

SERVICE PLAN 2017-2019

ANNUAL YEAR-END REPORT 2016/17

AND

PLANNING FOR 2017/18 &
2018/19

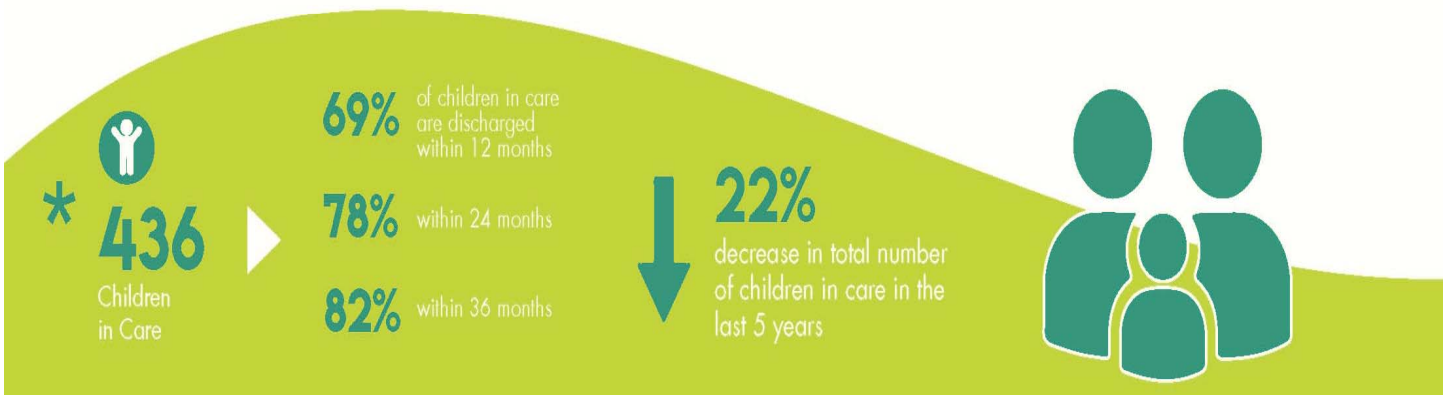


The Children's Aid Society of Ottawa | La Société de l'aide
à l'enfance d'Ottawa

Protection Services Provided by The Children's Aid Society of Ottawa

2017

Based on 2016-2017 Service Data



Overview

Introduction

The Children's Aid Society of Ottawa (CASO) is committed to protecting the children and youth of our community from abuse and neglect. We work in collaboration with community partners to ensure the wellbeing of children and youth to strengthen the capacity of families and the communities in which they live. The Society has operated for 125 years and continues to evolve and adjust based on the needs of our local community and our legislative requirements. Each year CASO serves children, youth and families with our strong staff group of trained professionals.

The purpose of the **Service Plan** is to examine the provincial context, local strategic directions, work processes, pressures and operational requirements in order to determine the opportunities and/or challenges that the organization should address over the next three years, with a focus on 2017-18. To accomplish this, CASO:

- **Looks back** over the past year, examining the corporate and services performance over the past year, including quality assurance and organisational development accomplishments, strategic activities and results, and provincial influences, and
- **Looks forward to 2017-18 and subsequent years** to articulate the organizational services plan for the period 2017-2018 based on the strategic directions and organizational priorities.

Looking Back

Strategic Initiatives

Despite the pressures of CPIN and other provincial influences in 2016-17, our work on strategic initiatives continued, albeit at a slower pace. In all areas we have made progress towards our intended goals and have tracked our results. In order to achieve the objectives of our six strategic directions, we have a number of initiatives under each which reflect an integration of the work. This approach is designed to focus and intensify our progress on the strategic directions). The following are examples of progress that was made in 2016-17:

- The efforts to increase the number of children and youth living in family-based care continued to grow. For example, at the beginning of the year, 70 children and youth were in group care. By the end of the fiscal year, we had reduced that number to 58. The strategic initiatives of the group care pilot, continued integrated planning with our service partners, and implementing Signs of Safety/ Family Finding training with 54 staff members primarily from our Adolescent Protection Team produced positive results.

