

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

REVITALIZING CLAIMANT INFORMATION SESSIONS

UNDERSTANDING NEEDS AND BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chapter

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2019-2020 the ESDC Innovation Lab's Behavioural Insights Research and Design (BIRD) team collaborated with departmental partners, including Service Canada Ontario, the Skills and Employment Branch (SEB) and the Integrity Services Branch (ISB) to revitalize Employment Insurance (EI) Claimant Information Sessions (CIS). The project was initiated in response to: the need to refocus CIS from an integrity-driven model to an employment services offerings approach; and to better reflect today's labour market and program realities while maintaining the integrity of the EI program. With a focus on learnings and opportunities for ESDC, this report summarizes the project's approach and findings, as well as next steps for revitalizing CIS using innovative methods.

PROJECT METHODS

The project used human-centered approaches, namely, Design Thinking, Qualitative Research, and Behavioural Insights to generate innovative and impactful solutions. Evidence from the lived experience of Canadians gathered through a series of (in-person) interviews formed the basis from which stakeholders from across the department co-developed solutions. The project revealed strengths and weaknesses of existing CIS, provided a deeper understanding of the needs and experiences of EI claimants, and engaged a diverse set of CIS stakeholders to reveal their realities and opportunities. This work generated feasible solutions that can better serve clients, improve claimants' employment outcomes as well as integrate integrity by design.

RESULTS

The project provided many insights on current challenges, including:

- Very low awareness of federal, provincial, and local employability programs and services is not increased following attendance of CIS.
- Only 10% of claimants are invited to the sessions and its resources are not provided to other claimants, service provision is not equitable.
- Integrity and job search resources are not always presented in a manner that is practical, targeted, or personalized to different client groups.
- Many claimants want, need, and are expecting personalized support targeted to their specific situation but receive generic information that doesn't feel relevant to their context.
- Relevant local labour market and provincial/territorial employment services and programs information is often limited or absent.
- Very little support is provided for explaining to claimants what is considered acceptable job search efforts and how to engage and sustain a productive job search.

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OPPORTUNITIES

To address the gaps identified, the following ecosystem of prototypes are ready for further development and testing. These are not just ideas; the prototypes were co-developed with internal stakeholders and reflect the operational and resource realities in the department. This greatly improves likelihood of successful testing and ease of scaling for broader adoption.

Prototype 1 - In-Person Employability Support Sessions maintains the basic structure of hosting in-person sessions at Service Canada Centres while addressing some of the concrete feedback from claimants regarding the content of the current CIS. Because not all claimants are comfortable with the online space, they would strongly benefit from in-person information sessions. Sessions would be redesigned to address specific needs for different groups of claimants (e.g., first time claimants, upskilling or re-skilling, immigrant needs, long-tenured workers).

Prototype 2 - Understanding EI Tool (online) helps clients understand how EI works (i.e., rights and responsibilities) from a practical perspective, using a new online learning tool provided to all claimants. An initial assessment would triage claimants with gaps in their knowledge to appropriate learning modules. These modules would have interactive content, such as short videos with concrete examples, based on consultation with integrity officers. These modules would focus on the biggest and most frequent claimant questions and reporting mistakes (e.g., reporting different types of income). A follow-up questionnaire would then assess their learning and flag potential needs for further integrity support.

Prototype 3 - Service Needs Assessment Questionnaire would unlock CIS's capacity to provide personalized and tailored support for claimants. Claimants would provide important information about their specific circumstances (e.g., career change, occupation-specific skills, and training needs) by answering key questions developed with employment counsellors. By leveraging the Targeted Referral and Feedback system, this information can be provided to provinces and territories and feed into existing employment programs and services, as well as the prototypes proposed in this project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OPPORTUNITIES

Prototype 4 - Online Targeted Support Service is an online tool that recommends tailored services and programs most relevant for the claimant's circumstances. The tool can also provide more general information on subjects such as core job search skills, financial planning and mental health. In its most advanced form, this prototype could take the form of a comprehensive service recommendation tool integrated into Job Bank accounts. As a minimum viable product for testing, this prototype could be a curated email with resources based on data available from the EI application form. Future iterations could leverage data from the Service Needs Assessment Questionnaire (Prototype 3).

Prototype 5 - Digital Job Search Effort Tracking Tool is an online job search tracking tool to replace the existing paper form (a paper version could be made available for non-digital claimants). The tool would make job search tracking easier by automating some aspects (e.g., saving search histories), adding structure via templates for tracking different types of search activities (e.g., search for posts, preparing applications, networking). The tool would also leverage Behavioural Insights to make it more motivating and rewarding via built-in goal-setting and achievement tracking functions. For example, it could send reminder emails to follow up on submitted applications and nudge claimants toward underutilized job search strategies. This tool could also be leveraged by integrity officers to verify job search behaviours.

The prototypes developed through the CIS project are concrete, feasible, and testable changes that can help to better support the EI program and Canada's active measures within the existing system. They can help bridge some of the existing gaps between federal and provincial services and take advantage of ESDC's advancements in the quickly growing digital employment services space, i.e., JobBank, that can provide cost-effective services to large numbers of Canadians.

NEXT STEPS

To start experimenting with these prototypes, one of the first challenges will be to allocate time and resource to staff. In recognition of this challenge, we recommend starting small, that is not trying out the whole ecosystem of prototypes, or even the full version of a prototype, at once. For example, for prototype 1, developing one type of targeted session for a particular client group and testing it at one or a small group of Service Canada Centers (virtually during COVID). For the digital solutions, one could pick up on particularly interesting or feasible aspects of the prototype and present early low-fidelity versions, on a voluntary basis, to samples of claimants for feedback.

Programs and services that involve aspects of human decision-making, motivation, persistence, etc., can benefit from Behavioural Insights (BI) interventions that are low cost, easy to implement, and evidence based. Many have been tested and are being used by OECD member and partner countries to improve access to the labour market, improve labour market skills, and change organizational behaviour. BI can help to improve job fair attendance, increase job search behaviours, bolster job seeker's health and well-being, reduce bias in hiring, increase employment of disadvantaged job seekers, and prevent unemployment by improving job flexibility (BIT, 2018). ESDC has already successfully leveraged BI on a number of occasions to increase the take-up of services provided by Job Bank such as Job Alerts (ESDC Innovation Lab, 2018). The Lab's BIRD team can help to support these initiatives (both early and more mature) with behaviorally informed advice on their design, stakeholder engagement, and by helping to set up rigorous outcome measurement and testing.

BACKGROUND

Chapter

01

BACKGROUND

In Canada there is a legislated division of roles and responsibilities between EI passive measures (administering benefits, i.e., Part 1) and the provincial delivery of active measures (e.g., training and employment assistance services, i.e., Part 2)). CIS are part of this system of supports to facilitate the reemployment of EI claimants as well as ensure the integrity of the EI program.

