

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2017 – 2022

ALIGN Association of Community Services Mission:

One voice, so children, families and communities thrive.

ALIGN Values:

- Excellence
- Respect
- Collective
- Ethical Accountable
- Courage
- Commitment
- Integrity

ALIGN Beliefs:

- We believe all families and communities have the strengths and capacities to grow and change.
- We believe each child and family must be provided the opportunity to maximize their potential
- We believe children and families must live in safe, secure, healthy, stable and nurturing environments.
- We believe that children and families should have services based on the best knowledge, practices and wisdom.
- We believe in respect for the diversity, values and dignity of all people.

ALIGN Objects:

- To serve as a community of agencies respecting the diverse needs of Alberta's children, youth individuals and families.
- To act as a collective voice advocating for the rights, causes and issues that directly affect our members and Alberta's children, youth, individuals and families.
- To support excellence in service delivery through shared diverse knowledge, wisdom and evolving practice.
- To influence and collaborate with government in the development of legislation, policy and procedures.

ALIGN Strategic Directions:

Strategic Direction #1: Develop and implement organizational sustainability strategies, including targeting and key messages.

Strategies:

- a. Create more sophisticated communication strategies.
 - Continue to development of an interactive website and Social media presence –**Ongoing**
 - Sharing “good news” stories - **Ongoing**
 - External fact sheet- **October 2017 completed**
 - Newsletters, bulletins and updates – **Bi-Weekly, 35 communication in 2017 (Sector resources and grants)**
 - **1200 Career postings per year**
 - **Maintain an extensive list of upcoming funding opportunities, grants, bursaries and awards**
 - Higher a communication contractor who will assist in developing a communication plan and will assure the look is consistent in all activities **October 2017 completed**
 - Will complete a special addition journal re: Indigenous Thought Leaders **Spring/Summer 2018**
 - Updated political tool kit – **Presently under going revisions.**

Presently we are utilizing a contractor to align all ALIGN communication with the same look and feel. The communications contractor is helping us to recognise other areas where communication can help support our work. Templates are being used for flyers, and she is helping us use our brand in a more expanded professional look.

- b. Develop strategies on resources, staff, funding and member recruitment/retention/satisfaction.
 - Encourage agencies to have frontline staff utilize website
 - Support agencies to mentor leadership at ALIGN events. **2018 ALIGN conference presenters, February 27, 2018 Indigenous Thought Leader Day 2, Trauma training series day 3 – Looking at trauma from an organizational level (spring 2018)**

With respect to membership recruitment, ALIGN is presently sending a letter to all previous members and anyone who has attended a ALIGN event who is not a member to encourage them to become.

- c. Create a strategy for ALIGN's work with the next generation of sector leaders.
 - ALIGN is a strong emerging association that needs broad knowledge leaders on the board – Addition of new board member Julie Mann Johnson of the U of C and Jeff Hansen from Woods Homes, Lethbridge– **Fall 2017**
 - Renegotiated Leadership Bursary **Fall 2017**
 - Developed Succession Plan for E.D Role **2017/2018**
 - Celebrate history with 50/10 **January 2018**

The ALIGN Board of Directors has also began work on the ED competencies and another on Succession planning.

Strategic Direction #2: Promote Excellence in Professional Development and Research in Alberta.

Strategies

- a. Make Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations part of professional development and training. **ongoing**
 - Utilize the Calls to Action as guidelines to further our development of training. – **Mike DeGagne to provide workshop May 7 and May 8, 2018**
 - Ensure members have access information.
 - Consult with the ALIGN Indigenous Advisory committee for future direction in this area. - **2018**
- b. Provide leadership development within the sector.
 - Leadership bursary **Leadership Bursary spent out as of March 31, 2018**
 - Work on organizational development in Indigenous knowing and Trauma Informed practice. **2017/2018**
- c. Support Child Intervention providers to ensure that they work with the Foundations of Caregiver Support principals.
 - Clarify Ministry definition of Trauma informed – **Completed 2017**
 - Develop a training strategy for opportunities for Trauma Informed Training. **Completed Day 1& 2 spring 2017, Day 3 spring 2018.**
 - Develop a plan with the provincial 101 Working Group for the Provincial implementation of the FCS 101 training series for legacy CS staff, agency staff and caregivers. **(18 month contract)**

- Providing Palix Foundation workshop provincially - How the brain develops and Intergenerational Trauma. **Fall 2017/Spring 2018**
- d. Encourage research and evidence is used in practice
 - ALIGN Research Journal- Produce twice annually
 - Providing opportunities for organizations to gain the knowledge that can be used in practice – **i.e workshops with Kevin Campbell, Howard Bath, Dr. Yellow Bird, Dr. Junlei Li, Mike DeGagne and Line Perron.**
Currently working on a special editions Indigenous Practise and research.
 - Mental Health and Suicide Action Plans - **Participated over 2017/2018 Edmonton. Once finalized will be disseminated to membership.**
- e. OHS
 - **Contractor attended two conference CAMH and the Association of Safety Partnerships (AASP)**
Received 18 month grant from Ministry of Labour and presently working on a training plan with Alberta Association of Safety Partners on formal Health and Safety Management Systems.
Informing and preparing agencies for the implementation of Bill 30 – June, 1, 2018.
Information sessions being provided and coordinated to agencies
Representation from the Ministry of Labour presenting at the ALIGN membership meeting on May 4, 2018.
- f. Opioid Strategy and Substance Abuse committee –
 - **Contractor attends and policy has been developed, currently working on training for caregivers.**
- g. Alternative learning opportunities - **Ongoing**
 - Online training – Vimeo Videos – **Posted Indigenous Thought Leaders segments and protocol process videos.**
 - Learning portal on ALIGN website
 - Develop community of practice opportunities -
 - Cross cultural training – **working on ALIGN Cultural Solutions and Omaniw sessions for 2018.**
 - Utilize Interns and Students more for projects and research
 - Connecting with post-secondary institutions

