

# Leeds and Grenville Integration of Human Services

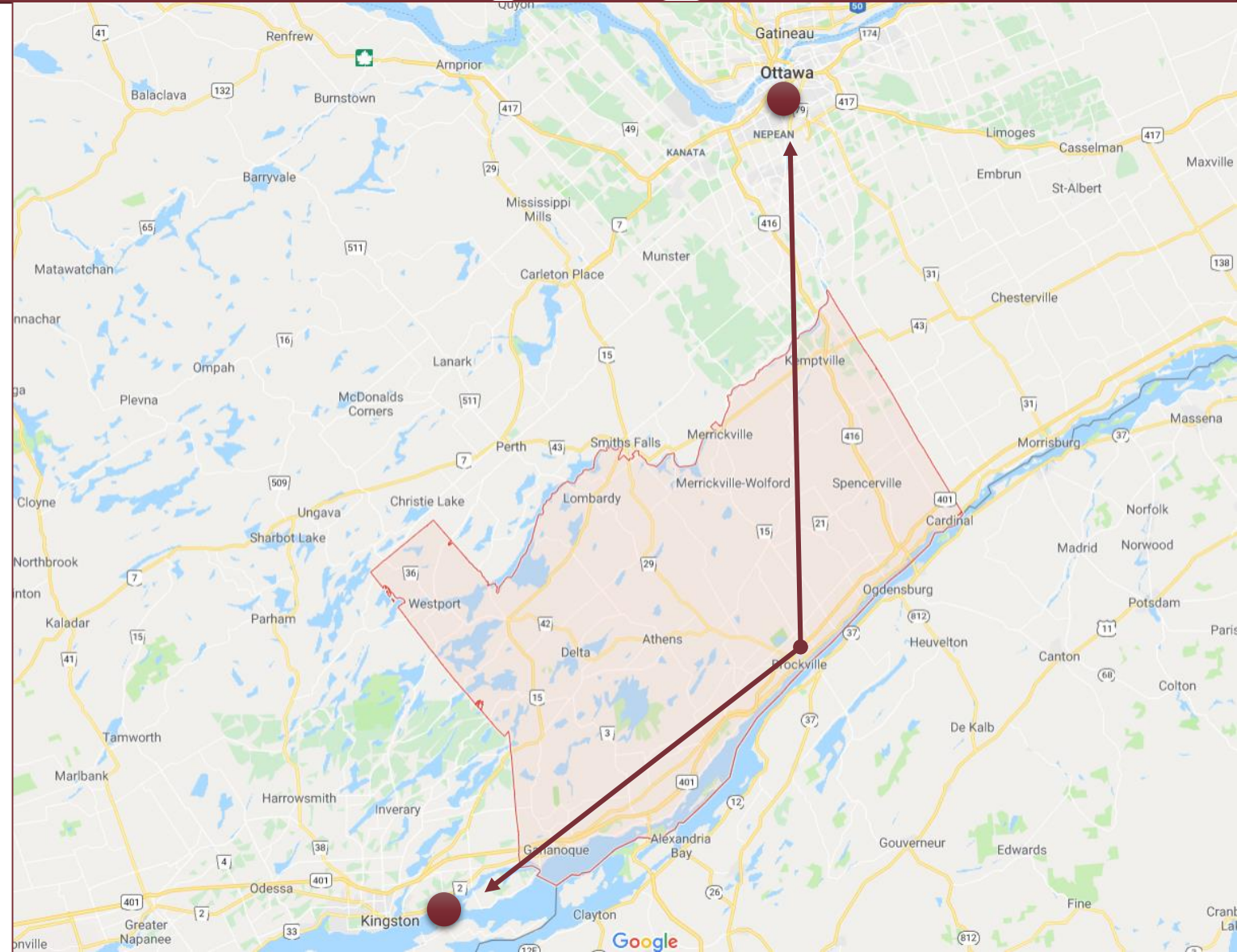
OMSSA Policy Conference  
December 2019

# Our location in Eastern Ontario



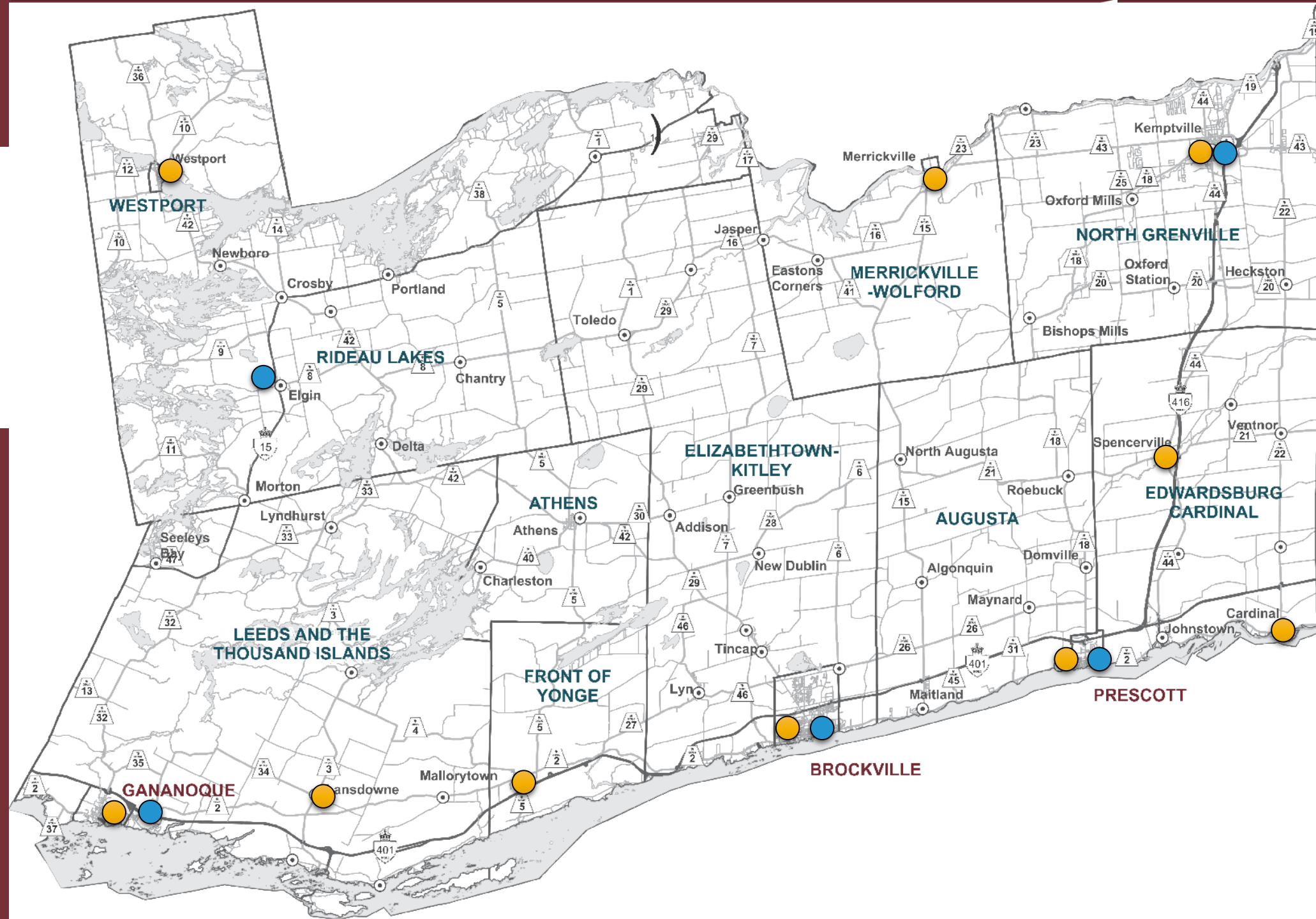
# A bit about Leeds and Grenville

- Population of the County: 100,000
- Largest urban population in the County is City of Brockville (population 21,000)
- 1 hour East of Kingston
- 1.5 hours South of Ottawa





- UCLG owned Social Housing units (single family and apartment buildings)
- Community and Social Services Office Locations



# Programs and Services Provided



# Today: How Integrated is UCLG Social Services Now?

## Main office Reception

- Front Desk staff take inquiries (in person/phone) for OW, Child Care and Housing.
- Front Desk staff have access to YARDI and SAMS
- Receive rent payments and post to YARDI
- Front Desk staff are part of the Ontario Works Department
- Interview Rooms in main reception are used and booked by all case managers from all departments in Social Services
- Access by clients to public computers in reception area
- TV Monitor in main reception shares info about various programs



# How Integrated...?

- Annual budget preparation
- Contract management with various Ministries
- Reporting back to Ministries
- Cheque processing for OW, Rent Supplement, Housing Allowance, etc
- Accounts Payable / Accounts Receivable for all program areas
- Tracking of statistics / outcomes to support Ministry reporting

