



DTSSAB

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Message from the Chair

The DTSSAB continues to do an excellent job delivering the programs it is mandated to deliver and several new programs have been added. A major change in operations for the DTSSAB occurred on January 1, 2005 when the DTSSAB commenced direct delivery of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) program. In preparing for this transfer of responsibility, a transition team was established. Numerous issues were reviewed with procedures and forms put in place and as a result the transition has gone extremely smooth. The success of this transition was also due in a large part to the cooperative efforts of the paramedic staff, as well as, the three previous service providers; namely Buffam Ambulance Services, Englehart and District Hospital and the Kirkland District Hospital. The DTSSAB continues to work through the transition issues and is currently trying to negotiate a new collective agreement with the paramedics.

A major initiative by the Province in which the DTSSAB is involved in is the Best Start Program where the District of Timiskaming has been chosen as a demonstration site. The Best Start Plan is a 10+ year strategy that will provide many more families with easy, affordable access to services and supports so that all Ontario children can arrive in Grade 1 healthy, ready and eager to learn.

The Province also introduced a new Rent Bank Program in order to promote housing stability by assisting low-income tenants who experience a temporary financial crisis. This program compliments the Homelessness Program currently funded by the DTSSAB and provided by the Canadian Mental Health Association in preventing homelessness. More information on the Best Start and Rent Bank Program can be found in the CAO's message.

The DTSSAB's 2005 budget has been established and there is an increase in the amount charged to the municipalities. This increase is attributable to several factors such as increases in program and administrative costs with no offsetting revenues from the Province. The Board, after lengthy debate and careful consideration, increased the 2005 budget by an average of 6.63% to the municipalities over the amount levied in 2004. The impact on individual municipalities varies due to the cost apportionment factors being different for each program. In order to maintain the increase at 6.63% for the municipalities, the DTSSAB is using approximately \$1.5 million from reserves. Without this major contribution, the municipal share of the increase would have been over 20.00%.

Despite these funding restraints, the DTSSAB continues to deliver top-notch programs throughout the District of Timiskaming. You can be assured that the DTSSAB members are committed to continue providing excellent programs to the residents of the District of Timiskaming.

Message from the CAO

The DTSSAB will be involved in the implementation of two new provincial initiatives namely the Best Start Program and the Rent Bank Program. These programs are 100% funded by the Ministry and a short description of these programs is being provided for your information.

Best Start Program

The McGuinty government recently announced the implementation of a Best Start Plan which involves a massive expansion of quality and affordable child care, beginning with four and five year olds, and investments in every child's healthy development, all in a convenient and easily accessible location for parents. This strategy is about supporting children so that they can learn and grow, be successful in school, and ultimately, be successful in the workforce and society.

Across Ontario, community partners will work with the province to develop and implement plans that will achieve the Best Start vision in ways that make sense to their local communities.

The Best Start Strategy is based on a vision of improved access to high quality early learning and care programs, which support parents in their role and help to make the transition to school smooth, seamless and successful. The implementation of this strategy will take 10+ years and will be accomplished in phases. The government chose three communities, as demonstration sites to fast track implementation, so that they can serve as models for the rest of the province. The District of Timiskaming was very fortunate to have been chosen as a demonstration site and a Best Start Network is being established to implement this program.

The Province chose these three communities as they all had a solid network of community agencies that are well placed for rapid expansion of the Best Start vision, including:

- A rapid expansion of child care spaces for children in junior kindergarten and senior kindergarten
- A half-day learning program and child care spaces for two-and-a-half to four-year-olds
- Early and ongoing screening of newborns to identify needs and supports
- Early identification of specialized hearing and language needs.
- A comprehensive 18-month well-baby checkup.

In addition to the three demonstration sites, the Province has also established three expert panels to guide implementation. These panels are:

- 1) The "Getting it Right at 18 Months Expert panel" is developing strategies for a province-wide developmental assessment for every child in Ontario at 18 months of age.
- 2) The expert panel on an early learning program will guide the development of learning strategies for preschool children that can link to the junior and senior kindergarten learning programs.
- 3) The quality and human resources expert panel will look at recruitment and retention of early childhood educators, and ways to improve informal child care.

More information on the Best Start Program can be obtained by accessing the Ministry of Youth and Children Services website.

