



SUMMARY

On June 2, 2017, Deloitte and Volunteer Canada co-hosted the **National Round Table on Screening Volunteers**. Twenty leaders from the public, private, and non-profit sectors gathered to consider models to improve screening people interested in working in positions of trust with vulnerable people, including children, youth, people with disabilities, frail elderly, and those experiencing temporary or chronic debilitating illness.

Purpose: The purpose of the National Round Table on Screening was to explore the legal, practical, and philosophical implications for creating a centralized, integrated, online screening system for those working with vulnerable populations.

Objectives:

1. To explore international models for online screening
2. To review the Canadian context for screening
3. To identify the assets, challenges, and considerations for establishing an online screening platform in Canada
4. To determine the pathway forward – next steps

Lessons from Abroad Panel Presentation

With the aim of learning from models established to increase the safety, quality, and efficiency of programs and services in communities, presentations were made by:

- Neil O’Connor, Manager Community Information, Department of Justice and Attorney-General, [Blue Card Services](#) (Queensland, Australia) – [[Download Presentation](#)]
- Tom Clark, General Manager, [AccessNI](#) (Northern Ireland) – [[Download Presentation](#)]
- Gerard Hart, Director of Policy and Protection Services, [Disclosure Scotland](#) – [[Download Presentation](#)]

Reflections on the Panel Presentations

Following the presentations, the Round Table discussion focussed on two questions: *What features would be beneficial in Canada and what are some of the concerns or questions that they raise?*

Beneficial Features	Concerns and Questions Arising
Establishes eligibility, not suitability	Cross-Jurisdictional co-operation (provincial, territorial, federal)
Balances protection, privacy, and human rights	Social inclusion (ensuring that ex-offenders are not excluded from community participation)
Links individuals to “employers”	Cross-Sectoral engagement (organizations in faith, sport, childcare, education, seniors’ services, healthcare)

Real-time updates	Multi-departmental collaboration (Justice, Public Safety, Employment and Social Development Canada, Privacy Commission, Human Rights Commission...)
Filters information – considering what is relevant	Education for organizations regarding risk mitigation and screening practices (beyond Police/Vulnerable Sector Checks)
Continuous stakeholder relations	Political leadership and public education will be critical
Portability of screening information	Expertise required (human rights, employment standards, privacy, volunteer engagement)
Regulatory framework	Language that reflects the Canadian context

Canadian Landscape

The current Canadian Landscape was also reviewed by Volunteer Canada, the RCMP and the BC Criminal Review Service.

- [Ten Steps of Screening](#) – Paula Speevak, President and CEO, Volunteer Canada – [[Download Presentation](#)]
- [Vulnerable Sector Checks](#) – Robert Murray, Manager, Civil Fingerprint Screening Services and Legislative Conformity, RCMP
- [BC Criminal Review Service](#) – Meghan Oberg, A/Director, Security Programs Division, BC Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General – [[Download Presentation](#)]

Assets and Challenges within the current Canadian Landscape:

Screening practices are currently inconsistent among, private, public, and non-profit service-providers, across provincial/territorial jurisdictions, and between regulated industries and professionals. This includes the degree to which the [Ten Steps of Screening](#) are carried out as well as the process, cost, waiting time, and information provided through Police Checks and Vulnerable Sector Checks. Individuals who wish to volunteer in more than one organization serving vulnerable people, are currently required to get separate Vulnerable Sector Check.

In recent years, there have been some good developments in Ontario (through the Law Enforcement and Records-Management Network – LEARN), in British Columbia, through the expanded Criminal Records Review Program, and initiatives in other provinces and territories, in the development phase. It was noted that the [Screening Handbook](#), co-developed by Volunteer Canada and Public Safety Canada contained valuable information, however, it is not widely known/applied. Furthermore, it was noted that there may be excellent practices and tools available within specific sub-sectors but these are not broadly accessible.

Next Steps:

Deloitte and Volunteer Canada reaffirmed their commitment to provide leadership in the area of improving screening for volunteers working in positions of trust with vulnerable populations. The following next steps were suggested:

1. Circulate a summary of the Round Table discussion to broaden engagement
2. Provide a briefing on the Round Table discussion to key stakeholders
3. Establish a working group to create and guide a pathway forward.

For more information, please contact:

Paula Speevak, Volunteer Canada
pspeevak@volunteer.ca