

# Leeds and Grenville Integration of Human Services

OMSSA Policy Conference

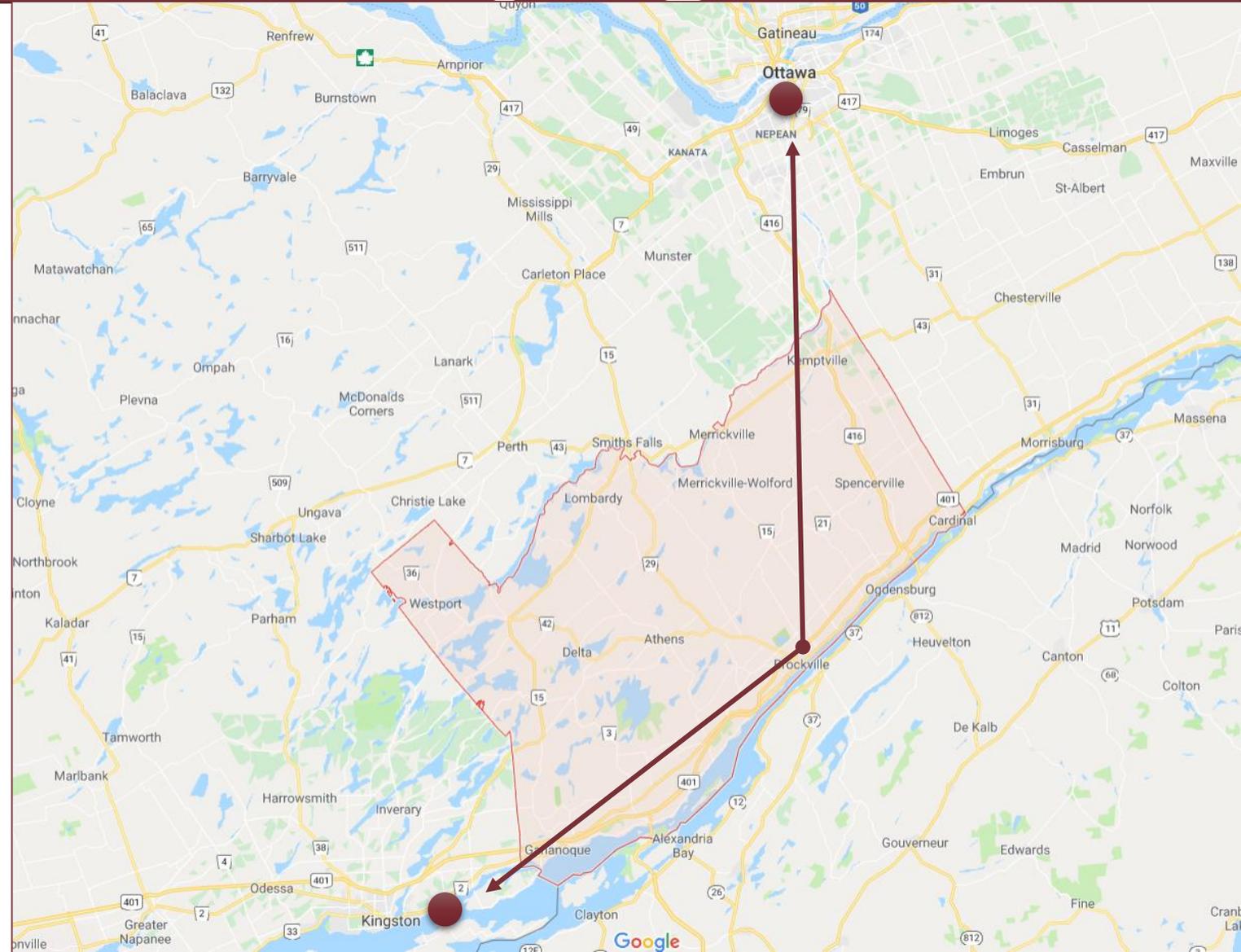
December 2019

# Our location in Eastern Ontario



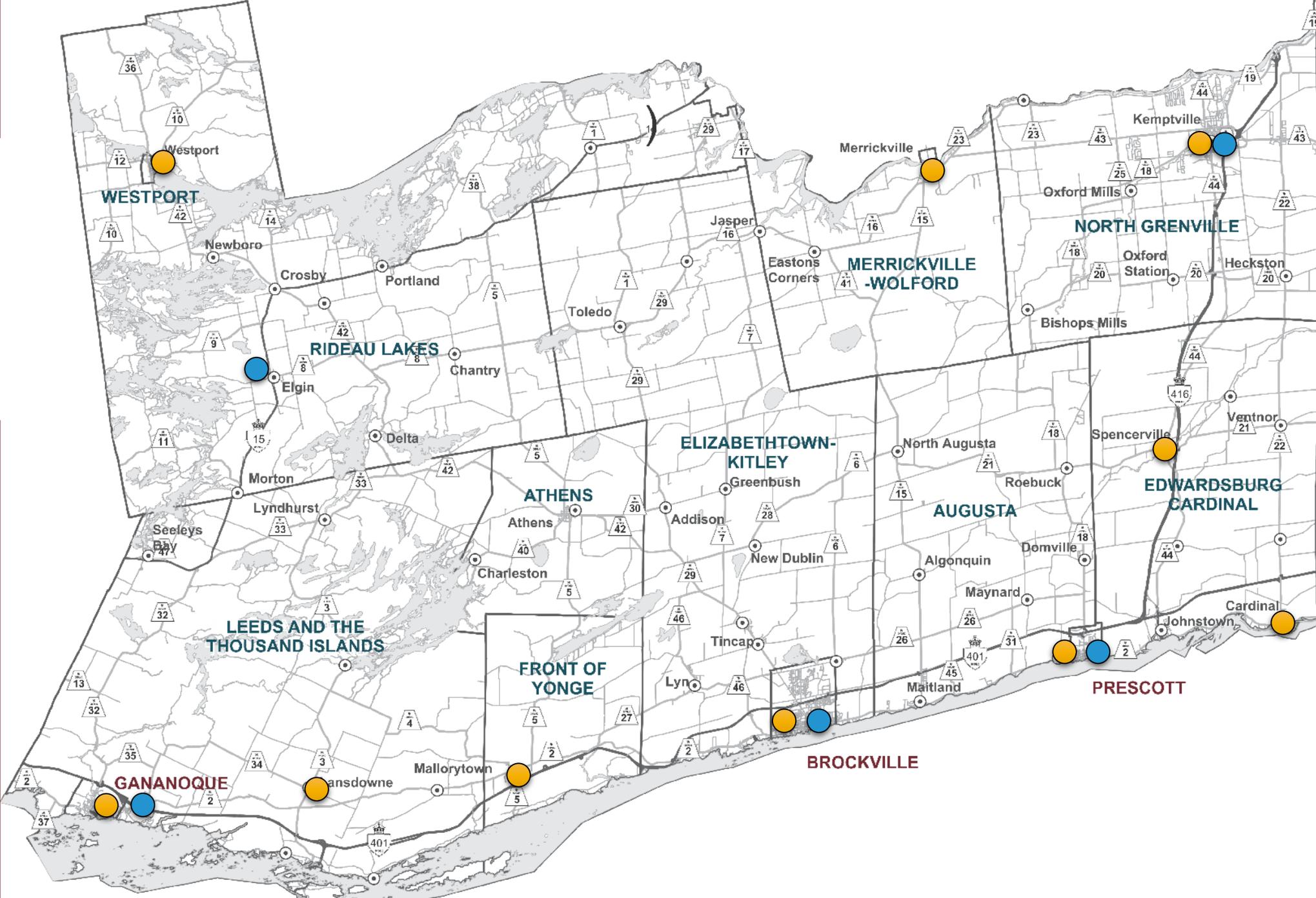
# A bit about Leeds and Grenville

- 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?

