

# What is Life Stabilization?



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# Life Stabilization

## OMSSA Exchange 2021 – Breakout Session

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# Life Stabilization in Ontario Works and ODSP

In February 2021, the government announced its vision for the future of social assistance to create an efficient, effective and streamlined social services system that focusses on people, providing them with a range of services and supports to respond to their unique needs and address barriers to success so they can move towards employment and independence.

## **Ontario Works**

Supports Ontario Works recipients and non-disabled adults from ODSP cases to become employment ready

## **ODSP**

Supports recipients to achieve greater independence, participate in their communities and prepare people for work where they are able.

**Life stabilization services are critical to supporting people become employment ready and move towards independence.**

**People can still work while addressing challenges, but the likelihood of finding and keeping employment and being independent is higher if they are able to address underlying issues that may be barriers to success.**

# Social Assistance Life Stabilization Framework

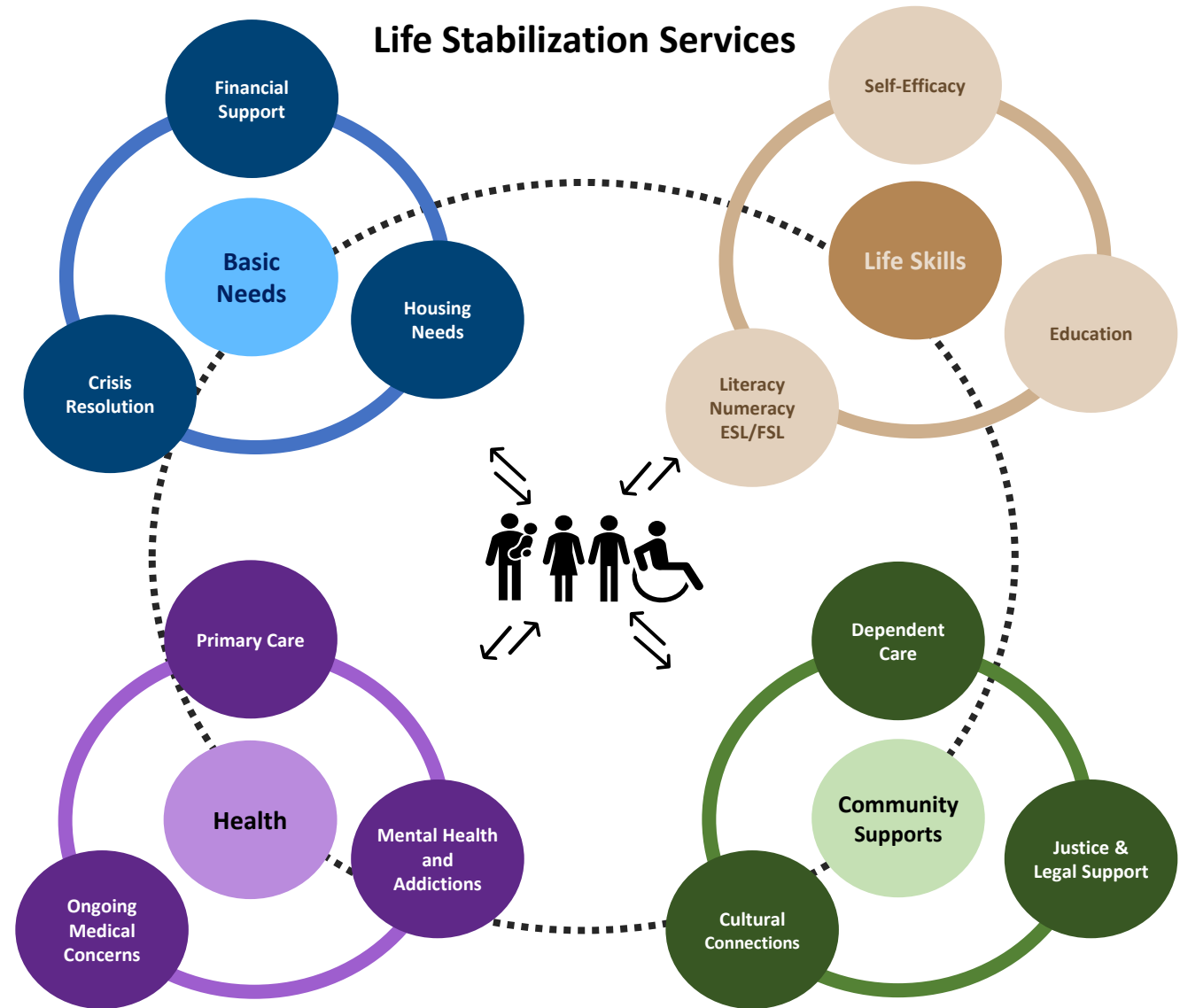
