to meet targets

29. Food borne illness

30. Off-site service provision/inability to directly supervise staff/volunteers/boundary issues

32. Staff turnover/backfill capacity

Managing change has always been a strength of the organization. This was proven with the organization's adaptability and response to both the pandemic and the provincial reshaping of the healthcare system under Ontario Health and local Ontario Health Teams.

Failure to meet targets is significant for the organization as they are defined by the LHIN (now Ontario Health) and directly related to funding via the MSAA. The pandemic resulted in significant service number changes with decreases in many in-person and congregate programs. While new virtual programs proved highly popular, net organizational number decreased. The LHIN however recognized this was due to the pandemic and is not holding organizations responsible for missing targets during this period.

Food borne illness is addressed through policy, procedure, standard operating practices as well as hiring and training practices (i.e. staff expertise) that minimize this risk. Community Support Connections has a standard operating procedure for addressing food borne illness that includes client notification, recall, and communication strategies.

Staff workload, turnover, and backfill capacity is a continued risk, exacerbated by increases to the minimum wage. This risk has been and continues to be mitigated by operational vigilance and preparedness. Community Support Connections is conducting a comprehensive salary review in the spring of 2021 and will continue to review the placement of each position on its internal grid on an ongoing basis. Every vacancy is examined to ensure workload is manageable and postings will attract the best candidates possible. Individual and team professional development is ongoing.

Control Activities

Community Support Connections' risk management policies (7000 series) address risk strategy, tolerances, and responsibilities for risk and are embedded in [the agency's Policy Manual](#). [The Policy Manual also](#) includes other policies and procedures designed to

minimize risk to individuals (clients, volunteers, Board, staff and other stakeholders), property, the agency and its ability to continue to serve the community.

These are complemented by plans which have approval or input from the Board of Directors and Committees which identify and address specific risks and related mitigation strategies.

- Strategic Plan
- Annual Operating Plan
- Emergency Preparedness and Pandemic Plan
- Client Safety Plan
- Emergency Leadership Plan
- Succession Plan
- Quality Improvement Plan
- Fundraising Plan

The Senior Leadership team and Manager, Quality provide the Board of Directors with a quarterly dashboard and a number of reports throughout the year which are incorporated into the Board of Directors' calendar and/or work plan for the year. The reports provided include, but are not limited to:

- SharePoint site, accessible to all directors, with all Board and Committee document and reports, including by-laws and policies, as well as links to applicable legislation, for easy reference;
- regular board education – both at board meetings and through external opportunities;
- opportunities for Board members to interact directly with Community Support Connections staff and volunteers;
- quarterly financial reports to the Finance Committee;
- quarterly financial reports to the Board of Directors;
- annual audit and accompanying reports;
- monthly update reports from the Executive Director;
- quarterly performance dashboard;
- quarterly health and safety/client incident and complaint reports;
- annual staff satisfaction reports;
- program evaluation reports; and
- annual insurance update.

The Board of Directors also receive written briefing notes on specific initiatives or subjects for discussion. Environmental scan information (including emerging issues and trends) and updates regarding strategic priorities are provided to the Board of Directors in the Executive Director's report monthly.

Operationally, Standard Operating Procedures have been developed for all front-line/client-facing positions that support policies and procedures. Client Service Standards and Protocols and Data Entry and Communications Standards further outline expectations regarding client, volunteer, and staff safety.

There is ongoing training and supervision regarding policies, procedures, protocols, and leading practices. In addition, our organizational culture focuses on client, volunteer, staff, and stakeholder safety and satisfaction – thereby integrating risk management processes and practices into every aspect of Community Support Connections operations.

The Senior Leadership Team, the Safety and Quality Committee and Operations Management Group meeting agendas will include relevant standing items from the following list: Health and Safety, Client Concerns and Complaints, Organizational Performance, Quality Improvement Ideas and Emerging Issues, Opportunities and Trends. These items are in addition to other current issues to be discussed or addressed.

The organization's commitment to Accreditation provides an opportunity to benchmark our control activities against industry standards.

Information and Communication

This Risk Management Plan is approved by the Board of Directors, and then the plan in its entirety, or parts thereof, as appropriate, is shared with teams throughout the organization via SharePoint and emails, etc.

References

- Hardy, K. (2010). Managing Risk in Government: An Introduction to Enterprise Risk Management, The IBM Centre for the Business of Government. Retrieved at: <http://www.businessofgovernment.org/sites/default/files/RiskinGovernment.pdf>
- Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. (April 2001). Integrated Risk Management Framework.

Appendix A.

Internal Risk Assessment Findings

November 2020

**Includes Rationale For Ratings And Changes
And Mitigation Strategies**