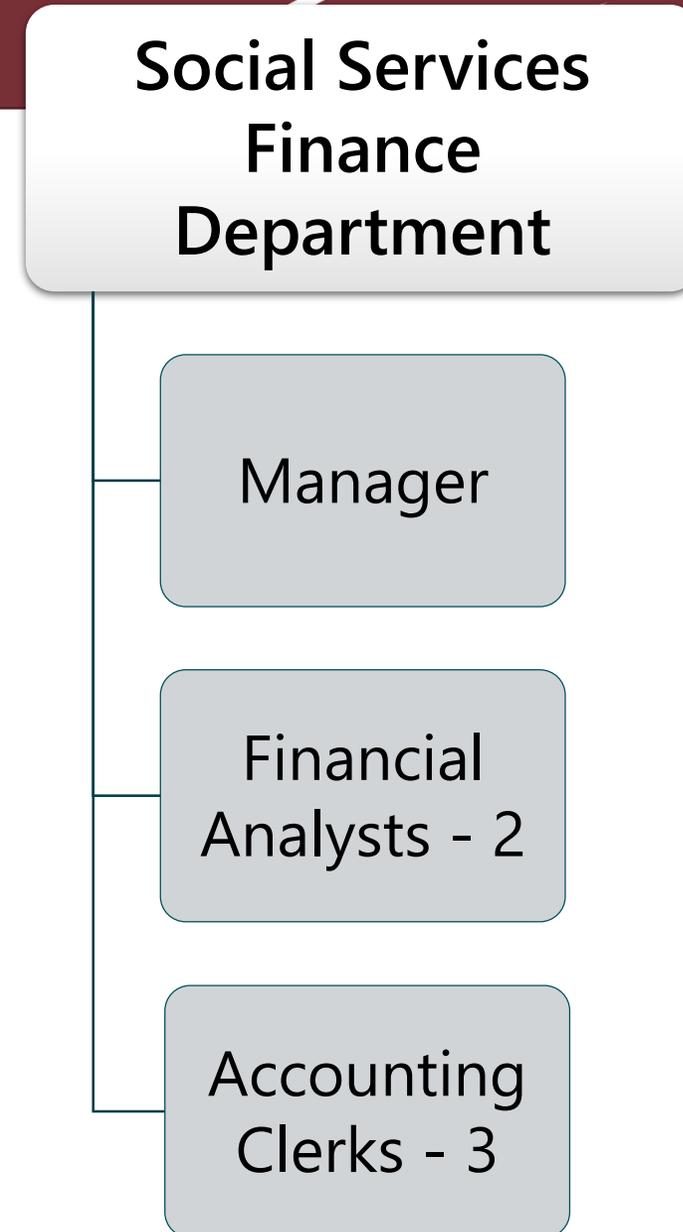
## Main office Reception

- 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

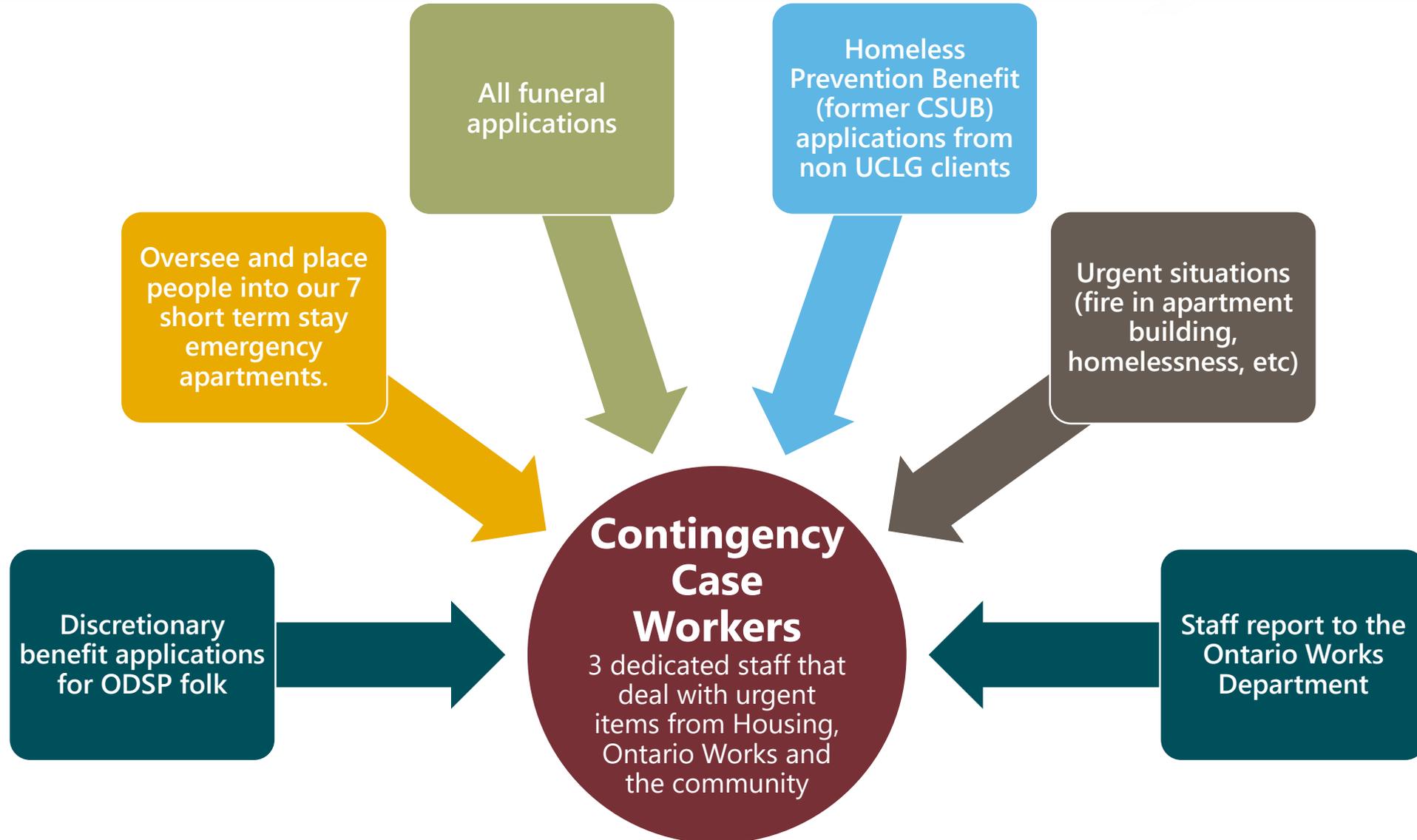


# How Integrated...?

- 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



