

ONTARIO WORKS SERVICE PLAN 2017-2018



**District of Nipissing Social Services
Administration Board**

May 2017

Table of Contents

PREAMBLE	4
PURPOSE	5
Report Production	5
1.0 DNSSAB STRATEGIC PLAN 2020	5
1.2 Ontario Works Vision and Mandate	6
1.3 Organizational Assessment	6
1.4 Ministry Priorities	6
2.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN	16
2.1 Analyses of Previous Planning Cycle.....	16
2.2 External Influences: PEST (Political, Economic, Social, Technological)	23
2.3 Demographic and Socioeconomic Summary.....	25
2.3.1 Demographic Summary	25
2.3.2 Socioeconomic Summary.....	30
2.4 Caseload Description	30
2.4.1 OW Beneficiaries.....	30
2.4.2 Family Household type	31
2.4.3 Age of Dependent Children.....	31
2.4.4 General Age Groups	32
2.4.5 Education	33
2.4.6 Months on OW Assistance	34
2.4.7 OW Caseload Trend	35
2.5 Local Labour Market.....	36
2.5.1 Labour Force Unemployment and Participation Rates.....	36
2.5.3 Industry Structure	40
2.5.4 Future Labour Market and Employment	41
2.6 Community Engagement	42
3.0 PROGRAM MANAGEMENT	45
3.1 Service Delivery	45
3.2 Oversight Strategy	55
3.3 Analysis of Resources	58
3.4 Overview of Learning Supports	60
3.5 Strategy to Deliver French Language Services	60
3.6 Business Practices.....	62
4.0 OUTCOME STRATEGIES	63

4.1 Service Strategy 63

4.2 Linking Strategies to Outcome Measures..... 67

4.3 Action Steps and Resources 69

4.4 Stakeholder Linkages..... 70

4.5 Addressing Service Gaps..... 71

4.6 Increased Employability Strategies 74

4.7 Monitoring Service Strategies 76



PREAMBLE

As the SAMS journey starts to become an image in our rear view mirror, DNSSAB is bracing itself with cautious optimism on what the next planning cycle will bring to social assistance service delivery in Ontario. While change is no stranger to Ontario Works service providers, the past few years has certainly tested our resiliency and perseverance to overcome challenges. Change can also bring trepidation as there are often unknowns inherent in the process. Two areas or “unknowns” that stand out as being significant are; what the results of the Guaranteed Annual Income Pilot will be, and what the future of integration efforts in the area of employment service delivery will look like. As the answers to these two questions have the potential to transform the social assistance delivery landscape, service providers are left wondering what their role will be once the evolution is complete.

As mentioned in our Addendum back in July, Social Services have come to learn that the path to improving employment outcomes is rooted in local solutions, leveraging community partnerships and cross sectoral collaborative planning. Social Services continues to make great strides in this area through the implementation of an employment services database, enhanced partnership with the North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce, Canadore College and others, the division of the caseload into distinct employment service categories and changes to our intake model. In recognition of these efforts DNSSAB was recently recognized by the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association, awarding DNSSAB the peer nominated Local Municipal Champion Award for 2017. DNSSAB will continue to build upon these accomplishments and as you will see in this Plan, has transformed its services from the point of first contact to better meet the diverse needs of the caseload.

The 2017 Provincial Budget explains how “globalization, new technologies, automation and other factors have led to structural changes in the labour market. This includes an increase in non-standard employment, such as temporary and part-time work. While non-standard employment can provide workers with greater flexibility, it can sometimes be precarious and reduce an individual’s ability to earn a stable and secure income”.¹ These factors must be taken into consideration when we think about the role of social assistance programs and the delivery of employment services within this broader context.

As the Province moves forward with social assistance reform and modernization, DNSSAB feels that it is well positioned to be responsive to new challenges and expectations. DNSSAB is looking forward to future consultation on this process and is confident that the end result will be a model that is not only cost effective but more importantly promotes the social inclusion and empowerment of social assistance recipients.

¹ 2017 Ontario Budget A Stronger and Healthier Ontario,
<http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/ontariobudgets/2017/ch4d.html>

PURPOSE

The 2017-2018 Ontario Works Service Plan builds on priorities established in the previous service planning cycle and demonstrates the key strategies being utilized by Social Services to support the Program’s vision and mandate. It further provides an overview of the environmental context in which Ontario Works is delivered; as awareness of the existing political, social and economic conditions are essential to program planning and analysis. Service Providers, through the Service Plan, are also required to illustrate how current service delivery strategies are aligned with the achievement of the performance targets set in the Plan. The Service Plan further provides an opportunity to highlight achievements and best practices, set new goals, analyze resources and identify gaps in service. The Plan also provides an opportunity for service providers to communicate the role that stakeholder linkages and community partnerships play in the delivery of social assistance.

Report Production



This report was written by Michelle Glabb, DNSSAB Director of Employment and Social Services; and David Plumstead, DNSSAB Research Analyst. Ontario Works staff also provided input, and the report was reviewed by Joseph Bradbury, DNSSAB CAO.

1.0 DNSSAB STRATEGIC PLAN 2020

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020

OUR VISION: Healthy communities without poverty

OUR MISSION: Proactively enabling inclusive, healthy and prosperous communities within the District of Nipissing through a focus on prevention, innovation and accessible human services

EFFICIENCY	EFFECTIVENESS	EXCELLENCE
<p>ONTARIO WORKS AND EMPLOYMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Advocate, enhance and align internal employment programming and initiatives with the economic needs of the District. ◆ Focus on client centered services that recognize the challenges and opportunities facing clients on their path to self-sufficiency through employment. ◆ Deliver seamless service that is effective, efficient and enhances opportunities for feedback. ◆ Strengthen human resources strategies to attract personnel with targeted qualifications. i.e. mental health/addictions and employment ◆ Re-align existing resources to find efficiencies and better meet the needs <p>CHILDREN'S SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Enhance focus on quality assurance reviews and metrics ◆ Further develop system to increase childcare capacity that aligns with Ontario's vision for early years ◆ Enhance sector capacity with targeted professional development and training opportunities ◆ Lead partners with effective and efficient special needs services ◆ Advocate for provincial resources to expand opportunities to access fee subsidy and target employment supports for those with children <p>EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Enhance health care system coordination by growing the role of Community Paramedicine and the use of target paramedical skills. i.e. Using paramedic skills and time more proficiently during "down times" in rural areas ◆ Increase response time focus by training more Emergency First Response Teams in targeted areas - provide incentives and recognition. ◆ Enhance the outcomes of our highest risk, frequent users and most vulnerable patients that are linked to the hospital system i.e. check ins and innovative best practices ◆ Advocate with partners for desired system changes in EMS i.e. funding formula, Ambulance Act, regulations and patient standards ◆ Maintain Nipissing District EMS services that meet or exceed provincial quality standards. 	<p>HOUSING SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Become local experts on our legislated responsibilities; build knowledge and capacity with stakeholders by providing effective coaching, mentoring and training opportunities ◆ Facilitate, support and maintain the integrity of the social housing system with sensible program and financial performance ◆ Work with our partners to implement the 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan and continue to focus on homelessness prevention ◆ Maintain excellent service system obligations by delivering efficient and effective customer service ◆ Facilitate and assist NDHC with their long-term social housing regeneration and modernization plan <p>CORPORATE SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Targeted investments in technology for enhanced district wide electronic customer service delivery models, resource utilization and corporate risk management. ◆ Increase employee engagement and organizational talent capacity with targeted training and long-term talent management profiling by department ◆ Enhanced communication and community engagement through the use various media forms to share timely information and drive effective client and stakeholder feedback. ◆ Develop sound metrics and data systems to measure results of decisions and strategies and to streamline existing processes. This includes enhanced performance data management reporting, organizational and financial alignment and advanced data analysis - to drive informed decision-making with long-term planning (20-years). ◆ Continue drive for efficiency by exploring opportunities for shared services 	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p style="font-size: small;">District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p style="font-size: small;">Conseil d'administration des services sociaux du district de Nipissing</p> </div>
Putting People First	Pro-Active	Collaboration
Empowerment	Innovation	

FIVE CORE VALUES MAKE UP OUR FOUNDATION AND ARE APPLIED TO EVERYTHING WE DO

The DNSSAB strategic plan is unchanged from the last service planning period, although at the time of this writing, the Board is starting the process of reviewing the plan to make any necessary adjustments. DNSSAB's mission, vision and corporate strategies continue to be supported by the three pillars of *efficiency, effectiveness, and excellence* and the core values support the strategic framework.

As with the previous service plans, the OW Service Plan 2017-18 aligns with the strategic direction of the Board, while still meeting the requirements of the Ontario Works Service Planning Guidelines 2017-2018.

1.2 Ontario Works Vision and Mandate

The Ontario Works vision and mandate remain unchanged from the previous service plan:

Vision: To achieve improved employment outcomes for Ontario Works participants by increasing individual employability with the goal of sustainable employment and increased financial independence.

Mandate: To provide employment assistance and financial assistance to people in financial need. The Ontario Works Program:

- recognizes individual responsibility and promotes self-reliance through employment;
- provides temporary financial assistance to those most in need while they meet obligations to become and stay employed;
- effectively serves people needing assistance; and
- is accountable to the taxpayers of Ontario

1.3 Organizational Assessment

During the previous service planning period, the DNSSAB had an Organizational Assessment performed by a management consulting firm. The main reason for performing the assessment was to see how resources are aligned with the strategic plan and achieving client outcomes, and whether any adjustments are necessary to the service delivery model.

One of the recommendations coming out of the assessment is for Ontario Works to shift social assistance delivery in favour of more individualized case management for all clients, at all stages, of need and employment-readiness. This includes changing client intake to triage client needs and ensuring that optimal pathways are available for each client. Some of these changes are underway and are described further on in the plan.

1.4 Ministry Priorities

The following section highlights the specific activities and strategies being utilized by Social Services to address the Ministries 3 priorities as per the Ontario Works Service Plan Template:

- 1. Improved service coordination and communication between OW and ODSP delivery offices within the service area, including transfers between programs, business protocols, shared case**

management when appropriate, and expanded and strengthened access to employment services for ODSP clients and people with disabilities within the community.

Social Services has enjoyed a positive working relationship with the Ontario Disability Support Program for many years due to the inherent overlaps in program delivery. By building on existing capacity and fostering relationships between the local offices, comprehensive Joint Implementation Protocols (JIP) that are intended to streamline service delivery have been developed and successfully implemented. The JIP is designed to be flexible, adaptable and adjustable to local conditions and legislative changes to ensure that business practices remain current and relevant to the work of front line staff.

The following represents a few of the key areas where ODSP and OW intersect:

- ❖ ODSP Discretionary Benefits **(Policy targeted for review in Q3/Q4 2017)**
- ❖ ODSP Applicants who choose to participate in Ontario Works Activities, ODSP dependent adults and non-disabled spouses with mandatory OW participation requirements
- ❖ ODSP File Transfer processes based on SAMO requirements
- ❖ Referral processes to identify who should or should not be referred to OW
- ❖ Rapid Reinstates Referral process
- ❖ Prescribed Class Referrals
- ❖ On-going communication and administration of cases in transition between programs
- ❖ DAU referrals
- ❖ Employment Related Benefits
- ❖ OW Discretionary Vision Care for ODSP Dependent Adults
- ❖ OW Discretionary Dental for ODSP Dependent Adults
- ❖ ODSP Funerals

One key area where the two programs have historically intersected that has changed since the submission of the Addendum back in July 2016 is the administration of benefits under the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI). Effective April 2017, DNSSAB's Housing Department will be responsible for the delivery of CHPI benefits for both social assistance and non-social assistance recipients. Social Services will assist the two programs with this transition as new joint protocols will need to be developed. This will help to promote a seamless transfer of this function to ensure that no gaps are created by this change in administration.

A few other initiatives that stand out as being relevant to the service coordination between programs are:

- Social Services involvement with the Nipissing Travellink transportation initiative which will be highlighted later in this Plan, directly benefits all low income people living along the highway 17 corridor inclusive of ODSP recipients.
- Social Services dental initiative and partnership with the North Bay Regional Health Centre that has recently expanded to support the dental needs of ODSP recipients without access to dental care.

- Social Services Employment Database that stores targeted employment related information for OW and ODSP clients in order to expedite matches to employment opportunities and/or community and employment placements.

Social Services remains committed to working in partnership with ODSP on all of the areas noted above to ensure that the needs of social assistance recipients across programs are effectively met. By working together to remove barriers and increase employment opportunities for people in receipt of benefits under ODSP, we can collectively influence the overall health and wellness of the communities we serve. Social Services remains committed to focusing on the abilities of all clients and recognizes that everyone has something to contribute whether that be through paid employment, a community placement or any other activity that promotes social inclusion. Social Services looks forward to developing new initiatives with ODSP to promote participation in the Ontario Works Program. Joint training and development may also be an opportunity that could be explored as the Province continues on their path to modernize the delivery of social assistance programming in Ontario.

2. Stronger collaboration with economic development organizations within the regions to identify, expand and leverage provincial investments in infrastructure and resource development to provide opportunities for OW clients, youth and disadvantaged populations to access skills training, work experience, and new jobs.

The following are brief descriptions of economic development activities that were undertaken or are currently underway, during the present two-year planning cycle. These activities involve collaborative participation and planning with economic development organizations, or leveraging other public and private investments in areas such as infrastructure and resource development. The activities also include compiling and disseminating information and data relevant to economic growth and development, for key stakeholders and organizations.

Collaboration and Planning with Economic Development Organizations

- ❖ A number of Get Job Ready events and Job Fairs were held in South Algonquin, West Nipissing, and North Bay (April 2017), to help people prepare for, and find, employment. These events required collaborative participation and planning by many service organizations including – but not limited to – the DNSSAB, Employment Ontario, The Labour Market Group, Canadore College, College Boreal, Fed Nor, North Bay Economic Development, the respective North Bay and West Nipissing Chamber of Commerce, etc.
- ❖ DNSSAB Hosted a Nipissing Regional Economic Development Workshop (July 2015) which was attended by elected officials, senior administration, and directors of economic development from surrounding municipalities. The workshop was intended to facilitate a discussion around economic development and growth in Nipissing District, and gauge whether there are opportunities for working together on any initiatives or taking a coordinated /regional approach to economic development. This event was well received by the Board and those who participated. Since that time the Board has communicated a renewed interest in engaging this group again in 2017. DNSSAB’s Research Analyst

will be working on organizing this event. Further details on the outcome of this event will be provided in the 2018 Addendum.

- ❖ Economic Development Organizations are actively involved in the Nipissing Employment Services Table.
- ❖ Economic Development Organizations are actively involved in the Nipissing Travellink Transportation Initiative as part of the working group.

Disseminate /Share Economic Development Information and Data:

- ❖ DNSSAB made a presentation to the North Bay Development Corporation on demographic and socioeconomic factors, set within an economic development context.
- ❖ DNSSAB made a presentation to the Baylor University team involved with the Baylor Focus Firm Partnership project.
- ❖ Staff presented an economic update to the DNSSAB Executive Audit Committee (Feb. 2016).
- ❖ DNSSAB provides the North Bay Economic Development Department with monthly labour force data from the national Labour Force Survey (Statistics Canada).

3. Establishing local partnerships with community organizations to build on and strengthen supports to support OW clients, including individuals with multiple barriers to employment (i.e. long-term recipients of social assistance), marginalized or disadvantaged groups across service sectors including: health, developmental services, housing, violence against women, human trafficking or education and training.

Social Services is well aware that it cannot meet the diverse needs of the caseload on its own. For this reason, over the years relationships with numerous community partners have been built to ensure that participants have access to a robust selection of internal and external employment services. In order to be effective, every opportunity to take advantage of integration, leveraging partnerships and collaborative planning must be taken to meet the complex needs of the clients we collectively serve. In many cases this collaboration grows into more formal agreements and/or protocols that clarify roles and responsibilities. The old adage of it “takes a village” absolutely applies to the work of the human service sector as we all have a role to play in helping clients navigate through the various service systems. While some may only have a few stops to make along the continuum of services, others have many, and encounter set backs along the way.

While we would like to believe that the composition of the Ontario Works caseload is primarily job ready participants, the reality is that for many clients’ barriers play a significant role in preventing them from being able to engage in employment related activities. This is why establishing local partnerships with community organizations to develop protocols to support OW clients, marginalized or disadvantaged groups across service sectors remains an over-arching priority for Social Services.