## Social Services Finance Department

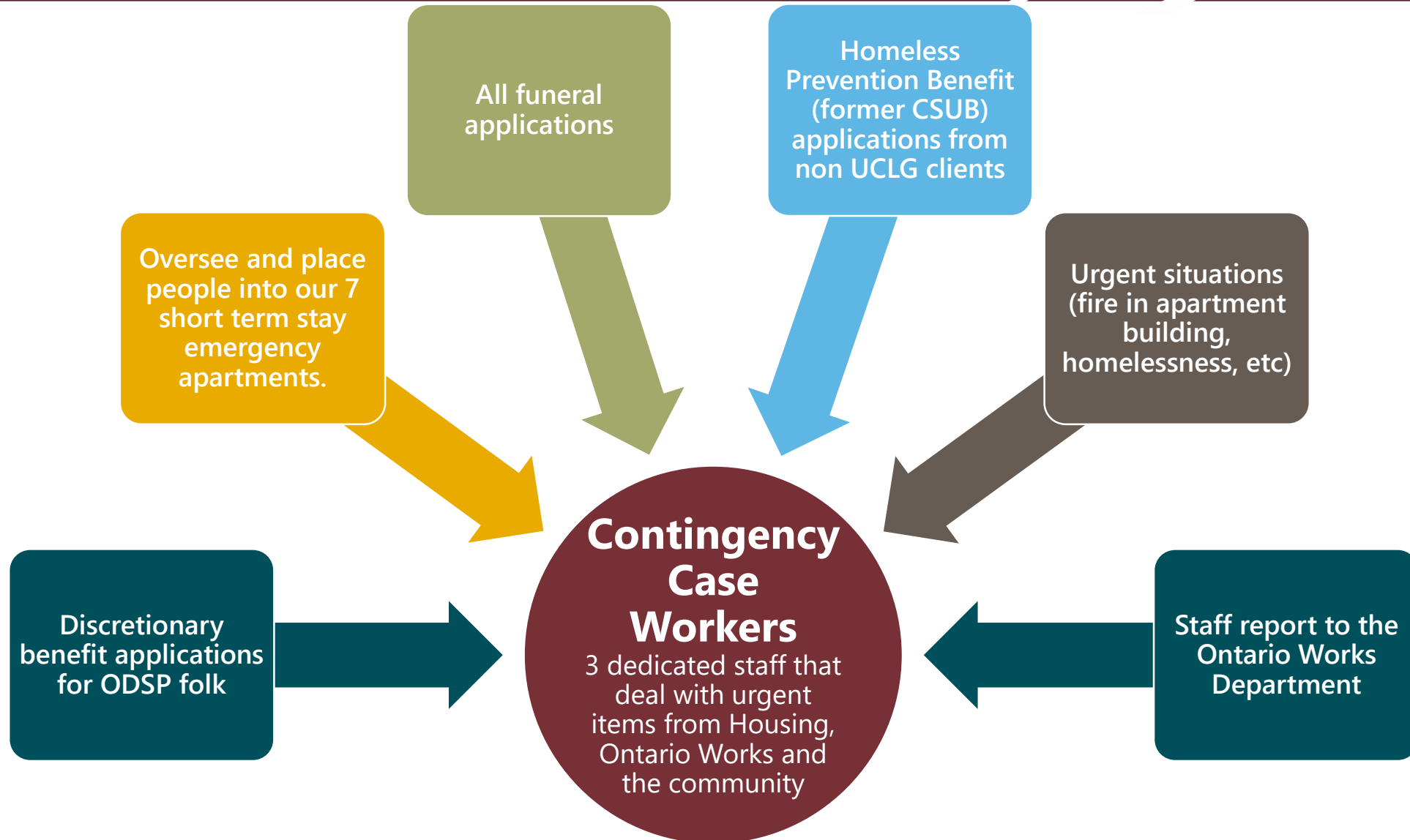
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graph TD; A[Social Services Finance Department] --- B[Manager]; A --- C[Financial Analysts - 2]; A --- D[Accounting Clerks - 3];
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Manager

Financial  
Analysts - 2

Accounting  
Clerks - 3

# How Integrated...?





# How Integrated...?



Common job titles across the program areas:

- Case Manager
- Program Support
- Administrative Assistant



Common job titles have similar job description and all have same compensation grid.



Qualifications for the common positions are the same regardless of the program area.

# How Integrated...?

**Ontario Works**

**Child Care**

**Housing**



- Release of info form signed by clients of Ontario Works and Housing to enable sharing across programs
- Ontario Works, Housing and Child Care case managers share the same office area
- Some training opportunities are open to all departments (i.e. SAIL, Mental health)
- Mutual case consultation done amongst case managers and supervisory staff as required (ie. pending eviction)

# History

## Implemented the “Integration Initiative” in 2007.

- Full restructuring of the Division
- Collapsed departments, new job descriptions, lay offs, hiring, training
- Chaos



## Prior to Integration (2007)

### Community and Social Services Division

Ontario Works  
Department

Program Planning  
and Integrity  
Department (policy,  
emergency planning,  
training, Data Analysis)

Finance and Special  
Services  
Department  
(Finance, ERO, FSW)