# 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)

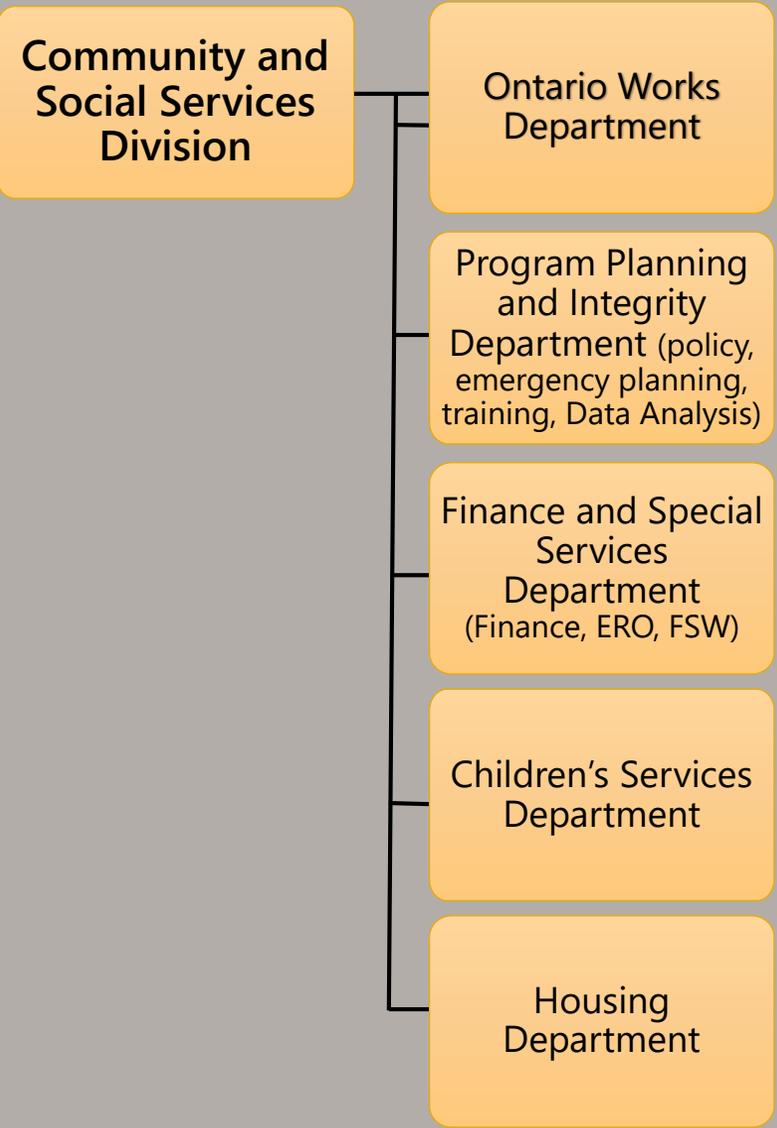
# History

## Implemented the “Integration Initiative” in 2007.

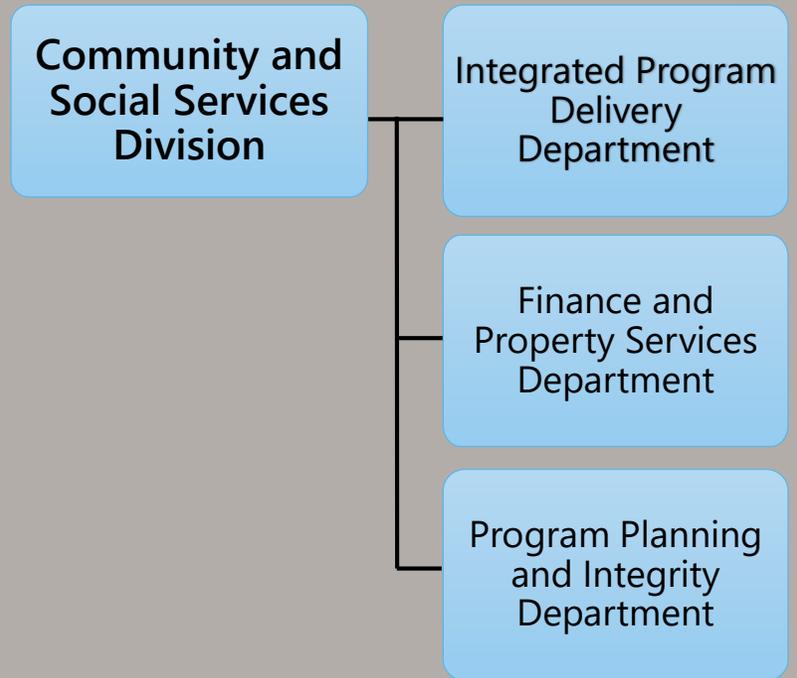
- Full restructuring of the Division
