



Social Development

ANNUAL REPORT
2024-2025

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Province of New Brunswick
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TRANSMITTAL LETTERS

From the Minister to the Lieutenant-Governor

Her Honour The Honourable Louise Imbeault

Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

May it please your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the annual report of the Department of Social Development, Province of New Brunswick, for the fiscal year April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable Cindy Miles
Minister of Social Development

Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

May it please your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the annual report of the Department of Social Development, Province of New Brunswick, for the fiscal year April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable Lyne Chantal Boudreau
Minister responsible for Women's Equality and Seniors

From the Deputy Minister to the Minister

Honourable Cindy Miles

Minister of Social Development

Madam:

I am pleased to be able to present the annual report describing operations of the Department of Social Development for the fiscal year April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Mehan".

Jim Mehan
Deputy Minister

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MINISTERS' MESSAGE

As the Minister of Social Development, I am proud to present this annual report, which showcases the department's commitment, resilience, and tireless efforts over the past year.

This year marked a significant period of growth for the department, with collaborative efforts driving policy development and enhancements that will have a direct, positive impact on New Brunswickers.

In 2024-2025, the Department of Social Development made meaningful progress in expanding opportunities for clients and partners to share feedback, offer insights, and identify areas for improvement.

We actively invited input from individuals receiving support, as well as from our service delivery partners, encouraging them to share their experiences. Their contributions played a vital role in shaping new initiatives, informing key program changes, and assessing how effectively our supports meet the needs of those we serve.

The department further supported the implementation of the *Child and Youth Well-Being Act* – legislation that creates a safe, supportive, and fair environment for children to grow, learn, and develop to their fullest potential.

We have worked closely with municipalities and community partners to tackle the complex issue of homelessness, collaborating to address the unique needs of each region. In the past year, we provided wraparound services to those experiencing chronic homelessness – starting with housing – and will continue to support a community case management approach.

In collaboration with Housing New Brunswick, the department has been working hard to create additional housing developments across the province. By improving access to affordable housing and related support services, more New Brunswickers have a safe place they can call home.

I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the entire team in the department for their continued commitment and dedication. I also want to thank the partners and stakeholders for their unwavering support and collaboration. As we look to the future, I know we are all committed to building on successes and will continue to accomplish our goals, together.

The Honourable Cindy Miles



Honourable Cindy Miles
Minister of Social Development

MINISTERS' MESSAGE

As Minister responsible for Seniors, I'm honoured to share the incredible accomplishments from this file over the past year. I'm very proud of the milestones our team has reached.

I would like to begin by thanking staff with the Department of Social Development. Your dedication, empathy, and sincere care for the wellbeing of New Brunswickers shows in your work.

This year, the department added 90 additional nursing home beds to the system. The department also worked on and succeeded in expanding the Nursing Home Without Walls to a total of 27 locations throughout New Brunswick. Providing seniors with the option to stay in their communities for as long as possible improves their quality of life and allows them to maintain their independence, while still getting the care they need.

Over the past months, I've visited a number of nursing homes across the province. During these visits, I've been able to connect with residents, families and caregivers to hear directly from them on what they want and what their concerns are.

Through sustainable actions toward becoming welcoming for all ages, 2025 saw New Brunswick's network of Age-Friendly communities continue to grow! This is wonderful news and a promising sign for the future of inclusivity in New Brunswick.

We also completed the final year of the Healthy Seniors Pilot Project, a three-year agreement with the federal government that allowed us to positively impact over 28,000 seniors, caregivers, students and care providers across the province.

Our province hosted a meeting of federal, provincial and territorial Ministers responsible for seniors, which resulted in fruitful discussions. As Minister, I was also fortunate to share the good work our department is engaged in by speaking with our partners throughout the province.

Throughout 2025, we have stayed committed to our promise of "nothing for us, without us", collaborating with New Brunswickers to figure out how we can best serve our communities.

Again, I would like to thank the dedicated civil servants, who work hard each day to make initiatives like these – and so many others – a reality. I would also like to thank our stakeholders for their invaluable input and support. I look forward to all that we will accomplish together in the coming years!

The Honourable Lyne Chantal Boudreau



Honourable Lyne Chantal Boudreau
Minister responsible for Women's Equality and Seniors

DEPUTY MINISTER'S MESSAGE

As we look back on the 2024–2025 fiscal year, I'm proud to share this year's Annual Report from the Department of Social Development. Our mission—to support and empower individuals across New Brunswick—remains at the heart of everything we do.

As Deputy Minister, I take great pride in the remarkable accomplishments our department has achieved over the past year. We have delivered a range of successful projects and initiatives that reflect the dedication, innovation, and hard work of our entire team. From advancing key policy goals to improving services for New Brunswickers, this year has been one of meaningful progress.

I am excited to share the highlights of our work and the positive impact it continues to have across the province.

The department finalized the Healthy Senior Pilot Project (HSPP) in 2024-2025, a \$75 million funding agreement with Public Health Agency of Canada. This project aimed to foster healthy aging, increase independence and quality of life for older adults, and enable older adults to live safely and securely in their homes. The work under the HSPP reached over 28,000 seniors, caregivers, students and care providers across New Brunswick.

The department further supported the implementation of the *Child and Youth Well-Being Act* - a transformative piece of legislation designed to ensure that every child in New Brunswick has the opportunity to grow up in a safe, supportive, and equitable environment. This work included strengthening collaboration across sectors, enhancing services that promote mental, emotional, and physical well-being, and ensuring that children's voices are heard in decisions that affect their lives.

For the first time in nearly 20 years, the Comfort and Clothing allowance was increased in 2024-2025. This allowance helps cover personal expenses not provided by a long-term care facility, including items like toiletries, non-covered medications, and transportation.

As you read through this report, we hope you see more than just a record of the past year's operations. It stands as a testament to the unwavering commitment, resilience, and collaboration of the Social Development team and our community partners. Their dedication to serving New Brunswickers is evident on every page - and it's this shared effort that continues to drive us forward.



