

Community Care East York & WoodGreen Community Services Integration

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. General

Why join together now?

Community Care East York (CCEY) and WoodGreen Community Services (WCS) are community-based organizations that serve seniors, adults with disabilities and their caregivers. These two organizations share a common vision and mission in serving the community and provide services to clients in two adjacent geographic areas within the City of Toronto. While both are in sound financial shape, the current economic, political and health and social services environment calls for change.

- Our communities are changing. An aging population, an increase in newcomers and shifting socioeconomic profiles means higher needs for community services
- There is little or no increase in funding to meet these changing and growing needs
- We need to improve access to services and reduce the barriers and fragmentation created by multiple organizations
- There is a push to streamline organizational administrative and infrastructure costs to reinvest in direct services to clients
- Our funders are looking for organizations to integrate and consolidate.

The management and boards of both organizations recognize that, through consolidation, services could be delivered more efficiently, programs could be expanded, and advocacy for clients could be enhanced. The Boards of WCS and CCEY have asked their management staff to work on a proposal and process that would result in bringing together the activities and operations under one organization. The conditions under which the organizations would become one are laid out in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This document is available from the offices of both organizations upon request.

Who initiated these discussions?

Both organizations voluntarily came together at the same time to discuss the benefits integration could provide to seniors in East Toronto.

Whose idea was this?

The idea did not stem from one person. Both organizations saw excellent opportunities to improve service offerings.

Why does it make sense for these two specific organizations to integrate?

CCEY and WCS are leaders in the community care sector and share a common mission and vision in serving the community. Both organizations have a long track record working collaboratively on new initiatives to provide seniors services.

Both have been successful in expanding supportive and assisted housing services for seniors. Each organization also brings complementary expertise to building an expanded seniors operation: CCEY has expertise in Accreditation and use of information technologies and WCS brings expertise in housing, immigrant services, mental health and developmental services and elder abuse awareness and prevention. Both organizations also provide Adult Day Programs, supportive housing, wellness clubs, case management and social work.

Are you doing this to save money?

Although we may find efficiencies as we progress with the integration process this is not the primary reason for integration. Together, we can effectively expand our programs by combining our service offerings and expertise. Our goal is to provide additional, enhanced and cost effective solutions to the clients we serve in East Toronto.

Will any new services be offered?

CCEY clients will still receive the same services currently being delivered to them, and in addition will have direct access to WCS's full basket of social services including immigrant settlement services, affordable housing, mental health & developmental services and many more.

Additionally, we will add a new Research & Development initiative. The focus of this new R&D piece will be to create innovative new programming.

What will happen to the CCEY name?

CCEY will become part of WoodGreen Community Services, with CCEY staff bringing their expertise to the new organization. In acknowledgement of the many years of CCEY's service to East York, the current CCEY Senior Centre will retain its name.

How many management staff were involved?

Negotiations around the proposed integration were held at the CEO and Board levels of both organizations. Negotiations began in April 2011.

How long will it take for CCEY and WCS to become fully integrated?

Although the effective integration date is December 31, 2011, the process of fully meshing the two organizations will take several months.

Will clients lose access to the staff and volunteers they currently work with?

No, all clients will continue to receive services from the same staff and volunteers as they currently do.

What happens with existing program structures?

We do not foresee any changes to existing program structures at this time. However, with input from staff, improvements to programs structures would be considered in the future.

2. Human Resources and Staffing

How many employees will new organization have?

WCS currently employs approximately 530 staff and CCEY employs approximately 120 staff, so the new organization will have roughly 650 staff members.

How will merger affect staff?

All CCEY employees will be offered comparable employment at WCS, and this employment will take effect as of January 1, 2012. There will be no involuntary job loss as a result of this merger and CCEY staff will be offered positions at levels similar to their current ones.

Additionally, WCS will work with both unions to ensure a smooth transition for CCEY staff into the structure of WCS.

What happens to the volunteers?

Volunteers at both organizations will continue to provide their excellent services to the community through their exemplary work.

Relocation

There will be some relocation of staff for efficiency of operations. However, seniors will still be able to access services through the same locations.

How will decisions be made about employment issues?

WCS and CCEY will form a joint Steering Committee to work through the due diligence process which will include dealing with any employment issues.

Will the pay freeze remain in place?

Yes, all employees of provincially funded organizations like CCEY and WCS are subject to the pay freeze through March 31, 2012 as per the Public Sector Compensation Act.

