

Provincial Update on Auditor General Recommendations
 Department of Community Services
 AS AT MAY 31, 2012

Since 2009, the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) has made 41 recommendations to the Department of Community Services, in efforts to improve government for the people of Nova Scotia. The Department has made every effort to address these recommendations. Of the 41 recommendations made, 10 have already been completed, and 31 are in progress.

Recommendations assigned to Department of Community Services:

	Complete	Work In Progress	Action no Longer Required	Do not Intend to Implement	Total Recommendations
Recommendations by Chapter					
November 2010					
Chapter 2: Rent Supplement Housing	6	3	-	-	9
Chapter 3: Services for Persons with Disabilities	4	25	-	-	29
November 2011					
Chapter 4: Protection of Persons in Care	-	3	-	-	3
Total	10	31	-	-	41
Percentages	24%	76%	0%	0%	100%

Recommendations in Detail:

Month & Year	Chapter	Recommendation	Status	Brief summary of actions taken
Nov. 2010	2	2.1	Work in Progress	The department completed a review of the <i>Finance Manual</i> and the <i>Applicant, Tenant & Property Management Manual</i> which resulted in some revisions/updates. The department will also implement a process to annually review manuals and, when required, update in a timely manner.
Nov. 2010	2	2.2	Complete	The department developed and implemented an internal self-audit process with templates to annually review applicant files. All Housing Authorities completed the review and reported the results to the department.

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Nov. 2010	2	2.3	Complete	The department developed and implemented an internal self-audit process with templates to annually review applicant files. All Housing Authorities completed the review and reported the results to the department.
Nov. 2010	2	2.4	Work in Progress	The department provides guidance and advice to proponents to ensure the requirements of the program are addressed in their proposals. In 2012/13, the department, in consultation with its housing partners and stakeholders, will develop a provincial housing strategy. This will involve looking at the existing housing programs to ensure they will meet future housing needs.
Nov. 2010	2	2.5	Work in Progress	Utilizing the Mortgage Management Information System, the department is putting in place a process to monitor the rental rates of units created through affordable housing subsidies.
Nov. 2010	2	2.6	Complete	As of January 2012, Housing Authorities have been directed to ensure developers obtain a municipal occupancy permit before placing rent supplement tenants or public housing tenants in newly built rental housing. This includes new rental housing developed by both the Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation and private developers.

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Nov. 2010	2	2.7	Complete	The <i>Applicant, Tenant & Property Management Manual</i> has been reviewed and the areas in need of updating have been identified. The department has revised the Rent Supplement policy to require all Housing Authorities to follow up on all deficiencies noted in inspections until they are resolved.
Nov. 2010	2	2.8	Complete	The department has reviewed the risks associated with not completing annual inspections on rent supplement units and has updated the policy in recognizing municipal jurisdiction over building standards. Housing Authorities may still conduct inspections if they suspect substandard conditions and make reports to the landlord or authority having jurisdiction.
Nov. 2010	2	2.9	Complete	New performance measures have been established for the Housing Authorities. Areas of performance include vacant unit turn-around time, vacancy rate and value of rental arrears. Measures are reported on a monthly basis. Targets have been set using accepted industry standards as a guide. Actual performance measured against performance targets form part of each Housing Authority director's annual performance appraisal.

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 Department of Community Services
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Nov. 2010	3	3.1	Work in Progress	The development of a strategic plan for the Services for Persons with Disabilities program was approved as a departmental priority in <i>Community Services' 2011/12 Statement of Mandate</i> . The development of a joint SPD/Continuing Care Committee to review and make recommendations regarding long term care and support services across the province will inform the SPD strategic plan. This Committee has developed a report for consultation across the sector. Once this work is complete, the SPD strategic planning process will resume.
Nov. 2010	3	3.2	Work in Progress	Following the completion of an SPD strategic plan, a formal operational plan will be developed. In the meantime, some recommendations such as expansion of the Independent Living Support (ILS) and Alternative Family Support (AFS) Programs, and enhancement of the supports to families is underway.
Nov. 2010	3	3.3	Work in Progress	Efforts to support monitoring of SPD goals, objectives and priorities to date include: utilization of the Initiatives Tracking System to monitor the progress of some of the SPD priorities; an evaluation is underway for the ILS Program; the development of draft standards for adult residential programs; and a dedicated staff person has been assigned responsibility for data collection and analysis. Through the strategic planning process, an SPD dashboard will be developed to monitor the progress of the program.

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Nov. 2010	3	3.4	Work in Progress	<p>Performance indicators have been identified in the standards for residential services. Other performance indicators for SPD programs will be developed as policies and procedures are updated.</p> <p>Through the strategic planning process, an SPD dashboard with key indicators will be developed to monitor the progress of the program.</p>
Nov. 2010	3	3.5	Work in Progress	<p>The future requirements of the SPD program will be developed as part of the SPD/Continuing Care redesign and strategic planning initiative.</p> <p>In the meantime, the department considers information such as the provincial wait list data, population and program trends, and jurisdictional research.</p> <p>The evaluation of SPD programs will also inform future needs and enhancements. The evaluation of the ILS Program is currently underway and recommendations are expected in Fall 2012.</p>
Nov. 2010	3	3.6	Work in Progress	<p>The SPD policies and procedures are being finalized. The updated policies will be implemented in Summer 2012.</p>
Nov. 2010	3	3.7	Work in Progress	<p>The draft policies, forms and standards that are under review by regional staff and service providers will also apply to small option homes.</p>