(continued on Page 3)

Message from the CAO (continued)

Provincial Rent Bank Program

In an attempt to promote housing stability by assisting low-income tenants who experience a temporary crisis that forces them into short term arrears in avoiding eviction, the Province has set up a new Provincial Rent Bank Program. The key conditions for individuals to qualify for this program are:

- Rent Bank assistance may only be used for rent arrears for eligible tenants.
- The rent assistance may only cover two months' rent arrears.
- A tenant may only receive financial assistance once every two years.
- Consideration must be given to clients' need and potential for long term housing before considering an application.
- Rent Bank assistance will be considered through an application-based process and the DTSSAB must evaluate tenant applications on an individual basis.
- Payment for rent arrears is to be made directly to the landlord, who has agreed to stop eviction proceedings.

This program is being delivered through our Ontario Works Program and individuals wanting to apply can contact either the Kirkland Lake or New Liskeard offices.

Energy Emergency Fund

The Province of Ontario has created an energy emergency fund to help vulnerable households with their energy bills. This fund will provide one-time emergency assistance to deal with payment of energy utility arrears, security deposits and reconnection fees. The government recognizes that low-income households often face unique challenges. People, living in or renting poorly insulated accommodations with electrical heating, are not able to switch to more energy efficient options. Also, they may not have access to equalized billing and could face seasonal spikes in costs that can place them in danger of disconnection and even eviction.

This program is being provided by the Canadian Mental Health Association on behalf of the DTSSAB and compliments both the Homelessness and Rent Bank Programs.

<http://www.dtssab.com>

Our web site is designed to provide the public and our partners with information on the DTSSAB's programs and services.

Additionally, our site provides links and information on other agencies - check us out!

To get your organization "linked" contact the IT Manager at 647-7447 ext. 223.

Awareness Days

APRIL

Earth Day (Apr 22)

International Dance Day (Apr 29)

National Wildlife Week
(second week of April)

MAY

National Missing Children's Day
(May 25)

Emergency Preparedness Week
(May 01 – 07)

National Police Week
(second full week of May)

National Mining Week
(May 15 – 21)

Emergency Medical Services
Week (May 15 – 21)

Safe Boating Week
(May 20 – 26)

JUNE

Clean Air Day Canada (Jun 01)

National Aboriginal Day (Jun 21)

National Public Service Week
(Jun 12 – 18)

Seniors' Month

Transition of Emergency Medical Services

The transition towards direct delivery for Emergency Medical Services went ahead smoothly. The transition of Paramedics to the District of Timiskaming Social Services Board as their new employer officially took place as of 12:01 on January 1st, 2005. The place of work and schedules remain the same as Paramedics will continue to provide the same level of service to the District as with the previous employers.

Our thanks go out to the Englehart and District Hospital, the Kirkland and District Hospital and Buffam Ambulance Service for their years of dedicated duty to their communities.

The District of Timiskaming Social Services Administration Board welcomes questions and comments regarding the delivery of Emergency Medical Services within the District of Timiskaming. Please direct your questions or comments to Mike Trodd, EMS Manager by phone at (705) 567-9366 (x232) or email to trodd@dtssab.com.

Residents without 911 in the following areas who require Emergency Medical Assistance will need to dial one of the following numbers:

Englehart, Charlton, Dack, Evanturel, Chamberlain
(705) 544-7777

Kirkland Lake, Larder Lake, Swastika, Virginia Town Area
(705) 567-4357

Haileybury, Thornloe, Casey Twp, Latchford, Kenabeek area
including the Tri-Towns
(705) 672-3133

Social Housing Report

The Social Housing Program has had a fairly consistent year. The department continues to transform and adapt to our new administrative duties brought about by the Social Housing Reform Act. The establishment of the Central Waiting List was our major accomplishment this year. The Timiskaming Social Housing Registry now accepts, processes, and maintains the waiting list for all applications for Rent-Geared-to-Income Housing.

The Social Housing Working Group was organized in 2002 to facilitate the transfer of Social Housing to the DTSSAB and to develop plans for the establishment of the Centralized Waiting List. The group is comprised of the Property Managers from each of the Non-Profit and Federal Projects within the District. This group continues to meet on a monthly basis to assist in the development of business
(continued on Page 5)

Social Housing Report (continued)

practices and processes to meet legislated obligations, to make recommendations for the setting of local rules, to assist in the development of standard documents, and to assist in the development of harmonized Housing Policies.