Children's Services  
Department

Housing  
Department

## After Integration (2007-2012)

### Community and Social Services Division

Integrated Program  
Delivery  
Department

Finance and  
Property Services  
Department

Program Planning  
and Integrity  
Department

## And now... (changes occurred 2012 and 2016)

### Community and Social Services Division

Ontario Works  
Department  
(Integrated  
Program Delivery  
Department)

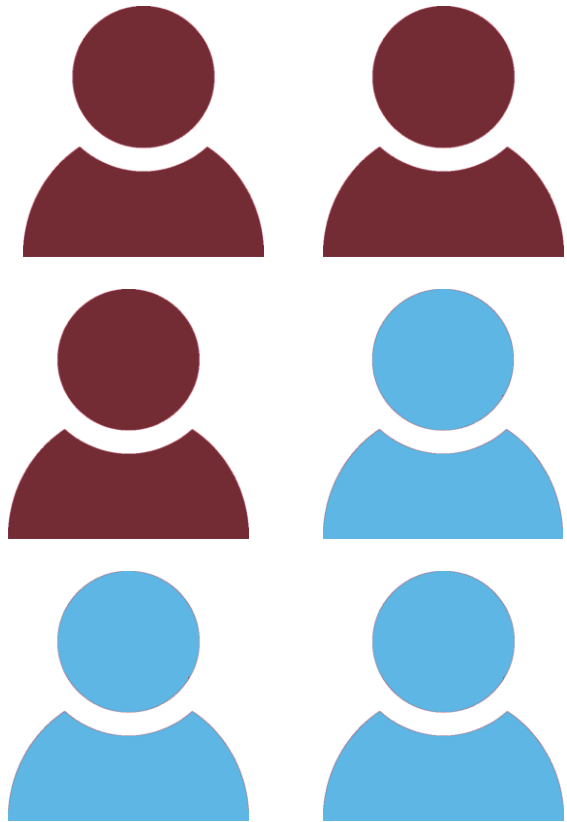
Children's Services  
Department

Housing  
Department

Financial Services



# The Integrated Case Manager



- Trial period of 2 years.
- Cross training / multiple technologies / multiple legislation / regulations.
- 6 staff were part of the trial (  $\frac{1}{2}$  OW background,  $\frac{1}{2}$  Housing background).
- Built the concept around Housing Tenants – All units distributed across 6 workers who would also manage the OW case if tenants were on OW.

# The Challenges

- A generalist vs. a specialist.
- Keeping up to date in both program areas was time consuming and took away time from front line work.
- Over time the 6 staff developed coping strategies and functioned more as an integrated team versus integrated workers.
- Housing Arrears increased 4x above average during the first 12 months.
- Ethical conflicts (ie. evicting tenants).
- Different cultures across program areas - not bad, just different.