- Educational supports to children and youth continued to grow through our partnership with the four Boards of Education. This resulted in a continued increase of children and youth completing their educational programs.
- Increased efforts in recruitment from diverse community applicants self-identified as 22% visible minority, 9% LGBTQ and 5.5% Indigenous.
- Headstart Nursery School provided developmental opportunities to 26 children living with CASO-involved families.

Service Accomplishments and Challenges

In 2016-17 the service volumes remained generally stable with small shifts in specific areas.

Last year, there was an increase in investigations completed of 4.2% over the previous year. This increase may in part be reflective of the increase in the overall child population. In the past four years, the number of investigations closed following an investigation has increased while the number transferred for ongoing services has decreased. Ongoing protection volumes over the last five years have decreased from year to year until last fiscal. There was an increase of 3.5% in ongoing cases managed between 2015/16 and 2016/17.

The overall trend of a decrease in the number of children admitted to care and remain in care continues as demonstrated by a 21.6% decrease in the average number of children in care over the past five years. The trend persisted this fiscal year with a 6.9% decrease in the average number of children in care between 2015/16 and 2016/17. While there has been a decrease of admissions of children into care, those who do come into care and stay in care are more often older children/youth with complex or high-risk profile.

While CASO has been successful in reducing the number of children who come into care and in finding earlier permanency for those who are in our care, we have found that older youth are a population for whom it is more challenging to achieve permanency. This has resulted in a growth in the number of older youth/young adults supported by CASO. This growth is also influenced by the Ministry policy changes which provide greater access to supports for youth aged 18 to 21 receiving Continued Care and Support for Youth (CCSY) services. This has presented a heightened need for CASO to develop a service network for the most at-risk youth.

Through the model of service, with the focus on admission prevention and family-based care, CASO has seen a shift in the types of placements in which children in care reside. There continues to be a greater use of CASO foster homes and a reduction of use of foster and group care provided by the private sector. In 2016-17, CASO stabilised at 12% of children in care placed in group care.

Like the rest of the province, CASO continues to see a downward trend in the number of available foster homes. A critical concern is that the retirements of foster parents are not equal to the opening of new foster homes. The recruitment and retention of foster parents continues to be a strategic priority for the Society in 2017/18.

CASO has seen a reduction in the numbers of children adopted or for whom legal custody has been obtained. However, given that fewer children come into CASO care (as a result of admission prevention activities and increases in kinship service options), and that those now entering care often present with higher needs, the numbers of children who do achieve permanency in these ways is a notable success.

The above shifts in service volumes highlight the primary drivers of our services

Local Changes

For CASO, the dominant activity in 2016-17 was the implementation of the *Child Protection Information Network (CPIN)* and the *increased expectations regarding measuring and achieving 100% compliance to Ministry Standards (Auditor General Report)*. These two change requirements interconnect and have had significant impact on the operation of the organization.

Improving standards compliance is predicated on being able to extract information from CPIN records in order to report on the services that are being provided and the current levels of compliance. Prior to CPIN, CASO was fully independent in our information systems, so we were able to control how information was entered in the systems, and how we could access it to develop reports in order to support managing the work. With CPIN, we are no longer in control of how the system manages the information that is entered, or what information we are able to retrieve from it.

CPIN

Much of CASO's initial focus this year was the preparations required for the implementation of CPIN, which occurred on May 30, 2016. While an intensive period, the challenge was focused on supporting staff to get used to the system following CASO's May 30th go-live date. All segments of the organization had to change their work processes and management of materials and files to work in the CPIN product. This particularly had an impact on child protection services, care providers, financial services, quality assurance, and in administration and legal, which created significant increased demand on our internal service capacity and financial resources.