In 2004, the Timiskaming Social Housing Registry accepted 299 new applications for Rent-Geared-to-Income Housing and 158 households accepted offers of RGI units throughout the District.

Temiskaming Shores continues to be the area with the highest demand for RGI Housing with approximately 50% of the total applications being for that area. The estimated waiting time for units in Temiskaming Shores is 3 years. Kirkland Lake is the next highest area in demand with approximately 24% of the total applications; however, because there are a greater number of units in that municipality, the waiting time is considerably lower at an average turnover time of 46 days. The average waiting periods for all other areas range from approximately 1 year (Englehart) to 2 months (Elk Lake, Cobalt, Earleton & Larder).

Currently the vacancy rates for the Public Housing Projects (DTSSAB owned) are fairly low in all areas. The highest vacancy rates are in Elk Lake (19%) and Earleton (18%), and the lowest vacancy rates are in New Liskeard and Haileybury with 0%. The other areas vary with Englehart at 3%, Kirkland Lake at 4.5%, Larder Lake at 5%, and Cobalt at 2%.

Recently the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) introduced a redesigned Strong Communities Rent Supplement Program that offered long-term funding to service managers to provide Rent Supplement to households in need of assistance. The DTSSAB has chosen to participate in the Supportive Housing component of the program and is currently working with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) and the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) provide supportive rent supplement assistance to clients under their care. To date the DTSSAB has agreements with 6 landlords; for 10 units located in Temiskaming Shores and Cobalt. The program is working well and we are pleased to be able to help provide safe and affordable housing to these individuals.

DTSSAB Offices

Kirkland Lake

- Child Care Program
- Emergency Medical Services
- Ontario Works Program

PO Box 310, 29 Duncan Ave. N
Kirkland Lake, ON P2N 3H7
Phone: (705) 567-9366
(888) 544-5555
Fax: (705) 567-9492

- Emergency Medical Services
– Kirkland Lake Base
Phone: (705) 568-2220
Fax: (705) 568-8846

Englehart

- Social Housing Program
PO Box 907, 65 Sixth Avenue
Englehart, ON P0J 1H0
Phone: (705) 544-2334
(800) 661-1338
Fax: (705) 544-8758
- Emergency Medical Services
–Englehart Base
Phone: (705) 544-5217 ext. 5399
Fax: (705) 544-5222

Temiskaming Shores

- Administrative Services
 - Child Care Program
 - Information Management/
Information Technology
 - Ontario Works Program
- PO Box 6006, 290 Armstrong Street
New Liskeard, ON P0J 1P0
Phone: (705) 647-7447
(800) 627-2944
Fax: (705) 647-5267
- Emergency Medical Services
–Temiskaming Shores Base
Phone: (705) 672-2626
Fax: (705) 672-3244

New Privacy Legislation for the DTSSAB

The DTSSAB is administering new privacy legislation that the Government of Ontario introduced for Health Care Providers in the Province. The new legislation came into full force on November 1, 2004.

The Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 (PHIPA) has strict rules designed to protect the collection, use and disclosure of personal health information in the custody of a Health Information Custodian (HIC). In the DTSSAB, the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Program is now covered under PHIPA, where previously EMS was covered by the Municipal Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA).

Personal Health Information is defined in PHIPA as any information, whether recorded or unrecorded that relates to the physical or mental health of an identifiable individual who is living or deceased. Personal Health Information includes matters such as the individual's physical or mental health or well-being, the provision of health care to the individual, payments or eligibility for health care in respect of the individual, the donation by the individual of a body part or bodily substance, the individual's health number or registration information. PHIPA only applies to personal health information that is held by a HIC.

This differs from MFIPPA in that MFIPPA provides individuals with a right of access to both general information and their own personal information maintained by municipal government, local agencies, boards and commissions. PHIPA applies exclusively to personal health information held by HICs; MFIPPA applies to all other DTSSAB records.

For more information on MFIPPA or PHIPA, contact the DTSSAB's Chief Privacy Officer at 647-7447 ext. 223.

Points to Ponder

On the other hand, you have different fingers.

An active body means an active mind.