How will the Board of Directors come together?

There will be one WoodGreen Community Services Board of Directors. This new Board will include three CCEY members.

3. Donations and Fundraising

What happens to current CCEY Donors?

We rely on donations to support our services, strengthen our work and to build a sustainable future for the people we serve. CCEY donors can continue to donate to CCEY. In order to accommodate this, The WoodGreen Foundation will set up a CCEY Fund to accept all gifts designated to CCEY including planned and estate giving.

Will The WoodGreen Foundation be supporting East York seniors through fundraising efforts?

Yes, The WoodGreen Foundation will be actively raising money for programs to support seniors in East York.

4. Communication

Who will be consulted on this integration?

The organizations will undertake a consultation process that will seek input from the community, local leaders, health care and community care partners, clients and their families and the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network.

CCEY and WCS are committed to open and transparent communications as details are worked through. Information will be available on our respective websites at www.ccey.org and www.woodgreen.org. In addition regular print updates will be available to clients, volunteers and the community.

5. What happens next?

Over the next 4-8 weeks, we will be conducting a comprehensive due diligence process that will assess the financial, human resources, clinical and other aspects of the proposal. We will also be preparing and submitting a plan to the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network.

We will be consulting with community members and organization over the next four weeks, including town hall meetings.

Information about our progress and further plans will be readily available on WCS's website at www.woodgreen.org and on CCEY's website at www.ccey.org as we move forward towards the integration date of December 31, 2011 (subject to all approvals).

Approvals will be required from the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network, the Boards of both organizations, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, and the corporate members of CCEY.

6. Is the merger contrary to the CCEY's strategic plan?

Page 5 of the Strategic Plan 2010-2014 describes the "Envisioned Future in Five Years" as follows:

| Vision | How Integration with WoodGreen will achieve this vision |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ❖ size: \$8MM - \$10MM in annual revenue | Combined seniors programs will have a budget of approximately \$10M in annual Revenue |
| ❖ CCAC designated provider | As a larger provider, increased likelihood of acquiring CCAC contract |
| ❖ infrastructure: no barriers to achieving goals | WoodGreen as a large multi-service agency provides infrastructure such as Research (Strategic Initiatives Unit), Housing Development, Marketing, Property Management, Fundraising etc. |
| ❖ multiple partnerships to bring in new services and leverage existing ones | Partnership with a large, highly regarded agency that provides much-needed new services such as Housing Development, Mental Health, Immigration Settlement, etc. |
| ❖ 'go to' agency – sought by other organizations for collaborations and engagement in system planning | The combined CCEY/WoodGreen will be a "go to" agency and has already been requested to collaborate and engage in system planning |
| ❖ top quality Board | The Board of the new WoodGreen will incorporate Directors from CCEY and we believe is currently and will continue to be a top quality Board |
| ❖ knowledge leader of the CSS | As a larger organisation with greater infrastructure support, operational management |

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| sector | will be able to keep current in knowledge, particularly with the support of the Research Department |
| ❖ leader of innovation/quality/system change | Both CCEY and WoodGreen have already demonstrated leadership in various areas which can now be shared: use of IT, Accreditation, eLearning Module development, etc. |
| ❖ leading on diversity | The addition of WoodGreen's already diverse community clients and staff will add to the diversity of CCEY's currently diverse population and staff; WoodGreen's Immigrant Services will support enrichment of diversity initiatives |
| ❖ leading quality/knowledge | WoodGreen has committed to leveraging CCEY's experience with Accreditation and has positioned the CCEY Accreditation lead in the Research Department of WoodGreen; WoodGreen Board will reshape a Board Committee to Planning and Quality |
| ❖ leader in health promotion & wellness programs & services | Both organisations articulate similarly in their Mission and Visions statements their commitment to health promotion and wellness |

Several of CCEY Strategic Planning strategies and goals will be achieved through the integration:

- Build client services and improve the client experience
- Champion system effectiveness
- Enhance infrastructure and funding

7. Did the merger process include pre-planning community engagement?

The Strategic Planning Process for CCEY which concluded with the Vision articulated above was conducted during 2010 with the involvement of clients, community members, Board members, health system leaders, staff and volunteers. This was the basis for Board deliberation regarding options for voluntary integrations as a means of achieving the identified Vision.