The federal government has been providing EI claimants with CISs since the early 1990s. Each year approximately 1 in 10 EI claimants will be invited to attend a CIS. The CIS is a 90-minute in-person group session at a Service Canada office (more details in What is the Claimant Experience section on page 10). The primary purpose of the sessions is to check claimants' entitlement to EI benefits (attendance demonstrates being ready, willing, and capable of working; submission of job search form demonstrates adequate job search) and provide them with information about the EI program (i.e., rights and responsibilities). They also provide some level of information about methods to secure gainful employment and in some cases provide local labour market information. Failure to attend a session can affect a claimant's entitlement to EI benefits, albeit this is rarely the case in practice (less than 1% of claimants who fail to attend are disentitled; ISB, 2020) and in 2018 and 2019 session attendance rates were 45% (ISB, 2020).

To help jobseekers find employment and return to work more quickly, in 2013 the Government of Canada launched the Connecting Canadians with Available Jobs (CCAJ) initiative. This initiative had the goal of increasing integrity through increased monitoring and sanctions. Main components included standardizing how EI claimants were selected to send to CISs, redesigning sessions to include information about the changes and establishing compliance investigations, as well as updating the definitions around a "reasonable job search" and "suitable employment". The initiative also enhanced online job search tools (i.e., Job Bank suite) which are presented in CISs. Finally, CCAJ explored whether providing information regarding employment supports earlier in a claim to jobseekers would decrease EI usage. For the most part, most of the changes brought forward through CCAJ were rolled back to previous program and service parameters.

The 2018 ESDC evaluation of the initiative found that (ESDC, 2018):

- With respect to the definitions of "reasonable job search" and "suitable employment", these did not encourage claimants to increase their job search efforts. Those attending CISs, where the information was presented were unable to recall much of its content.
- The changes to Job Alerts increased the awareness and take-up of this service; however, there was no significant improvement in labour market outcomes.
- Simply providing information regarding employment supports earlier in a claim only had limited impact on reduced EI usage. In contrast, participating in employment supports such as Employment Assistance Services is associated with a small, but measurable, reduction in claim length.
- EI claimants directed to a claimant information session (claimants with the highest job demand in their previous occupation) used about 1 week less of EI benefits compared to claimants not directed to a session.

Overall, the findings suggest that small tweaks to CIS are unlikely to yield significant changes in outcomes for claimants.

BACKGROUND

Evaluation findings over the years have shown that simply being invited to a CIS reduces the length of EI claims by about one week. This suggests that when claimants are notified that they will be “checked on”, they report being back to work sooner. This results in significant savings to the EI program, estimated to be \$120 million per year (ISB, 2018-2019). Attending the CIS does not have an additional impact on claim length (ESDC, 2018). This speaks to the importance of having additional touchpoints with clients beyond bi-weekly reporting activities. These efforts increase the integrity of the program by requiring claimants to demonstrate their eligibility for EI.

Given that the primary effect of existing CIS comes from the invitation letter sent to 10% of claimants, it seems prudent to consider the cost-effectiveness of the efforts that follow the letter. These efforts include integrity selecting claimants for attendance, regional integrity officers planning and scheduling the sessions, sending invitation letters, having to do frequent follow-up calls and rescheduling with claimants, Citizen Service Officers (CSOs) at each SCC preparing to and given the presentation, collecting and inputting attendance, integrity officers manually processing job search forms and inputting the results. Given these extensive efforts that can provide these services to only 10% of claimants, it seems worthwhile to explore potentially more cost-effective ways to provide these functions digitally, and reserve higher-intensity in-person services for higher-need cases (e.g., when there are significant integrity concerns, claimants with low digital literacy). In fact, most claimants (~86% as of October 2020; Job Bank) provide their e-mail addresses to receive information about federal, provincial, or territorial (F/P/T) employment programs and services when they submit their EI application.

Although evaluation of the CCAJ did not find evidence that presenting the employment support information in its CISs resulted in faster return to work, recent Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDA) evaluations have demonstrated that providing employment assistance services within the first four weeks of an EI claim facilitates faster returns to employment, and leads to increases in earnings after participation. This evidence is encouraging a number of jurisdictions to target EI claimants with LMDA programs earlier. It also indicates that if CIS is to continue playing an important role in connecting EI claimants with provincial employment supports, that these contacts should occur early in the claim, which is consistent with numerous international studies (e.g., Csillag, 2018). In 2018 and 2019, claimants could be selected for a CIS between 4 and 101 weeks into their claim and were invited on average 9 weeks into their claim (ISB, 2020).

Numerous regional initiatives also provide evidence-based insights into what works for maximizing the impact of CIS, that could potentially be scaled. For example, in the last year, one experimental initiative using behavioural insights targeting youth in southern interior of British Columbia, demonstrated that contacting claimants via email about relevant employment programs and services resulted in lower EI benefit use compared to a group who did not receive the emails. This type of intervention – targeted information about employment programs and services for specific EI claimant groups – could generate significant savings to the EI operating account; it is both a more cost-effective way to connect targeted claimants to relevant available supports as well as a way to better facilitate claimants’ reemployment. Whereas most regions currently combine the integrity (R&R) and support services aspects in one CIS session, Quebec uses a somewhat different model where attendants attend separate integrity and job search help sessions that allow claimants to receive more in depth, targeted help on each aspect of EI. Whether such a model, one that separates integrity and job search help, is more effective than one that tries to combine both is currently unknown, as no rigorous comparisons of the two are available.

BACKGROUND

A subset of claimants in some provinces and territories (e.g., Quebec and BC) may also be contacted by the province's employment services during their claim. This is possible thanks to ESDC's Targeting, Referral and Feedback (TRF) tool (developed in 2006), which provides the partner provinces and territories the ability to request information on claimants with specific characteristics. These often include those who have skills aligned with local labour market needs, those who could benefit from early activation and those who are likely eligible for employment programming. In 2018-19, approximately 55% of regular claimants in Quebec have their information sent to the province through TRF. As for British Columbia, the share is 48% and 5% for Alberta. This data sharing tool could be leveraged further to extend targeted (e.g., by occupation) and personalized (e.g., programs specifically for long tenured workers) employment help information and services to a greater proportion of claimants and broader range of services (e.g., beyond training to local labour market information, job search help, advice on reskilling, etc.).

Today, the immense impact of COVID-19 on the labour market, investment in active measures, including training and re-skilling with proven efficacy, is critical and explicitly recognized in September's Speech from the Throne, "This pandemic has shown that Canada needs an EI system for the 21st century," and "Working with the provinces and territories, the Government will make the largest investment in Canadian history in training for workers." In this context, the EI program is currently evolving into a more accessible and generous program. As the Canadian economy transitions out of lockdown, it will be crucial that the EI program has the capacity to connect unemployed workers with employment services and programs that can facilitate their reemployment.

Evidence from the domestic and international employment literature, point to many additional potentially high-impact opportunities for developing supports and services that provide jobseekers with resources, information, and training they need to reintegrate into the labour force. These can also help to counteract the potentially negative effects of generous unemployment benefits on work incentives by integrating some mandatory participation.