## Client Goals

**Awareness**  
Awareness of needs and available services

**Plan**  
Jointly developed plan that identifies goals, actions and supports

**Access and Participation**  
Client participation and effective and efficient access to services

**Progress**  
Increased client self-reliance and supported progress towards goals



# Social Assistance Life Stabilization Framework - Enablers

Supporting social assistance recipients on a pathway towards independence and employment readiness

## Policy

- Needs identification and assessment, outcomes and performance measurement
- Action Plan and participation requirements for life stabilization
- Flexible, responsive benefits and simplified policy

## Service Delivery

- Digital modernized services
- Effective and integrated planning and case management
- Case manager as navigator and coach

## Partnerships

- Local partnerships between social assistance and community health, human and employment and training delivery providers
- System partnerships between ministries and levels of government

## System Capacity

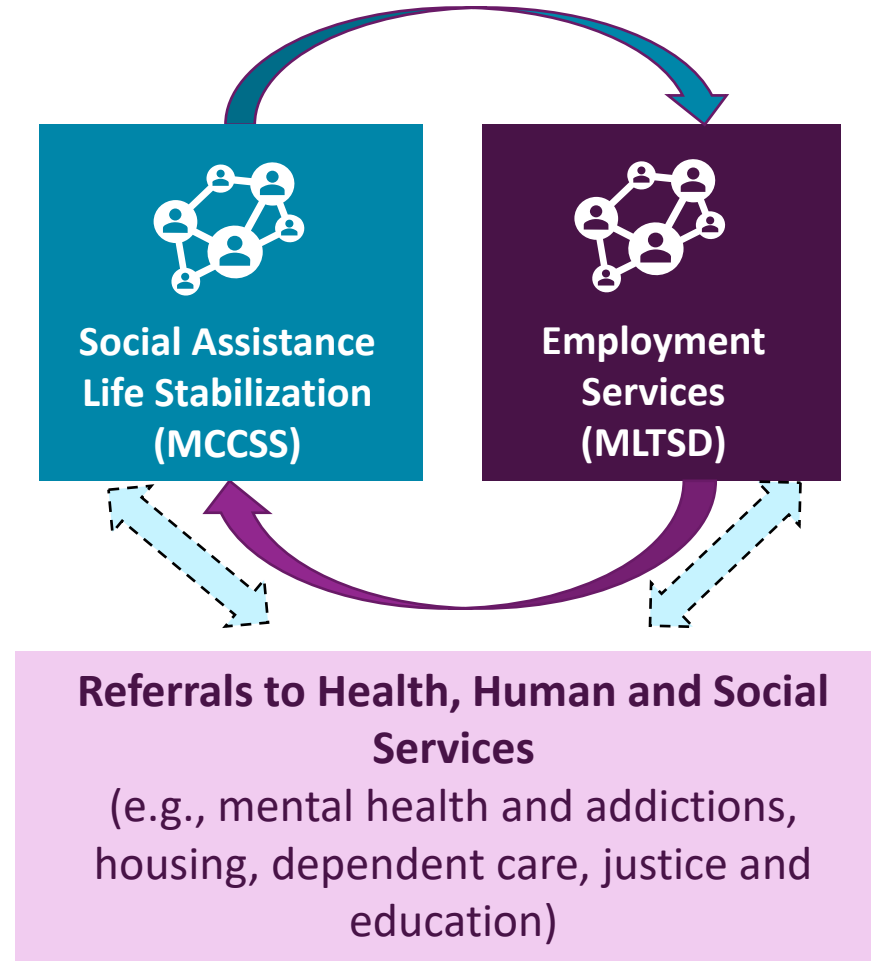
- Availability of healthcare, childcare, housing, and employment and training services
- System coordination and identification and sharing of what works