- Collapsed departments, new job descriptions, lay offs, hiring, training
- Chaos



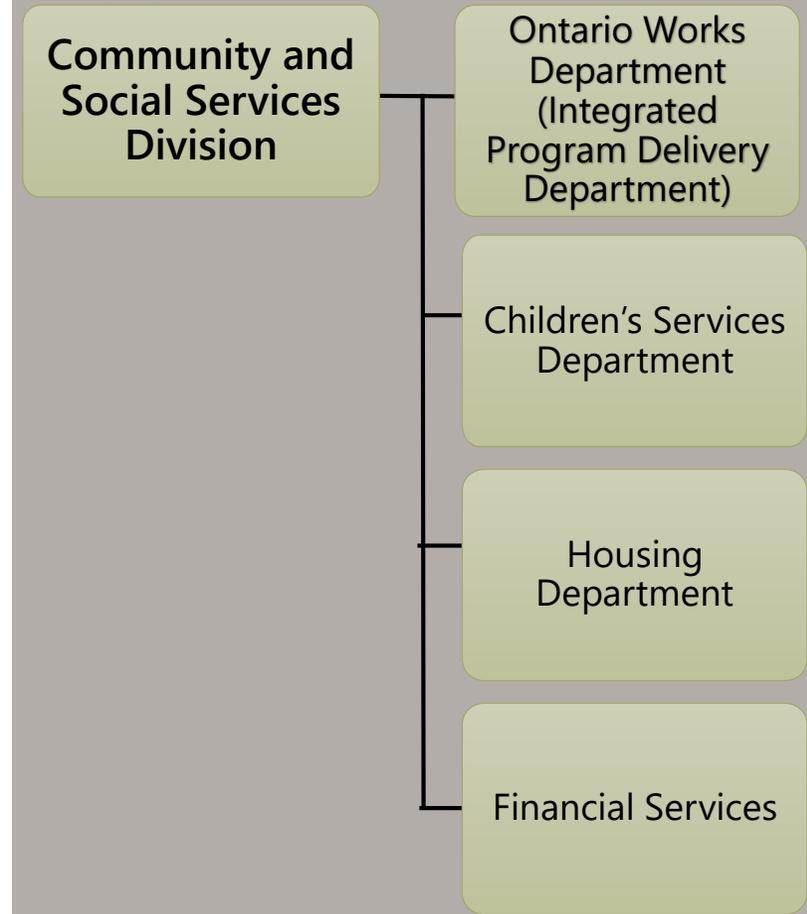
# Prior to Integration (2007)



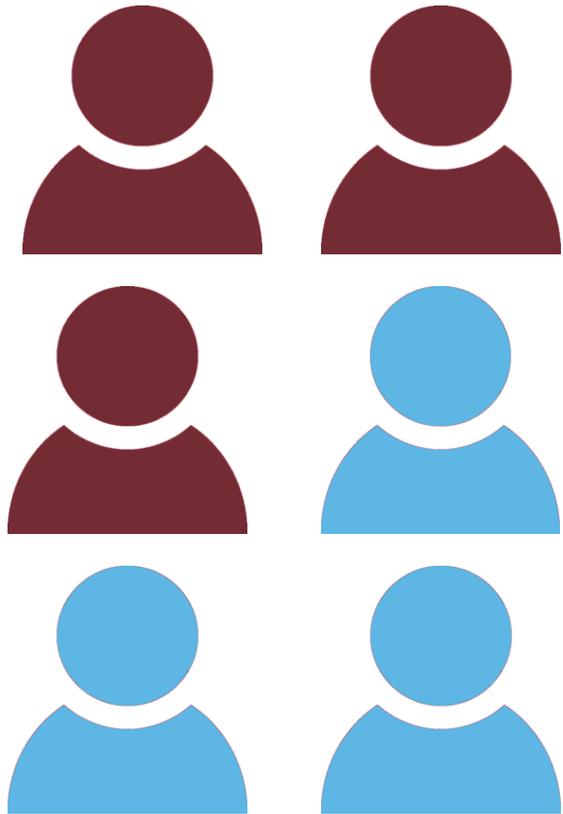
# After Integration (2007-2012)