Jim Mehan
Deputy Minister

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Delivering for New Brunswickers

The priorities the Government of New Brunswick (GNB) has focused on represent the stories and solutions we hear from residents across the province. Our goal is to make a difference and enhance the quality of life for everyone in the province we proudly call home. Together, we are learning, growing, adapting, and discovering new and transformative ways of doing business. GNB is focused on taking the necessary steps to move our priorities forward, and work is being done more efficiently and effectively every day. New Brunswickers are resilient, creative and compassionate people, and by working collaboratively, we can create the brighter future we all deserve. GNB is prioritizing partnerships and trusting and empowering the people and organizations on the ground working most closely with New Brunswickers to achieve results.

Priorities

GNB is focused on creating a brighter future for all New Brunswickers. To make progress towards this vision, several priorities have been identified within the following areas:

- Health care
- Affordability and housing
- Education
- The economy
- Environment
- Trusted leadership

We invite you to explore the commitments we have made within each priority area, as well as updates on our achievements and the metrics we use to measure success. For more information, visit: gnb.ca/accountability.

HIGHLIGHTS

During the 2024-2025 fiscal year, Social Development focused on these government priorities through the following initiatives:

Equitable Standards for Youth in Care – NB Pilot - New Brunswick has piloted the development of equitable standards for youth in care, co-designed by individuals with lived experience and guided by Dr. Melanie Doucet and the National Council of Youth in Care Advocates. Aligned with the *Child and Youth Well-Being Act*, an action plan is now underway to improve outcomes for youth-in-care and youth-from-care. These standards aim to ensure consistent support, accountability, and data-driven approaches to help youth thrive into adulthood.

Kinship Care Placements for Children at Risk – New Brunswick introduced its first Kinship Care Assessment tool to better support caregivers when children cannot remain at home. Adapted from British Columbia and evaluated by St. Thomas University, the tool focuses on the home environment, child and youth needs, as well as caregiver capacity. Grounded in the *Child and Youth Well-Being Act*, it promotes placements with familiar, loving individuals to strengthen family and community connections and improve outcomes.

Funding for Encampment Shelters – The federal government has announced funding to support community encampment response plans that uphold the right to adequate housing and use Housing First approaches to address unsheltered homelessness in communities. The province has partnered with the federal government to match this investment, with each contributing \$3.4 million over two years.

Rural Outreach Teams Expanded - Initially established in rural communities like Woodstock and Sussex, outreach services expanded to additional rural areas in 2024 in response to evolving needs. These services offer immediate support to individuals experiencing homelessness and connect them with long-term resources and care.

Health Seniors Pilot Project – In 2024-25, HSPP concluded its \$75 million funding agreement with the Public Health Agency of Canada launched in 2018. A symposium in November 2024 showcased outcomes from all 66 projects. The projects sponsored by this work reached over 28,000 seniors, caregivers, students, and care providers across New Brunswick. The University of New Brunswick's Monitoring Evaluation Knowledge Transfer Unit completed a portfolio evaluation, highlighting key lessons learnt as well as documenting impacts on the population from the initiative.

Increased Comfort and Clothing Allowance – The allowance helps cover personal care items, medications not covered by insurance, and transportation costs. Eligible nursing home residents now receive \$150 per month (up from \$108) and clients living at home or in other types of adult residential facilities now receive \$190 (up from \$135).

Nursing Home Without Walls - In 2024–2025, 27 new Nursing Home Without Walls (NHWW) sites were approved across New Brunswick. Led by nursing homes, each site collaborates with communities to provide free, tailored support that helps older adults age in place. This model fosters strong connections and redefines aging as a valued, engaged, and autonomous stage of life.

Increasing the Supply of Nursing Home Beds - Over the fiscal year, an additional ninety (90) staffed nursing home beds were added to the nursing home bed supply. The nursing home residence of Mount St. Joseph is host to thirty (30) of these new beds while sixty (60) are now available at Ville St-Isidore.

Nursing Home Bed Vacancies - The Department was able to reduce overall vacancies by 29.4% during the 2024-2025 fiscal year. This was accomplished through the Department's continued recruiting efforts for LTC staff and working with individual nursing homes to address specific needs.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

The information below outlines some of the department's priorities and how we measured our performance.

Outcome #1 - Client experience

Description of Priority

Client experience refers to how people feel during every interaction they have with the department—whether it's in person, online, or by phone. Social Development is working to improve experiences for New Brunswickers we serve, our partners, and our employees.

A person-focused Social Development:

- Looks like: Services are easy to access, interactions are straightforward, communication is clear, and issues are resolved effectively.
- Feels like: Clients and partners feel respected, heard, and understood, with their time valued.
- Outcome: Enhance client experience by providing personalized, timely, supportive services.

Why is it important?

The client remains at the centre of everything we do, and we strive to provide an environment where the people we serve can reach their full potential and have a rewarding experience.

Overall Performance

Success for client experience looks like:

- Increased opportunities to provide feedback.
- Improved communications and collaboration.
- Reduced burden when interacting with the department.
- Expanded options to interact with the department.
- Improved integrated, holistic supports.

In 2024-2025, the Department of Social Development made substantial advancements in creating opportunities for clients and partners to provide feedback on their experiences, share their perspectives, and suggest areas for improvement. We extended invitations to individuals receiving support and to our service delivery partners, to actively share their experiences. This input was instrumental in guiding the design of new initiatives, driving significant program changes, and helping us evaluate the extent to which our supports meet the needs of those we serve.

The Disability Support Services Pilot Project in the Central Zone tested a new approach for delivering services to individuals with disabilities and their families we hoped would be simpler and more helpful. Before the change: 58% found Social Development easy to navigate.

After the change, 66% found it easier to work with a single primary worker, and 65% felt better heard and understood. Additional feedback will be collected in 2025 to identify ways to improve the program and better support individuals with disabilities.

Collaborative Efforts to Support Seniors: The Departments of Social Development and Health piloted an initiative aimed at expediting the process for seniors in hospitals to determine their needs for transitioning back home or to a care facility. Feedback was gathered from stakeholders, including staff, service provider partners, seniors, and caregivers. The findings revealed that seniors and caregivers consistently experienced high-quality support, regardless of who handled their inquiries or coordinated services.

Improved integrated, holistic supports: The Department continues to strengthen navigation with its partnership with 211, ensuring 24/7 navigation support for New Brunswickers. In 2024-2025:

- Nearly 32,000 people contacted 211, with 55% seeking assistance to meet basic needs such as housing, utilities, and food.
- In July, a new 211 chat feature was embedded within www.socialsupportsNB.ca. Over 1,100 people have utilized this feature to access information and support.

