



STRATEGIC PLAN

Setting the Course 2014-2019

Context

In preparation for and as part of the development of the Strategic Plan for STRIDE, the Executive Director, four Senior Managers and 16 members of staff engaged in a half-day retreat on January 8th, 2014. They participated in a number of exercises to elicit information and stimulate ideas pertaining to the clients, programs and services of STRIDE.

In April 2014, the STRIDE Board, Executive Director and Managers met in a full day retreat to construct their Strategic Plan. The participants embraced the planning process and the activities of the Retreat. They provided a great deal of information, shared stories, laughed, generated many ideas and renewed their commitment to STRIDE and the clients they serve. They also crafted clear Strategic Directions for the organization.

STRIDE brings many values to their clients and these were examined during the retreat. These include opportunities, skills development, connections, experience and self-esteem. A SWOT analysis identified the internal strengths and weaknesses of the organization and the opportunities and threats existing in the broader environment in which STRIDE operates.

The following are the results of the both retreats.

The Clients

Staff were first asked to identify the clients and their needs. The second part of the exercise was to identify the programs and services offered by STRIDE that addressed the identified needs.

The clients of STRIDE are adults and youth (aged 16-24) with; mental health, addictions, concurrent and dual disorders. They are employed and unemployed. They are from diverse populations (cultural, socio-economic and sexual orientation). Their needs are numerous and STRIDE provides a non-judgmental, welcoming and supportive environment offering a comprehensive range of services to meet the needs of these populations particularly in relation to employment. STRIDE offers supports and services to help people find and retain employment as well as offering real-life job experience through transitional training and job opportunities where clients are employed, trained and supported to meet the needs of their customers.

Through individual and group supports, STRIDE offers a complete range of services from assessment through, skill building programs and services, to job retention. In addition to the programs and services STRIDE ensures that all clients are provided with information and referrals to other services in the community.

SWOT

The staff and board were asked to identify the elements that do, or could, be faced by STRIDE.

- **Strengths** (of the organization),
- **Weaknesses** (of the organization),
- **Opportunities** (in the broader community) and
- **Threats** (in the broader community)

Among STRIDE's STRENGTHS are a strong history of supporting clients and community collaboration. The agency is well respected by their clients and the greater community. They offer a range of client-centered services by experienced, empathetic and dedicated staff. STRIDE has a strong, diverse and energetic Board as well as an experienced, dedicated and respected Executive Director and management team who all

embody a willingness to embrace change. They have a proven track record in their commitment to continuous quality improvement and accountability best exemplified through their achievement of accreditation

WEAKNESSES that challenge STRIDE are their geography, high work load, limited growth opportunities and compensation for staff, limitations of their funding formula as well as the emerging need for branding and marketing of their agency.

OPPORTUNITIES identified for STRIDE include marketing, website and social media development, capitalizing on the rapid growth of Milton, greater community integration and expanded partnerships.

THREATS to STRIDE come from the economy, changes to the political environment and governmental legislation as well as staff turnover and the retirement of key staff.

Clients and Services

In order to plan for the future of STRIDE attention was focused on the clients and their needs. In preparation for the Board retreat the staff provided information, insights and perspectives on various aspects of the organization and the clients they serve. Components of that information pertained to the clients and their needs, as well as the programs and services offered by STRIDE to address the identified needs.

The clients of STRIDE are adults and youth (aged 16-24) with; addictions, mental health, concurrent and/or dual disorders. The needs of the clients are numerous and STRIDE provides a non-judgemental, welcoming and supportive environment while offering a comprehensive range of services. STRIDE supports and services help people to find and retain employment as well as offering real-life job experience through transitional training and job opportunities where clients are employed, trained and supported to meet the needs of their customers.

Through individual and group supports, STRIDE offers a complete range of services from assessment through skill-building programs and services to job retention. In addition to the programs and services STRIDE ensures that all clients are provided with information and referrals to other services in the community.

During the Board retreat the participants were provided with information generated by staff identifying the Client Needs and list of services STRIDE Provides. Participants were tasked to review the list to determine their concurrence with the staff perspective and to further identify needs or services over the next five years.

The following chart is from the Staff Retreat (January 2014)

All STRIDE clients	
Need	STRIDE provides
Honesty and trust	1. Support and understanding
Support to family members	2. Open-ended service
Case workers	3. Flexibility (time, location, etc.)
To find a sense of belonging	4. Quality service
Empowerment	5. Skilled trained staff
To be heard and understood	6. Active listening
Encouragement	7. Non-judgemental support
Sense of security	8. One-one meeting
Counselling	9. Peer support (worksite)
Skills development and training (Including Life Skills, Work skills, how to manage rejection etc.)	10. Workshops
Motivation	11. Referrals
Assistance in finding community	12. Safe and supportive environment
	13. Case conferences
	14. Client Bill of Rights
	15. Confidentiality
	16. Advocacy
	17. Individual assessments and goal-setting
	18. Supportive counselling
	19. Public outreach to reduce stigma/myths around mental health and addictions – educate community re: mental health and stigma
	20. Help to find and keep a job
	21. Transitional training and job opportunities (café, cleaning)
	22. Life skills training
	23. Skills building and certifications(WHMIS / SMART Serve), Skill building (worksite)
	24. First Aid certification, food handling course
	25. Job Club
	26. Pre-vocational workshops

