



AN INFORMATION SHARING FRAMEWORK

Supporting collaborative and integrated service delivery
in British Columbia

Looking Across Jurisdictions

The underlying issues that individuals and families face are quite similar across the country.

Individuals require services from organizations across sectors – whether health, social, justice, educational or other; – delivered by organizations that come from the public, health, and private and non-profit sectors, – that depend on funding from within federal, provincial or municipal government, foundation and private funding, as well as private or individual fund-raising efforts.

The environment in which the services are delivered differs, as do some of the deemed areas of responsibility.

The legislation that governs the organizations, including the privacy legislation are again, similar but



Adapting the Framework for British Columbia

BC has been pushing forward with a number of initiatives and programs to support collaborative care.

- Recognition that “Access to diverse supports offers more comprehensive and coordinated care to clients, acknowledging the key role of the social determinants of health in substance use and related harms. [from: *“Pathway o Hope: What We Heard”*]
- Integrated Youth Services,
- Introduction of the E-Health Act

The Framework can complement this work by putting in place a mechanism that builds trust relationships between organizations across sectors.



Current Realities

People and families often need support from more than one service at the same time.

They may interact with health, mental health, social, justice, and community organizations.

However, these systems are not designed to work together easily. Information does not flow well, services respond in silos, and people are often asked to repeat their story.

At the same time, organizations face growing demand, limited resources, and outdated privacy rules that were not built for collaboration.



What's Required to Move Forward

**To improve outcomes,
services need to move
beyond working alone.**

That means collaborating across sectors, sharing information appropriately, and using what already exists more effectively.

It also means information needs to be interoperable, enabled to flow where it is required.

Most importantly, it means looking at the whole person or family not just the part that fits within one system, while balancing privacy, safety, and care.



A Core Principle

Information sharing is not risk-free.

But neither is failing to share information when it matters.

As a system, we are responsible not only for what we share, but also for what we don't share, and the impact that has on people's lives.



Why Collaboration Matters

No single organization can meet every need on its own.

Different services bring different expertise, perspectives, and supports. When they work together, care becomes more complete, more balanced, and less fragmented.

Collaboration helps reduce bias, improve decision-making, and ensure people receive the right support at the right time.



Privacy Laws in British Columbia & Canada

Privacy legislation can feel complex and confusing.



Different laws apply to different organizations, and interpretations may vary.

These laws set boundaries, but they also allow for information sharing when it supports care, safety, and legitimate service delivery.

The Framework helps partners navigate this complexity and understand how information can be shared appropriately within the law.



What the Framework Does

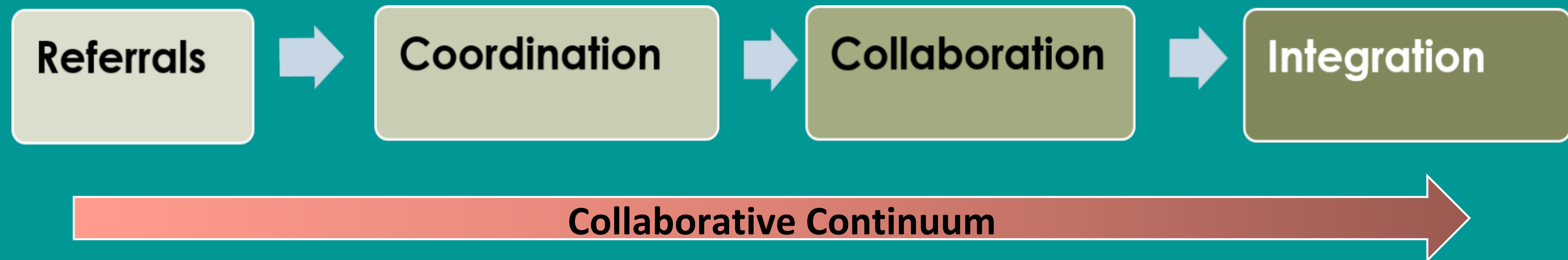
The Information Sharing Framework is a practical guide for working together across sectors.

It shows how privacy legislation can support appropriate information sharing, rather than prevent it. It helps organizations build trust, align practices, and avoid reinventing processes.

Most of all, it supports consistent, safe information sharing that strengthens coordinated care.



Collaboration Happens On a Continuum



Collaboration doesn't look the same in every situation. Some partnerships are informal. Others are highly structured.

The level of information sharing should reflect the purpose of the collaboration and the needs of the people being supported.

The Framework is flexible enough to support collaboration at different stages.



Setting the Stage

Before information can be shared safely and effectively, partners need clarity.

They need to understand why they're working together, who is involved, and how decisions will be made. The Framework addresses this through the following elements.

This foundation is essential for trust.



Purpose

Why are we working together?

The purpose of a collaboration determines what information needs to be shared, by whom, and for what reason.

When partners share a common understanding of purpose, information sharing becomes more intentional and appropriate.

Privacy legislation indicates that you should only collect the minimum information required to support the identified purpose.

You may want to articulate not only what the purpose is for working together, but what the environment is within which you will collectively be working.



Membership, Roles & Governance

MEMBERSHIP

Who needs to be involved to provide the right support?

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Clarity on roles and responsibilities determines what information is required to fulfill them. Each organization needs to understand its authority to collect, use, and share information, and how that authority may differ across roles.

GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

Strong governance creates clear decision-making structures, demonstrates accountability, and reinforces a shared commitment to privacy-conscious practice.



