

Frequent communication benefitted ISANS and the community during the pandemic.

Background

An evaluation of ISANS' operations during COVID-19 was conducted between November 2020 and March 2021. It involved the consultation of a Project Steering Committee and data was collected through document analysis, the ISANS database, surveys, focus groups, email correspondence, and a targeted interview with the organization's CEO.

Staff Called Vulnerable Clients

ISANS identified over 800 vulnerable clients at the beginning of the pandemic and proactively called them to check-in, to update them on the COVID-19 situation, and to ensure that their needs were being met. ISANS called these clients instead of sending a written communication in order to ensure that clients received the message in their first language, and in an accessible manner.

Connect Updated Staff

Connect, ISANS' intranet system, was used to communicate with staff about COVID-19 and the organization's operations. This ensured that staff were always informed about the context of the pandemic and the situation the organization found itself in.

Operations were Documented

ISANS documented detailed protocols for operations that could be relied upon when the context of the pandemic changed. ISANS was able to use documented protocols from the spring to quickly and efficiently transition back to predominately online service delivery in the fall.

Staff Worked with Public Health

ISANS worked with Nova Scotia Public Health throughout the pandemic to ensure that the province's COVID-19 communication and associated signage was accessible to all Nova Scotians. ISANS took on this enhanced role because of the urgent need for clients to understand health care information.

Support for the Health Care System

ISANS made messages from the health care system accessible to clients. This benefitted the health care system because ISANS' help allowed them to communicate with patients, and it helped ISANS' clients because they were able to receive important, health-related messages and services in a timely manner.