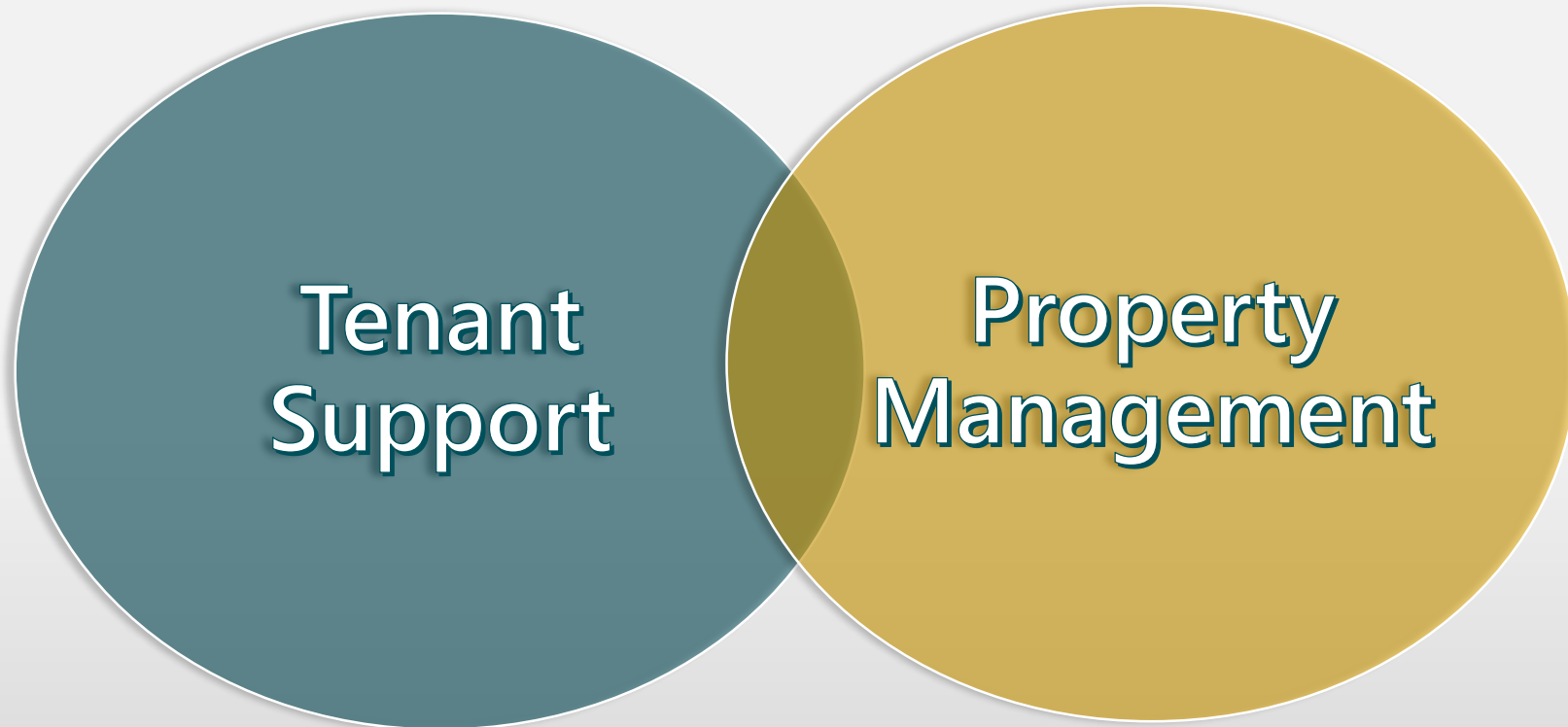
# Separation of Housing and Property

- The Integration Initiative resulted in the management of the social housing properties being separated from tenant support.
- Effective and necessary communication declined.
- Tenants became frustrated, as they were now dealing with different people for different things.
- Resulted in conflicts between departments.



# What Did We Learn

Tenant support and property management maintenance are intertwined and tenants assume such.





# Need to Know Why

## Does Everyone know why we are doing it?

- Be clear and ensure that all staff are aware of why the change is being made.
- What is the change anchored to?
  - Cost savings?
  - Staff reduction?
  - Improved client services?
- What problems will be addressed through the implementation – do we fully understand these problems and the factors contributing – can we directly correlate the proposed change to solving these problems?



# What Did We Learn?

**Slow** and **Steady** wins the race.

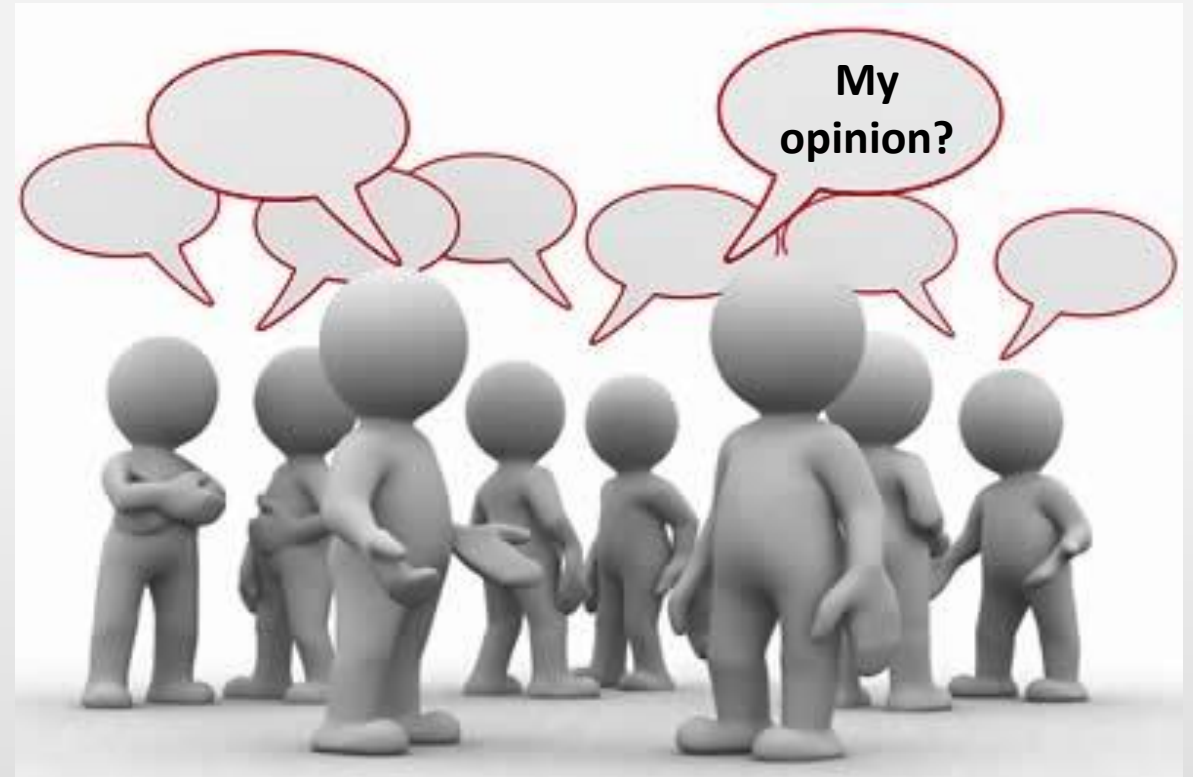
➔ Quick and aggressive deadlines for implementation can promote resistance, frustration and hamper success.



