

FACT SHEET



WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) is terminating its funding relationships with Pathways Information Centre in as part of a new “rationalization” of employment services, the Business Transformation Project (BTP). The BTP proposes to replace a variety of local services with “one stop shop” employment service centres. We serve a unique population in a unique neighbourhood and strongly believe that up to 80 per cent of our members may not be adequately served under the new model.

WHO WE ARE

Pathways Information Centre has been providing information, referrals and employment services to a growing membership of 14,000 DTES residents since July 2003. Pathways lies at the intersection of Main & Hastings in the poorest postal code in Canada. Our members come from all walks of life but are predominantly older, male, blue collar workers, with no formal qualifications and relatively few opportunities, living in the neighbourhood.

We are non partisan, secular, entirely inclusive and represent in the community a long-term and well established presence where safety from physical and bureaucratic bullying is the rule. The program has earned an enviable reputation in the neighbourhood with both residents and other service providers by providing critical services to the more than 3,000 new people who walk through our doors every year.

WHAT DO WE DO

Pathways’ responsive and attentive staff of seven offer a unique service in the neighbourhood by combining a central street-level presence at the intersection of Main & Hastings with easy access to resources, referrals and employment counseling. We are a vital source of information for the community and excel at supporting individuals in accessing the resources they need to meet their immediate and long term goals. Our self-serve, easy access to phone, fax and internet pulls 150-250 people per day through our doors. Our unique employment service is effective and responsive to the urgent needs of our members. Finally, being accessible and ready to listen allows us to connect long term with our members.

WHY WE ARE NEEDED

Traditional models for employment services have proven ineffective in supporting many residents of the DTES towards stable work. Poverty, mental and physical health issues, addiction, lack of training, criminal records and homelessness are not the only challenges that Pathways members face. This vulnerable population is not adequately served by the new funding model. The moral and financial costs to our society and the community will be high if this gap in services is permitted to exist. We believe that Pathways and its service model are an essential part of the overall solution to this challenge.