A few of the most recent activities that illustrate the commitment of Social Services to establishing local partnerships are:

Nipissing Travellink

Leveraging provincial investments in infrastructure and resource development is essential to moving initiatives beyond what falls within the mandate and scope of Ontario Works Administration. An excellent example of where leveraging provincial funding to reduce a long standing barrier in the District was successful is the Nipissing Travellink Transportation Pilot. Nipissing Travellink is intended to provide transportation between the district's eastern rural municipalities and North Bay, to support employment-related activities such as commuting to work, attending employment workshops and training, etc. It is also intended to increase the access to services and activities for the general population, and contribute to the district's economic development.

The DNSSAB and the Nipissing Employment Services Table (NEST) responded to a call for proposals by the Ministry of Transportation for the planning and implementation of local, community transportation projects (Jan. 2015). As the application required a Municipality to be the applicant, the Township of Papineau-Cameron took on this role on behalf of the NEST. As reported previously, the funding application was successful (\$100,000) and a community transportation pilot project ('Nipissing travellink') has been operational since March 2016. Since that time, MTO approached all grantees to confirm their interest for a one year extension with additional funding. The Township submitted their application and once again the application was approved for the period of April 1st, 2017 to March 31, 2018.

Nipissing and Area Food Charter Working Group

Social Services is also actively engaged in the Nipissing and Area Food Charter Working Group (FCWG). The FCWG members represent multiple sectors within our community and work together to develop food-related initiatives and policies in Nipissing District that are guided by the Food Charter. The Food Charter was officially launched in November 2015 and has identified six pillars; food literacy, the environment, culture, social equity, health and wellness and sustainable economic development. The Action Plan for 2017 focuses on 5 key projects;

1. Education initiatives and workshops
2. Community garden creation
3. Advocacy regarding emerging food policy and social equity issues
4. Communication strategy to showcase local food and highlight success stories
5. Consult with citizens with lived experience and organizations to inform local decisions regarding supports and programming needed to address food security issues in our community

As food security is one of the most important social determinants of health, Social Services would have been remiss to not participate in this initiative. While Social Services has no control over the amount of benefits clients receive to support their basic needs beyond the level of advocacy, it does have a role to

play in the overall landscape assisting with the development of strategies to elevate the food security of clients living in poverty within the District.

Legal Aid Ontario

Following the legislative changes with child support, Social Services contacted Legal Aid to confirm whether or not they had the capacity to absorb functions previously completed by OW Family Support Workers. To date, Social Services has met with Legal Aid twice to discuss what protocols would be required to ensure there was a seamless transition. Social Services explained what the new role of the Family Support Worker would be and confirmed any challenges that they could foresee. On-going consultation will be required to ensure that no gaps are created. Social Services is committed to ensuring that clients continue to have full access to whatever services they require to secure child/spousal support and navigate the court system.

Nipissing Service Collaborative

As reported in the Addendum, in March 2016, DNSSAB was approached to participate in the Nipissing Service Collaborative as part of the *Open Minds, Healthy Minds: Ontario’s Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy*, supported by the CAMH Provincial System Support Program. DNSSAB’s Social Services immediately agreed to participate as part of the strategy’s second phase.

Through an inclusive interactive design day in March 2017 Service Collaborative members and participants from the community met to identify core components of a client centered System Solution that would improve system navigation for adults with needs related to mental health, substance use and/or developmental disabilities. The solution would also address clients across the continuum of need and include multiple sectors. The core components of the system solution are:

- ❖ Service Map - Colour Coded and numbered directory of community services that facilitates the connection of people to the mental health, substance use and/or developmental services they need.
- ❖ Needs Questionnaire - Set of questions to help a person and a provider to understand what a person's needs are in order to develop an initial service pathway.
- ❖ Catalogue of Programs and Supports - A clear description of the programs and services offered that is simple to use, and includes service mandates and criteria, and contact information.

In order to accomplish this ambitious task, a sub group called the Service Collaborative Implementation Team (SCIT) was created to explore ideas related to the design and implementation of the system solution components. Social Services volunteered to participate on the SCIT as well to ensure that the sector and its needs was represented.

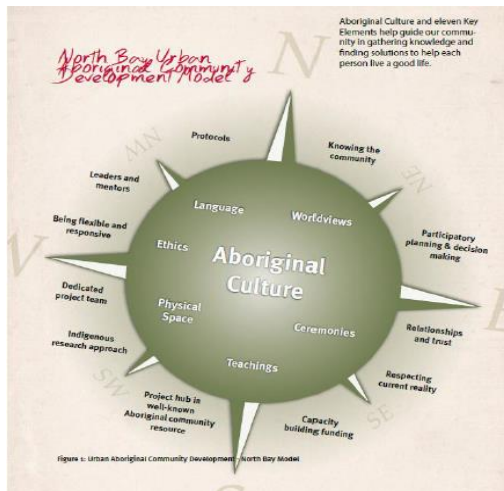
As the consultations and planning will be continuing well into the 2017/2018 planning cycle an update on the progress made by the Nipissing Service Collaborative will be provided in the 2018 Addendum. Key activities that will be taking place over the coming months will be:



- Consultations with community stakeholders, within and outside of the Service Collaborative, including persons with lived experience and family members, on the development and implementation of the system solution.
- *Completion of the Health Equity Impact Assessment (HEIA) tool with a small Health Equity-focused working group to support equity-based improvements.*
- *Communication with stakeholders across Nipissing to inform them and build support for this new system solution.*

Community Action Circle (CAC)

According to North Bay’s Urban Aboriginal Strategy research, Nipissing District’s urban aboriginal population is approximately 8.5% which is much higher than the provincial average of 2%. In order to ensure that there are adequate and culturally sensitive supports available to serve this population the Community Action Circle (CAC) emerged in 2015. The CAC has multi-sectoral representation including health, mental health, education, housing, justice, first nation community members and social services to name a few.



CAC Mission

To provide guidance to the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) project staff, in carrying out North Bay’s Urban Aboriginal Action Plan, following the principles of the North Bay Urban Aboriginal Community Development Model.

CAC Vision

A community where Aboriginal and non-aboriginal service providers and community stakeholders are engaged, and new relationships and partnerships are built and sustained, resulting in increased levels of Aboriginal participation in all aspects of North Bay

The CAC meets monthly and each meeting begins with an opening prayer, smudging ceremony and often includes an aboriginal teaching to encourage a cross-cultural understanding of concepts related to the 5 subcommittees listed below;

1. Justice
2. Education
3. Social Inclusion
4. Health and Wellness
5. Children, Youth and Elders

DNSSAB staff has played an active role on the CAC since its inception in 2015. We currently participate in activities geared towards addressing employment, financial and poverty issues that impact urban aboriginal social inclusion.

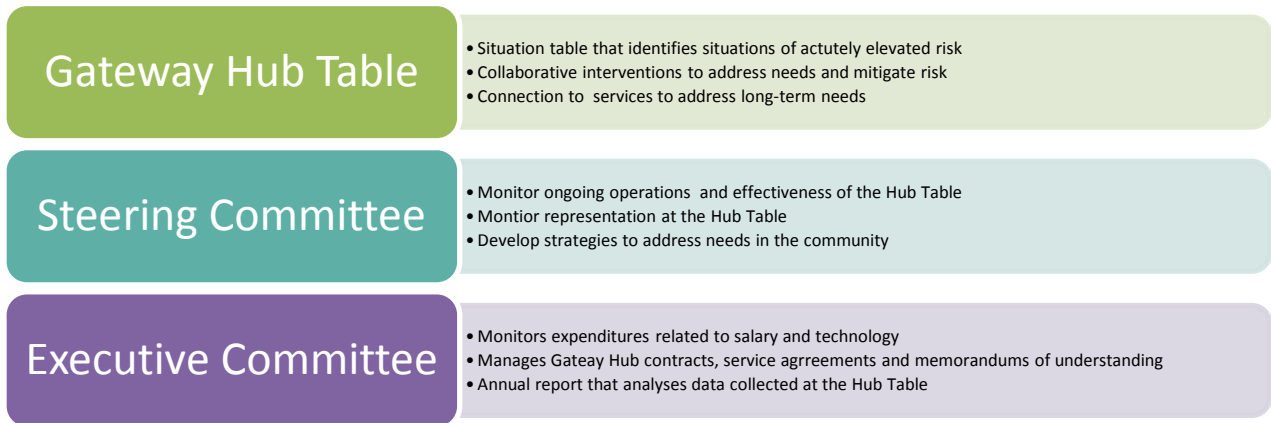
North Bay and Area Community Drug Strategy Committee

Social Services has been a participant on the North Bay and Area Community Drug Strategy Committee for many years. This committee is essentially a working group of community agencies that envision a safer and healthier community that optimizes the lives, abilities and health of individuals, taking into consideration the needs of all diverse groups. The group addresses substance misuse and addictions through prevention, treatment, enforcement and harm reduction.

The main focus of the committee since 2013 has been to raise awareness and promote change in how substance misuse and the responses to it are perceived. The committee has also been heavily engaged in advocacy and has taken a leadership role on many occasions to bring attention to issues that were reaching a crisis point locally. One that stands out as being significant was the implementation of the North Bay and Area Fentanyl Patch 4 Patch Policy. The purpose of the policy was to provide public education and awareness regarding the risks of fentanyl abuse and misuse to physicians, pharmacists and patients. The policy was brought to Queen’s Park by Nipissing MPP Vic Fedeli and Bill 33 **An Act to reduce the abuse of fentanyl patches and other controlled substance patches** received Royal Assent in December 2015. The Committee’s policy has now been implemented in most pharmacies across the province.

The Gateway Hub

DNSSAB took an active role in the research, development and implementation of a community mobilization model in Nipissing District. The Gateway Hub Table was introduced in December 2013 and shortly thereafter the steering and executive committees were formalized. DNSSAB continues to play an integral role in the sustainment, development and evaluation of Hub activities through participation in each of the tables and committees as illustrated below.



The Gateway Hub table is a forum for collaboration among human service providers including North Bay Police, Nipissing Mental Health Housing and Support Services, DNSSAB, 4 local school boards, North Bay Indian Friendship Centre, Crisis Centre, O.P.P., Canadian Mental Health Association, Youth Justice Services, Community Counselling Services and HANDS the Family Health Network. The intent of the Gateway Hub is to mobilize existing resources to help mitigate situations of acutely elevated risk. Acutely elevated risk exists when there are a number of risk factors identified, beyond the scope of an individual agency, that if left unattended will likely result in harm or lead to the situation worsening to the point that more formal and extended intervention is required. This may include, but is not limited to criminal charges, children being placed in the permanent care of the Children's Aid Society or victimization. It is important to note that respect for privacy is essential to the success of the Gateway Hub table so they adhere to a strict four filter process for identifying situations of risk.

The Hub Table captures de-identified data for each situation that is brought to the table. Analysis of this data is used to identify patterns of risk which help us to identify gaps in service and inform decision making. For instance, mental health, physical violence and parenting issues are the top three categories of risk identified in situations that have been addressed by the table. A sub-committee, including DNSSAB representation, has been formed to develop strategies to address these risk factors in our community.

Canadore Partnership – Nipissing Poverty Reduction through Education Program

In the fall of 2015, upon confirmation of funding through the Ontario Trillium Foundation Local Poverty Reduction Fund, DNSSAB in partnership with Canadore College launched the Nipissing Poverty Reduction through Education Program (NPREP). NPREP is a three (3) year pilot project which provides Ontario Works (OW) recipients extensive supports and services specific to their individual needs to transition them into post-secondary education and ultimately into sustainable employment. Supports and Services, depending on individual needs, may include;

- Financial incentives such as subsidized housing, transportation, health benefits, and school supplies
- Employment supports for 6 months post-graduation as well as help to secure summer employment between study periods
- Personalized coaching, mentorship and career navigation
- Educational supports including tutoring and access to technology

NPREP will enable more OW recipients to gain a post-secondary education which will move them and their families towards employment and income security and away from social assistance and associated poverty. The program will also increase the number of post-secondary educated workforce participants in Nipissing district to address the skills gap experienced by local employers.

To promote participation in NPREP, a lot of time and energy has been put into client engagement through numerous Lunch and Learn sessions, social media posts, inserts with monthly OW payments, as well as

direct client contact. To date we have had a total of 80 NPREP participants; 3 from the September 2015 cohort, 4 from the January 2016 cohort, 64 from the September 2016 cohort and 9 from the January 2017 cohort. We are gearing up to draw additional participants into the program to participate with the September 2017 cohort.

While we are on track to meet our target participation rates, we have had difficulty transitioning some OW recipients from OW into post-secondary. The primary barrier restricting participation in NPREP continues to be OSAP eligibility. Recipients who have previously defaulted on OSAP loans are generally unable to secure the financial resources required to return to post-secondary education and participate in NPREP. DNSSAB’s CAO has advocated for change with various Ministries in an attempt to remove this barrier with limited success.

Given the recent changes to Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) that will make over 210,000 students in Ontario eligible for non-repayable grants to cover the cost of tuition, we anticipate that interest in NPREP will only grow. The Program has also gained public interest. To date three news articles have been published that promote or mention NPREP:

- <https://www.baytoday.ca/local-news/pilot-project-guiding-people-back-to-work-354079>
- <http://www.nugget.ca/2016/04/03/program-puts-addict-on-the-right-path>
- <http://www.nugget.ca/2016/10/20/new-ontario-brewing-new-business-of-the-year>

NPREP was also recognized with an award through the North Bay Chamber of Commerce Bell Evening of Excellence as Success Story of the Year in October 2016.

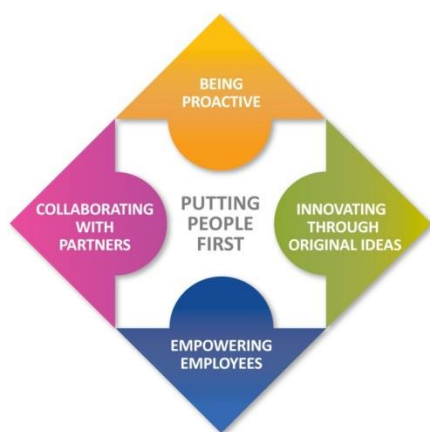


<http://nbdcc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/October-24-2016-E-News-Update-special-edition.pdf>

Examples of other partnerships are reflected in Table 1 in green on the following page. Planning Tables that bring these partners together are shown in blue.



Table 1 North East Regional Placement Table (Social Services leads)	Amelia Rising	March of Dimes
Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours Meetings	Northern Lights	YES Employment/Employment Options
Labour Market Group Table	Get Trained Workers	Dr. Phillips (psycho-vocational assessments)
Gateway Mobilization Hub	Nipissing Legal Clinic/Legal Aid	Business Centre/V&S Accounting
Community Action Circle with the North Bay Urban Aboriginal Strategy	Temagami/Bonfield Libraries (employment related printing/photocopying etc)	Canadore College, Nipissing University, Canadian Career College College Boreal, Contact North
Nipissing Employment Services Table (Social Services leads)	Literacy Council	Literacy Alliance
Nipissing District Homelessness and Housing Partnership Table	St. John's Ambulance	NBRHC Dental Clinic
Economic Development	Northern College	ODSP
Metis Nation of Ontario	Family Enrichment	Multi-cultural Centre
Amelia Rising	March of Dimes	Cap C
People for Equal Partnership	DEOC	Alliance
True Self	Community Counselling Centre	Indian Friendship Centre



2.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

2.1 Analyses of Previous Planning Cycle

The previous planning period saw an OW caseload that plateaued and leveled off, but at a relatively high level compared to the earlier period. For example, during the 2015-16 planning period, the average caseload in Nipissing District was 2,430 recipients compared to 2,265 the period before (2013-14). By many accounts, the effects of the 2008 recession continue to linger, especially for those on social assistance.

On the brighter side however, whereas the previous planning period was starting in an uncertain economy that was hard to read, the prospects for the next period are looking better. Key indicators signal that the provincial economy is finally strengthening after many years of weak

performance in the post-recession. There is also some indication of this locally, with North Bay’s unemployment rate trending downward during the previous planning period.² However, the city has also experienced significant job losses during the past year at major employers including Canada Bread, Ontario Northland, Ontario Power Generation and the North Bay Regional Health Centre. So, while the improving economy has not yet translated into full economic recovery or a reduction in social assistance locally, it is hopeful that the lag in performance will be overcome during this next period.

