Using Evidence In Policy and Program Planning: Lessons from the Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces Program

Ben Pollard

Director, Program Management and Evaluation

Immigrant Integration and Multiculturalism Branch

British Columbia
The Best Place on Earth

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, and Innovation

Overview of Presentation

- Complex social programs for addressing community specific issues
- Research and Evaluation to support Welcoming Communities
- Conceptual framework
- Developing a model of “Engaged Retention” for newcomers
- Informing policy and programs

Community-focused programs

- ‘Two-way street’ of integration
  - Immigrants settling
  - Communities being welcoming and inclusive of newcomers
- Welcoming and Inclusive Community Programs

Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces

- Three-year initiative to support communities to become more welcoming and inclusive of newcomers
- Four program lines
  - Community Partnership Development
  - Knowledge Development and Exchange
  - Public Education
  - Demonstration Projects

Conceptual Framework

- Recognition of “2-way Street” of integration
- Attraction and Retention
  - Attraction
  - Settlement and Adaptation
  - Integration and Community Attachment
  - Retention / “Engaged Retention”

Challenges

- Challenges due to complexity of integration process

- Challenges due to existing evidence base
  - Case studies
  - Small sample size
  - Inconsistent

Supporting Evidence-based Policy

Support evidence-based policy making by

- Evaluating Community-based programs
- Evaluating overall impact
  - Pre-post/control model survey
- Developing a driver model of “engaged retention” (what makes newcomers feel a sense of belonging and choosing to stay in a community)

Survey Methodology

- Survey of 4500 British Columbians, including 2000 new immigrants
  - 38 Questions

- Own voice – about the perceptions and experiences of immigrants

Developing the Model

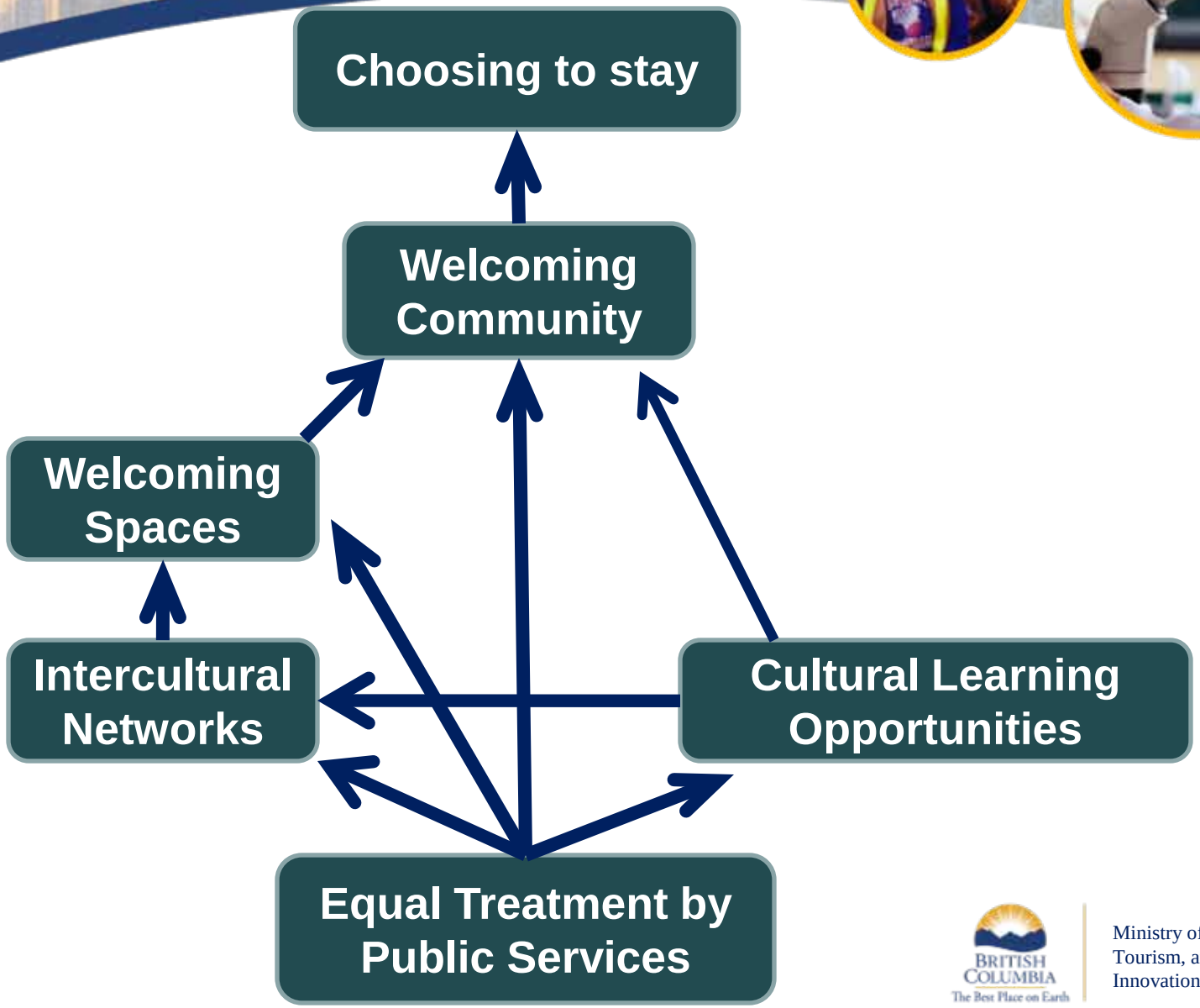
- Structural Equation Model of Engaged Retention
  - Driven by responses from newcomers
  - Identify key drivers of engaged retention for both recent and long-term immigrants
  - Identify key policy and program levers

Model (New Immigrants)

BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, and Innovation

Longer-term Immigrants



British Columbia
The Best Place on Earth

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, and Innovation

Informing policy and programs

- Informing policy and program design through Research
  - Highlighting the complexity, and providing a way of thinking about it
  - Identifying what levers are most important
- Informing program design through Evaluation
  - Filling out the picture through local data, including qualitative
  - Looking at what has been effective at moving those levers.