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



# 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.

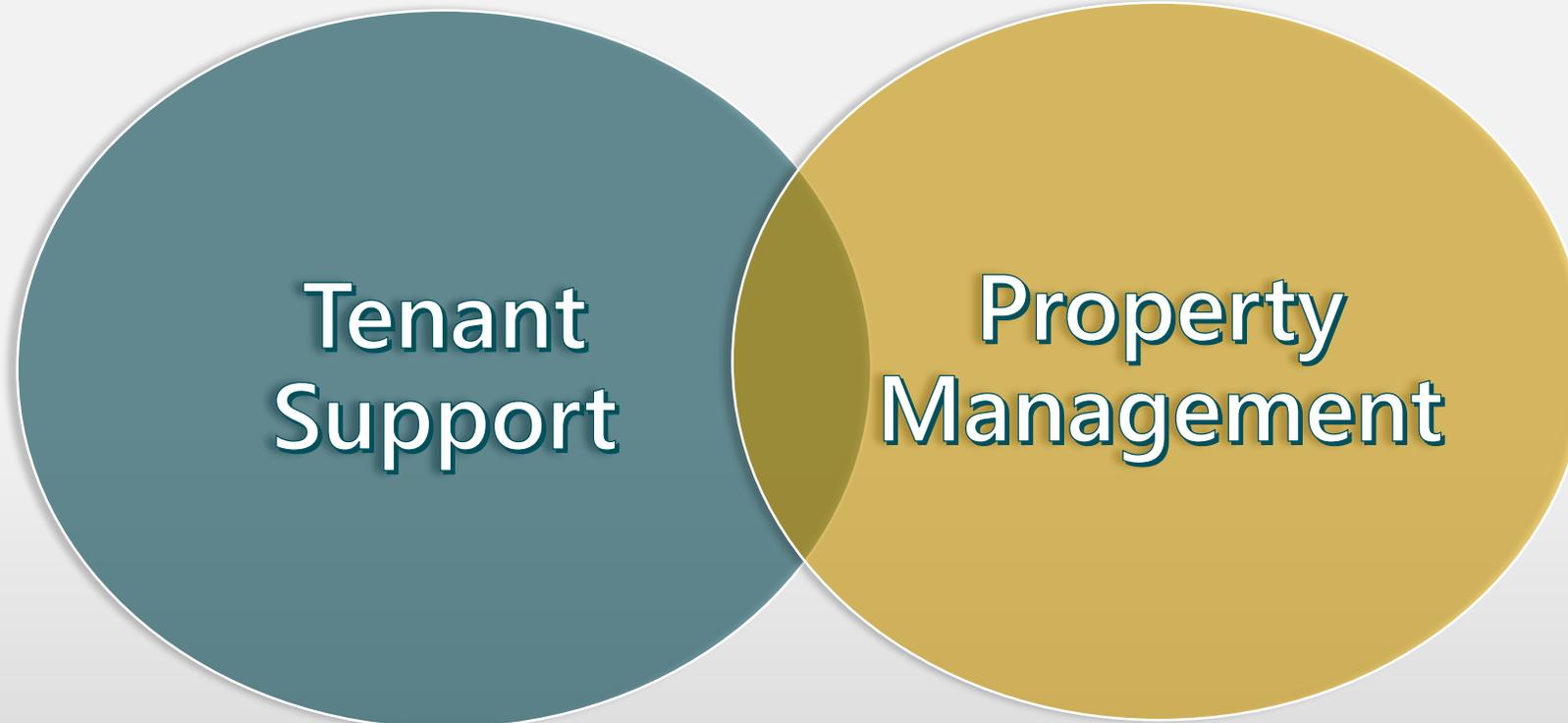
# Separation of Housing and Property

- 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.

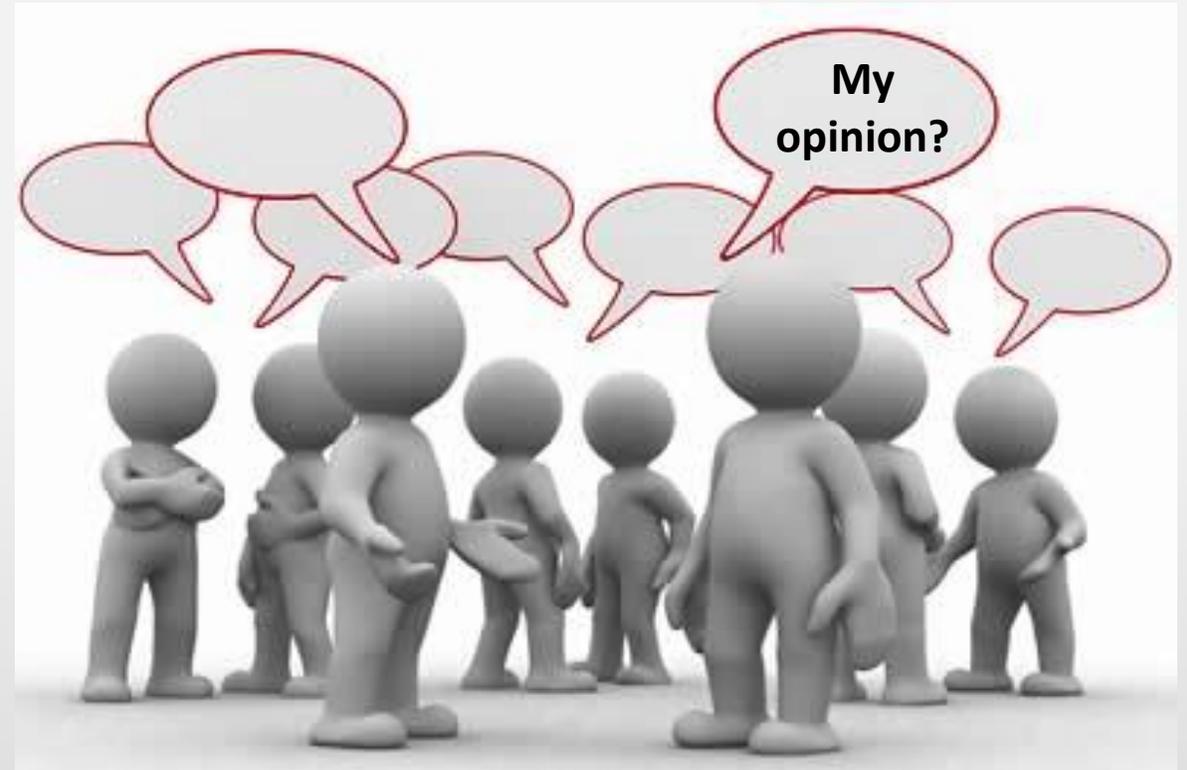
➔ Quick and aggressive deadlines for implementation can promote resistance, frustration and hamper success.