Always the reminder, DNSSAB operates in an environment where the determinants of caseload change and growth include factors beyond the DNSSAB’s control. However, during this next planning period, the DNSSAB Social Services will continue to focus on those determinants that it can influence and control, including employment training, preparation, and job readiness and placement.

The series of charts that follow in this section illustrate Social Services performance for the previous 2015-2016 planning cycle on the following four outcome measures:

- Average Monthly Employment Earnings Per Case
- Percentage of Caseload with Employment Earnings
- Percentage of Terminations Exiting to Employment
- Percentage of Caseload Exiting to Employment

Please note that as the outcome measures changed between 2015 and 2016, for the purpose of this Plan, only the achievements on the outcomes noted above will be presented. The other challenge that should be noted here is that due to the way SAMS continually measures outcomes, recorded achievements are never fixed. Therefore, outcomes reported in this plan are relative to when the snapshot of data was taken and may or may be the most current recorded outcome.

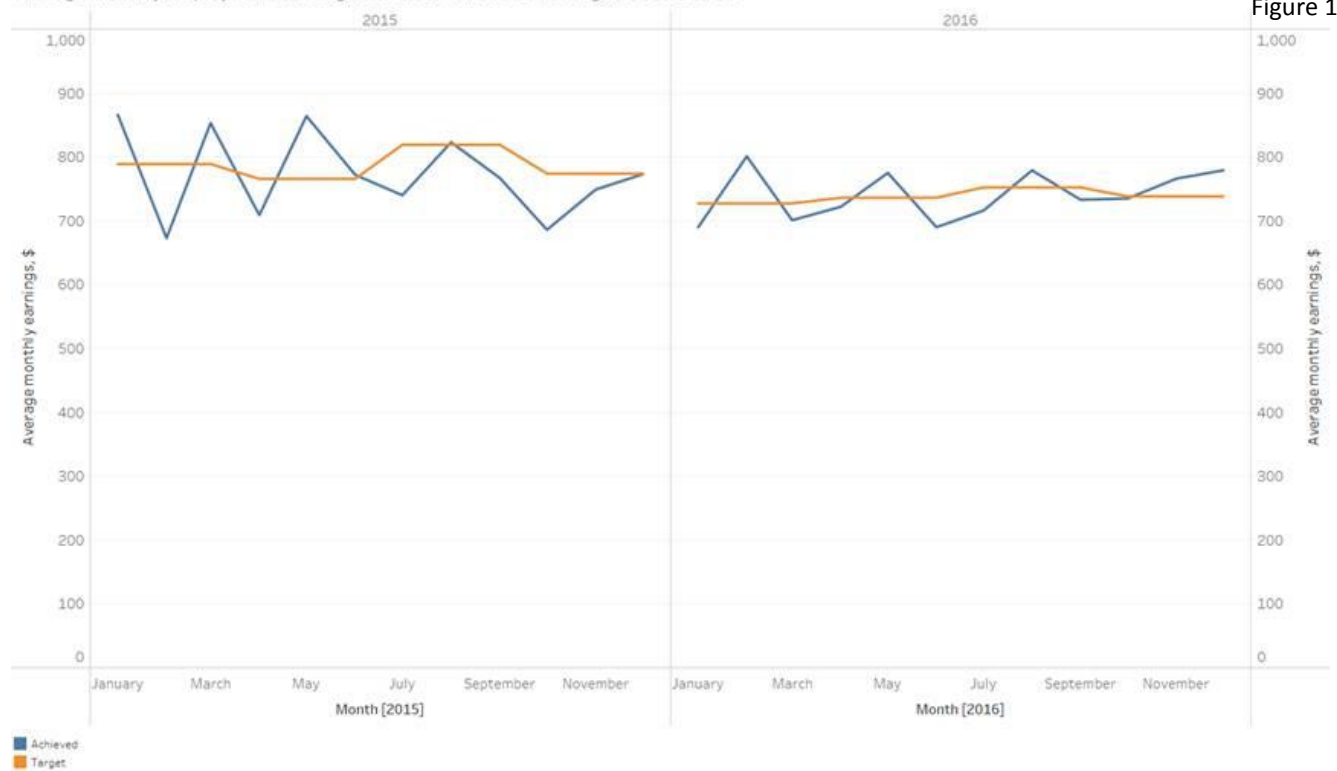
For the 2015 planning cycle, DNSSAB allocated 400 points to earnings and 600 points to employment. As noted above, when Measures changed for 2016, these allocations were adjusted with 500 points per category targeted. For 2015, overall outcomes fell just short of the target with 2016’s achievements picking up that shortfall for an overall achievement of 199.2%. This achievement is considered significant as part of the 2015/2016 cycle fell in a period where the operating environment was not fully stabilized.

Figure 1 below illustrates overall performance relative to the achievement of targets for the previous planning cycle on **Measure 1 - Average Amount of Employment Earnings for Participants with Earnings.**

² In the current plan, staff has decided to include key labour force indicators at the local level, including the participation and unemployment rates. While the data is a bit messy, it still provides insight into local labour force patterns and trends.

Average Monthly Employment Earnings Per Case, Achieved and Target: 2015 & 2016

Figure 1



As shown the lowest level achieved on this measure during the cycle was in Feb 2015 (\$673), with the highest level being achieved in January 2015 (\$866). For the 2015 and 2016 planning cycles, 200 points was assigned to this Measure for a potential maximum achievement of 400 points at the end of cycle.

For 2015, the following targets on this Measure were set: Quarter 1 \$788.90, Quarter 2 \$765.80, Quarter 3 \$819.10 and Quarter 4 \$773.90. The quarterly averages on this Measure show considerable variation with overall achievements for the first 2 quarters exceeding the targets. However, by Q3 these achievements started to decline relative to the targets. For this reason, this target was not met with the overall average achievement falling just short of the \$786.90 target at \$773.00.

For 2016 targets were set by reviewing the previous year’s quarterly averages and adjusting them to recognize the fluctuations in achievements: Quarter 1 \$727.20, Quarter 2 \$736.20, Quarter 3 \$752.30 and Quarter 4 \$738.20. As you can see the achievements on this measure were less volatile than in 2015 with the average targets met for Quarters 1 and 4. Performance during Quarters 2 and 3 were marginally below targeted achievements. Overall, as the yearly average achievement of \$740.60 exceeded the average yearly target of \$738.50, for 2016, this target was met.

Case Managers continue to encourage their clients to approach their employers for increases in their hours and or wage rates. However, as this measure is heavily impacted by unfavorable economic conditions these efforts are most often not successful. The increasing trends in part time employment

and/or prevalence of minimum wage jobs also impacts this Measure. Coordinating two or more part time jobs to make ends meet can also be difficult and the uncertainty that exists around leaving one employer for a better paid opportunity, or one with more hours, can at times be a risky decision. One-to-one employment counseling, marketing clients to higher paying employment opportunities through employment placements, investing in clients through skills development opportunities, encouraging networking, and utilizing community placements when appropriate are all strategies that can improve outcomes on this measure.

Figure 2 below now illustrates overall performance relative to the achievement of targets for the previous planning cycle on **Measure 2 –Percentage of Caseload with Employment Income:**



The lowest level achieved on this measure was in January 2015 (10.08%) with the highest level being achieved in Dec 2016 (16.03%). For 2015, 100 points was assigned to this Measure with 300 points allocated in 2016 for a potential maximum achievement of 400 points.

For 2015, the following targets were set by reviewing the previous year’s quarterly averages and adjusting them to reflect any in year fluctuations in achievements: Quarter 1, 10.6%; Quarter 2, 10.1%; Quarter 3, 11.1%; and Quarter 4, 7.1%. As the overall achievement on this Measure was 11.8% against a target of 9.7%, this target was met and exceeded for 2015.

For 2016, the following targets were set: Quarter 1, 11.06%; Quarter 2, 10.05%; Quarter 3, 12.06%; and Quarter 4, 14.07%. As the overall achievement on this Measure was 13.71% against a target of 11.81%, this target was met and exceeded for 2016.

Case Managers and Employment Support Workers work diligently with clients on their job search strategies through one-to-one employment counseling, workshops, and through referrals to the many community partners who offer employment services that enhance the employability of the client. Other strategies by OW staff include community and employment placements which are used regularly along with referrals to the Get Trained Workers Coordinator to match clients with employment opportunities.

Maximizing the use of the employment supports and benefits available under the Ontario Works Program are also promoted to ensure that clients have what they need to assist them with their job search efforts or to start a training or employment opportunity. Although these efforts have proven to be effective, there is more work to be done in this area to identify other employment enhancing activities that may be beneficial to increasing the employability of clients who may be facing other barriers, in addition to being unemployed. Strategies to improve services in this area are currently being developed and will be explained in more detail further on in the Plan. As with other targeted outcomes, the results on this Measure can often be skewed by client’s not submitting income reporting statements after they have secured employment and received their first pay, therefore it is difficult to measure the overall effectiveness of current service strategies on outcomes.

Figure 3 below now illustrates overall performance relative to the achievement of targets for the previous planning cycle on **Measure 3 – Percentage of Exits Exiting to Employment**.



Achievement for this measure ranged from a low of 11.95% in Sept 2016, to over two times this number (32.9%) in Dec 2016. For both years of the planning cycle, 300 points was assigned to this measure for a potential maximum achievement of 600 points.

For 2015, the following targets were set: Quarter 1, 24.1%; Quarter 2, 28.9%; Quarter 3, 26.2%; and Quarter 4, 23.2%. The chart above reveals that this target was only met in Oct with achievements ranging from a high of 23.41% in June to a low of 11.68% in April. As the overall average achievement on this measure was only 13.8% on a target of 25.6%, the target on this Measure was not met for 2015.

While the recorded performance on this Measure for 2015 fell significantly short of the target, it is not considered to be an accurate reflection of the number of clients exiting the caseload for employment. This is because during the post SAMS implementation period, the process of completing cold calls that was implemented several years ago to mitigate the negative impact on outcomes when clients did not submit an income reporting statement after securing employment, was not being completed regularly due to the operational challenges at the time. Social Services had planned to discontinue this practice due to the time and resources that were required to support this process. In fact, targets were adjusted downwards for Q3 and Q4 of 2016 to ensure that this change was taken into consideration. Upon further reflection, this decision was reversed as it was and continues to be felt, that this activity is required in order to provide the Board with a more accurate depiction of the work being accomplished by Social Services.

Figure 3 above also illustrates how volatile performance on this measure can be. As you can see for 2016 due to the low achievements in 2015, targets were significantly lowered as it was difficult to know whether or not the absence of cold calls, or a change in the local labour market, was the cause of the drop in achievements. For 2016, the following targets were set: Quarter 1, 14.07%; Quarter 2, 18.09%; Quarter 3, 15.02%; and Quarter 4, 16.02%. As shown, achievements on this Measure were very strong in comparison with the previous year with targets being met in all months other than Feb and Sept. The extreme variations in achievements recorded in 2015 can also be seen in the 2016 outcomes with overall achievements ranging from 11.95% in Sept to 32.9% recorded in Dec. As mentioned previously the completion of cold calls greatly impact achievements on this Measure. It is believed that this is what caused the extreme variances especially in Feb and Sept. Overall, as the average achievement on this Measure was 23.18% on a target of 15.8%, the target was met and exceeded for 2016.

Similar to Measure 2 Percentage of Caseload with Employment Earnings, efforts to increase the employability of clients are the focus of both the Case Management and Employment Teams. As noted further on in this plan, there are various initiatives underway to facilitate the proper matching of clients to job opportunities through the Social Services Employment Database, collaboration of the Employment Services Table, the separation of the caseload into distinct service categories based on a recipients distance from the labour market and Social Services partnerships with Canadore College, the Chamber of Commerce and North Bay Economic Development to name just a few. Maximizing the use of the employment supports and benefits available under the Ontario Works Program are also promoted to

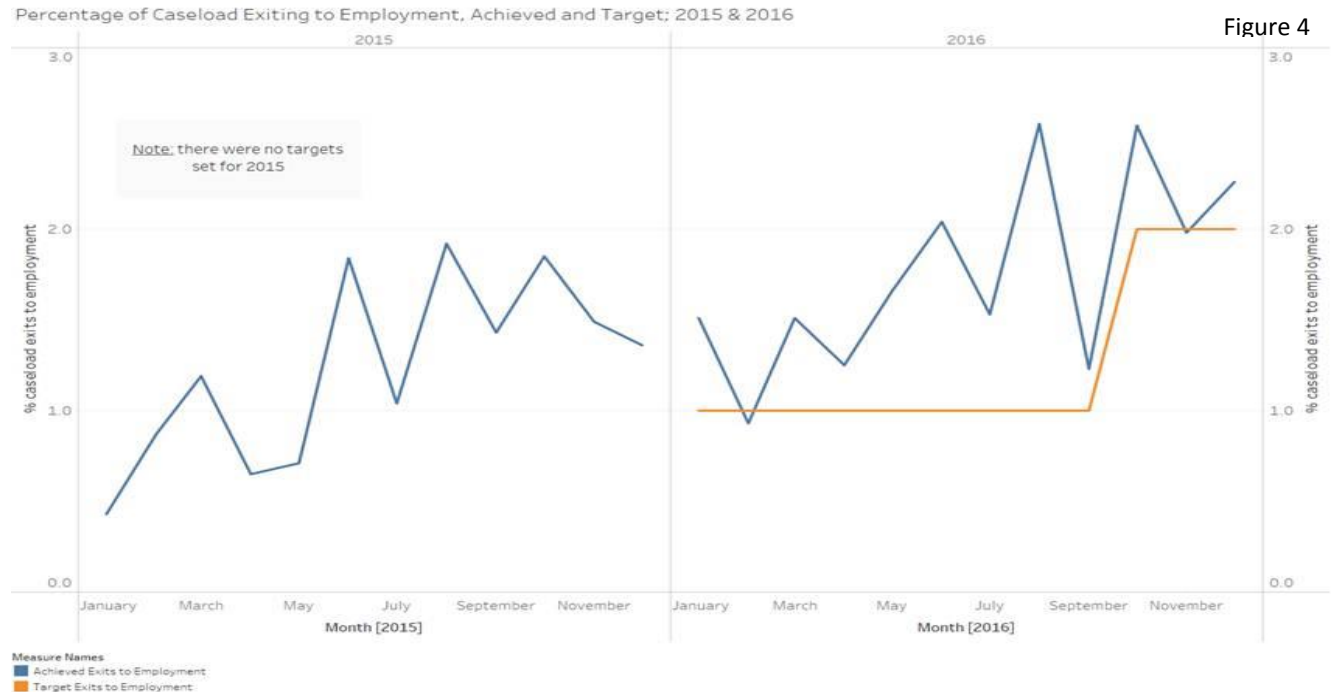


ensure that clients have what they need to assist them as they transition from social assistance dependency to self-sufficiency through employment.

As explained in previous Service Plans but remains relevant, is that this Outcome Measure continues to be impacted by the data integrity issues and/or legislative changes intended to promote poverty reduction. The following list represents a few of the factors that have the potential to skew outcomes that must be taken into consideration when determining the overall effectiveness of current service strategies:

1. Outcomes for clients that have secured employment and do not submit an income reporting statement are hidden in other termination reasons such as “failure to submit IRS” rather than “voluntary withdrawal Employed”.
2. Earnings/Flat Rate exemptions that allows social assistance recipients to earn more and remain eligible for Ontario Works assistance thus creating longer term dependency;
3. Increase in the Ontario Works asset limits which can also potentially allow clients to remain eligible;
4. Changes to how self-employment income is treated

Figure 4 below now illustrates overall performance relative to the achievement of targets for the previous planning cycle on **Measure 4 – Percentage of Caseload Exiting to Employment**. You will notice that targets were not set on this measure for 2015, as this measure is new to the Service Planning Process.



As shown, the lowest level achieved on this measure was in January 2015 (0.43%) with the highest achievement recorded at 2.58% in August 2016. As this is a new outcome being measured, Social Services will need to monitor performance on this Measure closely in order to evaluate how it responds to service delivery strategies and performs in relation to the other outcome measures. It will also be interesting to see how correlated the outcomes on this Measure are with Measure 3 – Percentage of Terminations Exiting to Employment and with the overall caseload fluctuations and seasonal trends.