Before and following the go live date, CASO hired and maintained additional 'overhires' beginning in the winter of 2015/16; staff to support workload on the teams through the learning and adjustment period.

Based on the experience with the changes due to CPIN and the increased oversight of the daily work through increased standards compliance requirements, it became clear that we needed to review our service models to be able to sustain ourselves financially. As result, in the winter of 2017, CASO introduced changes to staff teams to create financial efficiencies and systems to work more effectively in the CPIN system and to achieve improved compliance.

Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance has continued to implement the strategic and operational activities focused on accountability and quality improvement. This includes reporting on service performance indicators, conducting stakeholder and client feedback surveys, as well as the development and implementation of audits, reviews and program evaluations. These activities inform and guide our evaluation and planning exercises.

Much of the work of the QA department this year was consumed by gathering and analyzing data for the Auditor General of Ontario Quality Improvement Plans (AGO QIPs) and conducting reviews in order to improve compliance and quality in the areas reported on in the QIP. CPIN's reporting limitations created a requirement to collect and validate most data manually which has been extremely resource-intensive.

The implementation of CPIN continues to have a significant impact on the QA department's access to real-time, accurate electronic data which it previously relied upon through CASO's legacy system. CPIN's reports are hindered by a problematic data model and inconsistencies in data entry and the information it provides is not yet reliable in all areas. As well, not all data that CPIN collects has yet been made available to the sector through the Cognos reporting system. As mentioned, this has been very challenging at a time when there the demand for information about compliance has increased significantly. However, there has been some progress in improvements to the data model, access to information in Cognos and the development of reports in this last fiscal year but progress has been slow.

Corporate Services

For Corporate Services, the issues that have been the past year's primary focus related to the implementation of CPIN.

The *Human Resources Department* led the staffing process for CPIN. As well as the backfills for the CPIN trainers, thirty-six additional positions were created for a one year period to provide added supports. This created significant churn in staffing as the domino impact of staff shifting positions created more work. In addition, the frustration growing out of CPIN and responding to staff members who were unable to manage the work within CPIN generated activity for Human Resources. This was reflected in increased grievances, workload challenges and more use of overtime.

For the *Finance Department* one of the most noteworthy impacts of the implementation of CPIN has been the integration of finance and case management activities. Data entered in Curam (case management interface) triggers finance functions in Oracle (finance management interface), which provides the opportunity for the case manager to view financial transactions in the case. Implementation of CPIN by the MCYS has been challenged by the separation of the different streams: the development, training and implementation of Oracle as new financial software within CPIN occurred independently of the development, training and implementation of Curam. The CASO project team worked

diligently to gather information and prepare for the changes required with respect to finance processes; however they were challenged during the 2016/17 fiscal year to manage these financial processes and accounting within two systems for the fiscal year.

Records and Information Technology (IT) work shifted significantly in the past year. IT Helpdesk reduced its work as CASO's self-managed IT systems became redundant. While in Records, the pressure for 'search' in CPIN resulted in increased workload. As well, the scanning and attaching of documents required in CPIN necessitated the development of the central administrative team to ensure consistency of data integrity.

Despite these challenges, the Leadership worked to reduce positions funded by the Balanced Budget Fund, as this fund will be exhausted by the end of 2017-18. Through thorough oversight of the 'over-hires' terminations, the provision of early exits, and restructuring, the staff-related expenses were reduced by the end of the 2016-17 fiscal year. The focus was on shifting the resources to where the pressures were being experienced as a result of CPIN.

This resulted in the following changes:

- Increased the number of staff in our intake teams to better manage the increased compliance measures;
- Changes to After Hours Services to respond to the growth in volume and to meet the compliance requirements into the evenings;
- Re-structured Family Visitation Program to better serve the families visiting their children during the hours they are available while maintaining service volume;
- Changes to Volunteer Services to focus on the pressure areas of drives and streamlined utilization of volunteers; and
- Implementation of a Centralized Administrative services to increase CPIN expertise and flexibility in work assignments for administrative staff.