These initiatives illustrate Social Development's commitment to and progression in fostering a person-centered culture and enhancing experience for New Brunswickers.

Outcome #2 - Employee experience

Description of priority

- Our responsibility is to always focus on our interactions with work colleagues to make each day a positive experience for everyone. We strive for an employee experience that includes healthy workplace culture, opportunities to learn, growth and be involved, work-life balance, recognition, and reaching our full potential as employees of Social Development.
- Outcome: Strengthen Social Development to be an employer of choice.

Why is it important?

Employees that are equipped with the right tools, skills, training, and information to do their jobs well will result in a rewarding experience for everyone and make each day a positive experience for our colleagues as well as our clients.

Overall performance

Success for employee experience looks like:

- Improved talent management approach.
- Leveraging technology to improve employee experience.
- Enhanced internal information sharing.
- Employee wellness and engagement are supported.
- Improved access to resources and training supports, initiatives or projects undertaken.

MAELP Team Wins CAOT “Citation Award” – Team members of the Health Services Mobility and Adaptive Equipment Loan Program (MAELP) at Social Development received the 2025 National “Citation Award” from the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT). Nominated by the therapeutic community of professionals that make equipment request to the program, the MAELP team was celebrated for their efforts in the modernizing of the service delivery of the MAELP by developing framework, material and training that helped improve the efficiencies of the program and overall client experience. Congratulations!

Kinship and Equitable Support - Social workers who work with children and youth, throughout the province, were provided training opportunities on Kinship and Equitable Supports for young adults. The Department collaborated with other provinces and Saint Thomas University on a new assessment tool (made in NB) for kinship recognising family strengths and the importance of family connection. Dr Melanie Doucet, a former youth in care, provided social workers with training on Equitable Standards for youth in care. These experiences provided staff opportunity to learn from those with lived experience and to be engaged in best practices when working with young people and families.

Enhanced Training and Learning Opportunities for Staff – Training is regularly developed and delivered to staff in support of personal and professional development. This last fiscal year the department offered blended learning formats related to all areas of the department including elements of the new *Child and Youth Well-Being Act*; offering Mental Health Commission of Canada curriculum “The Working Mind” for staff; as well as a “Working with Older Adults” series to explore and discuss key issues in aging populations including geriatric mental health. Social Development

also supported the investment into 108 seats for current and future leaders through Evolving Leaders, Aspiring Leaders, and Core 500 leadership training for social work supervisors.

Outcome #3 - Quality services

Description of priority

- Quality services speak to the responsibility of ensuring that we have the right tools and resources available so that the services we provide support the best outcomes for New Brunswickers. We hope to deliver a positive experience through quality services.
- Outcome: Improved client outcomes by monitoring and modifying services.

Why is it important?

We will deliver a positive experience through quality services. These services are continuously monitored and assessed to ensure they generate positive outcomes for our clients and the population of New Brunswick.

Overall performance

- Success for quality services looks like:
- Aligned community care and support.
- Infrastructure and partnerships are leveraged.
- Improved consistency, efficiency, and effectiveness of services.
- Reduced barriers and increased innovation.
- Increased collaboration with service providers.
- Evaluated and adapted services.

Community Care NB: Advancing Integrated Care in New Brunswick

Community Care NB (CCNB) is a new digital platform designed to improve coordinated, person-centered care for New Brunswickers. Following a successful 2024–2025 pilot in the Southwest Zone, key components are being expanded province-wide:

- **Modernized Digital Service Orders** – Streamlines ordering, billing, and payments, reducing administrative burden and improving communication between Social Development staff and community partners.
- **Digital Incident Reporting** – Enables proactive monitoring of client well-being and earlier interventions to help clients remain safely at home.
- **Integrated Education Data Access** – Provides real-time absenteeism data for children in care, supporting targeted educational interventions.
- **Digital Nursing Home Inspection Tools** – Modernizes inspection and oversight processes, ensuring high-quality care in long-term care facilities.
- **Partner Portal** – Facilitates collaboration and ongoing system improvements with service providers across the province.

Collectively, these innovations reduce administrative burden, improve service delivery, and strengthen care outcomes for citizens.

Strengthening a Palliative Approach to Long-Term Care (SPA-LTC) – Phase 2 of the *Strengthening a Palliative Approach to Long-Term Care (SPA-LTC)* initiative improved access to high-quality, culturally safe palliative care across 62 LTC homes and 10 adult residential facilities. Notable gains were made in Palliative Champion Team development (+55%), PPS assessments, and family education,

- Updated end-of-life order sets were reported in 89% of homes.
- Over 600 champions completed SPA-LTC education modules,
- 403 live webinar attendances were logged.

Collectively, these efforts have enhanced resident and family experiences while building a foundation for long-term sustainability. Cultural safety was strengthened through a three-part Culture Care Education Series, developed with guidance from Indigenous Elders and the newly appointed Indigenous Palliative Champion.

Supporting Social Assistance Recipients: The Social Assistance program offers individualized case planning services and benefits to assist social assistance recipients in their preparation for education, training and employment. Through this support, over 3,380 social assistance recipients secured employment and maintained employment. Case managers work in partnership with other departments and community resources to better lives, enhance client experience, and improve outcomes for individuals receiving social assistance.

Social Assistance Rate Increase: On April 1, 2024, social assistance rates were increased by 3.55% in accordance with the percentage change in the New Brunswick Consumer Price Index' annual averages from 2022 to 2023.

Quicker access to necessary services and reduce the demand for facility-based care - The Department of Social Development, in collaboration with Horizon Health Network (HHN), piloted the transition of Long-Term Care (LTC) Assessments for hospitalized individuals to HHN staff. This initiative aimed to streamline the assessment process, facilitating quicker access to necessary services and reducing the demand for facility-based care.