Legislative Environment in British Columbia

Privacy legislation can feel complex and confusing.

- Different laws apply to different organizations, and interpretations may vary.
- The public sector comes under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA),
- The private sector, including nonprofits, is subject to the *Personal Information Protection Act*;

Beyond privacy legislation other legislation may also apply:

- The *Child, Family and Community Service Act* contains provisions that parallel the FOIPPA, and take precedence over FOIPPA,
- The *E-Health (Personal Health Information Access and Protection of Privacy Act)* may also apply to organizations if involved in the delivery of health care in BC.
- Using the Framework helps partners navigate this complexity and understand how information can be shared appropriately within the law.



Practices & Records

POLICIES & PRACTICES

Aligned policies and practices help build confidence between partners that information is managed responsibly, used for valid purposes, and protected with appropriate safeguards.

INFORMATION & RECORDS

Clear records support continuity of care.
Partners need to understand what information exists, who holds it, and how people can access their own information.



Electronic Systems, Security, Evaluation & Research

ELECTRONIC INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

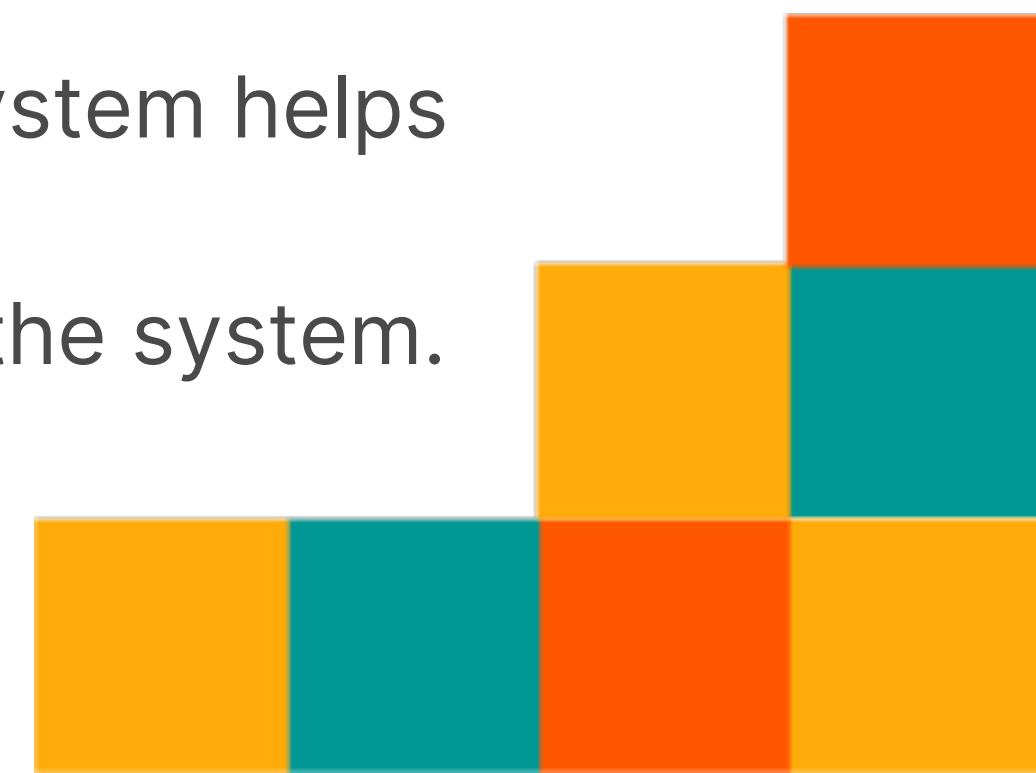
Technology can make information sharing easier and safer. It also introduces new responsibilities related to security and capacity. We need to use technology in ways that support collaboration without creating new barriers. That includes ensuring interoperability of data.

SECURITY & RISK MANAGEMENT

Protecting information requires safeguards in multiple areas: administrative, physical, and technical. Risk management is about putting appropriate protections in place.

EVALUATION & RESEARCH

Evaluation helps answer an important question:
Is collaboration making a difference?
Understanding outcomes for individuals, families, and the system helps improve practice over time.
The use of data in research also supports improvements to the system.



Practical Tools

The Framework is supported by practical tools, including templates, guides, and sample agreements.

These resources help organizations apply consistent approaches and build shared understanding more quickly.



Why a Framework Matters

The Information Sharing Framework helps organizations navigate complexity, build trust, and work together more effectively.

It supports safer information sharing, stronger relationships, and better coordinated care.

Putting it All Together

When information is shared appropriately, services become more connected.

- Trust grows.
- Duplication decreases.
- People experience care that feels more coordinated and responsive.



Key Takeaways

- Information sharing is essential to coordinated care.
- Privacy and care are not in conflict; they must be balanced.
- The Framework provides guidance for making those decisions together.



How the ISF built the CIE: purpose, trust, confidence

PILLAR 1

Purpose comes first

A shared purpose unlocks lawful sharing: information is used only for the purposes partners set together.

PILLAR 2

Trust, built at the table

Partners negotiated together, saw each other's practice, and learned whom they were trusting.

PILLAR 3

Confidence to grow

With one agreement in place, each new partner joins without starting the debate again.

PILLAR 4

Consent and accountability

Chris decides at every step; roles, permitted use and breach rules sit with a governance table.

Purpose made sharing lawful; trust and confidence made it happen.