Provincial Influences

In 2016-17 the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) implemented a number of new accountability requirements and oversight mechanisms in response to the poor results of the most recent Auditor General Audits and media attention generated by a variety of issues outlined below. As well, the sector as a whole identified the need to increase its capacity to work as a system rather than as individual bodies. Based on these issues, a number of strategies were developed to improve consistency of service, while recognizing variations in community need. These pressures resulted in an increase in MCYS oversight of compliance with standards, increased expectations for Board oversight of operational activities, and detailed requirements for quality assurance and improvements within Children's Aid Societies (CASs).

MCYS undertook a number of activities to review how they manage the Child Welfare portfolio. These included:

- An Adoption Enhancement Review;
- The introduction of a Funding Model Review, to be implemented for 2018-19;
- The development of a 'Blueprint' to respond to the Residential Services Report and recent child deaths in Residential services; and
- Significant amendments to the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA), now called the Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA). The new act will:
 - Enhance the adoption of Child Well-being Organizations for the First Nations, Inuit and Métis (FNIM) Communities
 - Extend the age of protection to 18 years.
 - Increase the child and youth's voice in decision-making
 - Clarify openness and privacy responsibilities.

In addition, in 2016-17 there were a number other events related to Child Welfare resulting in calls for improvements and/or changes to the Child Welfare system. These included:

- The Sampson Inquest and resulting recommendations;
- Legislative changes that increased the powers of the Provincial Child and Youth Advocate (PACY) over CASs which has added an additional layer of accountability for CASs;
- The Motherisk Commission review and recommendations; and
- The Ontario Human Rights Commission review of the equity in services for African Canadian and Indigenous communities in child welfare.

Throughout the past year, the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies continued to institute the "Call to Action" (initiated in the last quarter of 2015-16) to effect positive change in the sector. The intent of the initiatives was to increase the capacity of CASs to improve and work as an overall system. As a result, there were significant activities developed, such as quality and performance initiatives, system reconfiguration (e.g. shared services), and changes to worker training and authorization processes. There has also been a substantial commitment made towards reconciliation with the Indigenous communities and the *One Vision One Voice* initiative to reduce disproportionality of Black children and youth in the child welfare system. More detail on the Call to Action can be found in *Appendix H*.

Looking Forward

Strategic Initiatives

In 2017-18, CASO will continue to build on the successes of the past year's initiatives.

There is an additional focus this year to respond to the lack of resources available for high-risk youth with significant mental health issues both for those youth living with their families and those in the care of CASO. This year, CASO will work closely with our community partners to advocate for improved services and supports for these most vulnerable youth. As well, it is hoped that, as the staff adjust to CPIN, we can renew our commitment to build the capacity of our staff to work in our clinical framework of SOS/Family Finding to improve our capacity to meet the needs of these youth.

The continued and critical strategic activities focus on developing our ability to work with diverse communities. This will be particularly important in our strategic work with the First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities as we align with to the changes in the CYFSA.

Service Accomplishments and Challenges

Recognizing that the funding model is changing at the end of this year, CASO will be closely monitoring the volumes and shifts in service needs in preparation for planning in 2018-19. While we believe the shifts in volume are positive indicators of good service, CASO will continue to monitor the activities and analyze the outcomes to ensure this is the case.

Local Changes

The focus of 2017-18 internally will be on managing the change in work activity resulting from the pressures experienced by CASO last year. CPIN implementation was one of the most significant changes the organization has experienced in the past 12 years. This coupled with the increase in compliance to standards will likely be a continuous challenge for the staff this year. Feedback from the workers is that they are overwhelmed with learning and using CPIN. They feel tied to their computer, reporting that they had less time to work directly with the children, youth and families. As well, CPIN challenged their ability to achieve the standards in a timely manner, impacting their sense of competency. This has had a significant impact on morale within the organization.