- The pilot began on July 2, 2024 at the Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital (DECRH) and Oromocto Public Hospital (OPH).
- HHN staff were involved in two components of the LTC Assessment process:
 - Providing Interim Home Support Services (i.e. short-term services provided to return home without a full assessment being completed).
 - Completing the LTC assessment process (i.e. complete full LTC assessment and establish a case plan for home support or placement).
- During the evaluation period (July – September 2024), 157 patients were seen by the HHN staff for interim home support services or the LTC assessment process.
- **Outcome:** Service delivery was streamlined by enabling HHN staff to approve Interim Home Support Services for eligible LTC applicants. This went into effect provincially in May 2025 with Clinical Nursing and Social Work staff in the Extra Mural Program, Vitalité Health Network and other hospitals in the Horizon Health Network being able to approve Interim Home Support Services based on program criteria. HHN staff continue to conduct the LTC assessments at the two pilot sites while the department, in collaboration with HHN and the department of Health, continue to explore options and recommendations

Outcome #4 - Financial responsibility

Description of priority

- Financial responsibility means that we are providing the best services possible while working within our approved budget and being accountable to New Brunswick taxpayers.
- Outcome: Improved shared financial responsibility.

Why is it important?

It is important to spend wisely and to utilize and share available resources to the best of our ability. It is important for each of us to ensure that we use the tax dollars we are entrusted with to get the best results for our clients.

Overall performance

Success for financial responsibility looks like:

- Increased financial understanding and accountability.
- Available resources are leveraged.
- Re-aligned financial resources to meet outcomes.
- Increased strategic investments to support long-term outcomes.
- Ensured accountability of partners and service providers

New Tool for Portfolio Reporting - To support fiscal responsibility through data-driven decision-making, DSD launched a new portfolio reporting tool that enhances accountability and project management. It tracks project status, decision requests, risks and tasks, providing a single, reliable source of information for leaders and teams across the department. Advisors and decision makers benefit from information transparency and can align to desired outcomes, including fiscal responsibility.

New Trustee Bridge Funding Program - Introduced a new bridge funding program for residents in Nursing Homes that are in the process for trusteeship with the Office of the Public Trustee.

New Hiring Process for Nursing Homes - The conditional hire process for certain non-bargaining employees in Nursing Homes was removed.

OVERVIEW OF DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS

Vision:

Strong partnerships for better lives.

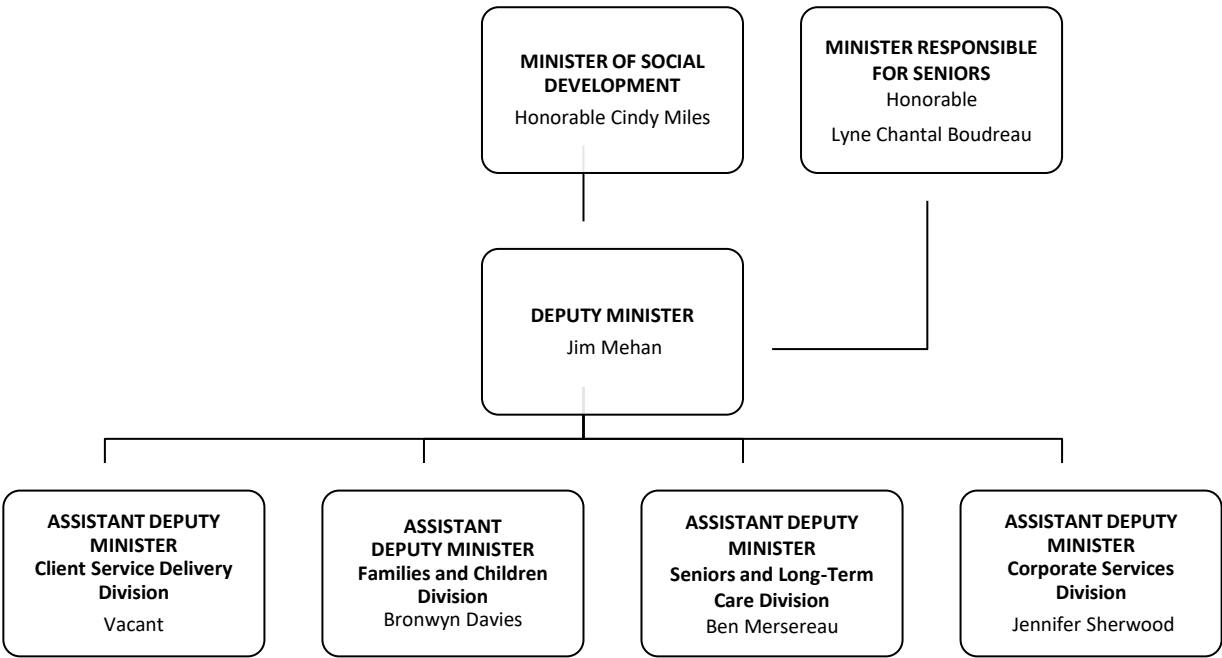
Mission:

Working together with individuals, families, and community partners to improve people's lives.

The four strategic themes: client experience, employee experience, quality services and financial responsibility define how the department will achieve its vision of 'strong partnerships for better lives' and frame the department's goals and objectives.

The Department of Social Development manages programs and services designed to provide protection and care for individuals and families, while also fostering independence and self-sufficiency. The department works with service providers and community partners who also play an important role in contributing to a safe, secure, and healthy New Brunswick. The department is structured in four divisions as seen on the following organizational chart that integrates in a team-based approach to support the citizens of New Brunswick.

High-Level Organizational Chart



DIVISION OVERVIEW



Client Service Delivery Division

Overview

The **Client Service Delivery Division** is responsible for delivering Social Development's programs and services to clients of the department, managing day-to-day client relations and operations, establishing, and managing relationships with community partners, and maintaining performance excellence. The division consists of four zones and the Client Service Delivery Organizational Support Branch.

The zones are responsible for the delivery of programs and services in core business areas to individuals and families. The core business areas include child and youth well-being and support services, income support, disability support services, and long-term care.

The **Client Service Delivery Organizational Support Branch** is responsible for facilitating the implementation of key priority initiatives within the Client Service Delivery Branch. The team works closely with both Central Office and Zone(s) to guide implementation and monitoring quality improvement activities. The team leads executive and operational supports including Medical Advisory Board coordination, Emergency Social Services, Integrated Front-End as well as the Intelligent Computer Exchange (ICE) Telephony Platform Business Ownership

Families and Children Division

Overview

The **Families and Children Division** is responsible for planning, designing, and monitoring department programs related to child and youth services, including integrated service delivery, income support, health services, disability support, homelessness, and supportive housing. This includes the interpretation of program guidelines, procedures, policies, standards, regulations, and legislation. The division focuses efforts on changing how it delivers services to improve people-centeredness, efficiency and sustainability while maintaining quality. The division consists of the Child and Youth Well-Being Branch, the Income Support and Homelessness Branch, the Disability Support and Health Services Branch, and the Homelessness Strategic Support Team.