# What Did We Learn?

**Only consult if you plan to use the feedback.**

- ➡ The exercise of consultation is not meaningful and can actually be detrimental to the project if not genuine.
- ➡ Do not consult to say you consulted.



# Common Job Classifications

- ☑ Beneficial to have common language and job classifications within the social services. Case Managers of all program areas are expected to have same competencies.
- ☑ Concentration of specific tasks may differ but overall similar job functions



# Silos



- Integration is designed to tear down silos.
- **Caution:** while some are torn down, others are built.
- Need further analysis of why silos occur.
- Is it about tearing them down or figuring out how to build windows and doors into them?

# Size Matters

- Ontario Works – 62 staff
- Child Care and EarlyON – 15 staff
- Housing -18 staff
- Feeling of being “gobbled up”



# Identity





# Integrated Reception Makes Sense

- ➡ Knowledge and training requirements of front desk staff to be able to offer service to all program areas is achievable and beneficial
- ➡ Makes sense from a client service perspective



# Loss of Focus

The work put into the Integration Initiative resulted in a reduced focus on certain projects:

- New affordable housing development
- Service agreements for Child Care and Non Profit Housing
- Partnership agreements with community partner agencies
- Ministry reporting/contract management

# Re-telling Your Story – Difficult to Assess

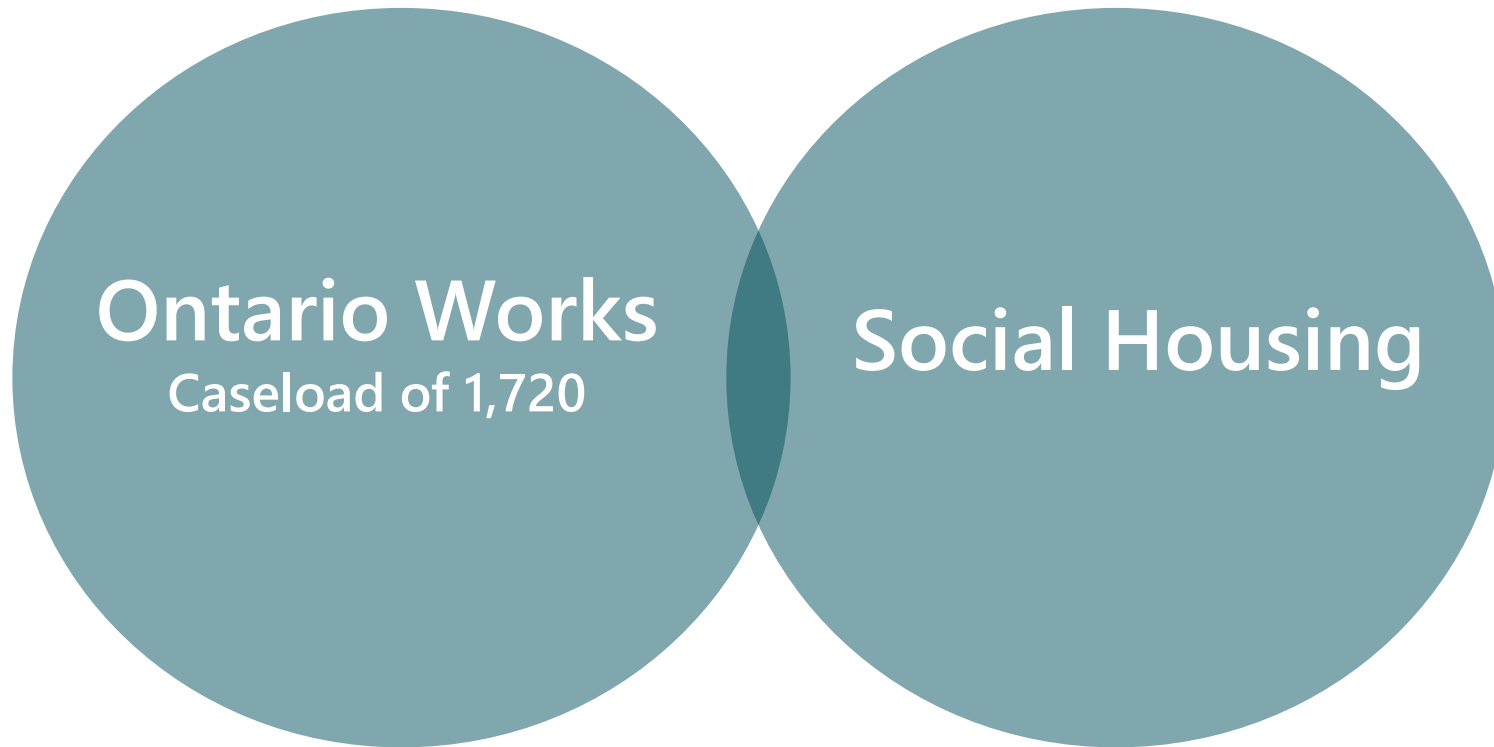
It can be difficult and frustrating for clients to re-tell their stories to multiple agencies/programs/services.

