



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
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Canada 

Community Action Program for Children and Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program

Summary of Feedback from Recipient Engagement (May-July 2023)
on the Proposed Renewal Approach

What is the purpose of this summary?

Purpose

- This summary aims to share overall themes and key takeaways from the feedback received from currently funded recipients during the engagements on the proposed renewal approach for of the Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP), that took place from May to July 2023.

Disclosure

- The following document is not a verbatim record of what transpired in the sessions and may not capture every nuance of the conversations. It is a summary of the key themes and takeaways discussed by those who participated in discussion of the proposed renewal approach at that time.

Thank You

- The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) wishes to acknowledge and thank community-based organizations for their vital role in improving health outcomes for young children and their families, providing trusted, inclusive, culturally appropriate, and locally tailored supports for those who face barriers to health equity.

Additional Information

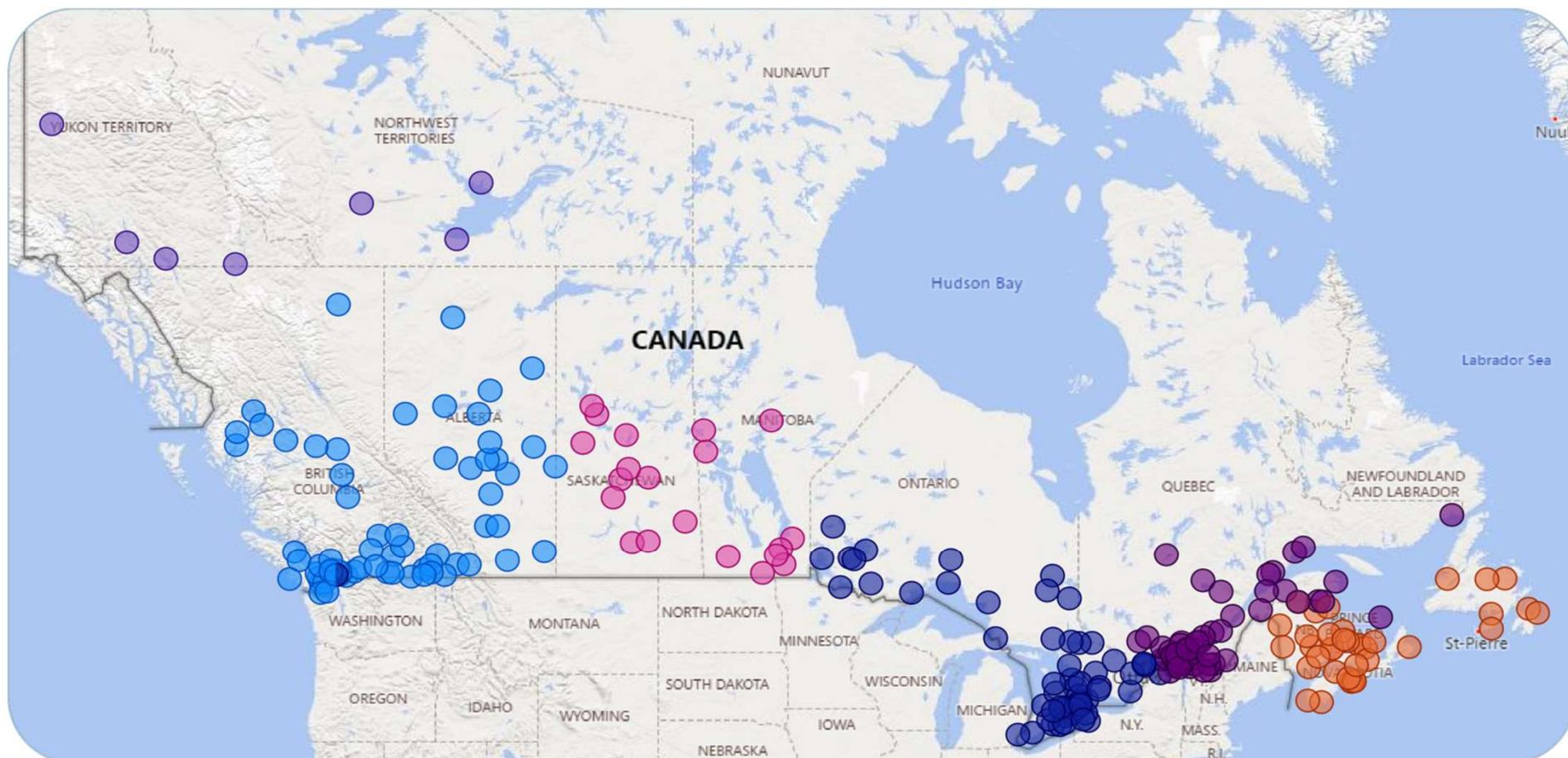
- If you have any questions about the material presented or additional information on the CAPC and CPNP renewal, please contact your Regional Office Program Consultant directly.



Who participated in the engagements?

From May to July 2023, the Agency held regional discussion sessions* with currently funded recipients of the Community Action Program for Children and Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CAPC/CPNP) to discuss a proposed renewal approach.

24 sessions were held with 637 individual representatives from 434 recipient organizations. Written feedback was also shared through online forms (170+ submitted) and directly with PHAC regional program staff.



PHAC Region: ● Northern Region (13) ● Western Region (99) ● Manitoba/Saskatchewan Region (35) ● Ontario Region (114) ● Quebec Region (126) ● Atlantic Region (47) = Total across Canada (434)

*Discussion sessions were not held in Nunavut due to regional considerations.

What were the overall themes from recipient feedback?

The feedback shared with PHAC during the engagement period represents the opinions and perspectives of currently funded recipients of CAPC/CPNP. An analysis was conducted on all feedback received to identify key themes and takeaways.