The **Child and Youth Well-Being Branch** is responsible for designing, implementing, and monitoring strength-based programs and services to help protect and promote the safety and well-being of newborns, children, youth, and young adults. This branch works in partnership with colleagues, other departments, and community-based services to ensure timely and culturally responsive services and resources that result in the best outcomes for children and youth. The vision of the Branch is the safety, well-being, a sense of belonging and lifelong connections for every child/youth in New Brunswick. Priority is given to strengthening family engagement by including family involvement strategies such as Family Group Conferences and Immediate Response Conferences to give voice to children, youth, young adults, and families.

This Branch includes Child and Youth Protection, Children and Youth in Care, Children's Resource Services, Kinship, Adoption, Expectant Parent and Birth Parent Services, Youth Engagement and Young Adult Services, Family Supports for Children with Disabilities, Collaborative Approaches, and services under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*. As well, the branch works in collaboration with other departments and community organizations in developing and supporting programs that will ensure better outcomes for children, youth, and young adults. The Branch is also a partner in Integrated Service Delivery, as well as the Provincial Integrated Support Committee, which are multidisciplinary partnerships intended to improve services to children, youth and young adults deemed at-risk or having complex social, emotional, physical, medical, and/or mental-health needs. Engaging, improving and co-creating programs with those with lived experience and with partners is a strong value and commitment for this work to ensure better outcomes for children, youth, young adults and families.

The **Homelessness and Income Support Branch** is responsible for providing individuals and families in need with financial benefits and supports. This branch also has the responsibility for planning, designing, and monitoring of all departmental supportive housing and homelessness programs and services. Including: emergency shelters, supportive housing projects to address systemic gaps, and identifying opportunities for improvements in existing homelessness infrastructure, including outreach programs, and Out of the Cold operations. The goal is to support individuals and families, to help them achieve and maintain self-reliance and, where appropriate, to enhance their potential for employment with self-sufficiency program services.

The **Disability Support Services Branch** has two programs: the Disability Support Program and the Health Services Program.

The **Disability Support Program** is responsible for planning, designing, and monitoring services delivered through the Disability Support Program for adults with disabilities. Using a person-

centered approach, the program focuses on building respectful, responsive relationships with individuals and families. The goal of the program is to honor each person's unique strengths and circumstances, while ensuring access to tools, resources, and guidance that support independent living, dignity, and active participation in community life.

Health Services is responsible for the day-to-day operations, planning, designing, delivery and monitoring of the department's Health Services Program. The Health Services Program offers several health and medical benefits, and services to Social Development clients that have an active health card. Services include Mobility & Adaptive Equipment Loan Program; Dental Program; Hearing Aid Program; Medical Supplies/Services Program; Orthopedic Program; Ostomy/Incontinence Program; Prosthetic Program; Respiratory Program; Therapeutic Nutrients Program; and the Vision Program. Health Services is also responsible for Healthy Smiles, Clear Vision, and the NB Cleft Palate Program. Specific client groups eligible through health services include Social Assistance recipients and their dependents, Health Card-Only clients (individuals with extensive health needs who are unable to cover the cost of services), clients served within the Child and Youth Services Program, Long-Term Care clients residing in Adult Residential Facilities, Nursing Home clients, and Mental Health clients residing in facilities.

Seniors and Long-Term Care Division

Overview

The **Seniors and Long-Term Care Division** is responsible for the planning, design and monitoring of Social Development programs related to seniors and adult protection. This includes the interpretation of program guidelines, procedures, policies, standards, regulations, and provincial legislation. This division focuses efforts on changing how it delivers services to improve efficiency and sustainability while maintaining quality. The division consists of the Adult Community Resources Branch, the Adult Client Services Support Branch, and the Operational Excellence Branch.

The **Adult Community Resources Branch (Nursing Homes)** is responsible for monitoring quality and compliance of licensed nursing homes throughout the province who provide care and for the nursing home program design. The department's objectives are to improve residents' quality of life, help safeguard their dignity, and ensure that appropriate, quality nursing home services are provided as efficiently as possible within available resources. This is accomplished developing comprehensive program standards and by ensuring compliance with all relevant acts, regulations under the acts, departmental standards, and policies. The purpose of this monitoring is to enhance accountability, effectiveness and efficiency in the planning and delivery of these services to nursing home residents.

The **Adult Community Resources Branch (Adult Residential Facilities)** is responsible for leading provincial planning, design, implement initiatives, strategies, programs, services and framework to improve adult residential facilities. The branch provides advice and consultative services to support Client Service delivery in the zones and monitors program results and outcomes. The department's objectives are to improve residents' quality of life, help safeguard their dignity and ensure that appropriate, quality services are provided. This is accomplished by developing comprehensive program standards.

The **Adult Client Services Support Branch** is responsible for planning, designing, and monitoring programs and services provided to seniors at home and in the community. The Seniors and Healthy Aging Secretariat falls within this branch and functions as the point of contact to facilitate the central alignment, coordination, planning and liaison for matters and issues related to seniors and healthy aging within government. The programs and services under the branch include the Adult Protection Program, the Long-Term Care Program, Home Support Services, Adult Day Centres, Nursing Home Without Walls, Healthy Seniors Pilot Project, Age-Friendly Communities Recognition Program, and The Healthy Aging Champions Program. This branch also delivers training to Social Development staff in the adult and senior services and program areas throughout the province.

The **Operational Excellence Branch** is responsible for providing operational support to licensed non-profit and fee-for-service nursing homes in the province. This support consists of operational funding, advisory services, personal protective equipment supply management, and the administration of capital repairs, renovations, and replacement projects. The branch also provides support in international recruitment for workers in the long-term care sector, infrastructure support for adult residential facilities under the “Aging with Dignity” Agreement, and contract management.

Corporate Services Division

Overview

The **Corporate Services Division** provides advice, resources, and support services to enable the department to deliver programs and services to clients. The division consists of Shared Analytics, Digital Transformation, Finance and Administration, Human Resources, Organizational Development, Policy and Legislative Affairs, and Strategy and Advisory Services.