TIMELINE (TBU)

Project Start and
Charter Signing

Employment
Literature Review

Qualitative
Research

Ideation and
Prototyping Sessions

2019
MAY 9 – 16

MAY – OCT.

MAY – AUG.

OCT. 2 & 3

MAY

MAY 29 & 30

JUNE 26

2020
JAN. – NOW

Observational
Research

Evidence
Workshop

Ideation and
Prototyping Sessions

Dissemination

EVIDENCE BEHIND THE PROJECT

Chapter

02

EVIDENCE BEHIND THE PROJECT

The project consisted of three stages that fed into one another. First, existing evidence around how CIS works and its efficacy was collected and shared with project stakeholders. Second, new evidence, generated through research with claimants and frontline staff, was produced that shed light on needs, barriers, and opportunities for improving CIS. Third, evidence from phase one and two were used to collaboratively generate concrete, feasible, user-centered ideas for revitalizing CIS.

1. BUILDING A COMMON EVIDENCE BASE

Observational Research

To understand how CISs were currently operationalized, the project team observed several CISs in Ontario, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and British Columbia. Team members also consulted with several Citizen Services Officers (CSOs) and Service Canada team leads at these centers to learn about their experiences.

Literature Review

At the same time as the observational research, and throughout the course of the project, Lab members conducted exploratory literature reviews (scans of the research literature for recent and well-cited articles and meta-analyses combining the results of many studies), both local and international, on relevant topics with search terms including “unemployment”, “reemployment”, “job search” job to understand how unemployment affects individuals’ lives and the different factors that can impact the likelihood and quality of reemployment.

Observational Research

Following the observations and initial literature review, the Lab hosted internal stakeholders in a (design thinking) workshop to build a common understanding of what we currently know about the functions and efficacy of CIS (this is called an ‘evidence safari’, see Annex A for details). This was crucial because disparate stakeholders from different branches, often with differing objectives and acting in silos, are all responsible for shaping and delivering CIS, and not necessarily aware of one another’s needs, goals, and activities. The Integrity Services Branch (ISB)’s primary goal is to prevent and catch fraud, as they are responsible for maintaining the integrity of the EI fund. As such, they select claimants for CIS attendance, provide EI rights and responsibilities information for the sessions, and flag clients for investigation. Service Canada is responsible for design of the session (headquarters) and frontline delivery (regional), i.e., scheduling sessions, delivering CIS presentations, recording attendance, checking job search forms, and contacting claimants for investigations. The Skills and Employment Branch (SEB) is the policy lead and provides content for presentations including information on JobBank services (e.g., Job Alerts, and career planning). Each stakeholder group was invited to contribute at least one piece of evidence (important piece of information on CIS, e.g., from evaluation or administrative data) for discussion at the session. Sharing of key evidence from different groups revealed that integrity and service goals and success metrics can look quite different, and that careful consideration of both would be important for improving CIS. Examples of evidence included:

EVIDENCE BEHIND THE PROJECT

- Inviting claimants to a CIS in and of itself results in reduced EI claim length.
- Although attendance, disentitlements, and job search form completions are recorded locally, they are not analyzed or reviewed to measure overall CIS performance.
- Claimant satisfaction metrics or feedback are currently not collected.
- We don't know whether CIS improves job search behaviors or functions as a referral mechanism to guide claimants to take advantage of EAS or training/education.

While the session flagged gaps resulting from CIS responsibilities being distributed across partially siloed branches and regions, this project was able to bring these groups together to build a common understanding of the realities and flag opportunities that would provide benefits for multiple or all stakeholder groups.



EVIDENCE BEHIND THE PROJECT

2. NEW EVIDENCE IDENTIFYING BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Observational Research

We interviewed 18 current EI claimants to understand their experience with unemployment, EI, and CIS, including positives, barriers, pain points, needs, and existing understanding of resources and help available to them. We also conducted five in-depth interviews with Service Canada staff who deliver CIS, as well as one provincial employment services counsellor who occasionally presented at CIS. Interviews were transcribed, coded for themes, and one-page anonymous profiles of the claimants were generated to share key insights from the data with the project partners (see Annex B for examples). These facilitate the ability of various internal stakeholders to empathize and perspective-take with clients' realities to generate better ideas for improving CIS.

3. GENERATING IDEAS AND SOLUTIONS COLLABORATIVELY

Ideation and Prototyping Workshops

Two sets of (design thinking) workshops brought together diverse departmental stakeholders from multiple branches, headquarters and the regions, frontline staff and executives, to generate client-centric ideas for improving CIS and develop concrete and feasible solutions that the department could test out, using evidence from stage 1 and 2.

Client-centric ideas were generated with creative design thinking activities that diverse teams worked on primarily in small groups (see Annex C for details). Qualitative research insights were presented as claimant profiles that showcased needs, hopes, motivations, and barriers to finding quality re-employment, as well as pain points with CIS. These helped to guide and challenge the thinking of workshop participants to keep claimants' realities at the forefront of idea generation. Ideas were prioritized using impact-feasibility ratings. Following idea generation activities, groups prototyped their ideas, meaning they started to work on key details of how the idea could be operationalized, e.g., how the new service offering would look, feel, how users would interact with it, what concrete mechanisms it would use to achieve the positive outcome for claimants. Groups generated elevator pitches for their prototypes to get feedback from other groups and to check their prototypes back against the profiles. They improved their prototype following each round of feedback.

Through this process, five solutions that form an ecosystem of CIS service offerings emerged (see Results section).

The Future of Client Information Sessions

Integrity's Window

APPLY for EI...

A ROADMAP...
 → USEFUL LINKS
 → ALERTS on REQUIREMENTS

MYSERVICE APP
 WITH HUMAN SUPPORT & IRL OPTIONS...

JOB SEARCH TAB... HELPS CLAIMANT & INFORMS INTEGRITY

2-5 MIN

REAL PEOPLE TAILORED to AREA...

FEDIPROV SERVICE VIDEOS

...ALGORITHM DETERMINES WHAT WORKS for CLAIMANT...

...MULTIPLE MODULES!
 ...by province + community

...ALERT within 1st WEEK...

in addition to IN-PERSON SESSIONS...

POINT OF CONTACT

CLIENT SESSION with ONLINE OPTION

CHOICE of DATE for IN-PERSON SESSIONS...

INTEGRITY

TAILORED POP-UPS

INTEGRITY GIVES OPTIONS for MISSED SESSIONS...

ASK the RIGHT QUESTIONS

WE'RE the GOOD GUYS!

ALEX

ROE DATA

JOURNEY MAP

QUIZ:
 → on GOALS, SKILLS, FAMILY, MENTAL HEALTH ETC...

TOUCH POINTS

ALLOW CLAIMANTS A PREFERENCE...

FILTERED into 3 PROFILES with VARYING LEVELS of SUPPORT

RESKILL

UP SKILL

IN-PERSON SESSIONS

With 3 STREAMS

VIOLA ISN'T A FAN of ONLINE...