For 2016, the following targets were set on this Measure through the Addendum: Quarter 1, 1.01%; Quarter 2, 1.01%; Quarter 3, 1.01%; and Quarter 4, 2.01%. As you can see, targets were met in all but 2 months (Feb, Nov). As shown, outcomes varied from a high of 2.58% in Aug to a low of 0.93% in Feb. Further analysis on the reason(s) for this extreme variance will be required. As the overall average achievement on this Measure was 1.75% on an average targeted achievement of 1.26%, this target was met for 2016.

It is anticipated that this Measure will be impacted by the same strategies, data integrity issues and poverty reduction changes noted above under Measure 3 - Percentage of Exits Exiting to Employment. For this reason and in an attempt to keep this Plan as concise as possible, this information will not be repeated here.

2.2 External Influences: PEST (Political, Economic, Social, Technological)

The PEST framework continues to be useful for considering external environmental factors that DNSSAB has no control over but which, could influence OW operations, direction, performance, and outcomes, during the two-year service plan period:

Political

- The end of the service planning period will be marked by provincial and municipal elections in the fall of 2018. The lead-up to the elections is expected to start around the fall of 2017, where the respective political parties and municipal candidates will start communicating their public policy and fiscal views. These political activities could affect social services planning and implementation during the period.

Economic /Fiscal

- Ontario’s average economic growth (GDP) is projected at 2.2% annually over 2017 and 2018. The province is also forecasting average annual employment growth of 1.1% and decreasing unemployment, from 6.4% to 6.2% over the same period.
- An increase in the general minimum wage, from \$11.25 to \$11.40/hour, came into effect during the last quarter of 2016 and the wage will be increased again – to \$11.60 /hour – in October 2017. The net impact of the wage increase on the local economy after considering other variables and



relationships (including labour force, education, and social assistance participation; business hiring /employment; income) remains largely unknown, especially at the local level.

Social

- In the fall of 2016, social assistance rates were increased by 1.5% for *families* (OW basic needs and shelter amounts) and \$25/ month for *singles without children* (basic needs). Another rate increase of 2.0% will also occur in the fall of 2017.
- A significant change in provincial social policy has resulted in the exemption of child support payments from the calculation of social assistance benefits. The change took effect in January 2017 and may have an impact on the Ontario Works caseload.
- Starting in January, 2018, the social assistance *allowable asset limits* will be increased (to \$10,000 from \$2,500 and for couples, to \$15,000 from \$5,000) which could lead to an increase in the OW caseload. Additionally, the income exemption for cash gifts will be increased to \$10,000 from \$6,000 per year in both ODSP and Ontario Works.
- Another significant policy change is the introduction of the Ontario Student Grant starting in the 2017–18 school year. Under this program, the average postsecondary tuition will be free and student financial assistance will also increase for middle-income families. This could have an impact on N-PREP enrolment in the final year of the pilot program, and also the general OW caseload in the years to follow.
- The province is going ahead with the Basic Income Pilot which will commence in the spring of 2017. While this is a three-year pilot to test the efficacy of a minimum income level, the pilot findings and results could start affecting social assistance policy, planning and delivery in Ontario, before the end of the pilot.
- Closely related to the above, the provincial government has also established the Income Security Reform Working Group, and working groups with First Nations and urban Indigenous partners. These groups will assist the province in “the development of a multi-year roadmap for an income security system that is based on equity, adequacy, sustainability and simplicity”. A report with recommendations is anticipated before the end of 2017.

Technological

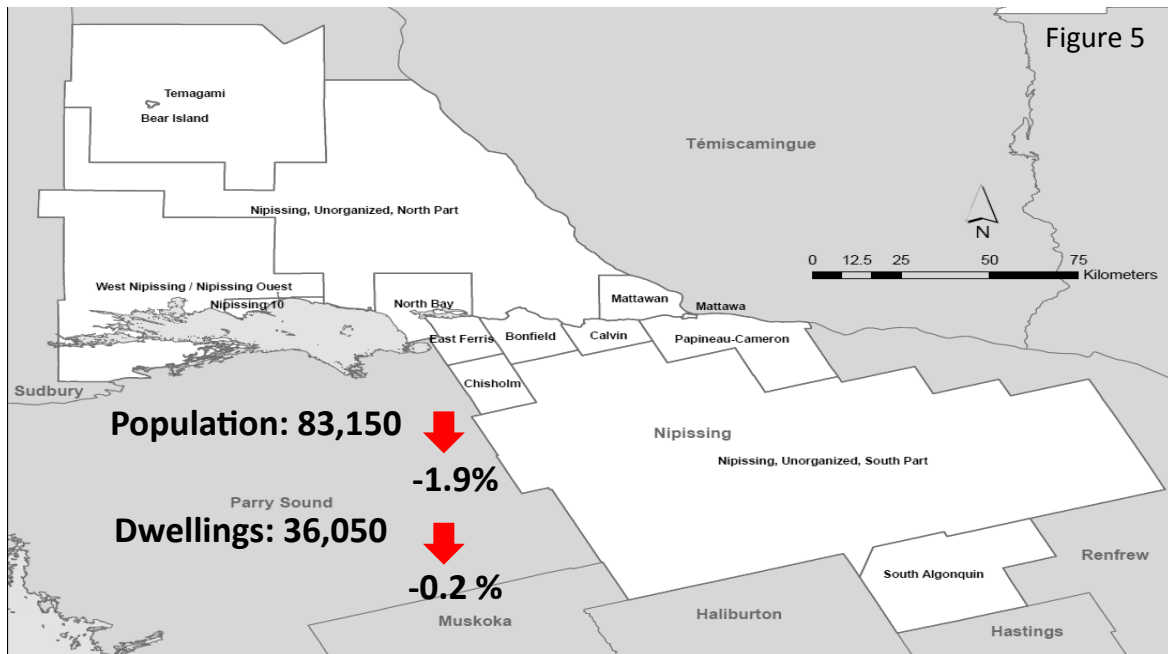
- In the spring of 2016, the province introduced a debit card system to replace ODSP cheques for clients who do not have a bank account or direct bank deposit. This helps to remove the stigma associated with ‘welfare’ cheques. It is expected that this will also be implemented for OW clients sometime during the planning period.

2.3 Demographic and Socioeconomic Summary

2.3.1 Demographic Summary

The following is an update on Nipissing District’s population and dwelling counts, based on the Statistics Canada 2016 census data. It can be noted that at the time of this writing, this is the only census data that has been released by Statistics Canada and analyzed by staff. The remaining census data will be released throughout the remainder of the year, and will be included in the next OW service plan addendum in July, 2018 (Note: census age and sex data will have been released during the writing of this plan but without enough time for data analysis and inclusion in the plan).

2.3.1.1 NIPISSING DISTRICT POPULATION AND DWELLINGS 2016



Based on the 2016 census, Nipissing District has a population of about 83,000 people who live in 36,000 private dwellings ‘occupied by usual residents’ (giving an average household size of 2.3 persons/household). This represents 15.0% of Northeastern Ontario’s population and private dwellings respectively, and 0.7% of Ontario’s (The share of population and dwellings is often the same, or very close, at most levels of geography).

The district’s population is down 2.0% (-1,600 people) from the 2011 census while the number of dwellings is down just under zero. On the population front this is not surprising when looking at the district’s historic trend. Nipissing District’s population has basically been stationary and ebbs and flows with each census period by +/- 2.5% (apart from a 7.0% growth spike between 1986 and 1991). For example, looking back 30 years to 1986, the district’s census population has been somewhere between 79,000 and 85,000. On the dwelling front however, the above is surprising as it marks the reversal of a



25-year growth trend. Between 1986 and 2011 - despite the population ebbing and flowing as described above - the number of private dwellings in the district has increased with each census period. So, the recent decrease since 2011 marks a significant turning point.

2.3.1.2 NIPISSING DISTRICT MUNICIPALITIES AND AREAS POPULATION 2016

Figure 6 below shows the population distribution for Nipissing District’s municipalities, First Nations, and unincorporated areas.

North Bay is the district’s main population centre with 51,500 people, accounting for about two-thirds of the district’s population. West Nipissing is the next largest centre with a population of 14,365 (17.0% of district) followed by East Ferris with 4,750 people (5.5% of district). It can be noted that East Ferris’s population count is presently under review for accuracy by Statistics Canada.

Nipissing District Municipalities and Areas, Population 2016

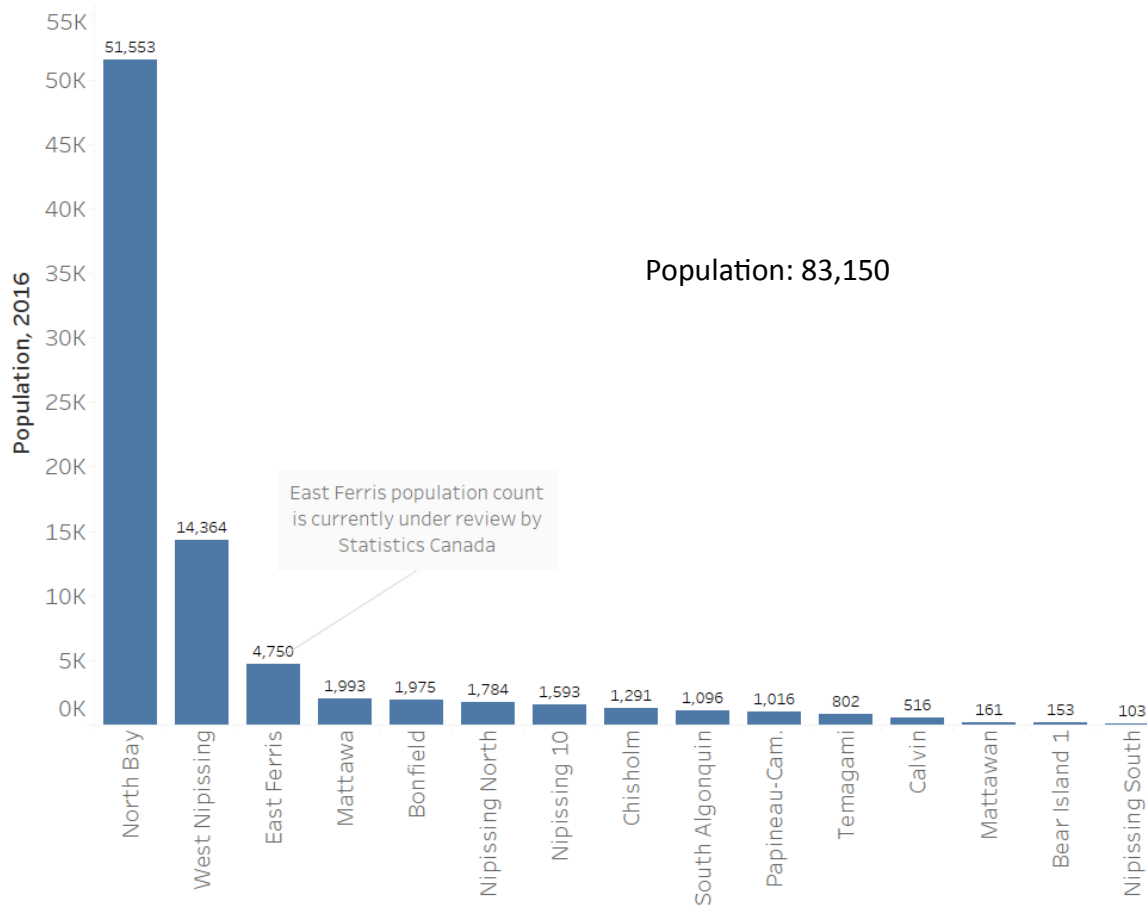


Figure 6

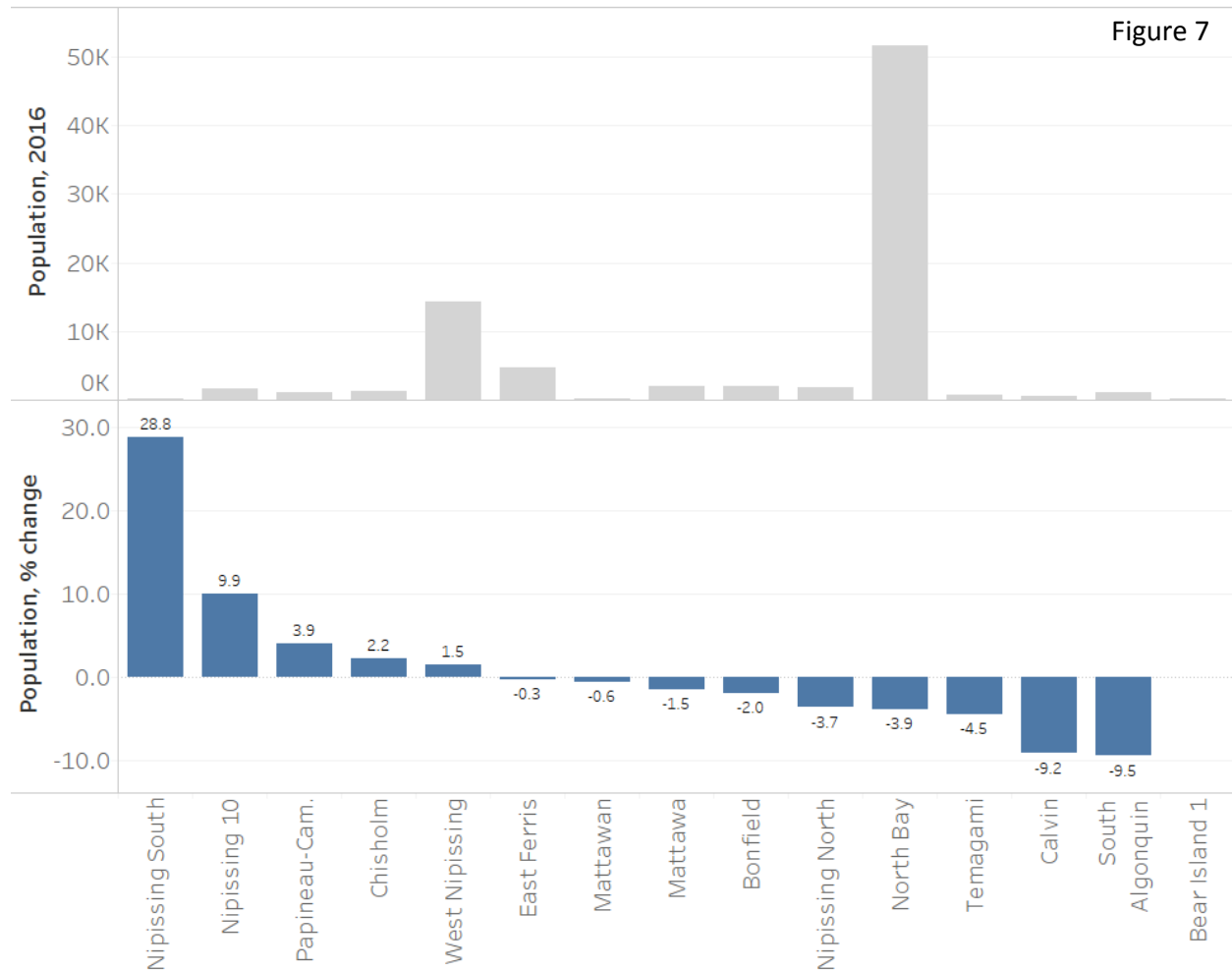
As noted on the chart, the remaining municipalities and areas account for the remaining 11.5% of the district’s population and range from about 100 people in unincorporated Nipissing South to just under 2,000 in Mattawa and Bonfield.



Population Change: 2011-2016

The chart below shows the relative change in population in the respective municipalities and areas, between the 2011 and 2016 census periods. The data is presented in descending order starting with the area that had the largest population growth percentage (the population chart is also shown above the change chart for added reference).

Population Change 2011-2016: Nipissing District Municipalities and Areas



It can be noted that five of the areas in the district had population growth while the others had decline (Bear Island was not enumerated in 2011 so there is no data available). However, the combined population growth (447 people) of these areas was not enough to offset the loss (-2,460) in the others, resulting in a net population decrease for the district.

Unincorporated Nipissing South posted the highest growth in Nipissing District at just under 30.0%. However, as the area has a small population of 100 people, this equates to less than 25 people and needs



to be kept in perspective. The Nipissing 10 Reserve had the next largest increase in population (10.0% or 143 people), followed by Papineau-Cameron (4.0%; 38 people), Chisholm (2.0%; 28 people) and West Nipissing at 1.5% (215 people).