The **Shared Analytics Branch** supports the Departments of Social Development and Health by enabling high-quality data and analytic insights. The branch conducts statistical and quantitative analysis, creates predictive models, conducts research and evaluates program effectiveness. These actions foster evidence-based decision-making in the planning, management, and accountability of the health care system and Social Development’s operations.

The **Digital Transformation Branch** provides strategic leadership intended to transform how we deliver value to New Brunswickers through a citizen-centered design of end-to-end processes that benefit the business while offering better experiences through innovative products and services. The Digital Transformation team works on enterprise change both across GNB and within Social Development to improve experiences for all New Brunswickers by supporting timely access to information and services that are easy to understand and use.

The **Finance and Administration Branch** is responsible to ensure the department’s financial resources are spent within government’s fiscal framework. The Branch provides information and advice to ensure consistency in budgeting, contract administration, financial reporting and administration, as well as conducting internal audits for the department’s programs and services. The Branch is made up of four units: Budget and Financial Reporting, Audit Services, Accounting and Administrative Services, and Contract Administration.

The **Human Resource Services Branch** provides support and consulting services to the department to increase organizational effectiveness and to maximize performance through our people. Team members work collaboratively to meet its mandate and objectives, while supporting the strategic

goals of both the department and the Government of New Brunswick. The team is responsible for strategic workforce planning and succession management, performance management, human resources related training, the development and implementation of health, safety, and workplace wellness programs, and the establishment of linguistic profiles. It serves as the primary vehicle for the delivery of Human Resource Services to the department. The human resource consultants have the lead role and responsibility for recruitment, as well as all employee relations, and collective agreement management and interpretation.

The **Organizational Development Branch** is responsible for the department's learning and development framework which is inclusive and aimed at increasing organizational effectiveness. The Branch leads the expansion and continuous improvement of learning and development opportunities to enhance employee, partner, and client experience and engagement. Additionally, the Branch provides advice, support, and communication functions across the department in all program areas.

The **Policy and Legislative Affairs Branch** is responsible for developing policy and legislative proposals for the department and for the coordination of legislative activities. The Branch provides ongoing support and advice in the interpretation and application of departmental legislation and is the departmental lead in working with Office of the Attorney General on legal matters. The Branch is the departmental lead on several interdepartmental and Federal, Provincial, Territorial groups, including the Seniors Forum and the Ministers Responsible for Social Services Forum. The branch supports departmental responses to inquiries and investigations by Legislative Officers. They are also responsible for providing advice on all privacy related issues and preparing responses to all access to information requests. In addition, the Branch facilitates the appointment process for agencies, boards and commissions related to Social Development.

The **Strategy and Advisory Services Branch** is responsible for strategic planning and alignment within the department. The branch leads the department's strategy planning process, organizational performance, and continuous improvement efforts throughout the department by providing organizational expertise in the areas of project and portfolio management, change management, and continuous improvement. The Branch supports all areas of the department by facilitating key planning and reporting activities, and the alignment of key departmental initiatives as drivers of performance. It leads the initiative management efforts of departmental priorities and acts as a liaison with the Executive Council Office to coordinate alignment with GNB's strategy.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For the fiscal period ending March 31, 2025 (\$000's).

This financial overview was prepared based on the best available information at the time of publication, and therefore, may not correspond exactly with the figures that were subsequently published in the public accounts.

Expenditures	Budget	Actual	Variance Over (Under)	% Over (Under)	Note
Corporate and Other Services	12,427.0	19,509.7	7,082.7	57.0%	1
Income Security	350,484.8	391,712.1	41,227.3	11.8%	2
Child Welfare and Youth Services	189,042.7	239,216.9	50,174.2	26.5%	3
Seniors and Long-Term Care	1,131,904.3	1,135,545.6	3,641.3	0.3%	4
Other Benefits	47,200.0	49,093.2	1,893.2	4.0%	5
Total	\$1,731,058.9	\$1,835,077.5	104,018.6	6.0%	

Numbers are expressed in thousands

Capital	Budget	Actual	Variance Over (Under)	% Over (Under)	Note
Nursing Home Services – Capital Program	\$17,000.0	\$25,177.3	8,177.3	48.1%	6

Numbers are expressed in thousands

Revenues	Budget	Actual	Variance Over (Under)	% Over (Under)	Note
Licences and Permits	33.0	31.3	(1.7)	(5.1%)	
Miscellaneous	5,175.0	5,106.6	(68.4)	(1.3%)	

Revenues	Budget	Actual	Variance Over (Under)	% Over (Under)	Note
Conditional Grants – Canada	39,821.0	32,921.6	6,899.4	(17.3%)	7
Total	\$45,029.0	\$38,064.0	(6,965.0)	(15.5%)	

Numbers are expressed in thousands

Notes on significant variances:
1. Over budget mainly due to recurring overhead pressures.
2. Over budget due to increased caseloads in the Extended Benefits Program and Transitional Assistance Program and increased cost per case.
3. Over budget due to cost increases related to Specialized Placements under Child Protection and Children in Care.
4. Over budget due to costs related to adult specialized placements.
5. Over budget due to higher than anticipated expenditures for Low Income Seniors Benefit and Healthy Seniors Pilot Project as well as an administration fee from SNB for the Low-Income Seniors Benefit Program.
6. Over budget due to Aging with Dignity Funding Agreement which, due to the timing of the agreement, did not have a Capital budget for 2024-25.
7. Under budget due to timing of revenue recognition for Healthy Seniors Pilot Projects.

SUMMARY OF STAFFING ACTIVITY

Pursuant to section 4 of the *Civil Service Act*, the Secretary to Treasury Board delegates staffing to each Deputy Head for his or her respective department(s). Please find below a summary of the staffing activity for 2024-2025 for Social Development.

NUMBER OF PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES AS OF DEC. 31 OF EACH YEAR			
EMPLOYEE TYPE	2022	2023	2024
Permanent	1,322	1,156	1,180
Temporary	153	172	194
TOTAL	1,475	1,328	1,374

The decrease in employees in 2023 is due to the New Brunswick Housing Corporation (NBHC) becoming a stand-alone corporation as of April 1, 2023, which included approximately 150 employees moving from Social Development to NBHC.

Please note that the 2023 numbers were restated from last year's report as not all temporary employees were accounted for. The 2023 numbers in this report accurately reflect the number of temporary employees for that year.