→ SHE CAN CHOOSE the METHOD & DATE & MODE of COMMUNICATION

EVALUATION BUILT IN...

FEEDBACK FORM

GENERAL FUTURE SKILLS EXPERT LED

MAKING the MOST of YOUR CLAIM

TIME BASED ALERTS

QUIZ to ASSESS KNOWLEDGE & NEEDS

LINK

A.I. SUPPORT
 MARKET INFO
 NEW SKILLS
 PERSONALIZED

NUDGES

CLIENT AUTONOMY via SELF-SERVICE...

TAILORED VIDEOS...

FOLLOW UP SURVEY

OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

Chapter

03

OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

We interviewed 18 current EI claimants to understand their experience with unemployment, EI, and CIS, including positives, barriers, pain points, needs, and existing understanding of resources and help available to them. We also conducted five in-depth interviews with Service Canada staff who deliver CIS, as well as one provincial employment services counsellor who occasionally presented at CIS. Interviews were transcribed, coded for themes, and one-page anonymous profiles of the claimants were generated to share key insights from the data with the project partners (see Annex B for examples). These facilitate the ability of various internal stakeholders to empathize and perspective-take with clients' realities to generate better ideas for improving CIS.

WHAT IS THE CLAIMANT EXPERIENCE?

Findings from Observational and Qualitative Research

Ten percent of claimants are invited to attend CIS and their experience usually begins with receipt of a letter directing them to report for an up to 90-minute session (Annex D). Here are a few key quotes from the letter:

- "You have been selected to attend a CIS".
- "We will explain your rights and responsibilities while receiving EI".
- "[...] provide information on programs and services available to help you find work quickly".
- "You will be required to submit details of your job search efforts" for the two weeks prior to the session via the included job search form"
- "this information will be used to determine my eligibility for EI benefits..." (declaration)

Claimants described the tone of the letter as punitive and some found the focus on fraud insulting. The letter is sent well in advance which some claimants appreciate, but without any reminder some forget to attend. Some claimants believed the letter meant that they were being investigated, resulting in anxiety. The declaration on the job search form regarding EI eligibility further contributed to the anxiety, especially because criteria for how job search efforts will be evaluated is not provided.

Service Canada staff who run the sessions consistently report that only 50% of invited claimants show up to their scheduled session. The option of rescheduling the session via phone is provided in the letter and Service Canada agents call claimants who miss their session to reschedule. Rescheduling and following up is very common and time consuming for agents (often two or more times).

OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

Claimants' feelings and expectations for CIS vary depending on whether it's their first time or they have previous experience. First-timers are often surprised to learn that it's a shared session with other claimants. Many expected that the CIS is a one-on-one interview and/or employment counselling session. Some are highly anxious, fearing that they made a mistake somewhere and are being investigated. Others dressed as if they were going to a formal job interview, expecting job search help counselling. Others, who may have attended in the past or heard about it from others, exhibit general apathy and impatience via body language (e.g., crossed arms, frowns).

There is regional and resource-dependent variation in terms of who gives the session and the format. Citizen Service Officers may do parts or all of the presentation. Sometimes a regional integrity officer may give the rights and responsibilities portion of the presentation and the CSO gives the service portion. Occasionally, in some jurisdictions, a provincial employment services representative comes to present on local service offerings, such as the provincial training programs available and job opportunities. The CIS is always presented in-person at a Service Canada Center, but the presenter may be in the room with claimants or in a different room presenting via tele- or video-conference (see Annex E for photos taken at CISs). In this format, the presenter often presents to multiple sessions at once and claimants' audio/video from one session are broadcasted to the claimants in other sessions. Claimants report being uncomfortable asking questions in this format.

The major CIS presentation sections are:

- EI rights and responsibilities.
- My Service Canada Account (MSCA) and Job Bank.
- What is job search.
- EI fraud and the importance of protecting your SIN (see Annex F for presentation slides).

All claimants we spoke with were disappointed by the CIS presentation because the material is too general, not new for them, and lacks practical examples. When claimants report aspects they found valuable, they are typically added content in the form of specific, concrete advice that seasoned agents bring in from past experience outside of CIS. For example, an integrity officer was able to give advice on how to prevent making the most common mistakes that claimants make on their biweekly reports, and a provincial representative was able to share companies that are currently hiring. Most of the session consists of presenters talking at claimants directly from the slide deck, with some time for questions at the end. Many sessions end without questions because the content was not engaging or concrete enough to generate questions.

OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

KEY INSIGHTS FROM INTERVIEWS

The interviews and focus groups we conducted (see Annex G for interview plan) confirmed insights from our observations and generated additional insights summarized in the table below:

Insights into the CIS Experience

CIS Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most claimants communicated that the timing of CIS activities was problematic: sessions are provided too late in their claim to be useful (e.g., information on EI rights and responsibilities and the need to fill in job search forms should be provided at the beginning of the claim), and they cannot choose the time of the CIS they must attend (e.g., some claimants have difficulty finding childcare at the scheduled time, some have work scheduled at that time).
CIS Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most claimants found the tone of the letter to be punitive, as if the department assumes claimants are dishonest, resulting in negative perceptions. No explanation for why claimants are selected results in anxiety over having made accidental mistakes when applying or bi-weekly reporting, being investigated and potentially losing the benefit. The intent of the session was also unclear – does the session aim to interrogate or to help?
CIS Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some claimants see the potential value of having the session in-person – it allows them to ask questions, to have interactive exposure to tools and to receive new unexpected information (i.e., you won't search for something you don't know exists). Most claimants have difficulty recalling what was presented in their CIS - especially the integrity information. They cite that there was too much information, it was too high-level, and not hands-on enough. Some claimants see the potential value of having the session in-person – it allows them to ask questions, to have interactive exposure to tools and to receive new unexpected information (i.e., you won't search for something you don't know exists).
CIS Personalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almost all claimants expected and expressed a need for the CIS to present information and job search help that is specific to their individual situations. The invitation letters created the expectation that CIS would provide personalized job search help. It is clear that there are massive individual differences in the types of help that claimants need, be it with understanding the EI program, job search based on occupation and education, and/or digital skills.

OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

Insights into Claimants' Lived Realities

Mental Health and Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Being unemployed takes a toll on mental health. Claimants struggle with depression, loss of confidence, demotivation, and isolation. · Some claimants also carry over mental health issues from their previous employment, such as burn out. · Coping with the uncertainty inherent to unemployment, rejection, and just the length of time it takes to land a job from first applying to being hired on requires optimism, perseverance, and resilience. · Community employability services play an instrumental role in validating difficult feelings, providing social support, and tools better cope.
Financial Realities of Being on EI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The significant drop in income due to unemployment means that many claimants need to rely on savings to make ends meet even with the help of EI benefits. Any additional drop in income would have significant consequences on the claimants' lives such as not being able to pay rent which can lead to being evicted or other necessary expenses (e.g. outstanding debt). This precarious situation makes claimants particularly sensitive to our communications that suggest they could lose EI benefits if they do not comply with our requirements; any degree of uncertainty around their EI benefits can lead to significant anxiety around their personal finances.
Seasonal Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · A significant portion of EI users are seasonal workers that cannot be shifted to non-seasonal work because some seasonal sectors are necessary. Many of these want to find work during the off-season but work is not available in their area or for their occupation type/skillset. · Unionized claimants are invited to CISs even though they are often not obligated to attend sessions. Unions conduct job search for claimants and actively discourage their members from searching outside of the union. Service Canada agents are usually not familiar with the special policies around unionized claimants, which can lead to increased frustration for unionized claimants as they are told one thing by their unions and another thing by Service Canada agents. · Some claimants feel entitled to EI on the basis of having paid into it, and because their socio-cultural environment (e.g., generational, occupation) has fostered a sense of entitlement to employment insurance.

OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

Insights Regarding Service Delivery

Digitalization of Services	· Digitalizing services is a double-edged sword. It can facilitate access to our programs and services but can also alienate claimants with lower digital literacy. Currently, many of the claimants who do not feel comfortable with technology have to rely on friends and family to file their submission for EI on AppliWeb as well as the bi-weekly reporting.
Employability Services and Skills	· Some claimants who had the opportunity to hear from an experienced provincial employment service officer during the session indicated that they learned about exciting new opportunities (e.g., subsidized training and education programs) for the first time. Some wished they would have known about them sooner (recall that many are not selected at the beginning of their claim). It also highlights a general lack of awareness of employability services and training programs. Because being on EI can be a period for career reflection, CIS can play a critical role in connecting Canadians to these services.

PROTOTYPES: POTENTIAL VIABLE SOLUTIONS

Chapter

04

PROTOTYPES: POTENTIAL VIABLE SOLUTIONS

The following prototypes were produced by the various stakeholders who participated in the design sessions and incorporated the findings mentioned above. As discussion evolved over the 2.5-days workshop, it became clear that the prototypes need to unpack the multiple goals (e.g., integrity and employment supports) CIS currently looks to achieve. This is due to the recognition that to be effective, the CIS needs to be:

- Universally accessible for claimants with a standardized quality of service.
- Sensitive to the diverse needs that different types of claimants have in different locations.
- Not over-rely on intensive training so the service can be scaled across Canada to be provided by all Service Canada agents.

These qualities would be best achieved as separate but interconnected components. Thus, though each one of the prototypes have merit on their own, they would be most effective combined into one ecosystem. All but one of the prototypes were designed to scale to provide services to the entire EI population with in-person sessions being held only for those most in need of high touch supports.

PROTOTYPE 1

IN-PERSON EMPLOYABILITY SUPPORT SESSION

Chapter

05

IN-PERSON EMPLOYABILITY SUPPORT SESSION

Prototype 1 aims to improve the current in-person format of the CIS with more specific and actionable employability support content.

KEY INSIGHTS FROM INTERVIEWS

The ideation session echoed insights from claimant interviews that many Canadians are still uncomfortable with technology or do not have access to stable internet. Stakeholders also highlighted that the in-person nature of the current CIS allow for a higher degree of intervention than digital platforms (e.g., for chronic users of EI who might be struggling with underlying employment barriers). It became clear that improving the CIS should maintain an analog, in-person component. Furthermore, it was advised that these sessions should allow claimants to feel comfortable raising questions by making sure that they can easily see and hear, not just the presenter, but also all the other participants at all times.

The need for the CIS to present more concrete advice is a prominent feedback that emerged from the research and interviews with claimants and frontline agents. A potential solution was suggested that even though training services and direct employment supports are provided by provinces and territories, the federal level could provide concrete insights into local labour market information and anticipated labour market changes that could support claimants' career planning. For example, labour market trends can be turned into digestible, accessible, and useful information that claimants and P/T partners can use to drive decisions for training.

Another idea emerged that CISs could be designed around different types of claimants (e.g., immigrant, niche market, looking to change career, union workers). Stakeholders were mostly positive about this idea but brought up the caveat that grouping certain types of claimants together can make sessions difficult. For example, in the past, CIS brought together groups of individuals who were laid off from on specific industry or even employer to provide support. This group felt they were targeted, were not satisfied with the supports provided, and behaved antagonistically and uncooperatively toward the presenters.

WHAT IS THE CLAIMANT EXPERIENCE?

The Invitation Notice

About 86% of EI applicants provide their emails to ESDC for communications during their EI applications (Job Bank, 2020). These emails could be used to send additional invitation notices to claimants as well as reminder emails closer to the date of the scheduled CIS. The emails do not need to replace the physical invitation letters that are sent but would rather supplement the letters to decrease the chance of claimants missing the invitation notice as well as forgetting the exact time of their CIS.

IN-PERSON EMPLOYABILITY SUPPORT SESSION

The In-Person Session

In-person sessions present the crucial ability to provide claimant with high-touch support in the form of curated information and advice on specific topics. For example, in-person sessions can provide much needed help and support for claimants who are not comfortable with the online space and would not be able to learn effectively in an online setting. Another example could be sessions designed specifically for first time claimants, who could be provided with advice on how to navigate the EI system, unemployment, and job search activities. These in-person sessions can also be an effective mechanism to bridge claimants from EI part I (i.e., the EI application and benefits) to EI part II services (i.e., provincial employment services and programs).

Only a few Service Canada centres would be needed to test this prototype. These centres would host sessions that recruit one specific subgroup of claimants per session based on information they provided in their EI application (e.g., claimants who worked in a specific industry, claimants who are still students, claimants who have been laid off within a specified period of time) and information that can be collected with prototype 3 (see below). Alternatively, we could allow claimants to self-select into sessions that interest them the most by providing them with the topics and times of multiple sessions. For each CIS session, the presentation would be developed in collaboration with provincial agents to tailor its content to the interests and needs of the subgroup of claimants or the specific topic the session is about. The diversity of session topics could include detailed analysis of labour market information for the city and other locations, introduction of provincial services and programs that these claimants are most likely to be interested in, walkthroughs of EI rights and responsibilities with concrete examples, and other topics. Some sessions would be focused on supporting claimants uncomfortable with technology (e.g., make them aware of the option for in-person employment counselling). Other relevant changes should be explored using the claimant interviews collected in this project, employment counsellors, frontline agents, and newly conducted claimant interviews.

As mentioned in the interview insights, another aspect of the session that could be tested is to change the tone of the presentation from a punitive tone to an empathy-focused tone. For instance, the presentation would explicitly acknowledge that losing employment is difficult and the government is providing help through specific services and programs. User testing could be conducted with claimants and ask for feedback about parts of the presentation.

IN-PERSON EMPLOYABILITY SUPPORT SESSION

Online equivalent for COVID

The online version of prototype 1 needs to maintain the ability to interact freely with presenters and other claimants. To do so, best practices could be taken from the online facilitator community. For example, some of these lessons include:

- Having a separate meeting host who is responsible for technology issues and keeping track of questions that audiences post in the chat.
- Utilize the capacity for live polls during the meeting
- Engage with the audience as they arrive in the meeting.
- Keep monologues to less than 5 minutes at a time.

