

BRIEFING NOTE HS22-22

For Information or For Approval

Date: April 27, 2022

Purpose: **Coordinated Access Nipissing Update and Prioritization of Housing and Homelessness Resources**

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Approved by: Catherine Matheson, Chief Administrative Officer

Alignment with Strategic Plan: Healthy, Sustainable Communities

Maximize Impact Remove Barriers Seamless Access Learn & Grow

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board receives report HS11-22 providing an update on Coordinated Access Nipissing and approves the Prioritization of Housing and Homelessness Resources as set out in the report.

BACKGROUND:

The implementation of Coordinated Access, including HIFIS 4.0 and a By-Name list (BNL), has been mandated by both Federal and Provincial governments. In March of 2022, the Federal Government acknowledged that the pandemic has created capacity barriers making it difficult to fulfill all of the required steps to Coordinated Access by the March 31, 2022 deadline. An extension for completion of implementation was granted to the end of June 2022 with the submission of a final implementation plan by March 31, 2022. The DNSSAB submitted the District's Implementation Plan to ESDC on March 30, 2022.

CURRENT STATUS/STEPS TAKEN TO DATE:

Client Updates/New Intakes:

- As of February 2021, the DNSSAB has worked with several community agencies to develop a process for updating, and adding to the current By-Name List. With this process

in place, the Coordinated Access Nipissing (CAN) group has added 25 new clients to the By-Name List.

- This collaborative group has been able to house 37 clients on the By-Name List who will be followed to track whether they stay stably housed.
- 32 of these 37 individuals were original PiT Count survey respondents.

Collaborative CAN processes:

- The Community Advisory Board (CAB) continues to provide ongoing oversight and guidance to CAN development and implementation and all CAN partner agencies are members of the CAB.
- The CAN partnership has developed a 'Quick Assessment and Prioritization Tool', designated access points to ensure 24/7 service provision, reviewed intake procedures, decided best practices for Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) Assessments, set a schedule and agenda for action-based case conferencing, and implemented an Executive Committee, HIFIS 4.0 Leads, and CAN Team members.

Examples of CAN processes at work:

- A CAN client was identified, assessed and housed within a 7-day period thanks to the collaborative efforts of the CAN partnership.
- A family of five was able to find housing with the assistance of the CAN partnership.
- With collaboration between the DNSSAB, NBIFC and the CCNB, an individual who was precariously housed and in the process of being removed from housing due to ineligibility, was added to the BNL, assessed, supported, and finally housed within a unit of their choice.
- All individuals and households housed from the BNL will be followed for at least a year.

In addition:

- The CAN Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) has been signed by all CAN community partners.
- Built for Zero (BFZ) Canada continues to work with the DNSSAB to monitor compliance in implementation of the BNL and CAN.
- A Nipissing District Housing Resource Inventory, used for matching individuals and households on the BNL with the housing and supports that are required to move them out of homelessness, is in the last stages of completion.
- The HIFIS 4.0 Training Manual and the CAN Guide are both in final draft version.
- HIFIS 4.0 is live and being used within the DNSSAB homelessness services, including the Homelessness Prevention Navigators (HPN). The HPNs are the DNSSAB's access point within the CAN process and will be using HIFIS 4.0 to track direct client benefits for the new Homelessness Prevention Program, and for navigation and coordination of services with other CAN partners.
- The CAN process has been developed and refined with the advice and input from both Executive and front-line levels of CAN partner agencies:

- Throughout the CAN process, data will be gathered and evaluated for the mandatory reporting expected by funders and for local planning and identification of successes, gaps and resource needs within the District.

NEXT STEPS:

A strong CAN process will use a housing first approach along with standardized and coordinated procedures for access, assessment, prioritization and referral for housing and other services across all the agencies and organizations in Nipissing.

The DNSSAB, as the Service Manager and Community Entity, is obligated to facilitate the coordination of services, supports and housing for individuals and households experiencing homelessness in Nipissing and implement policies that will delegate housing and support resources using the prioritization processes defined by the BNL and CAN.

The following process is being recommended for prioritization of DNSSAB Housing Resources with the households on the BNL:

By-Name List Eligible Benefits

- ✓ Rent Supplements (CRS) – must be added to registry prior to offer
- ✓ Rent Supplement (SCRS)
- ✓ PHB – must be added to registry prior to offer
- ✓ COHB
- ✓ RGI / Social Housing

The DNSSAB will prioritize households from the BNL by offering one out of every 10 housing resources to eligible households from the BNL. This method of access will recognize the importance of housing individuals and households experiencing homelessness, especially chronic homelessness, while acknowledging the many households currently waiting for housing and resources on waitlists.

Benefits will be matched to eligible households and individuals through the CAN Team BNL monitoring and those who are moved out of homelessness through the offered benefit will be followed for at least a year after their move from homelessness.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

HIFIS 4.0 implementation and maintenance will also be part of the DNSSAB's obligation for CAN, along with the Data reporting that will be required by both the Provincial and Federal funding bodies. Five members of the DNSSAB staff will be attending training in April to learn how to create and produce reports using HIFIS. This same training will also be offered to CAN partner agencies when they fully implement HIFIS 4.0. The funding for this training will be from the Community Capacity and Innovation funding through Reaching Home.

In May 2022, Built for Zero Canada will open the opportunity for new communities to join BFZ. This was identified within the Homelessness Action Plan as a way for the District to move forward with the goal of reaching functional zero for chronic homelessness within Nipissing. Becoming a BFZ community has an associated annual fee of approximately \$2,000.

RISK IDENTIFICATION AND MITIGATION:

As of 2022, all Federal and Provincial homelessness funding has mandated requirements for regular enumeration, data compilation, and service and housing resource prioritization and collaboration. The new Provincial Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP), which consolidates CHPI and Strong Communities funding, has reporting categories that are directly tied to the BNL. The DNSSAB is adapting internal processes to fulfil Federal and Provincial directives.

By June 30, 2022, HIFIS 4.0 and CAN must be fully implemented. Many CAN community partner agencies have had capacity issues as a result of the ongoing pressures of the pandemic and increased need of the vulnerable populations they serve. The extension of the implementation deadline for CAN and HIFIS 4.0 will allow the DNSSAB staff to train and support the CAN partner agencies flexibly and the CCI funding from RH will provide financial support.

CONCLUSION:

The implementation of Coordinated Access Nipissing and the creation of shared processes, consents and assessments will fulfill the mandatory requirements of the funders while strengthening the District's Homelessness system. The implementation of HIFIS 4.0 will facilitate collection of data throughout the District of Nipissing. The data gathered can then be used for planning at all levels of service and governance and also for the creation of a collaborative and data-driven continuum of services for the individuals who are represented by the data.