- Is it the same story for different programs/services?
- Stories change with time
- How many clients request multiple services/programs at the same point in time?
- Are there opportunities for better coordinated intake or client service when this arises?



# Understand Common Clients of the Program Areas

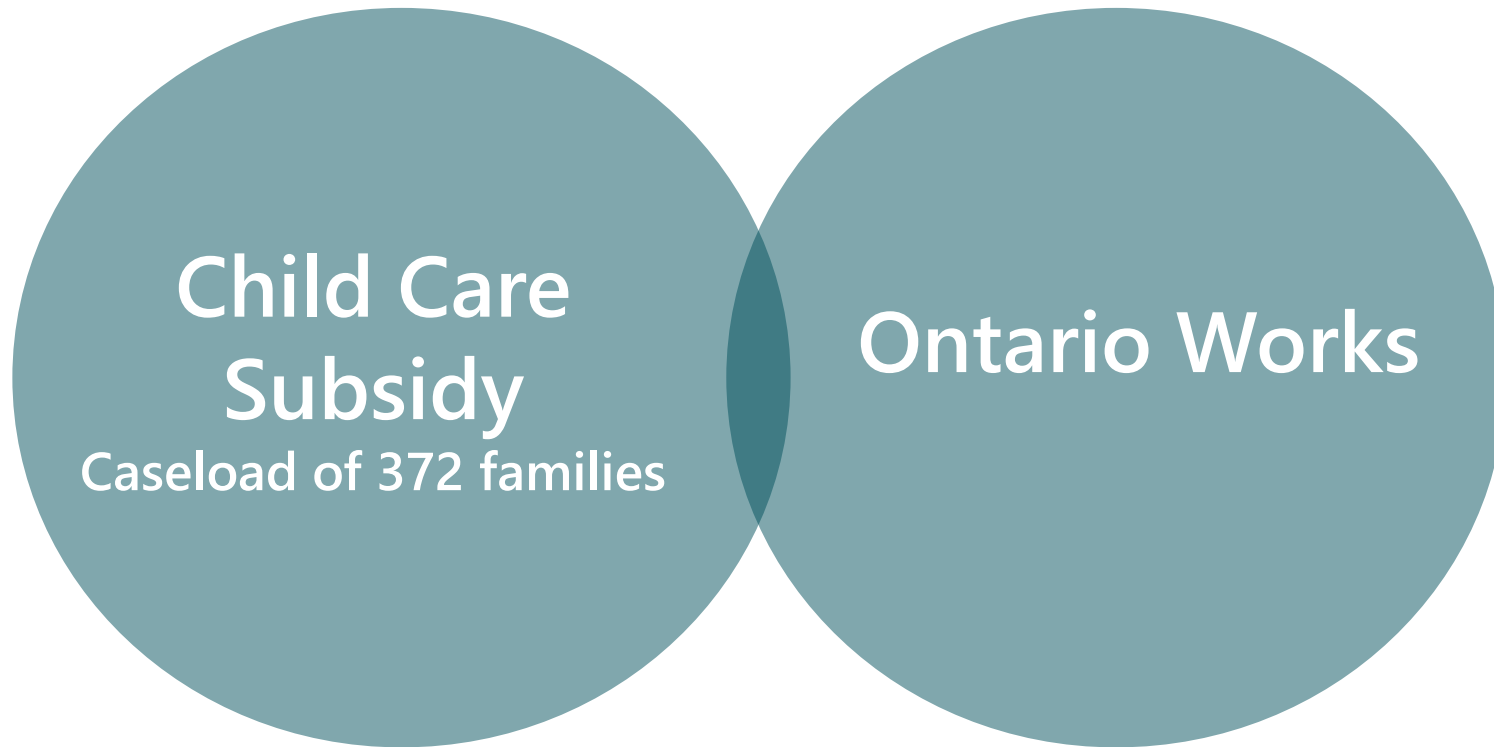
## Ontario Works



107 of Ontario Works cases are mutual cases of Social Housing (6%).