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Nov. 2010	3	3.8	Work in Progress	<p>The draft <i>Levels of Support Policy</i> has been sent to regional staff and service providers for their review and feedback. Implementation of this policy will inform the development of a quality assurance process.</p> <p>This work will be further aided with the hiring of a Coordinator of Assessment.</p>
Nov. 2010	3	3.9	Work in Progress	<p>Core training is being developed for staff and will be provided in conjunction with the rollout of the revised SPD policies.</p> <p>The department is developing quality assurance tools to ensure the appropriate information is captured in the client files (hard copy and electronic).</p> <p>This work will be further aided with the hiring of a Coordinator of Assessment.</p>
Nov. 2010	3	3.10	Work in Progress	<p>All SPD regional staff will participate in an orientation session in conjunction with the rollout of the revised SPD policies.</p> <p>Core training is being developed and will be available, on an ongoing basis, to all regional staff, including new staff.</p>
Nov. 2010	3	3.11	Work in Progress	<p>The service standards for the residential service sector (all licensed homes) have been drafted. Consultation will begin in the Spring 2012 with the residential service sector.</p>

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Nov. 2010	3	3.12	Work in Progress	<p>Individual planning is addressed in the draft service standards for the residential service sector. A formal plan template has been developed to ensure consistency in the process.</p> <p>Further consistency and oversight will be achieved through core training.</p>
Nov. 2010	3	3.13	Work in Progress	<p>SPD policies, procedures and related forms have been reviewed and updated and are proceeding through the department's approval process.</p>
Nov. 2010	3	3.14	Work in Progress	<p>Annual reviews and reassessments are required in the revised SPD policies.</p> <p>To support the policy, a quality assurance monitoring process with defined roles and responsibilities will be developed and included in SPD core training.</p> <p>This work will be aided by the new Coordinator of Assessment.</p>
Nov. 2010	3	3.15	Complete	<p>SPD has developed and implemented a wait list process, form and User Guide. This was implemented in Fall 2010.</p> <p>All wait list participant information is reviewed and updated annually.</p>
Nov. 2010	3	3.16	Work in Progress	<p>A staff person in Head Office has been assigned the responsibility of monitoring the ongoing accuracy of wait list reports, and will generate a monthly provincial wait list starting in June 2012.</p>

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Nov. 2010	3	3.17	Complete	SPD requires that all small option home operators follow the same incident and complaint processes as other SPD service providers. The recent licensing of small option homes will ensure consistency in reporting incidents and complaints.
Nov. 2010	3	3.18	Work in Progress	The department has developed draft processes and forms to support a centralized incident and complaint system. Departmental stakeholders are currently being consulted.
Nov. 2010	3	3.19	Work in Progress	The department has developed draft processes and forms to support a centralized incident and complaint system. Departmental stakeholders are currently being consulted.
Nov. 2010	3	3.20	Work in Progress	The department has developed draft processes and forms to support a centralized incident and complaint system. This includes a formal review process.
Nov. 2010	3	3.21	Work in Progress	The new special needs rate was approved by the Minister in September 2011. The Special Needs Policy has been updated and is proceeding through the department's approval process. Once approval is received, staff orientation sessions will be provided, and the updated policies will be implemented by September 2012.
Nov. 2010	3	3.22	Work in Progress	SPD program staff are working with staff from the Process Improvement and IT Services units to improve the payment process.

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Nov. 2010	3	3.23	Work in Progress	Before the staffing guidelines can be finalized, staffing assessments and process improvements must be completed. This work is underway.
Nov. 2010	3	3.24	Work in Progress	The Direct Family Support Policy is being updated and will include expectations concerning roles and responsibilities. A template will be developed to support the process. This policy work will be completed in Fall 2012.
Nov. 2010	3	3.25	Work in Progress	The department is reviewing existing service agreement templates. An initial consultation was completed with sector representative. Further discussions are planned as part of the residential service standards consultation.
Nov. 2010	3	3.26	Work in Progress	A standard individual program plan that is person focused has been drafted. The Annual Review form has been updated to emphasize the appropriate receipt of services as outlined in the individual program plan. A verification process will be developed to ensure compliance with SPD policies and standards.

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Nov. 2010	3	3.27	Work in Progress	<p>The Department will be developing quality assurance measurement tools to ensure the appropriate information is captured in the client files.</p> <p>Quality assurance is part of the core training that is being developed for the rollout of the revised SPD policies.</p> <p>This work will be aided by the new Coordinator of Assessment.</p>
Nov. 2010	3	3.28	Complete	The regulation changes related to the <i>Homes for Special Care Act</i> have been approved and implemented (effective February 16, 2012).
Nov. 2010	3	3.29	Complete	Amendments to the <i>Homes for Special Care Act</i> were approved in May 2010.
Nov. 2011	4	4.4	Work in Progress	The department has completed jurisdictional research on best practices to inform the development of an appeals process. The findings and options will be discussed with the DHW. The recommendations will then be presented to DCS Senior Management for their approval.
Nov. 2011	4	4.7	Work in Progress	The department is working with the Departments of Health and Wellness and the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) to identify and explore possible IT solutions.
Nov. 2011	4	4.8	Work in Progress	Performance indicators have been identified based on the objectives and goals of the program. A process to support ongoing tracking and reporting will be developed.