On the population-decline side, East Ferris and Mattawan show a slight drop in population of less than one percent. As mentioned earlier however, East Ferris’s population count is currently being reviewed by Statistics Canada (East Ferris has posted population growth over the past five census periods or more, so this is likely an undercount).

During the five year period, Mattawa and Bonfield experienced population declines in the 1.5 - 2.0% range, or about 30-40 people each. These municipalities were followed by Nipissing North, North Bay and Temagami who experienced declines in the 3.5-4.5% range. In absolute terms, this represents a population decrease of 69 and 38 people respectively in Nipissing North and Temagami, and 2,100 people in North Bay (North Bay accounts for 85.0% of the district’s total population decline between 2011 and 2016).

Finally, Calvin and South Algonquin posted the largest relative population loss in Nipissing District, in the 9.0% range (-52 and – 115 people respectively).

2.3.1.3 NIPISSING DISTRICT MUNICIPALITIES AND AREAS DWELLINGS 2016

Figure 8

Population and Dwelling Counts 2016: Nipissing District Municipalities and Areas

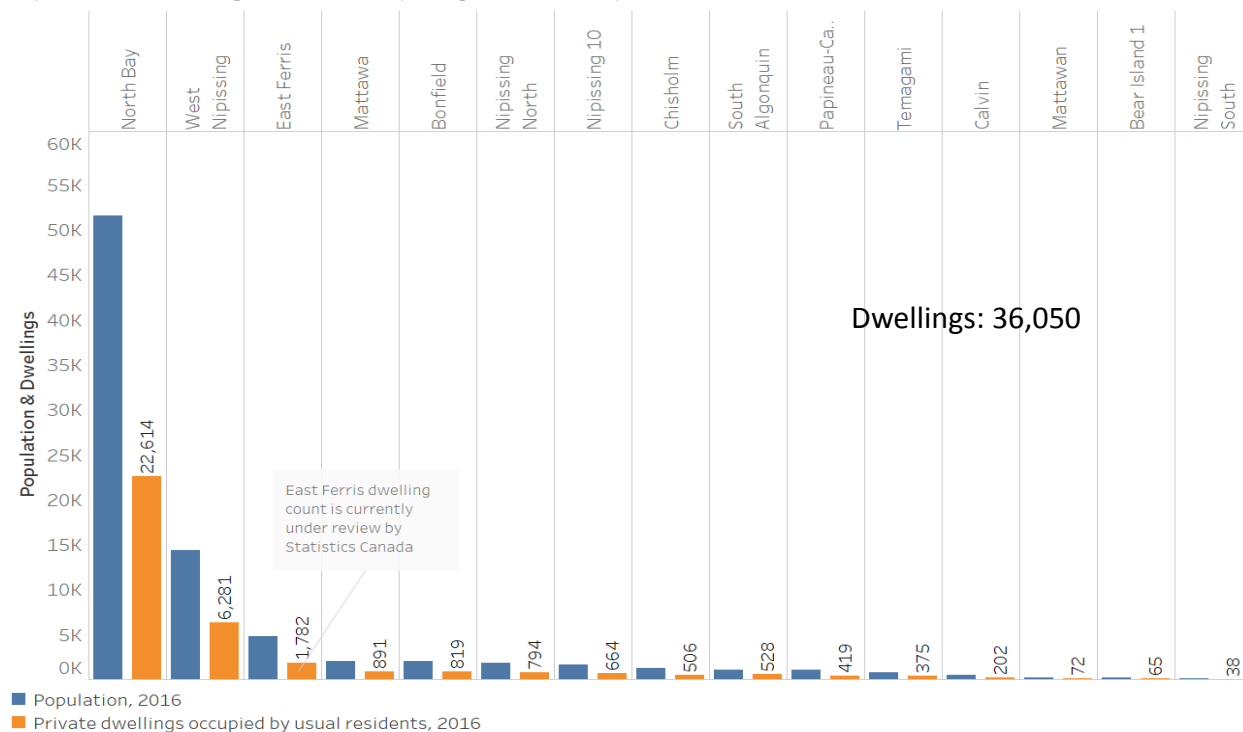
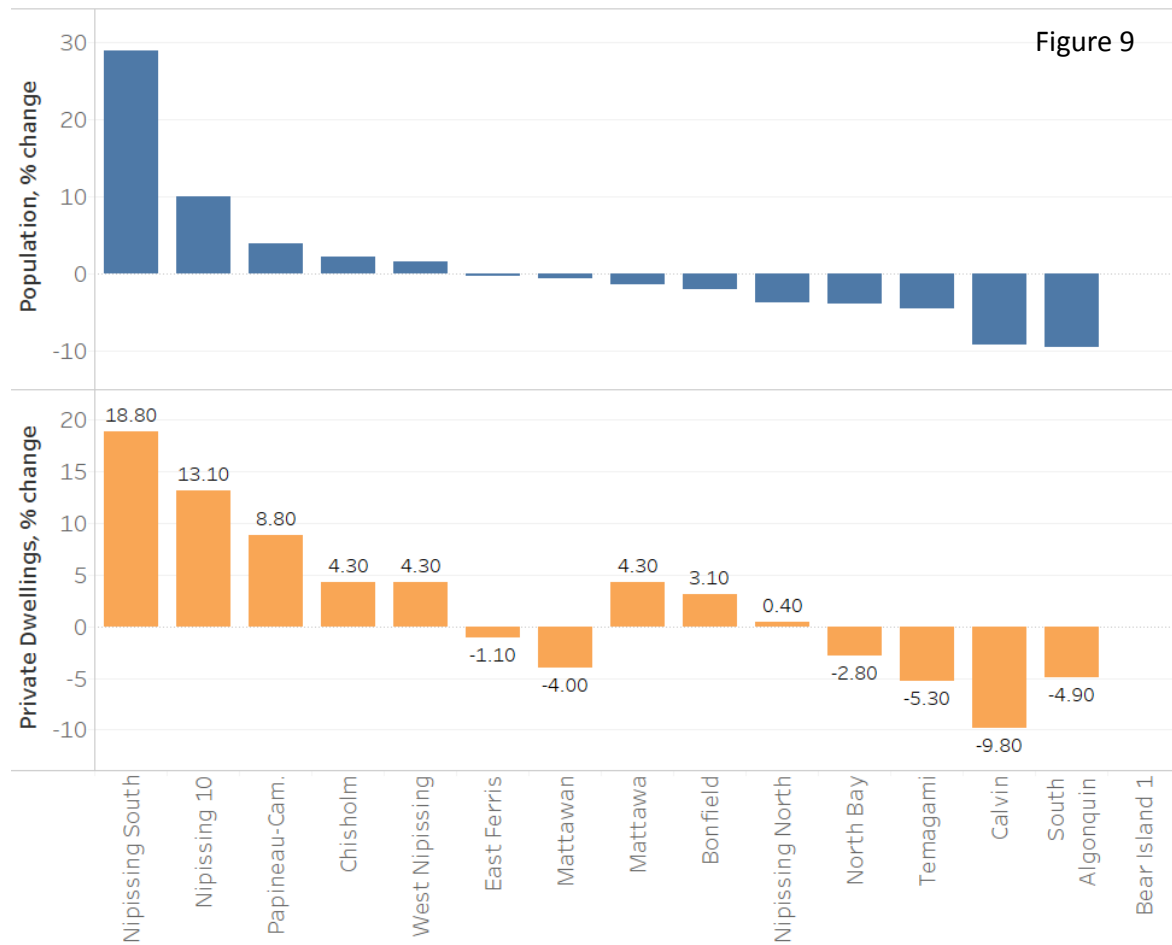


Figure 8 on the previous page shows the distribution of dwellings along with population. As noted, the distribution of dwellings throughout the district closely follows that of population. The analysis shows that the municipalities and areas have the same share of the district’s dwellings as they do population (within 0.2%). The notable exceptions are North Bay which has proportionately more dwellings, and East Ferris which has proportionately fewer dwellings (Note: in addition to the population count, East Ferris’ dwelling count is also under review by Statistics Canada so the dwelling count may not be accurate). However, what isn’t the same in all cases is the rate of growth between population and households which is described below.

Dwelling Change: 2011-2016

The figure below shows the relative change in the number of dwellings since 2011 across the municipalities and areas, in view of the population change over the same period:

Dwelling and Population Change 2011-2016: Nipissing District Municipalities and Areas



It can be noted that in about half the cases, the relative growth in dwellings is greater than the growth in population, or as the case may be, the decrease in dwellings is slower than the decrease in population. This is particularly evident for Nipissing 10, Papineau-Cameron, Chisholm, West Nipissing, North Bay and South Algonquin. Another way of thinking about this is, the number of dwellings is growing faster than the people living in them, or, slower than the people leaving them as in the case with North Bay and South Algonquin. In some cases the opposite occurs where population growth is greater than dwelling growth (Nipissing South) or population decrease is slower than dwelling decrease (Mattawan and Temagami).

Additionally, there are municipalities where the change in dwellings is in the opposite direction to the change in population. For example, Mattawa, Bonfield and Nipissing North – despite population loss – still posted dwelling growth.

The above reflects household and population growth/decline phenomena which are indicative of certain demographic and household trends underway in the respective municipalities and areas. In some cases this growth/decline differs from the average or mainstream patterns and trends.

2.3.2 Socioeconomic Summary

The previous Ontario Works Service Plan 2015-2016 provided a socioeconomic summary of Nipissing District based on the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) data. As mentioned above, the 2016 Census of Population has since been completed by Statistics Canada and will offer a socioeconomic update from the NHS. However, as only the above population and dwelling counts have been released by Statistics Canada and analyzed by staff, the remaining census data will be included in the next service plan addendum.

2.4 Caseload Description

Note: Unless otherwise stated the following OW data is sourced from Ontario Works Caseload at a Glance (Nipissing DSSAB), April 2017; PRAB (Policy Research and Analysis Branch).

2.4.1 OW Beneficiaries

As at March 2017 there are 3,818 Ontario Works (OW) Beneficiaries in Nipissing District. Most (62.0% or 2,365) of the beneficiaries are the Primary Recipients and make up the 'OW caseload'. The remaining beneficiaries are *dependent children* (1,233 or 32.2%), *spouses* (171, or 4.5%), or *adults* (49, or 1.3%).

The number of OW beneficiaries in the district remained fairly steady over the previous service plan period (2015-16) with a relatively small increase of 3.5% (134 beneficiaries). A more detailed description of the caseload trend is given at the end of the section.

2.4.2 Family Household type

As mentioned above, there are 2,365 Primary Recipients on the Nipissing District caseload. The family household types of the recipients are shown in the table on the following page.

Table 2. Family Household Type	#	%
Singles without children	1,586	67.0
Singles with children	608	25.7
Couples with children	121	5.1
Couples without children	50	2.1
Total	2,365	99.9

The family household composition is similar to that reported in the last service plan with some small differences. Single recipients continue to represent the largest household type, accounting for a little over two-thirds of the caseload (up from 64.5% in the previous plan). Lone parents or ‘singles with children’ make up another quarter of the caseload which is down slightly from the previous plan (27.5%). The remainder (7.2%) of the caseload is comprised of couples with, and without, children which is also down slightly from the previous planning period (8.5%).

So, over the course of the previous two-year planning period there was little change of significance in the above family household composition. And in comparison to the provincial caseload, Nipissing continues to have a greater share of singles, and fewer lone-parents and couples with children.

2.4.3 Age of Dependent Children

The table below shows the general age groups of the *youngest child at home* for the OW singles and couples with children (above):

Table 3. Age of Youngest Child	#	%
< 5 years	428	58.7
6 -12 years	198	27.2
13 – 17 years	79	10.8
18 years ≥	24	3.3
Total	729	100.0



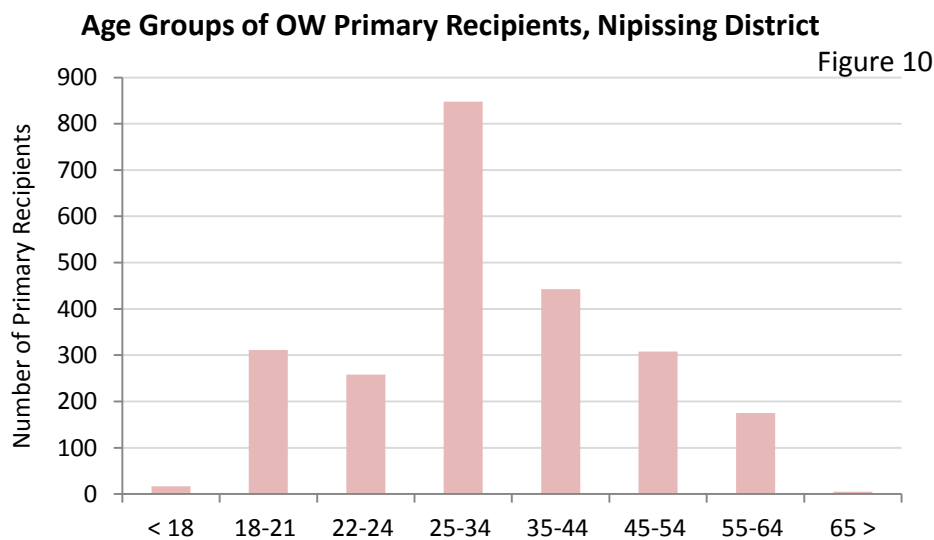
Close to 60.0% of the OW singles and couples with children have at least one child that is 5 years of age or younger, while a further 27.0% have a child that is between the ages of 6- 12 years. Thus, 87.0% of the OW caseload with children, have children that are 12 years of age or younger which signals a relatively young group of families. The remaining OW recipients with children have at least one child that is between the ages of 13-17 years (10.8%) and one that is 18 years or older (3.3%).

There has been little change of significance in the number of children in the above age groups, over the previous planning period. On average, the number of OW recipients with children in the 6-12 years age group increased 10.7% (19 recipients) over the period which is something to note.

In comparing the above age-groups with the provincial caseload, a larger percentage of Nipissing OW recipients have children that are 5 years of age or younger, while a smaller percentage have children in the other age-groups.

2.4.4 General Age Groups

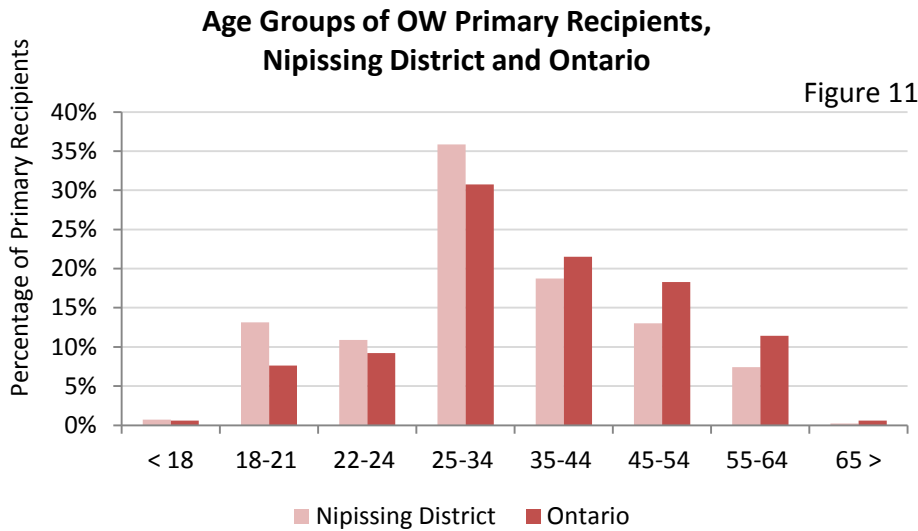
The figure below shows the age distribution of the Nipissing OW caseload by general 10-year age groups:



Approximately one quarter of the caseload is 24 years of age or younger while another 36.0% is between the ages of 24 and 34 years. The 35-44 age-group accounts for 18.5% of the caseload while older adults ages 45-64 years represent a further 20.5% of the caseload. A very small number of the primary recipients are 65 years of age or older (while senior citizens leave OW at the age of 65 for other government support programs, these recipients could be in transition depending when their birthday is, etc.).