The changes in structure in order to better work in CPIN while announced in 2016-17, will be implemented in this year. This will result in a number of staff changing their work focus or time of work in the organization.

CPIN

In 2017-18, CASO will continue its efforts to sustain our work in CPIN. There will be ongoing evaluation of the level of CPIN Training and support required for new, returning and current staff. Over the next fiscal year, CASO intends to establish a regular rhythm of group-based learning opportunities to address staff CPIN training and support needs, with minimal reliance on 1:1 supports. The support plan includes focused strengthening of the supervisors' CPIN capacity so that they are able to support their staff when case-specific difficulties arise.

In an attempt to streamline and simplify administrative requirements in order to support more client contact, CASO entered the 2017/18 fiscal year with a transition plan to centrally manage administrative support staff to be implemented by the fall of 2017. Until

this year, administrative employees have been managed individually throughout the agency by the clinical supervisors. With a provincial information management system such as CPIN, however, many administrative tasks can be centralized, which is intended to provide consistency and provincially harmonized approaches to records management. Other administrative areas of the agency are also under review through the next few months to determine where efficiency and consistency can be developed. A significant issue will be to develop the strategies to support those staff who continues to struggle working in CPIN.

Quality Assurance

In 2017/18, the quality assurance priorities are focused on continuing to implement the audits and reviews resulting from the AGO compliance pressures, conducting annual surveys, and managing the risk requirements related to Ministry reporting. CASO plans to complete our Signs of Safety / Family Finding pilot evaluation this year in order to determine impact of this approach in our work. The training and evaluation was hampered last year due to the competing demands of the AGO QIP, CPIN implementation and challenges in accessing data comparable to legacy system data in CPIN.

CASO is optimistic that the number of compliance reviews will reduce in this year, as CASO compliance increases. As well, it is hoped that there will be an increase in CPIN reports available if the intensive collaborative efforts continue at the provincial level. This would assist in addressing the issues related to CASO's ability to extract accurate and reliable information from CPIN for accountability and management purposes. The sector is moving into a shared services approach with respect to quality assurance activities which will allow CASO to refocus its efforts on evaluating outcomes.

Corporate Services

The Funding Model is in its final year of utilization of the current funding and the balanced budget fund. A ministry review of the funding model is underway and it will likely take into account the unresolved financial pressure in the northern and rural communities and the new focus on Child Well-Being Societies. It is anticipated that a changed funding model will be implemented in 2018-19.

CASO's balanced budget fund will largely be dedicated to mitigate our costs of CPIN for 2017/18, and any remaining balance will expire after March 31, 2018. Implementation of CPIN has had a significant financial impact on the agencies' balanced budget fund: total balanced budget expenditures during the 2015/16 and 2017/18 fiscal years were \$1,189,186 and \$3,229,368 respectively. The costs incurred were related to salaries/wages and benefits, travel, training and recruitment, and professional services. The future cost of operating CPIN will continue as the administrative burden placed on the frontline workers has increased. The Society continues to develop strategic approaches to streamline staffing resources and CPIN procedures in order to operate within the fiscal budget and mitigate financial risk where possible.

The Society will need to continue to develop new strategies to operate within a balanced budget; the funding envelope for the sector continues to be flat while salary costs and

minimum wages increases, as announced by the Province of Ontario, which continue to impact a number of our external contracts.

The key variable in our future funding will be how we are able to control/manage costs through the collective bargaining process (current contract expires December 31, 2017), CPIN sustainability, and the shifts in service volume that have been noted in the volume analysis.

Provincial Influences

There are a number of issues active in the last fiscal year (noted on page 2) which will continue to be in the forefront of the Ministry and sector activities over the next year. The Ministry received the recommendations from the independent review panel on Residential Services in December of 2016, which raised serious concerns regarding Residential Services, in particular the group care sector. Since then, a number of tragic incidents have occurred, creating heightened urgency to respond to the recommendations of the panel. Four child deaths in privately operated care purchased by child welfare occurred in 2016-17. These deaths underlined the absence of a strong model in our sector for servicing children and youth with high-risk, complex needs youth. As well, concerns were raised regarding the number of children living outside of their home community in inadequate resources.