Overall, recipients expressed the ongoing and increasing need for these programs in communities across Canada. There was acknowledgement of the need for change to some aspects of the programs, particularly in terms of funding and reporting.

It was noted by many that these discussions present an opportunity to inform the renewal approach and implementation process, and to contribute to an ongoing conversation with community-based organizations and partners about supports for families and children.

While there are still many questions about renewal, many recipients felt that the sessions themselves were helpful and informative. Some highlighted the professional, calm and competent approach of PHAC staff. Recipients anticipate further information and support and welcome ongoing dialogue and input into the process.

The discussion sessions explored the proposed changes to CAPC/CPNP*. The overall themes that were raised can be summarized as follows:

- Continued Support for At-risk Children and Families
- Strengthened Investment and Allocations
- More Time for Renewal Implementation
- More Support for Transition
- More Information on Application Process
- Streamlined Program Administration

*A detailed information package on the proposed renewal approach for CAPC/CPNP was shared with all recipients prior to the engagements and was recapped during the discussion sessions.



What were some key takeaways from recipient feedback?

Continue supports for at-risk children and families

Overall:

- ❑ Reducing the eligible age range could create more barriers. It needs to be flexible to address gaps in services at a regional/community-level for at-risk families with children.
- ❑ Making early learning and childcare activities for all target populations ineligible could create more barriers. They need to be flexible to address gaps for children with complex early / social learning needs and gaps in childcare for at-risk families.
- ❑ Consideration of specific populations is essential, including Indigenous*, newcomers, racialized and marginalized communities, minority language, and other cultural or faith-based communities.

☀ Some recipients noted that a more focused age range could be considered for projects where current demographics and specific community needs support this.

Indigenous-specific:

- ❑ There are gaps and systemic barriers for Indigenous children and families, particularly in early learning and childcare (e.g., Indigenous Early Learning and Childcare off reserve access and funding to Friendship Centres).
- ❑ Funding allocations should reflect current demographics of target populations, including the needs of Indigenous children and families.
- ❑ A competitive application process does not align with an Indigenous approach. Also, collaborative partnerships need to consider self-determination.
- ❑ Reporting and performance measurement approaches need to align with Indigenous ways of knowing and being. The renewed program framework should incorporate a holistic Indigenous worldview.

☀ Some recipients noted the value of a direct relationship with PHAC as a funder.

Note: This is a summary of recipient feedback and is not an exhaustive list.

What were some key takeaways from recipient feedback? (cont'd)

Strengthen investment and allocations

- ❑ Additional funding and new investment is needed to address current costs and needs, particularly around food, transportation, staffing and administration.
- ❑ A competitive process puts pressure on applicants to 'race to the bottom' with budgets and to not show real costs.
- ❑ A competitive process increases the risk of many recipients not being funded in the new program, particularly small, rural and remote organizations, as well as those who do not have capacity to apply.
- ❑ Time-limited, project-based funding could destabilize services for families and could put at risk matching or leveraged funding from provinces/territories and other sources.

☀ Some recipients noted that change is needed to support current programming costs and potential new community organizations and that this may involve a different funding process.

More time for implementation

- ❑ Recipients need more time to understand and implement the renewal approach, with consideration for ongoing service delivery and reporting requirements throughout the year.
- ❑ The current timeline puts small, remote and rural recipients at a disadvantage for developing competitive proposals.
- ❑ Making connections with potential partners is difficult with compressed timelines.

Note: This is a summary of recipient feedback and is not an exhaustive list.

What were some key takeaways from recipient feedback? (cont'd)

More support for transition

- ❑ Recipients need more information, time and support to understand expectations for community needs assessments and collaborative partnerships.
 - ❑ There are barriers to partnerships for small, rural and remote recipients where they may be the only organization providing these programs and services in their area.
 - ❑ Formal partnerships can add to administrative costs around joint planning and reporting, reduce autonomy and may result in unclear accountabilities for compliance.
- ☀ Some recipients noted that collaborative partnerships could be helpful to promote knowledge sharing.

More information on application process

- ❑ Coordinators/staff who are delivering programs and services are often the same resources who would develop proposals. The timing of launching the application process is critical as it can conflict with busy times for programming, reporting and/or leave.
- ❑ Applicants who are unsuccessful may have to wind-down operations, which has implications for human resources, assets, rental/building obligations, etc.

Streamline program administration

- ❑ Current reporting requirements and compliance processes present a high administrative burden for recipients.
- ❑ Expectations are unclear around upstream public health outcomes and what that means for services and reporting.
- ❑ Expectations are unclear around integrating knowledge sharing activities into service delivery projects and what that means for existing networks.

Note: This is a summary of recipient feedback and is not an exhaustive list.

What are the next steps for CAPC/CPNP?

- The renewal is a pivotal moment for CAPC/CPNP's longstanding programs, community partners, and for the promotion of health and resilience of children and families.
- PHAC listened carefully to the feedback received on the proposed changes to CAPC/CPNP and is incorporating the considerations raised into the approach going forward.
- In late July 2023, PHAC advised that the funding application process proposed for Fall 2023 was being postponed.
- In early September 2023, PHAC advised that all CAPC and CPNP funding agreements currently in place will be extended to March 31, 2026, at current funding levels.
- PHAC recognizes that currently funded recipients will require a clear and gradual transition period. At this time, PHAC is focused on preparing for the extension of current funding agreements, starting with those expiring in 2024.
- PHAC is committed to keeping community and provincial/territorial partners informed of changes to the approach as decisions are made. Details on timing and next steps will be communicated well in advance of their implementation.
- PHAC will continue to welcome feedback from partners on CAPC/CPNP renewal and its implementation.