An online version of prototype 1 may be necessary for the COVID reality, but it's development should keep in mind that the main intent of prototype 1 is to have a space for high-touch intervention with claimants.

IN-PERSON EMPLOYABILITY SUPPORT SESSION

The Feedback Mechanism to Monitor Efficacy

This presentation would be co-developed with stakeholders from Service Canada and would integrate feedback from a small group of EI claimants to ensure quality and relevance. The presentation would then be delivered instead of the usual content during a few CISs. Exit interviews as well as staff feedback would be collected to improve and iterate on the content. Successful products could then be scaled to more service Canada centers. Some of the key outcomes of interest could include:

- Claimant attendance rate.
- The co-development of key outcome metrics.
- The co-analysis of collected data.
- The co-facilitation of stakeholder engagement.
- The co-facilitation of stakeholder engagement.

Data for these outcomes can be collected using a short exit survey at the end of the CIS as well as administrative data.

The Innovation Lab can provide consultation and support for:

- The usage of user-centered design.
- The co-development of key outcome metrics.
- The co-analysis of collected data.
- The co-facilitation of stakeholder engagement.
- The iteration process to take prototyping testing to a fully developed solution.

PROTOTYPE 2

ONLINE UNDERSTANDING EI TOOL

Chapter

06

ONLINE UNDERSTANDING EI TOOL

Prototype 2 aims to provide a more effective and accessible education about EI rights and responsibilities for claimants.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FROM THE IDEATION SESSION

Insights gathered during the sessions indicate that insufficient understanding of how EI works is one of the key factors contributing to the number of mistakes claimants may make while on claim. These mistakes can cause benefits to be delayed for the claimant and significant work burden for both the claimant and public servants to rectify.

POTENTIAL PROTOTYPE TESTING

Online Video

A series of short online videos would be created to explain EI rights and responsibilities with concrete examples and details. These videos would be available to all EI claimants. The video content would be co-created with integrity officers, leveraging their expert knowledge on EI rights and responsibilities and first-hand experience with the common mistakes that claimants make while on EI. PASRB has a wealth of experience in the process of creating videos and may be a key resource to leverage.

E-mails would be used to send the links to claimants and to remind them to watch the videos. If no action is made on the claimant's side after a few e-mail reminders, they could be flagged for in-person sessions or for integrity follow-up (e.g., phone call to check-in with the claimant).

Personalizing the content to Claimant

To help direct EI claimants to videos that would be important for them to know, claimants would be asked to fill out an assessment questionnaire. Based on the knowledge gaps indicated by their answers on the questionnaire, claimants would be directed to videos that explain the relevant information. This questionnaire would also be developed alongside integrity officers. Answers from this questionnaire would also provide important insight into what the average claimant might know about the EI rights and responsibilities that can be used by integrity officers to better communicate with EI claimants.

ONLINE UNDERSTANDING EI TOOL

The Feedback Mechanism to Monitor Efficacy

Outcomes this prototype is interested in measuring include:

- Likelihood of having a disruption in EI claim due to integrity or usage issue that is addressed by the videos.
- Ease of referring claimants to the videos when they call about EI.
- Likelihood of claimants calling Service Canada centers about integrity related issues.
- A quiz on integrity knowledge that is handed out to claimants attending the current CIS as well as e-mailed to claimants who watched the integrity videos. Scores on the quiz would be compared to see how effective the online videos are in imparting integrity knowledge to claimants compared to the current CIS.

The Innovation Lab can provide consultation and support for:

- The co-development of the integrity knowledge quiz.
- The co-development of e-mails to notify claimants of the online videos as well as the reminder e-mails.
- The co-development of key outcome metrics.
- The co-analysis of collected data.
- The co-facilitation of stakeholder engagement.
- The iteration process to take prototyping testing to a fully developed solution.

PROTOTYPE 3

SERVICE NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOOL

Chapter

07

SERVICE NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOOL

Prototype 3 aims to build the foundation for a personalized and tailored service for EI claimants by collecting the relevant information necessary to give meaningful advice.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FROM THE IDEATION SESSION

Insights from the ideation session echoed the feedback from claimants that the content of the CIS presentation is frequently too general for the specific concerns and circumstances that claimants have. However, this non-specificity in the presentation was an attempt to be helpful to the diversity of claimants that attend each CIS by presenting information that is generally relevant for all claimants. If information could be gathered on claimants' interests and needs, the CIS could gain the ability to tailor sessions to claimants' specific concerns and circumstances, thereby improving the CIS's ability to be relevant and helpful for all claimants.

Both research and stakeholder experience make it clear that the sooner claimants are able to begin using employment services and programs, the faster and more likely they are to return to employment.

Employment Offices currently do not have access to systematic data about job seekers (i.e., their occupation, skills, education, training) that allows them to assess whether there is a match or mismatch between job availability and skill availability.

POTENTIAL PROTOTYPE TESTING

Collecting Information

A questionnaire would be developed for claimants to provide information on their preferences and needs for receiving employment support. Some example questions in this questionnaire could be:

- What is the preferred method of employment service delivery (e.g., phone, online, in-person).
- Are you looking to stay in [claimant's previous occupation].
- Explore which types of available training services they could be interested in (training, employment assistance services, etc.).
- Would you be interested in mental health resources.

SERVICE NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOOL

Employment counsellors would be consulted to develop this questionnaire along with the Innovation Lab. Participants would be invited to complete this questionnaire via email within a few days of completing their EI application. This type of assessment questionnaire is also in line with the best practices in other OECD countries (OECD, 2015).

The claimants can select which parties this information can be provided to (e.g., their P/T government, P/T associated employment centres, for record keeping by the Federal government only, etc).

Leveraging the Targeted, Referral, Feedback (TRF) system

Data collected from this questionnaire can be sent to provincial employment services as part of the TRF package that provinces and territories already receive. The associated employment centres could then reach out to claimants about their situation and help encourage claimants to utilize employment services and programs that fit their needs. This will also increase the likelihood Canadians are informed sooner in their EI claim about the services available to them. This process is low-cost to maintain and would create the capacity to connect claimants with employment counsellors who can best help with their specific circumstances (e.g., networking in a particular industry, career transition, immigrant-specific employment barriers).

Increased utilization of the TRF system can also help flag claimants who are living far away from Service Canada centers or have limited access to the internet by making their information available to employment counsellor who can reach out to them.

Potential to synergize with other prototypes

This prototype can also synergize with and improve the efficacy of the other prototypes described in this paper. For example, the ability to identify claimants with shared concerns and needs would contribute to a more effective in-person employability session (Prototype 1). Another example would be Prototype 4, the Online Targeted Support Service, which would be able to provide more concise and effective support to claimants if we have knowledge of the specific needs claimants have.