The department advertised 60 competitions, including 35 open (public) competitions and 25 closed (internal) competitions.

Pursuant to sections 15 and 16 of the *Civil Service Act*, the department made the following appointments using processes to establish merit other than the competitive process:

APPOINTMENT TYPE	APPOINTMENT DESCRIPTION	SECTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ACT	NUMBER
Specialized Professional, Scientific or Technical	An appointment may be made without competition when a position requires: • a high degree of expertise and training • a high degree of technical skill • recognized experts in their field	15(1)	5
Equal Employment Opportunity Program	Provides Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities and members of a visible minority group with equal access to employment, training and advancement opportunities.	16(1)(a)	1

APPOINTMENT TYPE	APPOINTMENT DESCRIPTION	SECTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ACT	NUMBER
Department Talent Management Program	Permanent employees identified in corporate and departmental talent pools, who meet the four-point criteria for assessing talent, namely performance, readiness, willingness and criticalness.	16(1)(b)	8
Lateral transfer	The GNB transfer process facilitates the transfer of employees from within Part 1, 2 (school districts) and 3 (hospital authorities) of the Public Service.	16(1) or 16(1)(c)	37
Regular appointment of casual/temporary	An individual hired on a casual or temporary basis under section 17 may be appointed without competition to a regular properly classified position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(i)	41
Regular appointment of students/ apprentices	Summer students, university or community college co-op students or apprentices may be appointed without competition to an entry level position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(ii)	9

Pursuant to section 33 of the *Civil Service Act*, there were no complaints alleging favouritism made to the Deputy Head of Social Development, and no complaints were submitted to the Ombud.

SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION AND LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

NAME OF REGULATION	EFFECTIVE DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
<i>Family Income Security Act</i> Amendment to General Regulation	April 1, 2024	Amendments to exempt the Canada Workers Benefit from social assistance income calculations, and index social assistance rates (Schedule A) to inflation.
<i>Child and Youth Well-Being Act</i> Amendment to General Regulation	August 16, 2024	Amendments to improve care standards and clarify requirements, including access to technology for education, caregiver qualifications and supports, health and safety provisions, living condition standards, planning and communication processes, and transitional supports for young adults.
<i>Child and Youth Well-Being Act</i> Amendment to Adoption Regulation	August 16, 2024	Amendment to adjust the definition of sibling and remove the requirement for a signed medical report as part of the child or youth adoption application
<i>Child and Youth Well-Being Act</i> Amendment to Child and Youth Social Services	August 16, 2024	Amendments to require background checks for those providing care or services to children and youth, clarify court procedures for revealing an informant's identity, restrict and set notice rules for interim hearings, define types of case conferences, set timelines for placement order hearings, and require written consent before transferring temporary custody under a kin custody order.
<i>Child and Youth Well-Being Act</i> Amendment to Forms	August 16, 2024	Prescribes forms relating to the disclosure of information source identity, protective and custody orders (including kin custody) adoption processes (placement, consent, applications, orders, notices), information sharing with parents after protective interventions.
<i>Family Income Security Act</i> Amendment to General Regulation	September 1, 2024	Amendments to increase the comfort and clothing allowance.

The acts for which the department was responsible in 2024-2025 may be found at:

[Statutes Under the Responsibility of the Minister of Social Development](#)

SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACTIVITIES

Introduction

Social Development follows the four objectives found in the Government of New Brunswick Official Languages [Implementation plan 2024-2031](#). This plan was developed and put in place by the Secretariat of Official Languages. It enables Social Development to strengthen its ability to offer quality services in both French and English, and to improve the vitality of bilingualism within government.

Strategic Objective 1

Ensure high quality, equal bilingual services to all New Brunswickers:

- There is continuous management of the department's linguistic profiles to ensure there is enough capacity in guaranteeing that clients are being served in their language of choice. We also strive to improve linguistic team capacity through the hiring process and second-language training.
- As part of the onboarding process, new employees are required to complete the mandatory e-learning modules for Language of Service and Language of Work offered through the GNB Knowledge Center.
- The Department worked in collaboration with the Official Languages Secretariat.

Strategic Objective 2

Provincial government employees can work and pursue a career in the official language of their choice.

- All communications and training to all staff is offered in both Official Languages. There is a section on the Intranet including information on second-language training and links to tools and resources to help employees practice their second Official Language.

Strategic Objective 3

New Brunswickers understand the socio-economic benefits of bilingualism through improved and effective communication and better support.

- Clients were invited to give feedback in a variety of areas in the department, either by survey or interview, in the language of their choice.
- The department engaged with service providers in providing input into designs, again in the language of their choice.

Strategic Objective 4

Positive measures are implemented to promote the development of both official linguistic communities:

- The department emphasizes an employee's obligations under the *Official Languages Act* as well provided them with the links for the e-learning modules Language of Work and Language of Service found on the GNB Knowledge Center.
- Large meetings, employee training, and activities are conducted in both languages.

Conclusion

The department continues to bring employee awareness of the responsibilities of the *Official Languages Act* in day-to-day work, and in the quality of programs and services provided to the public. The department also continues to promote both the Language of Service and Language of Work policies through its intranet site and onboarding process.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

Section 1

NAME AND YEAR OF AUDIT AREA WITH LINK TO ONLINE DOCUMENT	RECOMMENDATIONS
	TOTAL
2024 Volume 1 Chapter 2: Travel Nurse Contracts Auditor General Report 2024vol1	12