# 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

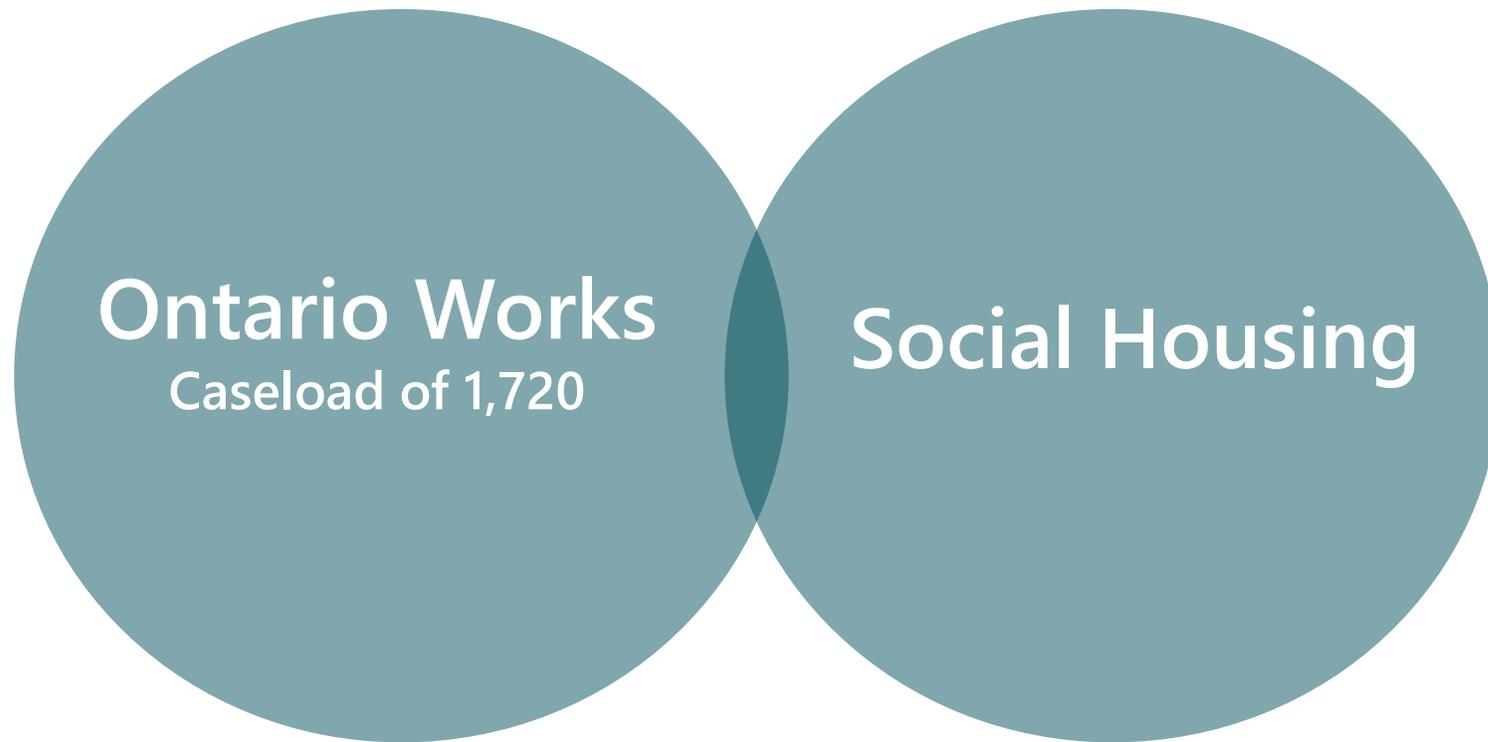
It can be difficult and frustrating for clients to re-tell their stories to multiple agencies/programs/services.