SERVICE NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOOL

The Feedback Mechanism to Monitor Efficacy

Outcomes this prototype is interested in measuring include:

- How likely claimants are to use employment services and programs.
- EI claim length.
- How often do employment centres use the information provided to them.
- Are there any additional information that would be helpful for employment counsellors.
- How effectively this data can be used to support other prototypes.

The Innovation Lab can provide consultation and support for:

- The co-development of the integrity knowledge quiz.
- The co-development of e-mails to notify claimants of the online videos as well as the reminder e-mails.
- The co-development of key outcome metrics.
- The co-analysis of collected data.
- The co-facilitation of stakeholder engagement.
- The iteration process to take prototyping testing to a fully developed solution.

PROTOTYPE 4

ONLINE TARGETED SUPPORT SERVICE

Chapter

08

ONLINE TARGETED SUPPORT SERVICE

Prototype 4 aims to make it easier for claimants to find the services and programs relevant for their specific situations.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FROM THE IDEATION SESSION

Unemployment is a major life event that impacts Canadians in multiple aspects of life beyond financial. A wealth of public resources (i.e., employment services and programs) has been developed to support Canadian job seekers in this situation. However, a major barrier that has been illuminated from consultation with internal stakeholders and claimants is the lack of awareness claimants have of these resources. This lack of awareness results in claimants who are not searching for employment resources because they don't know those resources exist and consequently not using those resources effectively. In the ideation session, it is recognized that a prototype needs to be developed to connect Canadians with information and services available to them to help them in their job search and adjust to unemployment.

While claimants report having trouble finding out about employment resources, Service Canada agents are also not equipped to provide advice or support on how to find these resources or to help claimants navigate the plethora of employment services and programs provided by their provinces and territories.

Some provinces and territories are more equipped to provide online employment advice to their claimants than other provinces and territories. Given that the material already exists online, there may be room to collaborate with provinces and territories to share the resources that are relevant for general claimants (e.g., guide on how to write a CV or prepare for an interview) rather than recreating similar content for each province or territory.

ONLINE TARGETED SUPPORT SERVICE

POTENTIAL PROTOTYPE TESTING

Initial low-cost model

To start, we can test whether claimants would find it helpful to be made aware of the public employment resources that are available to support their reemployment journeys via an employment support e-mail. This e-mail can be sent to a subset of recent claimants (e.g., completed their EI application within the past 2 weeks) and we can compare whether claimants who receive the email have more positive outcomes (e.g., finding relevant employment services, training) than those who do not. The e-mail could take the form of one comprehensive e-mail with different sections focusing on different needs claimants may have, or a series of daily e-mails focusing on one section per day. To give an idea of what these sections could be, some example sections titles could be:

- what to do after job loss.
- Core job search skills.
- Financial planning and budgeting.
- Finding a new job in the same field.
- Changing occupation.
- Mental health resources.

The content of each section would be collected from existing public resources developed by federal and provincial partners and on-going consultation would be conducted with employment counsellors contracted by provincial employment services. This collection of information would then be organized in a claimant-centric, behaviourally informed format. Some of this information could be tips and advice in the body of the e-mail. Other information might take the form of links to government webpages giving more details about specific services or programs or educational videos that delves further into a topic. Each section would be short and easy to read.

ONLINE TARGETED SUPPORT SERVICE

Online Navigation Platform for Public Employment Services and Programs

If the initial low-cost model demonstrates that actively reaching to claimants with information about employment support improves the claimant's journey to reemployment, then focus could be shifted to developing a national suite of employment information for all EI claimants. This could take the form of curating the online videos and readings materials that have already been created by provinces and territories, developing content that address gaps in existing materials, and collaborating with P/T to develop region specific content, as well as targeting the information based on specific claimant needs and interests.

Ensuring an Approachable Tone

To help make claimants feel comfortable reaching out to the employment support, this prototype should have a focus on human connection. In the e-mail model, the email could be written as if it is personally tailored by a local Service Canada or Employment Office agent and include the address of the claimant's local Service Canada or Employment Centre. It could also include (regionally authored) blog posts with tips and advice for job seekers (e.g., [Service Canada Agent's name]'s Top 10 Videos for Teachers Interested in Summer Employment).

ONLINE TARGETED SUPPORT SERVICE

The Feedback Mechanism to Monitor Efficacy

Claimant consultations would be used to get initial reactions and feedback on the emails and improve initial versions. Small batches of emails could be sent out with requests for claimant feedback in the form of surveys and open-ended questions to improve further before wider rollout.

Some of the outcomes that should be measured include:

- Open rates and clicks rates for e-mail content and links.
- How helpful the claimants found the e-mail.
- How likely the claimant is to recommend another claimant in their situation to receive this e-mail.
- How often does the claimant return to use information from this email.
- Length of EI claim.
- How likely the claimant is to use employment services and programs.

These outcomes can be measured with a feedback survey sent a week after the e-mail, web analytics data, and administrative data.

The Innovation Lab can provide consultation and support for:

- The co-development of the employment support e-mail (including gathering claimant feedback and iteration)
- The co-development of the e-mail to invite feedback from claimants.
- The co-development of key outcome metrics.
- The co-analysis of collected data.
- The co-facilitation of stakeholder engagement.
- The iteration process to take prototyping testing to a fully developed solution.

PROTOTYPE 5

DIGITAL JOB SEARCH EFFORT TRACKING TOOL

Chapter

09

DIGITAL JOB SEARCH EFFORT TRACKING TOOL

Prototype 5 aims to develop an online tool to track job search activities/efforts for all claimants.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FROM THE IDEATION SESSION

Service Canada agents indicate that they do not have the capacity to verify all the job search forms submitted by claimants during the CISs by calling the employers. Some claimants do not fill in the job search forms until they are in the CIS and only write down one instance of job search behaviour. There is a need to simplify the process of demonstrating job search for both the claimant and the frontline agents.

The ideation session determined that the current job search form serves an integrity function that must be maintained. The stakeholders also recognize this touchpoint can provide tips and information to claimants to help guide them to engage in more effective job search behaviours. In addition, this touchpoint is identified as a rich space for leveraging Behavioural Insights to increase job search motivation.

POTENTIAL PROTOTYPE TESTING

Online Job Search Tracking

One user-friendly and effective method for tracking online job search activities is by creating an online job search form. Job Bank can be an ideal starting point for this prototype. Job Bank accounts has the existing capacity to automatically track the job searches made by the user account on its website. In addition to capturing job search activity on Job Bank, the prototype would allow users to input other types of job search activities. It would allow claimants to save or enter job search information from other sources (e.g., Monster, Indeed, networking events) beyond Job Bank. Furthermore, additional capacities could be built into such an interface, such as recording non-online search activities (e.g., informal networking), suggesting different ways of job searching (e.g., networking, job fairs), and helping claimants build job search plans that are motivating by providing positive feedback on job search goal achievements.