# Understand Common Clients of the Program Areas

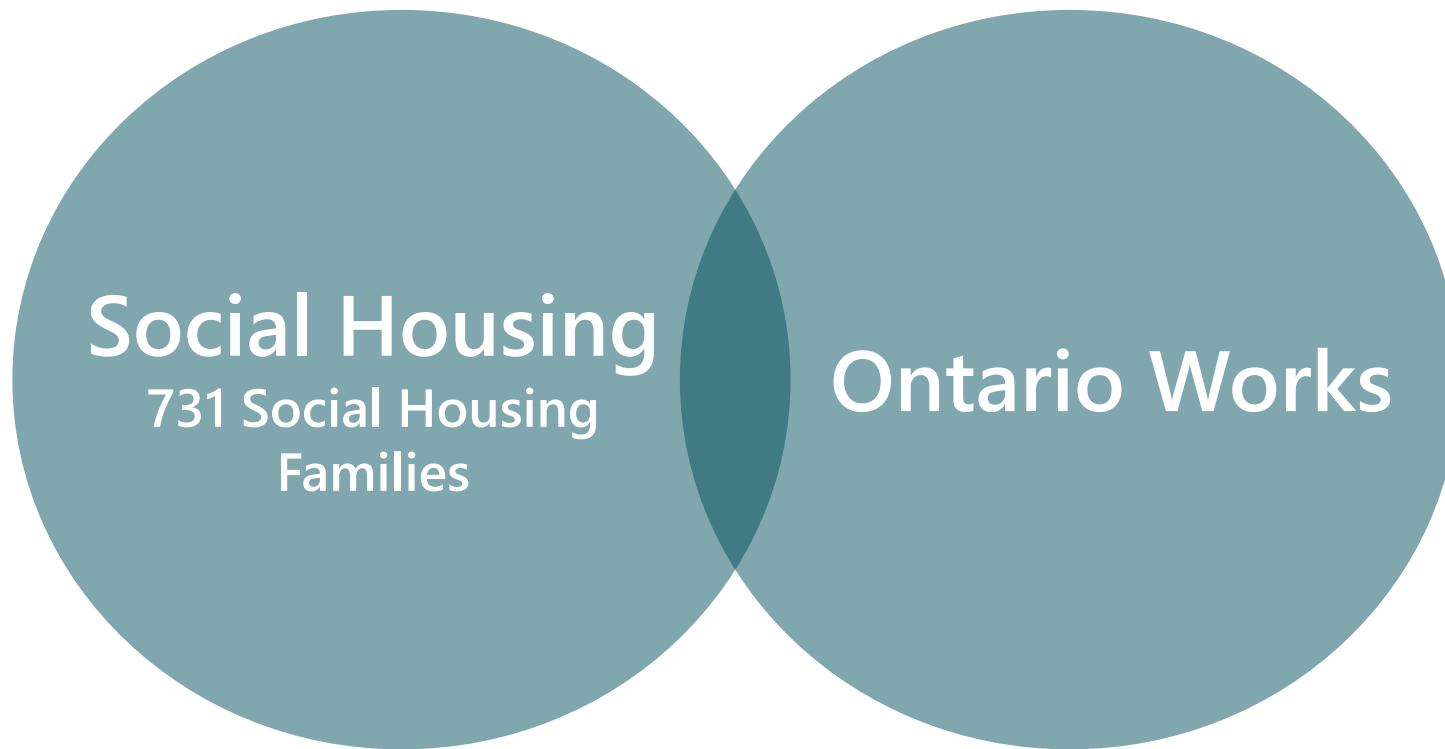
## Child Care Subsidy



21 of Child Care Subsidy families are in receipt of Ontario Works (5.6%).

# Understand Common Clients of the Program Areas

## Social Housing



107 Social Housing tenants are in receipt of Ontario Works (14.6%)



# Recovery

- It takes time to recover from significant change.
- Staff are amazing and resilient.



# The Future...

- Focus on processes, communication and cross training
- Example: If tenant of housing is on OW and facing eviction, how do the two staff work together in the best interests of client?
- Linkages with community partner agencies and opportunities for greater collaboration (ie. Employment Ontario, Home for Abused Women, Addictions and Mental Health)



# The Smell Test

- All staff need to identify and bring forward issues that arise (processes, policies, trends, issues) that do not support and that may hinder quality client service
- If it does not smell right, talk to your supervisor and perhaps simple changes can be made to correct





# Moving Forward...

In UCLG any and all future efforts towards integration will be centered around customer service and customer experience.