Over the course of the previous two-year planning period the caseload experienced a -6.0% decrease in recipients 24 years of age or younger, and a 5.0% increase in those between the ages of 25-54. The

largest relative increase was in the 55-64 age-group (15.3% or 23 recipients). As reported in previous service plans, the Nipissing caseload continues to be younger on average than the provincial caseload as shown in Figure 11 below (Note: due to data availability, the provincial data is for Sept. 2016 while the Nipissing data is for March 2017):



As mentioned earlier, 25.0% of Nipissing’s caseload is 24 years of age or younger, versus 17.5% for the province. The 25-34 age-group is also significantly higher in Nipissing District compared to the provincial caseload (36.0% vs. 31.0%).

Turning to the older recipients, it can be noted from the chart that Nipissing has relatively fewer recipients in all the older age groups. In total, about 40.0% of the district’s caseload is age 35 years or over, vs. 52.0% for the province.

2.4.5 Education

The broad education levels of the OW Primary Recipients are shown in the table below:

Table 4.Education	#	%
Grade 1 - 8	89	3.8
Grade 9 - 11	938	40.0
Grade 12 - 13	738	31.3
Post-Secondary	590	25.0
Total	2,355	100.0

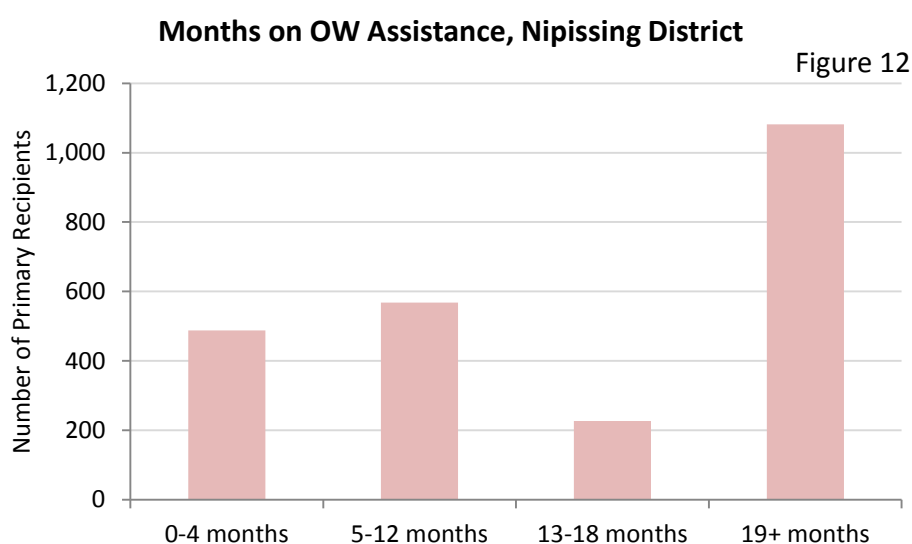


One-quarter of the OW caseload has post-secondary education, although it is unknown (from this dataset) what the extent of that education is. Close to another one-third of the caseload has completed high school (including grade 13 under the previous education system) while the remainder (44.0%) have not completed high school.

The above education levels are basically the same as reported in the previous service plan, and there has been little change over the course of the previous two-year planning period. Of note however, there has been a small increase in recipients who have completed high school or have post-secondary education (about 3.5%).

2.4.6 Months on OW Assistance

Presently, the average time on OW assistance in Nipissing District is a little over two years. Figure 12 below shows the distribution by general groups of monthly assistance:



Approximately 46.0% (or 1,082) of the recipients have been on the caseload for 19 months or more, followed by 9.5% who have been on for between 13–18 months. The remaining 44.5% have been on for 12 months or less.

Over the course of the previous planning period, there has been a shift towards recipients staying on social assistance longer. Between 2016-2017 there was a 19.5% increase in the number of recipients on assistance 19+ months, and a -7.5% decrease in the number of recipients on assistance 18 months or less.

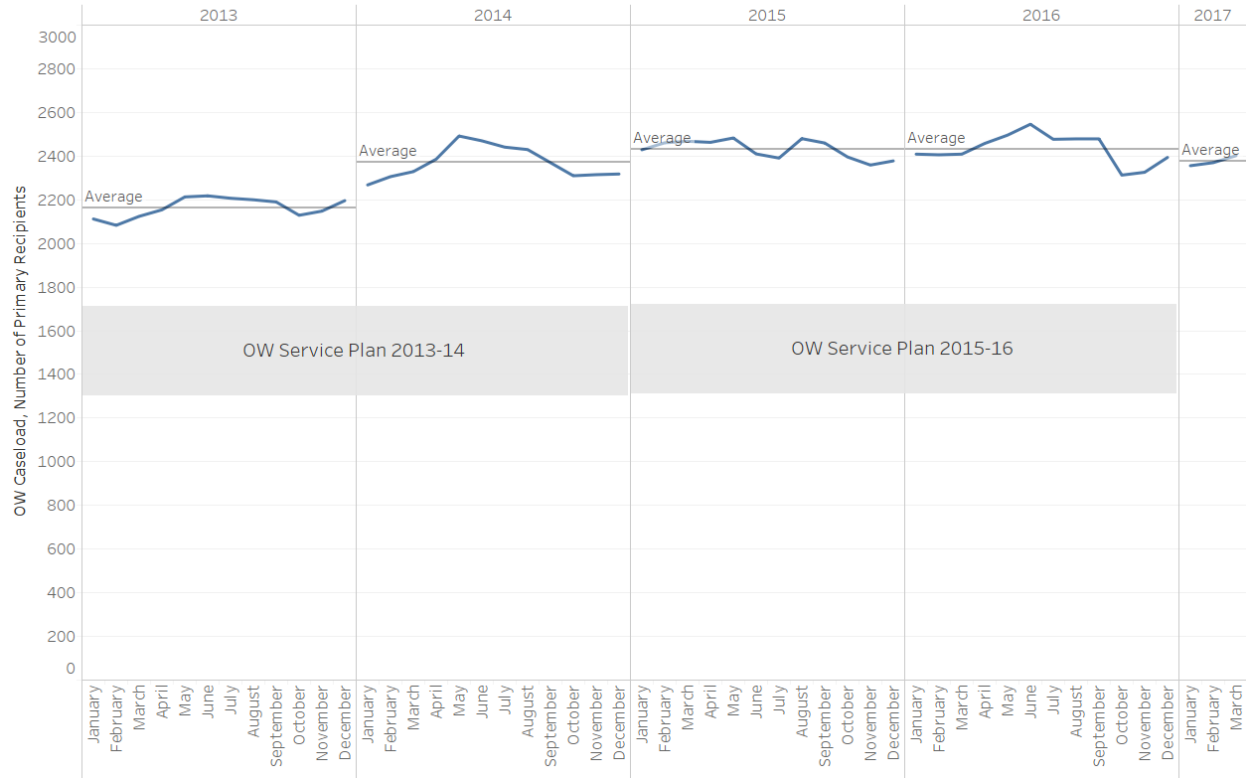
In comparison to Ontario, OW recipients spend 30.0% less time on social assistance in Nipissing District (34 months vs. 24 months respectively). Nipissing also has relatively fewer recipients on assistance for 19 months or longer than Ontario (46.0% vs. 52.0%) and more recipients on assistance for 18 months or less (54.0% vs. 48.0%).

2.4.7 OW Caseload Trend

The figure below shows Nipissing District’s OW caseload trend over the past two service plan periods. The caseload is shown by month, and the years are separated out to highlight and compare the annual caseload variation and patterns:

Figure 13

Ontario Works Caseload, Nipissing District: Service Plan Period 2013-14 and 2015-16



Data source: DNSSAB Social Service Program Updates. **Note:** The above monthly caseload counts include emergency cases so are higher than the MCSS quarterly counts over the same period.

During the recent planning period the OW caseload hit a high of about 2,550 recipients in June 2016 which is the highest since the global recession in October, 2008. The caseload appears to have finally leveled off however, with the average number of recipients (2,432) holding steady throughout the two-year period. In comparison, the previous planning period (2013-14) was marked by a significant caseload increase from one year to the next, marked by a 9.5% jump in the average number of recipients (2,165 in 2013 to 2,370 in 2014).

It is also interesting to note the difference in caseload variability within – and between – the OW service plan periods. For example, on average, the caseload varied by 66 recipients in 2016 vs. 41 recipients in 2015 (and 70 recipients in 2014 vs. 43 in 2013). In looking at the chart above, the difference in annual trends and seasonal patterns between planning years is also evident, but do not seem as consistent as in the past. Historically, the OW caseload has increased through the winter in to late spring, when it then

starts to decrease. The caseload decreases through the summer and into the fall, when it starts increasing again into the winter, before starting to repeat the cycle. In looking at the above planning periods however, the seasonal component has not been as clear or consistent year-to-year. Granted, the caseload is still following the general pattern described above but not as strong as in the past.

2.5 Local Labour Market

2.5.1 Labour Force Unemployment and Participation Rates

Notes

As stated in the previous Ontario Works service plan, unemployment data is not available for Nipissing District other than once every five years through the national census. The 2016 census labour force data will be released in November 2017 and can be included in the next service plan addendum along with the other census demographic and socioeconomic data.

Also mentioned in previous plans, labour force data for North Bay is available on a monthly basis through Statistics Canada's monthly Labour Force Survey. The data continues to be of weak quality, especially the unemployment rate which has a large standard error and coefficient of variation. In view of this however, and messy data aside, the local unemployment rate continues to be a key indicator of labour force and economic conditions. Thus, it is being included in the analysis of this service plan along with the margin of error for important and necessary context. In this manner, local unemployment can be interpreted cautiously and for what it is, while still providing insight into local economic conditions (North Bay's participation rate is also being included as another key labour force indicator).

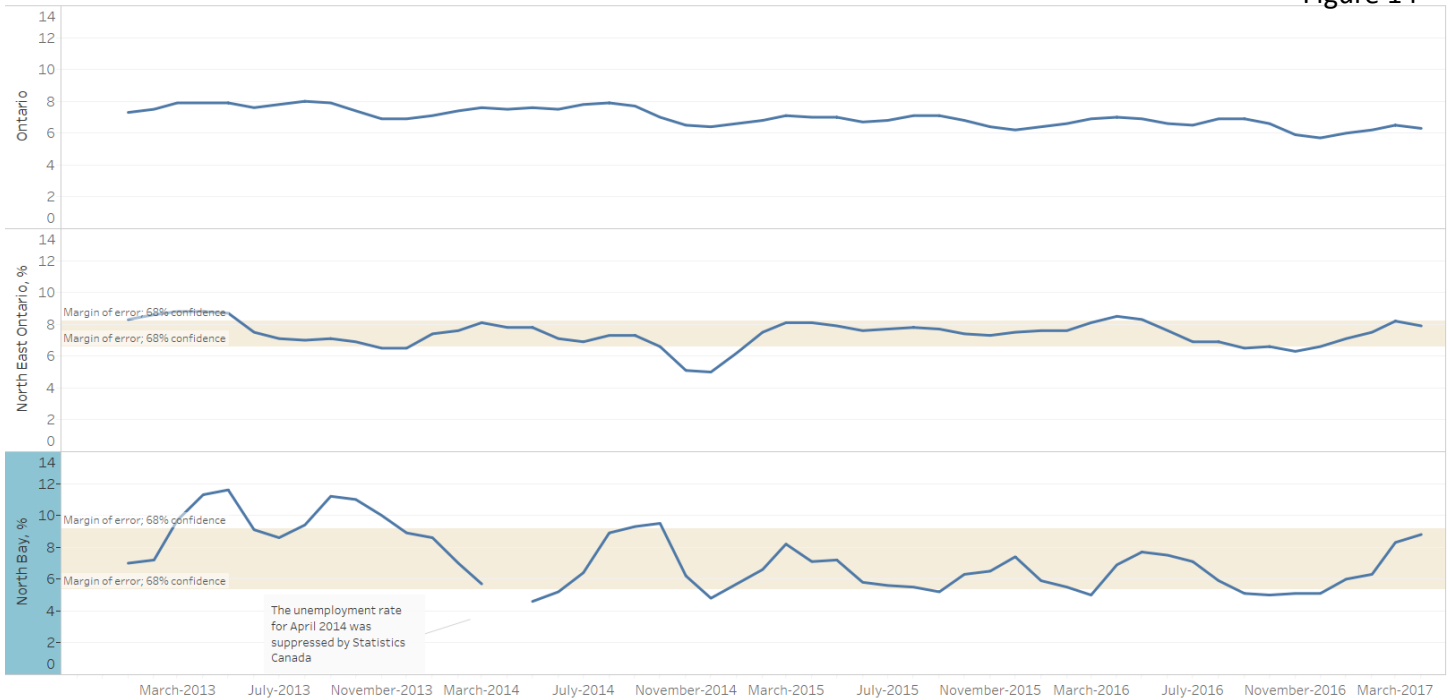
2.5.1.1 UNEMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rate for Ontario, Northeast Ontario, and North Bay is shown in the figure on the following page, going back to January 2013 which covers the previous two OW service plan periods. The line charts for Northeast Ontario and North Bay also show the margin of error for the unemployment estimate at a 68% confidence level –as noted, the variability in the sample data increases significantly moving from the province (basically non-existent) to the economic region, down to the city level.³

³ The margin of error is a function of the sample's standard deviation divided by the square root of the sample size, so smaller samples (i.e., North Bay) invariably result in more variability and error. For the above data, Ontario's average standard error is 0.2, Northeast Ontario's is 0.7 and North Bay's is 1.8 (increasing confidence to 95% doubles the margin of error).

Unemployment Rate in Ontario, North East Ontario and North Bay, 2013-2017 (April)

Figure 14



Data Source: Statistics Canada CANSIM Table 282-0122 (accessed May 9, 2017). Unadjusted for seasonality, 3-month moving average. North Bay data from the Statistics Canada monthly Labour Force Survey subscription.

During the two OW service planning periods above (2013-14 /2015-16), Ontario’s unemployment rate averaged 7.0% but varied from a high of 8.0% earlier in the period (Aug, 2013) to a low of 5.7% more recently (Dec. 2016). As noted by the chart, provincial unemployment has been trending downward over the period, helped by a significant drop during the fall of 2014 from 7.9% to 6.4%.

On average, provincial unemployment was lower (6.7%) during the previous OW planning period 2015-16 than the preceding period (7.5% in 2013-14). However, as noted earlier, Nipissing’s caseload was relatively high during this same period so Ontario’s stronger employment economy did not translate into a positive OW effect at the local level (in fact, in comparing the previous caseload trend chart with Ontario’s unemployment trend above, the two moved in opposite directions during 2015-16).

Switching to Northeast Ontario, the average unemployment rate in the region was a little higher (7.4%) than the province over the same period, with an average variation of ± 0.7%, two-thirds of the time. It can be noted that most of the unemployment movement was within the margin of error so could be either statistical noise, real change, or a bit of both.⁴ Periods of statistical significance in the Northeast are

⁴ Generally, movements inside the margin of error could be due to real changes in unemployment, or statistical/sampling variability, or both. Movements outside the margin are considered statistically significant and are likely the result of a real change in unemployment.

during the first half of 2013 when unemployment was high (8.3% - 8.8 %) and in the fall of 2014 when, following the provincial pattern, the rate dropped off considerably (from 7.3% to 5.0%). Unlike the province however - which continued trending downwards after the above drop – the unemployment rate in Northeastern Ontario increased to the 8.0% range by the spring of 2015 and has remained elevated since that time (currently sitting around 8.0% as at April, 2017).

As mentioned earlier, North Bay’s unemployment rate needs to be interpreted with caution due to the wide margin of error and variability in the data as noted on the chart.⁵ However, when viewed in proper context and alongside other datasets such as those for the province and region, the data can provide additional insight into local labour market conditions over the previous OW planning periods.

North Bay’s average unemployment rate for the period was between the province and region at 7.2%. Similar to the Northeast region, most of the unemployment movement was within the margin of error and statistically speaking, would be considered non-significant change. Again, it is uncertain whether these fluctuations are real changes in unemployment or noise and bounce from the data variability in the survey sample (or a combination of both). As noted by the chart however, most of 2013 was marked by a significant increase in North Bay’s unemployment rate, rising from 7.2% in February to 11.6% in May. Although the rate then decreased briefly during the summer (but was still relatively high in the 8.0-9.0% range) it was back up to 11.2% by the fall and remained relatively high for the remainder of the year. Other periods of significance are in the spring of 2014 when North Bay’s unemployment decreased to 4.6% and, following the provincial and regional trends, in December 2014 when it dipped below 5.0% again.