DTSSAB 2005 Board Members

Name	Representative Of
Al French, Chair	Kirkland Lake
Norm Menard, Vice-Chair	Unincorporated South
Dan Cote	Hudson, Kerns, Latchford, Coleman, Cobalt, Harris
Linda Cunningham	Kirkland Lake
Currently Vacant	Armstrong, Dack, Hilliardton, Brethour, Casey, James, Matachewan, Thornloe, Harley
Bob Hobbs	Temiskaming Shores
Jo-Ann Thompson	Englehart, McGarry, Larder Lake, Gauthier, Chamberlain, Charlton, Evanturel
Tom Wells	Temiskaming Shores
Jim Whipple	Unincorporated North

Board Meetings

The DTSSAB Board meetings are usually held twice per month:

- ✓ Second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.
- ✓ Fourth Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

The meetings are open to the public.

To arrange to make a presentation to the Board, please contact Eddie Alton, CAO one week in advance of the meeting.

Phone:
647-7447 ext. 222

Fax:
647-8983

Email:
edalton@dtssab.com

Changes to the Ontario Works System

2005 brings many changes to the Ontario Works program, including a provincial rate change, system changes, and service delivery changes.

In August 2004, the Province of Ontario announced that maximum monthly Ontario Works rates would increase by 3%. The increase will be implemented in March 2005, and will affect all recipients of Ontario Works Assistance, including renters, owners, boarders, those living in institutions and receiving a Personal Needs Allowance, and those receiving Temporary Care Assistance.

New rates for a single person will increase from \$520.00 to \$536.00 per month. Assistance for a couple with 2 children under 12 will increase from \$1,178.00 to \$1,215.00 per month.

Additional information was released indicating that two special payments would be issued to eligible social assistance recipients in 2004. In October and December, eligible single recipients received an additional \$65.00 and eligible families received an additional \$130.00 on their monthly entitlement.

Following the announcement of the new rate increase, and special payments, came the introduction of a number of changes to the Ontario Works program as part of the government's plan to restore integrity to the welfare system. These new changes were made in an attempt to help people move to employment, to streamline and simplify the system, to make the system more accountable and sustainable, and to treat social assistance recipients fairly and with dignity.

2005 also marks as a transition year for Ontario Works' Employment Assistance Program with a new focus on results-based planning. The new approach is part of a commitment to investing in improved participant outcomes and employment supports resulting in sustainable employment. The principals for the new approach will focus on participants and employment, while using a full range of employment services. The model will be developed through best practices, and will facilitate continuous improvement while allowing transition time, and will take into account participant and local labour market realities.

In addition, as part of the Ontario Government's aggressive energy conservation strategy, discretionary benefits will be available to help social assistance recipients with low-cost energy conservation measure, such as caulking and weather-stripping for doors and windows.

As an additional part of the Government's commitment to simplify and streamline the social assistance system in Ontario, the Ministry is taking steps to make social assistance programs more effective and efficient for the people who use them. This includes a variety of changes aimed at reducing the duplication of services and improving accountability. To improve access to social services, the Ministry is streamlining the Ontario Works application process from a two-stage application process to a one-step application process, which will involve the dissolution of the current Intake Screening Unit (ISU) structure.

The Ministry will work with municipal partners to put a one-step application process in place at Ontario Works offices located in communities across the province. The one-step application process will be completed over time by a simplified application form and streamlined documentation and verification standards. Ontario Works will move to a one-step application process by June 16, 2005.



Learn How to Cope With Arthritis

Enroll in the Arthritis Self-Management Program (ASMP)

A six-week course that will help you to:

- Understand your arthritis
- Learn ways to cope with chronic pain
- Take a more active role in your arthritis care

Date: Starting May 10 each Tuesday 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Location: Upstairs at Chartrand's YIG
New Liskeard (pre-register at the store)

Cost: \$35.00 (includes "The Arthritis Helpbook")

For more information and to pre-register:

Paulette 647-5116 or Alice 672-3693

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION DAY

May 06, 2005 from 12 (Noon) – 8 p.m. in the Haileybury Arena
FREE ADMISSION



Climb into a police cruiser,
an ambulance, fire trucks, and more!



- A dults – activities and information
- B usinesses – business continuity information
- C hildren – activities and information

Draws and giveaways!!!

The Temiskaming O.P.P. Detachment will be conducting a full bicycle inspection and registration (engraving) along with a helmet inspection. Participants will be eligible to enter a draw for participation prizes (bike accessories).

Are you prepared for an emergency? Do you have an emergency plan in place?

Support the CAT SCAN Foundation who will be on site selling food and refreshments.

Event sponsored by: North Cobalt Flea Market