supports	27. Individual client/employer support
Legal and financial support	28. Job development
Connections to education resources	29. Negotiate job accommodation
Help to find/keep employment	30. Help completing applications and Gov't forms
Job coaching	31. Creating volunteer opportunities
Goal setting and planning	32. Communications with family and case managers
Transportation	33. Feedback surveys
Support co-ordination	34. Family satisfaction surveys
	35. Money and access to resources
	36. Transportation
	37. Supports through ODSP
	38. OCAN

In addition to concurring with the above list the Board retreat participants added the following

Need	STRIDE provides
Cultural sensitivity	39. Job development
Advocacy (issues, employment and mental health leadership)	40. Employment plan
Client engagement	41. Job coaching
Marketing programs	42. Support to family members
Skills and training development	43. Best practices (expertise)
ODSP ES program	44. Lead agency
	45. Integration (support co-ordination)

Motherhood and Mission

The following words or phrases were used by the participants to express values for STRIDE moving forward

- Partnerships
- Leadership
- Client centered values- based delivery
- Community integration
- Employment readiness
- Access to supports
- Client/customer/community centered approach
- Organizational effectiveness

Key Elements and Strategic Directions

The KEY ELEMENTS of the strategic plan were identified and examined. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS were developed within each of these Key Elements.

The Key Elements and Strategic Directions addressed

- Financial and Risk Management - including risk management, efficiencies and accountability
- Organizational Development - including communications, clarity and succession planning
- Program delivery and Operations - with focus on clarity, advocacy and strategy
- Marketing and Awareness - with directions on growth in market share and messaging to prospective employers.

To meet the demands of a changing environment, the Strategic Directions included building of capacity the agency, staff and the organization through a commitment to accountability and growth. The perception was that by continuing to develop strong relationships within the community, customer base and local service providers and by branding and marketing STRIDE will be well- positioned to grow and maintain their strong reputation.

The Strategic Directions set the course for the organization and were created to take STRIDE through the next five years. They are designed to provide opportunity to develop the organization, while continuing to place high value on meeting the needs of their clients.

This report captures the contributions of the April Retreat and outlines the next steps in moving forward.

The Key Elements necessary to sustain and grow the organization were identified. Within each element, Strategic Directions were created and prioritized.

STRIDE Strategic Plan – Key Elements

2014-2019

**Financial and Risk
Management**

Organization Development

**Program Delivery
and Operations**

Marketing and Awareness

We are committed to:

Client centered, values-based delivery

Employment readiness

Access to supports

Based on:

Client/customer/community centered approach

Achieved through:

Leadership * Community integration * Partnerships

*Organizational effectiveness

Appendix A Clients

Clients	Specific Client Needs	STRIDE Provides (this is a verbatim transcription of the staff responses and should not be viewed as a comprehensive list of all services currently provided by STRIDE)
Youth (16-24)	Independence To discover their purpose Self-hope To gain confidence Support and understanding of expectations in work force-specifically in health issues. Assistance dealing with Mental Health issues Process of finding, keeping and maintaining a job Problem solving skills Communication skills Connecting them “where they are” Support in dealing with barriers A place to “start”	Specialized programs for youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HYPE group • Peer Support • Outreach • Use of social media - alternate communication
Adults (16+)	Child Care Financial stability	(see all clients)
Packaging Customers	Community and social involvement Low cost, high quality packaging	
Work site clients	Support and teaching in daily activities and personal care Support in understanding expectations and accommodations in the workforce Sense of purpose and belonging A network of friends with similar barriers Professional assistance in identifying strengths and challenges.	Worksites Employment Connections

Employers	Job coaching to help with training MH Stigma education Wage subsidy Training support Trained, competent, reliable employees	
Employed	Support managing symptoms at work	
Unemployed (people who want to find a sense of belonging through work) (people who need and want support to find employment)	Open and supportive counseling: depends on age, sex, gender, identity, race, class, culture, sexuality etc.	A plan to help them get Employed (resumes, covering letters, interview preparation, job development, negotiating)
Transgendered And LGTBQ	Connection to community Understanding and empathy Information Non-judgemental support Equal opportunity	Non-judgemental support An understanding of complex needs Referrals to other supports and agencies
People with Mental Illness and/or Addictions	Preventing relapse Support and hope	
People with Concurrent Disorder	Support that considers both their mental health and addiction challenges Coping strategies Flexibility in approach Client engagement Patience	Staff training Co-ordinated services (partnering services) Holistic approach Information Referrals to other agencies and supports Community outreach Flexibility Job coaching/maintenance
People with Dual Diagnosis	Communication and Problem solving skills Money management Connecting with community Boundary issues Limited work history and experience	Pre-vocational group Worksite Referrals to other agencies Skills teaching Supportive staff Flexible work schedule