Two children from outside of our jurisdiction died in Ottawa while residing in Outside Placement Services (OPRs). This intensified CASO's local interest in improving the services available for these youth and it prompted an examination of its own processes. While CASO is investing increased resources in linking with children and youth who are placed in Ottawa, OACAS is leading a Residential Review Process to respond to the lack of information flow between jurisdictions. CASO is hoping that there will be an increased licensing oversight of the homes by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. A number of these issues were identified in the *'Blueprint'* to respond to the Residential Services Report.

The Auditor General of Ontario will be returning to the sector to review the response of the seven CASs and the Ministry Area offices to the recommendations of the 2015-16 Child Welfare Audit. The sector is anticipating additional requirements regarding financial reporting and compliance to standards will be put forward in response to the outcomes.

Implementation of the changes to the CFYSA will start in the fall of 2017 and will continue through to April of 2018. It has been communicated that the changes will begin with raising the age of protection to the age of 18 and continuing to define practically how CASs can better include the child and youth voice in decision making.

The OACAS is continuing its Call to Action (see *Appendix H*), which has a focus on increasing the capacity of the Sector to work as a system. A significant milestone for the OACAS in the Call to Action was a commitment, at the end of March 2017, of the sector to implement Shared Services by 37 or the 44 CASs. As a result, the OACAS will be planning the implementation of the agreed upon Shared Service processes for implementation in 2018-

19. The Shared Services will have implications for CASO both in planning involvement for the services and understanding the changes required to our structure and resourcing.

Lastly the Minister of Child and Youth Services' personal commitment to decrease the number of children and youth coming into care from the indigenous and Black African communities aligns well with our strategic directions. CASO has for a number of years developed our internal capacity with the support of our community partners and will continue to work to achieve Indigenous reconciliation and commitment to diversity (see initiatives in *Appendix B- Looking Forward Strategic Directions 2017-18*).

Looking Forward Priorities for 2017-18

The following priorities have been established to respond to the anticipated provincial requirements, operational needs, strategic directions and risk issues. While there are ongoing activities and initiatives in all the areas there are changes that require focused effort in 2017-18. See *Appendix B* for a comprehensive overview of all *Strategic Directions – Looking forward*.

The primary drivers for operational and risk management requirements for 2017-18 and going forward are:

- CPIN sustainment;
- Compliance with standards;
- Funding Model adjustments and anticipated service pressures; and
- Labour relations.

CASO continues to be committed to its strategic directions and initiatives that are currently underway to support continuous service improvements. The emphasis this year will be focused on the critical partnerships that CASO has established with our local and regional partners, the changes to the CFSA in particular the extension to the age of 18 years, increasing our capacity internally to support diverse communities and continuing on our training and implementation of Signs of Safety/ Family Finding.

The pace and implementation of the activities identified below will be influenced by the provincial response to the 'unknowns' and OACAS Call to Action activities.

Response to Provincial Developments

The focus of the work for the coming year in Child Welfare is towards improving the delivery of child welfare, increasing our ability to work as a system rather than as individual agencies, and ensuring that decision-making considers the voices and input of the children, youth and families we serve. The following are the priority actions that CASO will undertake this year to respond to the change requirements:

<i>Implementation of the new requirements in the Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA)</i>	<i>Improvements to residential services across the province</i>	<i>Development of Shared Services</i>
<p>The activities that will be undertaken in 2017- 18 in response to the changes in the governing act will be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding of the scope of changes required to align with the act specific to the extension of the age of protection • Determine the similarities and differences with current service models • Ensure staff members are trained in the new Act • Develop a framework for service delivery • Review CASO’s activity against provincial recommendations and the field’s direction • Develop clear messaging for community partners 	<p>Work with OACAS and MCYS to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the quality of residential services for children and youth, in particular residential services provided by private operators of group care • Support Indigenous agencies’ out-of-jurisdiction placements • Increase the sector’s ability to share critical information on residential providers in a timely manner • Support increased oversight mechanisms for residential services with the Ministry and peer agencies • Continue to build and develop relationships with key sectors such as mental health and education. . 	<p>Support the development of the OACAS Shared Service Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participate in the planning of the Shared Service Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Group Purchasing ○ Child Welfare Data Services ○ After Hours ○ OPR • Identify potential challenges and opportunities for CASO in being a provider of shared services • Prepare for labour implications.
<p>Going Forward...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine need for revised workflow processes • Define costs • Develop partnerships 	<p>Going Forward...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support a provincial system of oversight • Build local relationships with service providers supporting shared services 	<p>Going Forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of new services

Moving on CASO Strategic Directions

The Board of the CASO established six key strategic directions to guide the work of the Society in 2013 which continue to be relevant today. These are to:

- Enhance support for children, youth and families;
- Increase the capacity to serve diverse populations;
- Advocate for the needs of Ottawa’s children, youth and families;
- Develop partnerships and shared services;
- Strengthen CASO’s resources; and
- Achieve service excellence.

There are 28 initiatives underway as noted in *Appendix B* to achieve these directions building on previous years’ success. This year, the intent is to support continued work on all of the current initiatives, with particular emphasis on three following critical goals. These are:

<i>Increase family-based care for children and youth</i>	<i>Improve work with and service for our diverse and Indigenous communities</i>	<i>Enhance the capacity of our workforce through training</i>
<p>The activities that will be undertaken in 2017- 18 specific to investing in family-based care include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize family-based care by focusing on family first • Ensure efforts are made to keep children within the Ottawa jurisdiction and to support good care for youth living in our jurisdiction • Better support for families to keep their youth in the home • Continue to recruit and develop foster and parent model homes for children and older youth • Develop a framework of service with our partners for at risk hard to serve youth 	<p>The initiative that will be undertaken in 2017-18 will focus on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FNIM: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support Provincial Reconciliation process ○ Integrate CYFSA changes ○ Build oversight through ED Circle ○ Develop service model for protection ○ Implement cultural contracts for Foster Care placements ○ Develop an Indigenous youth engagement strategy • Rainbow <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improve knowledge of and service to Trans-youth through local partnership • Diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implement One Vision, One Voice recommendations ○ Develop relationships with the Francophone Black African community 	<p>Increase capacity of workforce through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous, Diversity and Francophone recruitment plans • Provide forums for staff education regarding FNIM, Diversity, Queer, Addictions, and Infant • SOS/Family Finding training • Work and Safety focus on Mental Health in the Workplace
<p>Going Forward...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create links with services for youth over the age of 16 who come into care 	<p>Going Forward...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build partnerships to support development of appropriate services 	<p>Going Forward...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate impact of training • Redo Census to measure change

Achieving Operational Improvements

CASO continues to adjust and change how we work in response to the implementation of CPIN. This has also created increasing financial pressures as we exhaust our balanced budget fund savings that we have relied upon to augment our budgets through CPIN implementation. In addition, there will be increased pressures due to collective bargaining requirements and shifts in our volumes of services that impact on the funding formula.

In response to the anticipated changes, CASO’s operational focus is to reduce expenditures and develop additional strategies to sustain the organization in CPIN.