The phases and timelines for the voluntary integration are illustrated in Figure 1. After months of confidential exploration by representatives of both Boards and Senior Management, which represented Phase 1 of Due Diligence, sufficient agreement on the terms of a voluntary integration were articulated in a signed, non-binding Memo of Understanding expressing an intent to carry on their operations under a single corporation, subject to successful community engagement and agreement. This Intent was announced on August 18 2011 in an orderly and thorough fashion and made openly available to all through a variety of media. A comprehensive Community Engagement & Communications Plan was implemented to provide every opportunity to all stakeholders for feedback on the proposed integration. The CCEY Special Members meeting, held on October 12 2011, to approve the voluntary integration, again, provided an opportunity for input. Discussion was robust examining all perspectives of the integration. After this fulsome debate, the motion passed with a greater than the required 2/3 majority.

- 8. The new category of corporate member is not required under existing CCEY by-laws and that some existing members did not realize that they needed to be corporate members in order to vote on the merger at the Special Meeting on October 12 2011 and therefore did not register as corporate members and missed the vote.**
- 9. Is the creation of the corporate membership category a violation of existing by-laws and not ratified at the AGM in June 2011.?**

In recent years, CCEY has not been clear on membership and the registration process and has not maintained a current and up-to-date list of members. There have been several terms used for members – e.g., agency members, donor members and Senior Centre program members. The CCEY bylaws state that (Corporate) membership shall be from April 1 to March 31 of the following year, however, we have not had in place an annual membership renewal process. In attempting to clarify and update our membership list, we included a registration form for membership in the spring / summer 2011 newsletter, which was mailed to over 3000 individuals on our mailing list. To differentiate the (Corporate) membership from a program-type membership, we identified the registration as a corporate membership. CCEY did receive inquiries about the membership registration process and addressed such questions with individuals and with groups, such as the Senior Centre group and through the Community engagement sessions. The registration process was successful in registering members.

Membership (Corporate membership) provides voting privileges at Annual General Meetings.

The corporate membership category is not a new category. It is simply a name to differentiate program members and those members who have an interest and commitment to the business affairs of the organization. The registration process and renewal process for members had not been clear in the past. CCEY endeavoured to update its members list through a registration process.

10. How has staff morale has been impacted by the merger?

Overall, the response of staff to the integration has been very positive and enthusiastic about the significant opportunities that this integration brings, for growth in a broader organisation, and promotion. Although there was some initial regret at the loss of the current work situation, staff fully understand why this change needs to happen. To assist with the expected emotions, a Change Management Process and a variety of other measures were put in place:

- Immediately following the announcement the Interim ED had a private session with all staff in attendance to address any questions and to allow for any free expressions of staff.
- A meeting with staff was set for the very next day at which a change management process was employed to help staff process the future change.
- Staff were told that the 3 most Senior Management staff – the Executive Director, the Director of HR/IT and the Director of Client Services – would have an Open Door policy and invited all staff to approach them with any questions, concerns at any time.
- Staff was directed to all the materials describing the Intent to Integrate whether in print or on the CCEY Intranet website for detailed information.

- Thereafter, a weekly timeslot was dedicated for Management staff at which Senior Management was available to answer questions with staff as a whole or provide any updates on progress with the voluntary integration.
- Similar meetings were held evenings for frontline staff on a biweekly basis.
- In addition, to further facilitate the communication of the voluntary integration for frontline staff who do not work on-site at the head office, an easily accessible and verbal telephone message was made available re-iterating the print communications of the merger announcement.
- Speak-up Boxes/Suggestion Boxes were made available at all work sites that provided staff with the opportunity to submit anonymous questions to management regarding the integration.
- In response to questions and concerns by Administrative and Finance staff as to the details about process changes moving from the current organisation to the new one, a focus meeting was held to identify all staff questions for future resolution as information became available.
- All questions from all meetings and personal communications were recorded and answers provided both verbally and by posting on the organisations intranet site.
- In response to a request by CCEY staff to better understand WoodGreen, its services, organisation, etc. WoodGreen senior management made a presentation at CCEY for staff and responded to staff questions. Another presentation by WoodGreen staff addressed the Benefits package provided by WoodGreen and answered questions by CCEY staff.
- Certain CCEY staff were more appropriately placed in positions at WoodGreen other than within the Community Care & Wellness division, based on their skills and job role e.g. Accounting, IT, Knowledge Transfer staff. For such staff, special one-on-one meetings were held with WoodGreen management staff to discuss the newly proposed job role, opportunities, etc. and answer any questions that CCEY staff had.
- Staff continued to be able to access the EAP of organisations as they would normally in the course of work.
- As a result of all the efforts to respond to staff needs that might have been precipitated by the announcement of the Intent to Integrate Voluntarily, there was a steady decrease in the number of staff attending the weekly meetings and approaching Senior Management individually, signaling to Senior Management the success of the Communication Plan with staff.
- There has been no increase in staff absences or voluntary resignations since the Announcement, nor employee performance problems. Staff has continued to be professional, friendly and buoyant in their relationships at work. On October 14 2011, the Staff invited the Executive Director to a staff-funded social and another such staff social has been planned for November 25 2011.