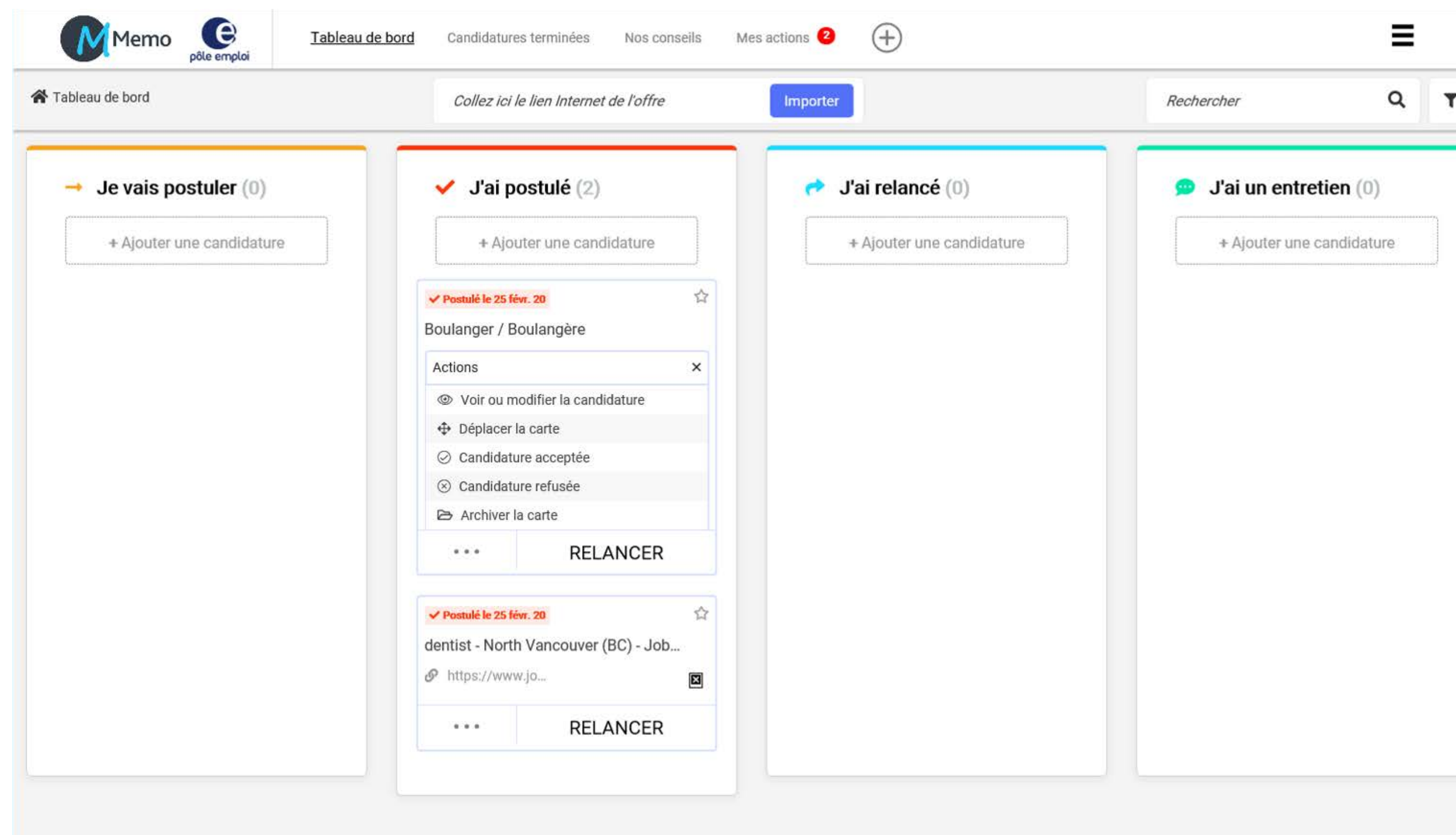
Similar to other prototypes, once the job search tracking tool is developed, it would receive feedback from a small group of EI claimants to then be tested more broadly via email invitations.

This tool can serve the dual purpose of helping jobseekers organize and learn effective job search strategies, as well as serve the need to verify job search efforts, integrating integrity by design. Integrity services could leverage this tool to undertake its verifications of job search activity or make the use of the tool mandatory for individuals who are at risk of noncompliance.

DIGITAL JOB SEARCH EFFORT TRACKING TOOL

Tools very similar to the proposed prototype are already in service in other countries. For example, the French governmental agency for helping unemployed people, Pôle Emploi, has a free web application on their website called Memo. This tool also leverages behavioural insights in its design where it automatically fills out the details of a job position (e.g., job title, location, salary) when the user pastes in the job post URL (see Figure 1). Memo allows the user to set reminder dates for events such as submitting the application and following up on the application, and has the capacity to keep track of the status of different applications. The use of behavioural insights in this space can be a powerful tool to guide claimants to conduct a comprehensive job search. A similar interface based on the existing capacity of the Job Bank account could serve Canadian job seekers.

Figure 1. Screenshot of the free job search tracker Memo on Pôle Emploi.



DIGITAL JOB SEARCH EFFORT TRACKING TOOL

The Feedback Mechanism to Monitor Efficacy

Some of the outcomes that should be measured include:

- Whether claimants continue to use the job search tracker.
- Claimant satisfaction.
- How likely the claimant is to recommend another claimant in their situation to use this tracker.
- The specific way the job search tracker is used (e.g., clicks on specific pages of the tracker)
- Length of EI claim.
- How likely the claimant is to use employment services and programs.

The Innovation Lab can provide consultation and support for:

- The co-development of the tracker functions.
- The co-development of e-mails to invite feedback from claimants.
- The co-development of key outcome metrics.
- The co-analysis of collected data.
- The co-facilitation of stakeholder engagement.
- The iteration process to take prototyping testing to a fully developed solution.

CONCLUSION AND REFERENCES

Chapter
10

CONCLUSION

By combining claimant experiences and organizational expertise, the Innovation Lab, Skills and Employment Branch, Service Canada Ontario Region, and Integrity Services Branch have co-developed a number of actionable prototypes to improve the services ESDC provides to Canadians on EI. These prototypes re-imagine Claimant Information Sessions into an ecosystem of services that leverage digital technologies expanding the reach of the sessions to all EI claimants while remaining within the scope of EI part. They also integrate integrity by design and provide new opportunities to ensure EI claimants are aware of their rights and fulfilling their responsibilities, mitigating unintended uses of EI.

This project was made successful thanks to the hard work of the project partners, the Canadians who shared their stories with us, as well as all of our national and regional colleagues who supported and participated in the workshops and shared their knowledge and expertise. It demonstrates the value of cross branch collaborations while leveraging design thinking, qualitative and behavioral approaches to co-develop modern solutions for the department's longstanding challenges. Looking forward, the Innovation Lab recommends that the prototypes be tested and validated to inform whether or not they should be piloted on a larger scale, and is open to supporting follow-up projects. As these prototypes were co-developed with experts from across the department, their testing should adopt a similar approach.

Dear reader,

If you would like to learn more about this project or the tools and methods that were used, don't hesitate to contact the lab at esdclab@gmail.com.

BIRD Team

CONCLUSION

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