Taking the data variability and margin of error into account, North Bay’s unemployment rate during the above two service planning periods, appears to have followed the provincial trend towards a decrease in unemployment. This would generally signal a stronger employment environment. However, as mentioned earlier and in comparing the unemployment and caseload charts (p. 36) this has not correlated with a decreasing OW caseload over the same period – in fact, the opposite is true as the district’s caseload generally increased over the same period.

2.5.1.2 LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

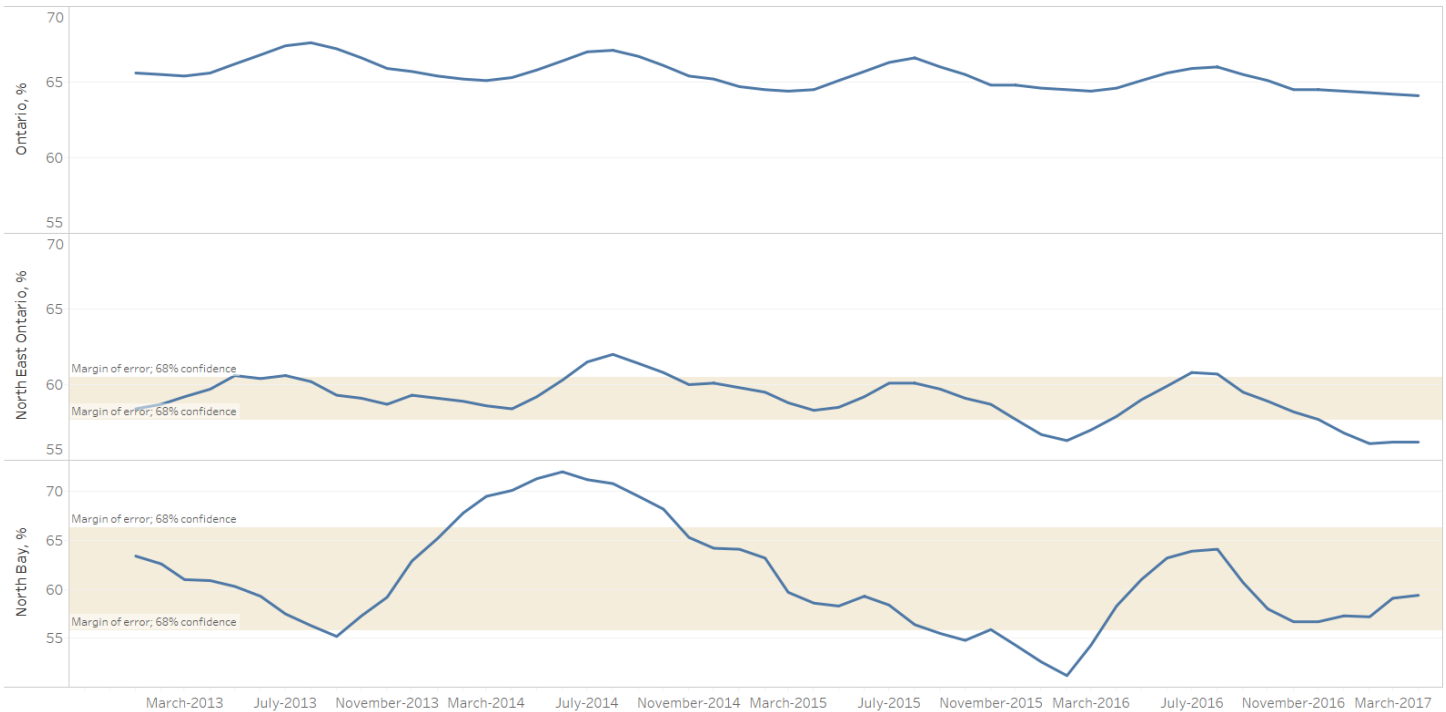
The labour force participation rate is another key indicator which refers to the percentage of the population 15 years and older that is in the workforce and either employed or unemployed.

The chart below shows the labour force participation rate for Ontario, Northeast Ontario and North Bay during the previous two service plan periods. As with the unemployment charts above, the line charts for Northeast Ontario and North Bay also show the margin of error for the participation rate estimate at a 68% confidence level (note: the chart axis has been truncated to emphasize the seasonal pattern).

⁵ For example, taken as a percentage of the estimate, the error averages 25% for the North Bay data during this period.

Participation Rate in Ontario, North East Ontario and North Bay, 2013-2017 (April)

Figure 15



Data Source: Statistics Canada CANSIM Table 282-0122 (accessed May 9, 2017).
 Unadjusted for seasonality, 3-month moving average. North Bay data from the
 Statistics Canada monthly Labour Force Survey subscription.

During the previous two OW planning periods, labour force participation in Ontario averaged 65.5% but varied between 60.0% and 64.0%.

As noted by the chart, provincial labour force participation also has a seasonal component whereby the workforce is at its smallest number in the winter and spring and then starts to build through to the summer. After peaking in late summer (usually around August) the workforce starts becoming smaller again, decreasing through the winter into spring where it reaches its smallest point again (usually around March) – the cycle then repeats itself. It can be noted that the seasonal cycle of the district’s OW caseload described earlier in the plan, is moderately (negatively) correlated with the provincial labour force participation cycle.

It can also be noted from the above that the provincial participation rate has trended downwards over the four-year period, in concert with the decreasing unemployment trend.

During the above period, the average labour force participation in Northeast Ontario was 59.1%, but ranged between 56.0% and 62.0%. This continues to be well below the provincial participation rate and following the historic path of a relatively smaller workforce.

The variability in the Northeast data is for the most part within the margin of sampling error (and if the confidence level is increased to 95.0% then all the data falls within the margin). However, the relatively high increase to 62.0% in the summer-fall of 2014, and the low decrease to 56.3% in the winter-spring appear to be significant changes in Northeast labour force participation outside of the regular seasonal change. Taking the data variability into account, labour force participation in the Northeast appears to have a similar seasonal cycle to the province and is also following the provincial trend over the period with a decreasing workforce.

Looking at North Bay now, interpreting the local labour force participation data also needs to be done cautiously due to the sampling error and relatively wide margin of error. North Bay's average labour force participation rate during the previous two planning periods was 61.0% which falls between the provincial and regional rates noted earlier. However, as noted by the chart, there was considerably more variation from the average than the other areas, swinging from a low of 51.2% to a high of 72.0% during the period. These extremes (high: summer 2014; low: winter 2016) appear to be statistically significant (well outside the margin of error) and correspond with the provincial and regional changes in labour force participation during the same period. This suggests the change was more likely a real change in labour force participation rather than a statistical one from sampling variability.

It's interesting to note that on average, labour force participation in North Bay was significantly lower during the previous OW planning period (2015-16) than the earlier period (2013-14). This correlates reasonably well to the higher OW caseload during the same period (i.e., 2015-16). Overall, North Bay's participation rate appears to have followed the province and region on a downward trend but this somewhat obscured by the statistical noise and variability in the data (as are the seasonal movements).

2.5.3 Industry Structure

As with most of the other 2016 census data, the industry data will not be out until later in the year and can be updated in the next OW addendum. Other industry datasets used in previous OW service plans include Canadian Business Counts (formerly Canadian Business Patterns) which are administrative data from the Statistics Canada Business Register and published twice annually.

An economic update to the Board at the end of the previous service planning period (Nov. 2016) used the Canadian Business Counts data (June 2016) in the analysis. This update shows that there has not been a significant change in the local industry structure since reporting in the previous OW Service Plan 2015-16, taking into account the differences in data sources and measures (although the previous service plan used 2011 census data and measured industry size by labour force participation, the economic update used recent Canadian Business Counts data and measured industry size by the number of businesses and employees).

2.5.4 Future Labour Market and Employment

The previous service plans have reported on occupations that are expected to be in demand based on local studies and evidence. The occupations that are most likely to accommodate OW clients in the future include sales and service; trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations; and accommodation and food services. Occupations in business, finance, and administration will also be well suited to some clients, as will occupations in manufacturing and utilities.

Some of these sectors are currently top job-producers as shown in the table below.

2.5.4.1 TOP SECTORS IN NIPISSING DISTRICT, 2015

The following table shows the top 10 sectors in Nipissing District in 2015, in terms of employment/jobs:

TOP 10 JOB SECTORS IN NIPISSING











NIPISSING			
	NAICS	DESCRIPTION	2015 JOBS
	62	Health care and social assistance	6,869
	44-45	Retail trade	5,701
	91	Public administration	4,624
	61	Educational services	3,529
	72	Accommodation and food services	3,429
	48-49	Transportation and warehousing	2,302
	23	Construction	2,174
	31-33	Manufacturing	2,068
	56	Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	1,759
	54	Professional, scientific and technical services	1,159

Table 5. Source: screenshot from the *Labour Focus*, April 2017; The Labour Market Group.

During the previous OW service planning period, many OW clients found work in the above retail and accommodation and food services sectors – this is expected to continue into the next planning period.



2.6 Community Engagement


As mentioned in Section 1 under Ministry priorities, in order to facilitate successful outcomes for clients and develop models of integrated streamlined and accessible services, Social Services must work to leverage partnerships through collaborative planning. Through referrals to the services offered by community partners, Social Services is able to extend its reach and participants are able to benefit from the wealth of expertise that exists within the broader employment service network. Utilizing third parties as part of a strategy to improve employment outcomes can also help minimize some of the stigma associated with social assistance delivery.

The following table represents some of the community engagement activities Social Services leads and/or participates in with the broader employment services sector:

Table 6. Activity	Purpose
Nipissing Employment Services Table	In 2014, following a DNSSAB led Employment Services Review, a group of over 20 employment service providers committed to form a table where providers could collaborate and strengthen partnerships, streamline referral processes, effectively communicate and share knowledge.
Northern Regional Planning Table (NRPT)	Provincial/Municipal community placement tables were launched in June 2000 in partnership with Ontario Works Branch and the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA), to assist municipalities in meeting Community Placement targets through networking, identifying best practices, strategies and good news stories from all regions. While the composition of the table changed over the years, participants continued to see great value in meeting quarterly to carry on the work of the table with an expanded focus. As a result, DNSSAB has been hosting the NRPT for many years. The revised objective of the table is to strengthen partnerships with local service delivery managers to improve both employment and financial services for clients who need it and reduce the barriers that may stand between them and financial independence.
Public Presentations	Social Services continues to do presentations in the community to any agency that requests it. In fact, both Nipissing University and Canadore College request presentations every year to educate their students in the Social Service Worker and Social Welfare programs. Social Services takes these opportunities to not only educate and inform but also to dispel myths and stereotypes related to social assistance recipients that even those pursuing careers in human services sometimes carry.

<p>Economic Development Engagement</p>	<p>As explained in Section 1, under Ministry Priorities, in 2015 DNSSAB took the lead on engaging Economic Development Organizations to start a conversation. As this session was received well by all, a future engagement session is on the radar for 2017.</p>
<p>CTS Canadian Career College/Cassellholme</p>	<p>In 2016, Social Services met with leadership from both Cassellholme and CTS to discuss a potential partnership on job specific skills training for Homemakers. The conversations continue, however, if deemed viable by all parties involved, this partnership has the potential to not only connect social assistance recipients to employment but also address what is slowly becoming a crisis in healthcare. The lack of PSW's and Homemakers is cause for alarm in an aging population. For CTS this partnership is also beneficial as it increases enrolment into programs. CTS has developed and submitted their proposed curriculum to their Ministry for consideration. If approved, further consultation related to cost and employment outcomes through Cassellholme will move to the next stage. The training will not be OSAP fundable and will be relatively short in duration. An update on the status of this initiative will be provided in the 2018 Addendum.</p>
<p>The Business Centre – Nipissing Parry Sound Inc.</p>	<p>DNSSAB has had an Agreement with the Business Centre for many years to assist OW staff to support clients pursuing self-employment. The Business Centre provides a comprehensive training program that allows participants to explore entrepreneurship, develop a business model and prove its viability. The program further assists participants with sound business skills and learning important networking methods to support the launch and successful growth of their business. All clients receive confidential one-one consultations that go beyond the completion of the program. Participants are invited to attend a variety of workshops and also receive all workshop material on a USB for future reference.</p>
<p>North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce - 100 Jobs Pilot</p>	<p>In early 2017 Social Services launched a new pilot to connect Employers to qualified social assistance recipients both in receipt of OW and ODSP. The Pilot is essentially an extension of the Ontario Works Employment Placement Program delivered by staff at the North Bay Chamber of Commerce</p>



	<p>through a service agreement. Like employment placement, the pilot offers employment incentives to employers seeking skilled labour.</p>
<p>North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce – Get Trained Workers Program</p>	<p>Social Services long standing partnership and Agreement with the North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce’s Get Trained Workers Program (GTW) also brings visibility to the Ontario Works Program albeit at arm’s length. The GTW Coordinator is very active in the community engaging local employers on how the GTW program can help meet their human resource needs. The Coordinator also works one-on-one with job ready clients to ensure that they are prepared both for interviews and potential job offers. This partnership has greatly enhanced DNSSAB’s employment services not only through the successful employment matches made to date, but also through the marketing of clients in receipt of social assistance as an available and skilled pool of labour no different than any other job seeker.</p>
<p>North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce – Get Trained Workers Marketing Campaign</p> 	<p>In an effort to bring more visibility to the Get Trained Workers Program, engage the broader public, employers and promote services, Social Services launched a marketing campaign late in 2016 to engage employers looking for skilled labour. Part of this campaign involves the use of billboards located at various locations across the City of North Bay. An example is shown to the left. Various other strategies both traditional and non-traditional and events using a variety of mediums are scheduled up to year end to further engage and target employer’s district wide.</p>
<p>Nipissing Poverty Reduction through Education Program (N-Prep)</p>	<p>N-Prep as described in Section 1 illustrates how through a collaborative application for funding partners from completely different service sectors can work together to improve employment outcomes for participants.</p>

3.0 PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

3.1 Service Delivery

Continuous improvement and the delivery of quality customer service have always been program goals for Social Services. Over the years, aside from provincially legislated changes, Social Services has gone through various transformations to improve its service delivery model. While many of the changes were successful, several were not. However, regardless of the outcome there were always lessons to be learned from these experiences. One example of a service model change that did not reap the intended results was when Social Services divided case management into two categories: financial and employment. This experience resulted in less efficient customer service as a client’s financial needs simply did not occur in isolation from their employment needs. The previous planning cycle was no exception. Several changes were made during this period to realign and re-profile existing resources to better position the department to perform at an optimal level in all program areas.

The 2015/2016 Service Plan, introduced the concept of separating the caseload into the following employment service categories: Life Stabilization, Preparing for Employment and Job Ready. The work to implement this change started in the previous planning cycle however due to the complexity of transforming the existing service model, the actual division did not occur until 2017. As you will see, other changes were also made to maximize the effectiveness of this new model.

The following table represents the most significant changes that were either started or completed during the previous planning cycle along with the rationale for each change.