11. How does the integration affect participation in programs and continuity of services?

The Chair indicated that all programs and services are to continue and that clients will have the same service providers. It is not expected that programs such as the Seniors Centre will be impacted by significant numbers of new participants, particularly as that program has not excluded interested individuals from beyond East York in the past. It is anticipated that all programs will continue in their current format.

12. Did the Board consider other potential organizations for integration?

The Chair and several CCEY Board members responded indicating that the Board did consider several options and weighed the options against criteria. A key criteria was the degree to which new services or expertise would be brought to the community served by CCEY. The Board determined that integration with WCS would bring the most value to the community.

13. How does the voluntary integration align with CCEY strategic plan?

The Chair pointed out that the strategic plan identified the funding constraints in the system, the need for growth of the organization and the need to position the organization for future service contracts, for example, a CCAC contract. The Board believes that CCEY, as a relatively small organization with services focused solely on seniors, was not ideally positioned for future significant contracts and would be better positioned through an integration with a larger and broader scope of service organization.

14. It appears that this integration was planned in a rush and that the Board has many new Board members who may not have sufficient experience.

The Chair and several Board members responded. The planning for the proposed voluntary integration has been proceeding since March / April following the departure of the CCEY Executive Director. Both organizations have invested a significant amount of time and due diligence to the planning process, with multiple negotiation meetings and Board meetings over the spring and summer. After consulting with the President & CEO of an organisation who has experienced a successful merger recently, she stated in her subsequent letter of support for CCEY/WoodGreen merger: "We worked at lightning speed to complete the ... transition in 6 months so the fact you have given yourselves 8 months should provide you with the necessary buffer to ensure all you "i's" are dotted and "t's" are crossed. From our experience, once the decision was made to merge, moving quickly was much better for all parties involved rather than a protracted process."

CCEY Board members reported their length of term on the Board, ranging from one to more than three years. Several Board members were noted to have a long legacy of involvement on boards, with one individual serving over 40 years on boards.

15. How does CCEY have representation on the Board of WoodGreen and what is the size of the WoodGreen Board?

The Chair responded that three current CCEY Board members (Sarah Downey, Heather Dawson and Peter Fuller) have been appointed to the WCS Board, conditional on the completion of the integration. Thomas Hofmann, Chair of WCS Board, indicated that the WCS Board will become an 18 member Board with the addition of three members from CCEY. He also pointed out that a number of current WCS Board members are residents of East York.

16. How does one become a (corporate) member of WoodGreen Community Services?

Thomas Hofmann, Chair, WCS, reported on the requirements for membership in WCS: members are those who have made a donation to WCS for two previous years. If an individual made a donation of a minimum of \$10 in 2011 and then a minimum of \$20 again in 2012, they would have voting privileges as of the 2013 annual general meeting. Several CCEY members voiced concern about the waiting period for voting privileges and asked about processes for making donations.

17. How is the name of CCEY being preserved in this integration?

Concern with only a part of CCEY, the Seniors Centre, will be retaining the brand name of CCEY. The Chair confirmed that the CCEY name will be formally attached to the Seniors Centre to celebrate and recognize the long history of CCEY in serving East York. Various individuals have expressed concern about the loss of another East York organization. It was further pointed out the CCEY serves clients and operates supportive housing in areas well beyond East York.

A number of members expressed their support for the integration, noting the need for a stronger voice on seniors' issues, the need to address housing options for the community of East York, and the opportunity to better serve seniors in times of reduced funding.

18. Was there deliberate exclusion of senior staff from attending further Committee and Board meetings?

Senior staff continued to attend Committee & Board meetings as required. All Senior staff received the variety of communications materials about the integration that were made widely available which included means of contacting the Toronto Central LHIN to voice any concerns.