- Working with U of C on practicum placements – **U of C has met with Edmonton Chapter to discuss opportunities.**
- Added U of C representative to board of directors – Julie Mann –Johnson – **Fall 2017**
- Healthy Workplace Research Project - **Final 2017/2018**

ALIGN has been taking a leadership role in Indigenous knowledge and ceremony as practise. We have also been utilizing experts in Trauma to inform practise. More recently we have included University of Calgary, Julie Mann-Johnson to our Board of Directors. ALIGN has also been invited to participate in various research projects.

Strategic Direction #3: Develop an ALIGN Indigenous Strategy

Strategies:

- a. Help organizations with how to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s calls to action and what these mean to their organizations. **Winter/Spring 2018**
- b. Give voice to practices that work - **Ongoing**
 - Support and encourage practice as ceremony -
 - Indigenous Thought Leader Day 1 & 2
 - Cultural Solutions and Omanitew
 - Kinship care
 - Ensure agencies have a means to incorporate Indigenous strategies into their practice
 - Develop agency integration in Practice
 - Highlight innovative good practice within our communication strategy
 - Important to highlight better care for Indigenous Children
 - Develop resources
 - Support cultural safety and understanding.
- d. Engage our DFNA partners. - **Ongoing**
 - Invite to conference
 - Offer training opportunities for Mental Health First Aid
 - Invite to Indigenous Thought Leader Day 1 & 2

The strategies are well underway. We will continue to develop and grow as knowledge is incorporated. We are also taking a lead in using ceremony as practise and encourage all agencies to do so.

Strategic Directions #4: Develop a Workforce Strategy for Healthy, Sustainable, Competent Service Providers

Strategies:

- a. Further develop our wellness strategy - **Ongoing**
 - Continue the wellness stream in annual conference
 - Facilitate wellness training
- b. Clarify policies and develop a process to support agencies in providing safe working conditions.
 - Work with Ministry of Labour. – **January 2017**
 - Four presentation on Bill17 – **Fall 2017**
 - Liaison with WCB – **Met with WCB Fall 2017**
 - Follow up on any relevant recommendations – **received OHS grant**
 - **Continue to develop OHS resources on website**
- c. Have events on leadership, volunteer development, and success planning and basic ethics.
- d. Explore strategies to recruit and retain Indigenous agency staff

This is becoming a significant piece of ALIGN's work especially since the implementation of Bill 17 and the imminent implementation of Bill 30.

Strategic Directions #5: Leadership with Government

Strategies:

- a. Refine ALIGN advocacies strategy - **Ongoing**
 - Enhance our political tool kit.
 - Consider partnering with Public interest Alberta and other Associations.
- b. Support procurement that results in a viable, sustainable service provider system by providing response to costing from Procurement Advisory table.
 - Be clear on procurement strategy and communicate that. **Fall 2017**
 - Speak with Ministry about moving the process forward and determining an interim strategy. **Fall 2017**
- c. Contracts need to be clear regarding services required and contracts to include the finances required to provide such services.
– Met with ADM and DM regarding Procurement and Bill 17 requirements **November 2017 and January 2018**

- d. Focus on addressing full costing of minimum wage changes.- met with DM of Ministry of Community Support Services – **October 2017 and January 2018**
- e. Influence and collaborate with government in the development of legislation, policy, and procedures in areas such as the Child Intervention Review, Child Advocate, Human Rights, Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Disabilities.- **Attended majority of Child Intervention Panel meeting, as well ALIGN has made submissions to the Panel on behalf of Group Care, Foster Care and contracted Agencies. Spring 2018 ALIGN and many members have attended the recommendation community engagement session and are hosting some others as requested.**
- f. Understand and disseminate information on recent Labour Employment standards. – Bill 17 - **Ongoing**
- g. Ensure voice for the sector is included at all Policy, procedure and development tables with government.
 - Child intervention Tables - **Ongoing**
 - 101 Training working group
 - SOS working group
 - CI practice committee
 - C.S Steering Committee
 - Provincial Foster Care/Kinship Collaboration Table
FSCD – **Ongoing**
 - Regional FSCD meeting – **November 2017**
 - HR strategy for disabilities – **December 2017**
 - Disabilities Symposium committee – **upcoming June 2018**
 - Collaborate with ACDS for needs of Disabilities staffing – **January 2018**
 - Ensure that we are included at tables with Prevention and Early intervention to ensure a better collaboration and to inform the sector. **Met and ask to be included in the reset/redesign of the Framework – October 2017 and a meeting request made January 2018**
 - Continue to Chair Youth in Care mentoring project - **Ongoing**
- h. Advocate for future Leadership Bursary funds.

Government changes are significant and quick these days. ALIGN is having to be very nimble to ensure that the agency voice is heard.

Concurrently we are one year away from an election and the government relations landscape is very different. We will need to engage all members in GRC activities as all parties will need to understand the needs of the sector.