Develop a long-term care staffing recruitment and retention strategy to ensure legislated staffing requirements are met. Vacancy data should be analyzed to determine areas of most risk	Social Development is involved in a number of different initiatives to support long-term care staffing. A comprehensive recruitment and retention strategy will be developed in cooperation with the sector, recognizing that Social Development is not the direct employer
Ensure that a documented selection process (including selection criteria and scoring matrices) is established to support the awarding of contracts.	The Department agrees with this recommendation and notes that such processes are already in place for competitive procurement processes such as requests for proposals. The circumstances that gave rise to this recommendation do not reflect its normal procurement and contract management processes.
Ensure that contracts of a predetermined dollar value be reviewed by legal.	The Department agrees with this recommendation and has a process in place where the standard form GNB contract or Social Development's standard service agreement is used, with any significant modifications reviewed by legal. The deviations from the standard contract practices were relative to circumstances at the time.
Ensure contract terms are reflective of actual service requirements.	The Department agrees with this recommendation and notes that the circumstances that gave rise to this recommendation do not reflect its normal

	procurement and contract management processes.
Ensure appropriate criminal record, vulnerable sector and Social Development checks are performed for care staff working in the long-term care sector.	The Department agrees with this recommendation and notes that the circumstances that gave rise to this recommendation do not reflect its normal procurement and contract management processes.
Ensure the province is a party to all Social Development contracts.	The Department agrees with this recommendation, to the extent that it applies to Social Development contracts, and notes that the circumstances that gave rise to this recommendation do not reflect its normal procurement and contract management processes.
Ensure that contracts for services have provided for valid and appropriate liability insurance.	The Department agrees with this recommendation and notes that the circumstances that gave rise to this recommendation do not reflect its normal procurement and contract management processes.
Include expectations for adequate levels of invoice support to be provided before approving payment when contracting for goods and services.	The Department agrees with this recommendation and notes that the circumstances that gave rise to this recommendation do not reflect its normal invoice approval process.
Ensure adequate levels of supporting documentation are obtained, reviewed and are in compliance with contract terms before payment.	The Department agrees with this recommendation and notes that the circumstances that gave rise to this recommendation do not reflect its normal invoice approval process.
Ensure contracts provide the Minister with the authority to audit the service provider.	The Department agrees with this recommendation and notes that the circumstances that gave rise to this recommendation do not reflect its normal procurement and contract management processes.

Consider performing audits on contracted service providers, noting cost/benefit of doing so.	The Department agrees with this recommendation and has included performance audits on contracted service providers in its current audit plan.
Complete a post implementation review on the contracting and use of travel nurses.	The Department will apply the learnings and recommendations from the Auditor General review on the use of travel nurse agencies. However, since the Department has not used the services of travel nurses in over two years and is focusing its efforts on supporting nursing homes recruit and retain permanent staff, a post-implementation review will not be actioned at this time.

NAME AND YEAR OF AUDIT AREA WITH LINK TO ONLINE DOCUMENT	RECOMMENDATIONS
	TOTAL
2023 Volume 1 Chapter 3: Pandemic Preparedness and Response in Nursing Homes Department of Social Development 2023 Auditor General Report	8

IMPLEMENTED RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTIONS TAKEN
Work with nursing homes to develop and implement a recruitment strategy for nursing home clinical care staff.	The department is currently involved in the People Pillar work under the Provincial Health Plan but believe that a focus on long term care is necessary, especially for the nursing home sector. To this end, the department has already spearheaded a Recruitment and Retention Task Force to establish a recruitment and retention strategy. This initiative is now being led by the Talent & Recruitment Division at the Department of Health.
Update the infection prevention and control requirements in Nursing Home Standards to align with IPAC Canada best practice by providing access to a dedicated prevention and	Updated Standards and Guidelines have been developed. We agree with a further evolution of the program based on IPAC best practices. This will require significant investment and therefore will require government approval. Additionally, a

IMPLEMENTED RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTIONS TAKEN
control professional per 150-200 beds depending on acuity levels.	support structure with appropriate expertise is required either within the department or with partners to ensure accountability and oversight.
Implement a formalized risk management strategy detailing sufficient procedures that reflect infection prevention and control best practices until a capital improvement plan can be developed.	The department will be completing an updated Facility Condition Assessment to inform the development of future capital improvement plans including proposed replacement and spatial renovation projects to address aging infrastructure. Any new construction will adhere to applicable nursing home design standards. These infrastructure plans will require significant investment and government approval. An additional 16 Facility Condition Assessments were completed in 2024-25. Anticipating remaining assessments to be completed in 2025-26.
Develop adequate enforcement mechanisms to support compliance with legislation, regulations, and standards	The department is beginning its work on the development of comprehensive Long-Term Care and Adult Protection Acts and in addition to developing a robust compliance framework. It is noted that the updated legislations and compliance mechanisms will require significant investment and government approval.
Publicly report the licence status of nursing homes online	While the licence status is posted on the doors of the nursing homes, it should be reported in an aggregate format that is readily accessible to the public and stakeholders. Although, not yet implemented this is part of the requirements developed for the public facing dashboard in relation to our digital inspection platform expected to be launched in late 2025.
Ensure corrective actions as noted in IPC audits have been implemented to support ongoing / future infection prevention and control risks	We agree with recommendation however it is dependent on the approval of an enhanced IPC program and appropriate resourcing (as noted above).

IMPLEMENTED RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTIONS TAKEN
Regularly assess training needs of nursing homes and provide funding accordingly. Ongoing training should include infection prevention and control measures based on best practices.	Subject to federal funding approvals, the department will be developing a training plan which will consider an IPC component. On-going training would be part of the IPC program and is dependent on the approval of the program and resourcing. Nursing Home Training Needs Assessment completed in 2024 and year 1 of 4 now completed (2024-25) with implementation of the training plan under the Aging with Dignity Agreement. The Department has also ensured access to N95 Fit Testing for all Nursing Home Staff based on best practice recommendations, in alignment with updating our NH Standards.
Work with nursing homes and the Department of Health to develop outbreak management plans and procedures.	We have current plans for COVID as well as Influenza, but we recognize the need to look at all infectious disease to create a comprehensive guidance for outbreak management. Collaboration with Public Health has continued. Have developed guidance documents for: Viral Respiratory Illness and Gastrointestinal Outbreak Management. Still to be completed guidance for management of antibiotic-resistant organisms (AROs) specific to the LTC sector.

Section 2 – Includes the reporting periods for years three, four and five.

Social Development did not receive any recommendations from the 2021 and 2022 Auditor General's report.

NAME AND YEAR OF AUDIT AREA WITH LINK TO ONLINE DOCUMENT	RECOMMENDATIONS	
	TOTAL	IMPLEMENTED
Update on Nursing Home Planning and Aging Strategy – 2020 Vol. II Auditor General Report 2020 Vol II	5	1

REPORT ON THE PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE ACT

As provided under section 18(1) of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*, the Chief Executive shall prepare a report of any disclosures of wrongdoing that have been made to a supervisor or designated officer of the portion of the public service for which the chief executive officer is responsible. The Department of Social Development did not receive any disclosure of wrongdoing in the 2024-2025 fiscal year.