- 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

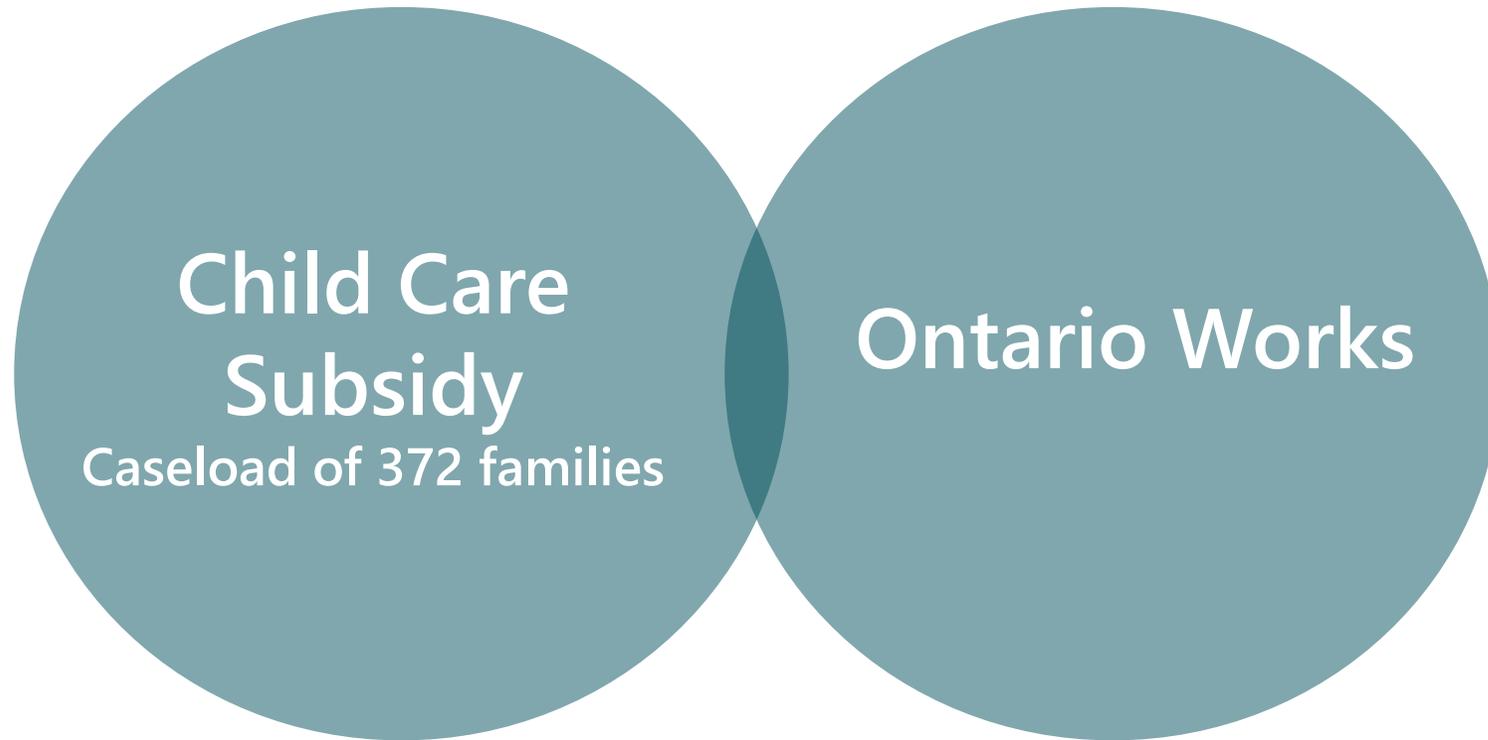
## Ontario Works



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

# Understand Common Clients of the Program Areas

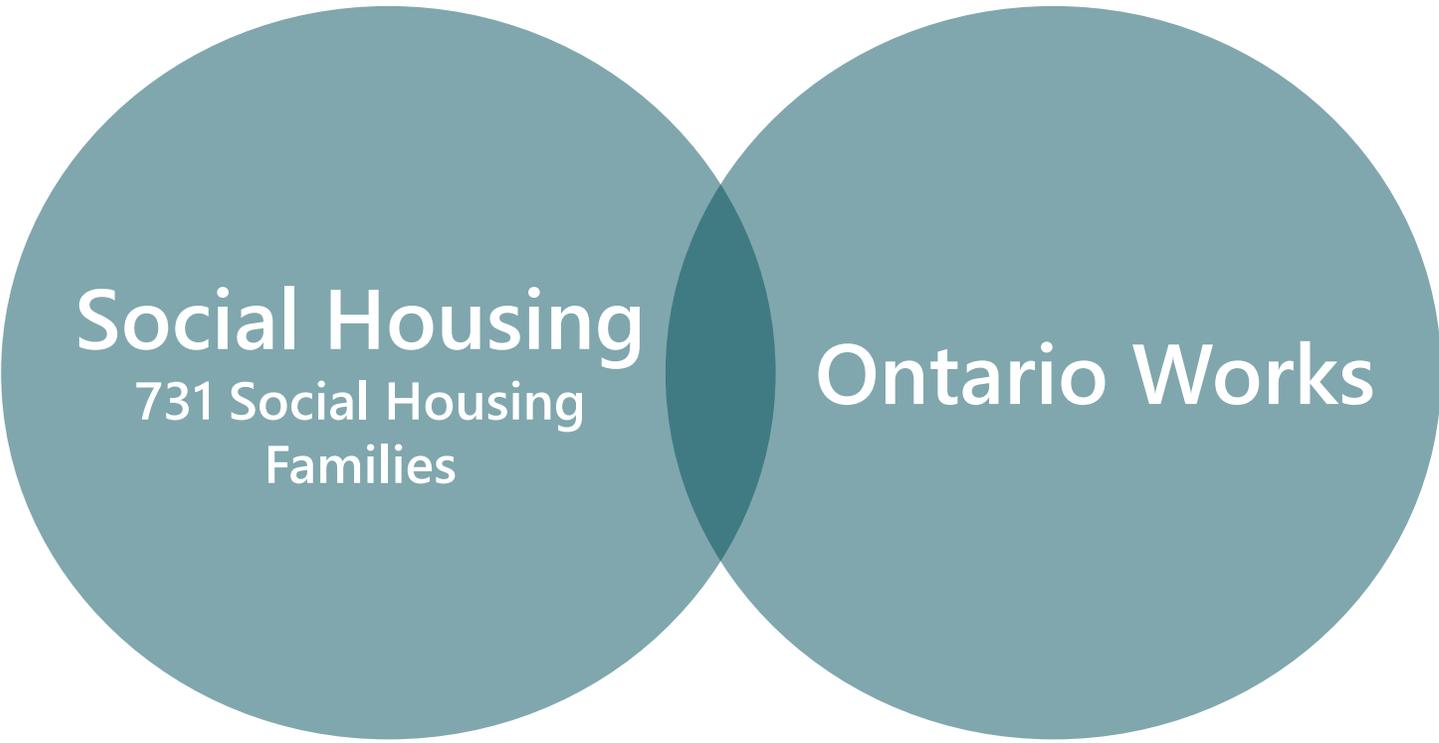
## Child Care Subsidy



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%)