## Organizational Capacity

- Culture and change management strategy for life stabilization, navigation and service connections

# Future State

- Improved client access to employment services
- Improved client access to services that support life stabilization
- Clear expectations for delivery partners and staff
- An updated program and policy design to reflect life stabilization
- Better data and measurement to support planning and accountability



Improved readiness for employment



Increased resiliency, independence and participation in community

## Current Policy and Change Enablers

<b>Framework</b>	Provincial foundation and common understanding of life stabilization. Outlines supports needed at a system level.
<b>Benefits</b>	Changes to broaden and consolidate benefits in policy to support life stabilization participation within the EST prototype sites
<b>Policy guidance</b>	New life stabilization policy guidance developed and being tested within EST prototypes (e.g. reducing deferrals)
<b>Case Management Tools</b>	New tools developed for EST prototype sites to support consistent client needs identification, assessment and planning (e.g. Common Assessment and Action Plan) specific to life stabilization
<b>Evaluation and Monitoring</b>	EST prototype monitoring and evaluation to assess how the changes are being implemented and where are there opportunities to adjust policy or tools
<b>Change supports</b>	Training and development resources that were developed to launch EST prototypes (e.g. videos), as well as existing change supports (SAIL) to support learning and development for system transition



**Spotlight on Key Tools to Support Life Stabilization  
Service Delivery**

# Common Assessment

## What is the Common Assessment?

- a stand-alone digital questionnaire tool
- made up of two main modules
  - administrative & life stabilization questions
  - employment questions

## How does the Common Assessment help?

- For Caseworkers it will facilitate conversations with clients about their needs and barriers – and it will help to build clients' life stabilization action plans.
- For Social Assistance as a program, it will be a way to consistently collect information on the needs of clients and the broader need and availability of services.

# Common Assessment

## What types of questions are asked about life stabilization?

<b>Administrative</b>	Administrative data that includes client basic personal information, such as contact information, date of birth, marital status, no. of dependents, citizenship/immigration, etc.
<b>Demographics</b>	Demographic questions to identify characteristics about clients that may impact employment and outcomes. This includes the identification of clients with unique employment needs or barriers
<b>Skills</b>	Essential skills (language skills, communication, literacy, numeracy, digital) provide the foundation for learning and enable people to better prepare for, get and keep a job, and adapt and succeed at work.
<b>Self-Efficacy</b>	Self-efficacy is one's confidence in their abilities to perform either generally or on specific tasks.
<b>Life Stabilization (Service and Support Needs)</b>	Life stabilization questions represent client situations (e.g. financial need, caregiving duties, housing/homelessness, food insecurity, transportation) that, if left unaddressed, may present barriers to gaining and maintaining employment. Responses to these questions would inform the services, supports or activities needed to support effective employment pathways.

# Action Plan

## What is an Action Plan?

- Action Plans are used to monitor and manage life stabilization activities
- Action Plans are currently being tested in EST prototype sites and will evolve and improve with input gathered from users.
- The fields, content, and features were selected with an intention to:
  - structure case management around life stabilization
  - allow for SAIL influenced collaboration with clients (strength-focused goals, flexible where needed)
  - align language with Common Assessment
  - improve data gathering on how benefits are applied

# Timelines – Key Activities

- Dissemination of change management supports
- EST prototype monitoring and evaluation
- Co-design of shared program delivery model

- Further regulation amendments proposed to support life stabilization
- Initiate provincial roll-out of case management tools
- Change management focused on implementation of life stabilization

Spring/Summer 2021

Fall/Winter 2021-21

Spring 2022

- Phase 2 change-management – hands on training of new case management tools
- Proclaim proposed changes to the Ontario Works Act to enable shared delivery model and reflect life stabilization
- Initial regulation amendments proposed to support life stabilization

## Discussion

- How prepared do you feel your organization is to undertake the proposed system changes?
- What do you need to help support change within your:
  - Organization?
  - Community?
- How can OMSSA members support and promote the culture shift to life stabilization?