<i>Ensure financial viability going forward</i>	<i>Increase staff capacity to achieve AGO QIP requirements</i>	<i>Support CPIN development and sustainment</i>
<p>Review and prioritize financial investments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure expenditures are well supported • Reduce costs in low priority areas • Examine service model and business processes to reduce financial pressures • Monitor and continue to work towards a reduction of children in group care where possible 	<p>Complete the one year cycle of QIP processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate outcome of QIP processes and adjust based on results • Reduce intensity of review in areas of successful improvement • Develop support strategies to reduce stress for frontline staff members • Develop support strategies for supervisors to achieve comfort in CPIN and QIP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete implementation of CPIN • Continue the support of provincial advocacy on improvements to CPIN: • Continue the investments provincial in business harmonization and access to reports initiatives • Define the required ongoing staffing required in CPIN • Develop model for continuous onboarding, training and supporting CPIN • Increase capacity and comfort of supervisors in CPIN • Improve financial systems in CPIN • Develop improved capacity for record management and administrative supports
<p>Going Forward...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust to changes in the funding formula 	<p>Going Forward...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust to support new expectations • Develop a strategy of award or recognition. 	<p>Going Forward...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to improve CASO staff functioning of CPIN • Continue to contribute to improving CPIN functionality in provincial initiatives

Manage and Reduce Risk

CASO's contract with OPSEU is complete at the end of December 2017. The provincial labour relations picture suggests that CASO will have a challenging bargaining period. This is reinforced by CASO's experience of the aggressive approach that OPSEU and the Local are taking on labour issues as evidenced by the past year's significant increase in grievances. This, coupled with the pressures from the implementation of CPIN and the Ministry focus on oversight mechanisms and quality improvements, has impacted staff morale. While achieving our quality requirements and meeting the standards are important, the expectations and workload pressures on the workers has impacted worker satisfaction considerably, increased overtime costs and created a sense of loss of the focus on the casework relationship with children, youth and families in favour of documentation and recording in CPIN.

In April of 2017 CASO experienced an Information Technology shut down that prevented us from working in CPIN. CASO was unable to recover access to our systems for four days. This has motivated CASO to review and add failsafe mechanisms to ensure our capacity going forward.

In response to these risks, CASO has developed some management strategies. These are:

<i>Prepare for bargaining</i>	<i>Business continuity improvements</i>	<i>Improving internal organizational culture</i>
Plan for bargaining by the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of provincial contracts • Development of contingency plans • Engagement of supervisors in planning of bargaining position • Development of communication strategies 	Build a continuity plan for the web and electronic platforms at CASO: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase second web system • Develop a second access system for frontline workers to do their work should one system fail • Test system quarterly • Develop policies and procedures on privacy and use of electronic systems • Purchase necessary equipment to eliminate cyber risk at the frontline level 	Identify and implement opportunities to improve the agency culture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue Sustainability Work Group with supervisors to develop and monitor work plan • Implement Healthy Minds survey and training on maintaining health • Continue to improve on health and safety issues • Communicate regularly on the issues • Build capacity of supervisors to respond to the changed environment
Going Forward... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce labour relations challenges 	Going Forward... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue improvements to system 	Going Forward... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue key strategies for the next year

Conclusion

The *Service Plan* reflects the accomplishment of the past year and outlines the challenges ahead. The implementation of CPIN continued to dominate CASO in 2016/17 and had a significant impact on all aspects of the organization. In spite of these challenges, CASO continued to deliver good service, worked on improving its compliance with standards and quality of work, maintained a balanced budget, further developed community partnerships, delivered on a number of strategic initiatives and actively participated in planning locally, regionally and provincially.

The operational priorities and strategic directions continue to build upon our strategic successes and to respond to the changes and risks going forward. The resulting plan is focused on the overarching goals of:

- re-engineering the organization to respond to demands of CPIN and to prepare for the anticipated provincial changes;
- strengthening the culture and the capacity of the organization to respond to the needs of the local community;
- continuing to improve of the quality of service; and
- addressing and mitigating risks.

While the plan has been developed to guide the work in 2017-18, it is anticipated that the priorities and initiatives will continue into 2018-19 and will provide the groundwork for 2019-2020. The results of the plan will be reported through the appropriate Board Committees to the Board of Directors.