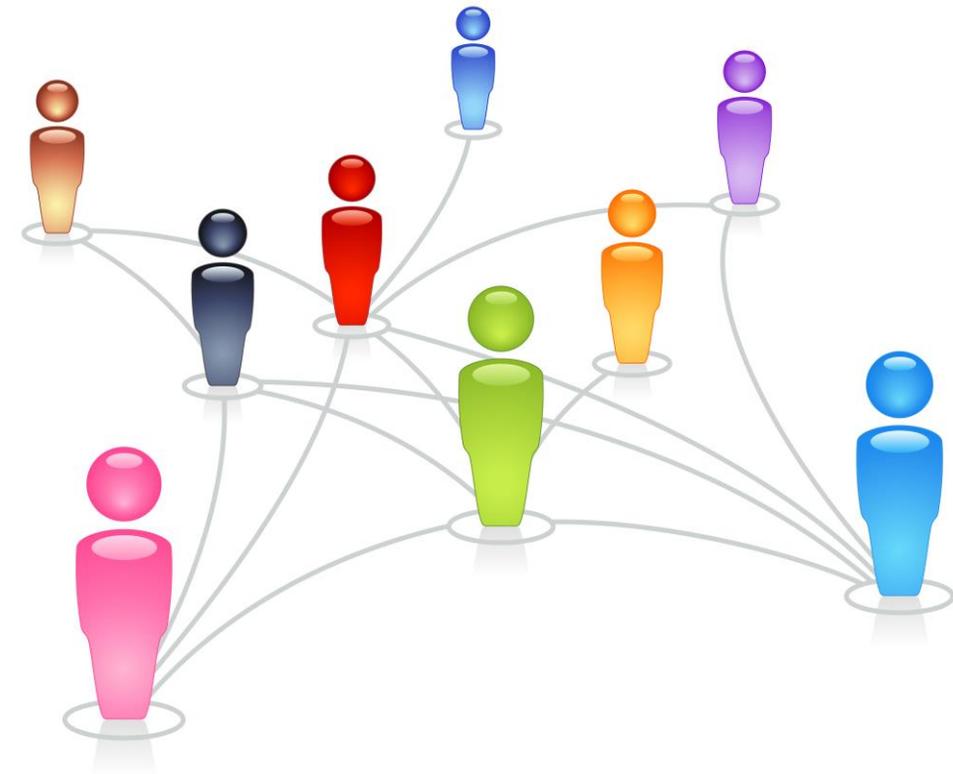
# Recovery

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



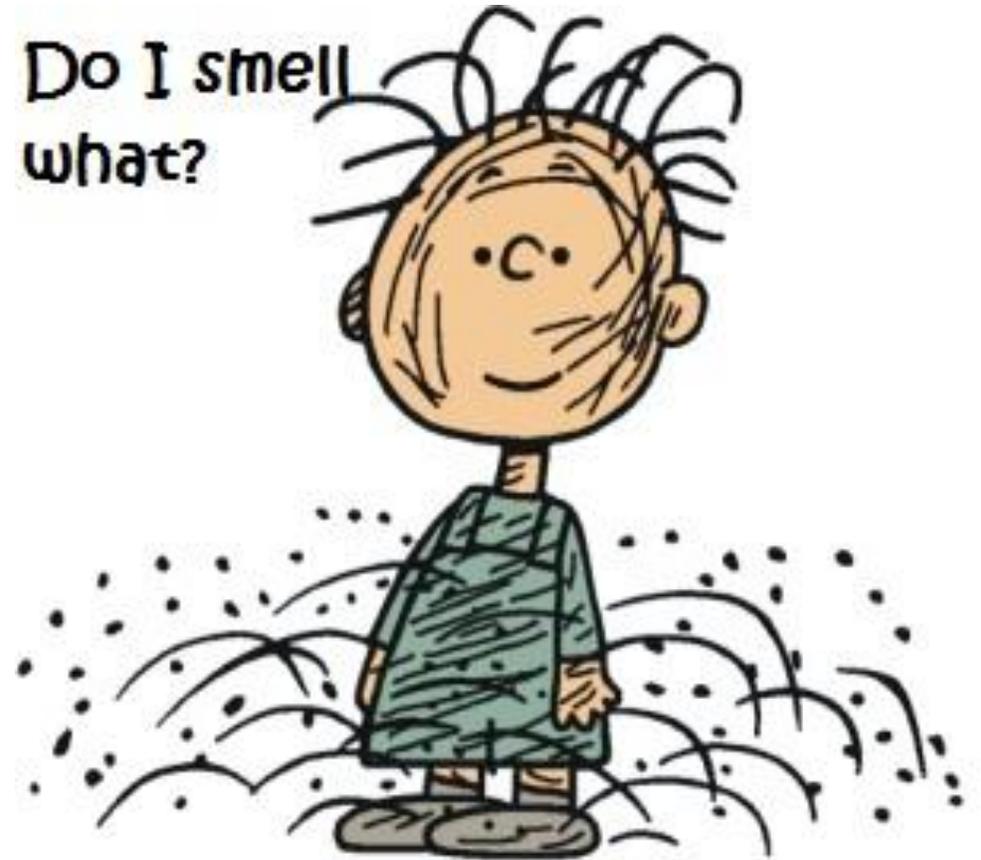
# The Future...

- 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.