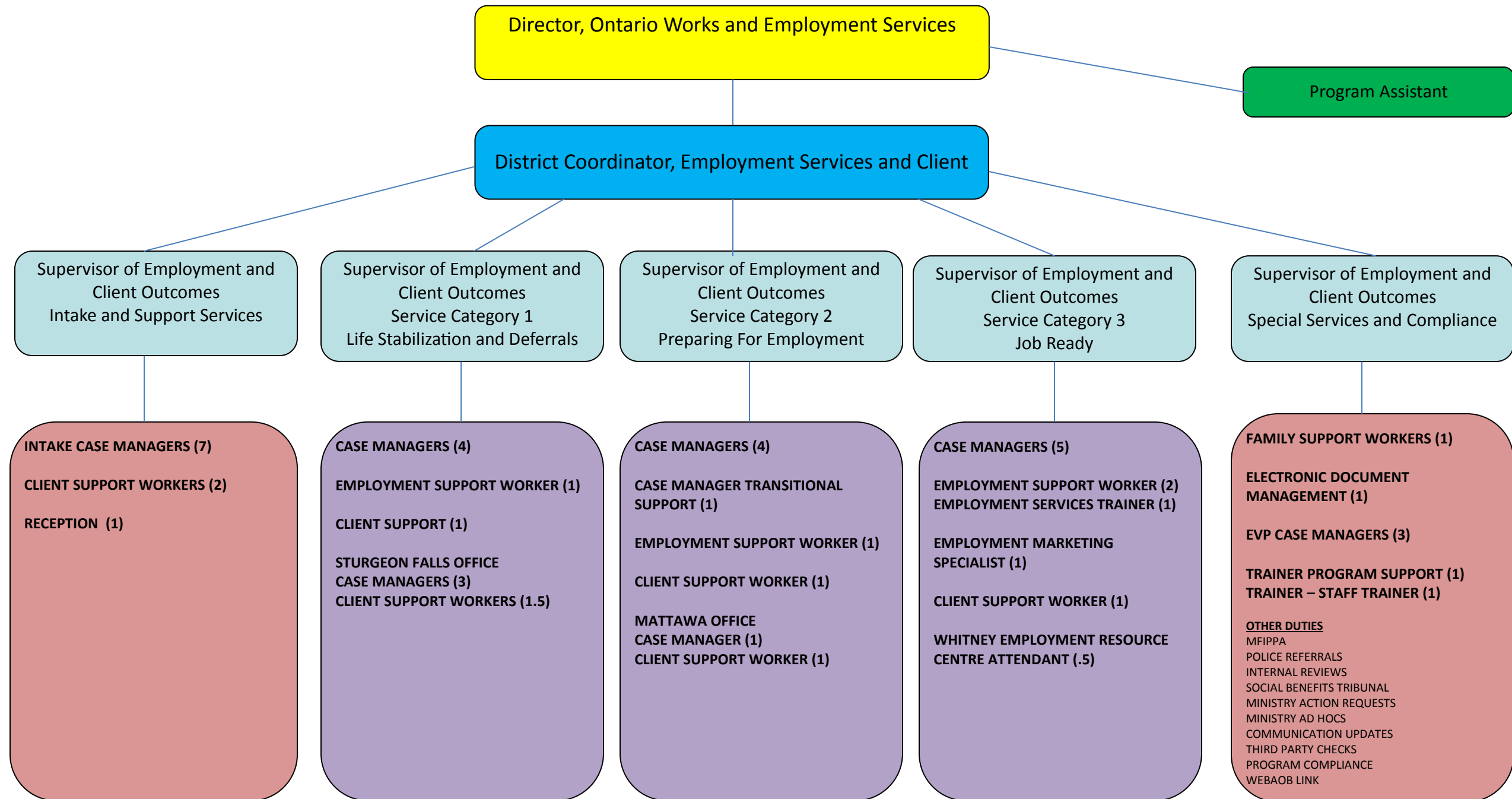
Table 7. Change	Status	Rationale
Elimination of Intake Screener Role and creation of Intake Case Manager role.	Completed in 2016	The scope of an Intake Screeners role was limited. In an effort to expedite the assessment of a client’s employability and needs, the classification of Intake Screener was eliminated and replaced by Intake Case Managers. These new roles now have the capacity to determine eligibility, issue benefits and assess employability in accordance to defined employment service categories all at the time of grant.
Team Structure Composition Changes	Completed in 2017	In order to accommodate the change in the service model, staff teams were also separated by employment service categories. This will allow staff to focus primarily on the employment related needs of one service group vs all groups.
Elimination of 1 Family Support Worker	Completed in 2016	Due to changes made by the Province with respect to child support, it was felt that operating with 1 FSW vs 2



		would be manageable as some of the work historically completed by FSW's could be shared with Legal Aid. This change was made in consultation with Legal Aid as explained in Section 1.4 to confirm their capacity to absorb these referrals.
Transition of CHPI to Housing	Completed in Spring of 2017	Since the inception of CHPI benefits, DNSSAB's Housing department has funded an OW Case Manager to assess eligibility for CHPI benefits. At the time, the housing department was not in the position to carry this role within their staffing compliment. Since that time, the Housing department restructured resulting in capacity to move this function to its program of origin. This change was seamless as protocols did not change during the transition period. Moving forward, OW Case Managers will continue to work closely with the newly created CHPI Navigators.
Employment Services Trainer made Permanent Position	Completed in 2016	Initially this position was made temporary as it was a new position. Time was needed to assess whether or not the position would improve outcomes. To date based on the data available; the long term benefits of this position have outweighed the cost. Therefore, the position has been deemed permanent.
Creation of a Transitional Support Case Manager	Completed in 2016	In an effort to better meet the needs of clients with significant challenges in the area of mental health and addiction, dollars saved from the elimination of 1 FSW were reinvested into a new position. This position will focus solely on a specialized caseload of clients presenting with these barriers. The position will also act as a liaison with the mental health and addictions sector.

The organizational chart on the following page illustrates the current Social Services staffing structure. As you will see, the teams including supervisors have been separated into the following 5 categories:

1. Intake and Support Services
2. Life Stabilization and Deferrals
3. Preparing for Employment
4. Job Ready
5. Special Services and Compliance



While we know that this change in structure will come with challenges we believe that the benefits will outweigh the shortcomings of this service model. It is anticipated that the new model will allow for a more targeted approach to both client and staff training. Work is underway to identify the target groups within the service categories to ensure that the workshops/training opportunities that are applicable to their unique needs is available, either internally or externally through a partner within the broader employment services network.

The following section provides an overview of some of the key activities associated with each classification in order to illustrate how work has been organized. In the interest of keeping this section brief, please note that the descriptions below only include the primary duties of each position and do not represent all of the responsibilities associated with each role.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Intake Case Managers (7)

- Completes verification interviews;
- Determines initial eligibility for Ontario Works Assistance;
- Makes referrals to internal/external resources as required;
- Issues mandatory and discretionary benefits if required at the time of application;
- Completes employability assessment and negotiates first Participation Agreement;
- Assigns case to on-going Case manager by Employment Service Category;
- Completes assignment of Benefits, agreements to reimburse and other mandatory forms required to complete the application;
- Completes and commissions all necessary documentation;
- Completes in person, online and phone applications to determine eligibility for Ontario Works;
- Completes phone applications for non-SARS CHPI applications and Childcare Subsidy;
- Conducts third party checks as required;
- Explains legislative requirements to the applicant in conjunction with the program they are applying to;

On-going Case Managers (13)

- Manages on-going eligibility for financial assistance;
- Carries and monitors an on-going caseload;
- Responsible for ongoing Ontario Works case;
- Responsible for post grant client inquiries;
- Makes referrals to internal/external resources as required;
- Conducts fraud allegations and reviews eligibility related discrepancies;
- Determines eligibility for mandatory and discretionary benefits;
- Negotiates and monitors on-going Participation Agreements and compliance;
- Collaborates with community partners, completes referrals and case conferences;
- Monitors and reviews assignment of benefits, agreements to reimburse, client reimbursements and third party reimbursements to ensure accuracy and proper data entry;

- Completes and commissions all necessary documentation when required;
- Audits overpayments to ensure accuracy/creates overpayments and/or arrears and activate temporarily uncollectible overpayments if justified.

EVP Case Managers (3)

- Completes reviews through the Eligibility Verification Process;
- Critically analyzes and interprets third party consumer credit and EVM output information to determine if a recipient continues to meet eligibility requirements;
- Makes all necessary changes/updates to recipient files and calculates overpayments and/or underpayments as applicable;
- Performs in person interviews to review file when phone reviews are inappropriate through the EVP process;
- Performs all of the duties noted above under On-going Case Managers when required

Transitional Support Case Manager (1)

- Performs all of the duties noted above under On-going Case Managers
- Will be interacting more frequently with community partners providing mental health and addiction services throughout the District
- Will be participating on the North Bay Drug Strategy Committee’s treatment pillar

Specialization of Caseloads

While there are advantages and disadvantages to specializing functions within caseloads, in some areas specialization has proven to be a more effective solution. The following list represents areas where specialization occurs at some sites. While some represent full caseloads, others only represent specialized function within caseloads. You will notice that the 3 new specialized employment service categories along with the new Transitional Support Case Manager have also been added.

- LEAP
- Self-Employment
- Funerals
- Emergency Assistance
- EVP Case Managers
- Temporary Care
- ODSP Participating Adults/Spouses
- **Job Ready Service Category - NEW**
- **Life Stabilization Service Category - NEW**



- **Preparing for Employment Service Category - NEW**
- **Mental Health and Addiction – Transitional Support Case Manager - NEW**

One area of specialization that has been moved from a caseload into intake is emergency assistance. With the new intake model, it was determined that as emergency assistance cases are not on-going, Intake Case Managers could effectively meet the needs of this application type.

It is important to note that despite some of the caseloads being specialized, all Case Managers are trained to deliver services to all target groups if called upon in order to mitigate the negative impact of specializing functions. Staff movement in a specialized environment can become problematic at the front line level when skill sets and knowledge do not match the requirements of the job.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The Employment Services Team works collaboratively to deliver a continuum of employment programming to meet the job readiness requirements of OW and ODSP Participating clients. As noted above, Case Managers are primarily responsible for developing and monitoring a client’s outcome plan on their path from social assistance dependency to self-sufficiency through sustainable employment. However, in order to maximize employment outcomes and target the “Job Ready”, Case Managers are supported by four Employment Support Workers, one Employment Marketing Specialist and one Employment Services Trainer. The Get Trained Workers Coordinator through a contractual service agreement with DNSSAB also works alongside the Employment Team to maximize results and share knowledge.

Employment Support Workers (4)

- Assists designated staff in implementing and monitoring client outcome plans;
- Provides employment services supports in the Nipissing Career Hub;
- Delivers a continuum of designated workshops (resume writing/interviews skills etc);
- Completes monitoring and tracking of community placement hours;
- Assists in liaising with community agencies and employers;
- Processes employment support benefits for ongoing ODSP/OW participants;
- Initiates and facilitates client information sessions;
- Assists with employer contact and gathers information on job vacancies;
- Assists with developing marketing materials for employment services;
- Works 1-1 with participants to assist with all aspects of their job search activities;
- Assists with various employment related events such as job fairs and Get Job Ready Events.

The Employment Marketing Specialist (1)

- Responsible for identifying employment opportunities district wide for participants in receipt of Ontario Works or participating ODSP recipients;
- Markets participants to Employers by means of successful job matching in collaboration with other Social Services Staff;
- Provides retention services to maximize sustainable employment outcomes;
- Negotiates employer incentives and training plans for Employment Placements and obtains final authorization for the expenditure of funds from Management;
- Works with for-profit, not-for-profit, charitable and government organizations to help develop paid or unpaid placements for participants;
- Provides human resource supports to employers and placement sponsors;
- Negotiates and prepares Legal Agreements for Employment and Community Placements for final approval by Management;
- Completes reports in the event of accident or work related injury according to WSIB and insurance coverage requirements for all Placements when required;
- Assisting with the development of job readiness programming, job retention workshops and job-specific training as required;
- Completion of Skills Assessment Surveys.

Employment Services Trainer (1)

- Leads on curriculum development and implementation of Site Ready Training and other client training initiatives using adult learning principles;
- Provides employment focused training for front line staff;
- Develops and implements evaluation processes and creates assessment activities/tools to identify areas of strength and areas in need of improvement with respect to maximizing outcomes;
- Converts learning resources into web-based learning formats
- Provides technical adult education expertise and guidance to staff as required;
- Develops and updates training methodologies, material and course content;
- Assists with the preparation of employment services marketing tools;
- Anticipates future employment training and resource needs

Employment Resource Centre Attendant (.5)

- Ensures that employment related Resource Centre services are available to clients in South Algonquin;



- Assists with coordination and supervision of Community Placements working in the Resource Centre;
- Provides information, makes referrals and assists customers to use resource centre equipment;
- Introduces and maintains a membership number system;
- Monitoring and recording equipment use;
- Maintaining a supply of resource material such as pamphlets, brochures, legislation, etc.
- Schedules resource centre activities.
- Assists with the marketing of the availability of services in the community.

FAMILY SUPPORT

Family Support Workers (1):

- Interviews and negotiates with clients, respondents and their lawyers to reach settlements;
- Assesses the financial ability of the respondent to provide support;
- Assists clients in the completion of documents;
- Monitors and pursues payments owed from assignments or accounts in default;
- Registers support agreements and domestic contracts for enforcement under the Family Law Act only when there is an agreement and it is no longer in pay;
- Corresponds and liaises with lawyers, Court Clerks, Process Servers and Legal Clinics;
- Reviews and recommends support waivers when appropriated to Supervisor for approval;
- Conducts investigations to determine the whereabouts of absent spouses/parents;
- Acts as representative for DNSSAB during case presentations in Family Court through settlement conferences, trials and hearings;
- Applies for Orders in the name of DNSSAB to collect arrears owing to DNSSAB;
- Acts as a resource to Staff on all support related issues
- Assignments to FRO if period being reviewed is prior to January 31, 2017

PROGRAM SUPPORT

CLIENT SUPPORT WORKERS (7.5)

- Provides direct support to Case Managers with client related matters;
- Provides client support which may include assessing potential eligibility for client benefits and services;
- Assesses and responds to client inquiries;
- Makes referrals to appropriate internal and external resources;
- Receives and processes client reporting documents as directed and updates electronic file;

- Generates payments as directed and distributes real time payments, near cash items and records distribution;
- Responsible for assigning, receiving and sending incoming and outgoing file transfers;
- Processes income reporting statements as directed and approved by Case Managers
- Prepares necessary letters, memo's, forms and reports as required;
- Monitors receipt of funds for repayment, reimbursements and processing of all cash and cheques received and issues receipts;
- Assists with 3rd party checks;

RECEPTION (1)

- Responsible for providing administrative support services and clerical reception support to customer service counter and switchboard;
- Responsible for greeting and directing client, agency, community partner and general public inquiries in person or by telephone in both official languages in a welcoming, effective and efficient manner for all DNSSAB programs;
- Supports general clerical functions as directed within client services;
- Responsible for directing calls and inquiries to the appropriate program staff;
- Preparing necessary letters, memos, forms and reports as required;
- Assisting with 3rd party checks;
- Receiving and sorting incoming mail in preparation for delivery to all departments;
- Providing duplicate T5's if required

ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT (1)

- Responsible for providing administrative support services;
- Responsible for ensuring documents are managed, stored and/forwarded electronically in an effective and efficient manner;
- Sets up client master files hard copies and/or electronically as required by individual programs;
- Receives and stores client applications, supporting documentation, correspondence and reports based program requirements;
- Provides general office support as directed including internal mail delivery and prepares outgoing correspondence, courier etc. for mailing;
- Responsible for incoming and outgoing hard copy file transfers electronically and hard copy;
- Responsible for file purging in accordance to file retention requirements;
- Assists with the maintenance and upkeep of office automation equipment directly related to electronic document management.

STAFF TRAINERS (2)

- Provide support, coaching, mentorship and training to Ontario Works Staff;
- Collaborates with staff to resolve issues arising from file audits, program reviews, process and service delivery change, internal reviews, SAMS issues including overpayment issues and regulatory or policy updates;
- Develops, delivers, and evaluates training programs (including self-study and blended learning opportunities) for all staff, under the supervision of program management;
- Coordinates training activities and schedules;
- Leads training sessions for staff as required on changes to SAMS business processes, Legislation, technology changes and workarounds, Local Policies; etc.
- Assesses impact of changes on local policies and business practices and make recommendations for changes to Supervisors;
- May assist with the completion of internal reviews and overpayment validation when required;

PROGRAM ASSISTANT (1)

- providing program and administrative support to members of Social Services management;
- provides contract administration and data collection;
- Coordinates operational and administrative activities within Social Services Management by organizing the incoming flow of work and requests in order of priority;
- Responsible for coordination and administration of all contracts in reference to due dates, amendments and monitoring of required reports for such contracts related to Social Services;
- Gathers information and acts as liaison with community partners, providers or other government agencies;
- Organizes information and maintain databases as required for various programs within Integrated Services.
- Provides general administrative support by preparing general correspondence, memorandums and a range of program reports as requested;
- Performs general office duties including filing, copying, scanning and faxing;
- Prepares for meetings including booking meeting rooms, preparing agendas, minute taking, ordering catering and setting up meeting facilities and equipment.
- Receives calls and provides appropriate responses and information based on departmental procedures

CHILDCARE

- The Ontario Works Program remains integrated with Children’s Services but only at the front line Intake level. The Intake Case Management Team is responsible for screening all applicants applying for a childcare subsidy throughout the District. Children’s Services Representatives work closely with Ontario Works Case Managers to make access to childcare as seamless as possible. Requests for informal childcare to enable participants to participate in employment or training continues to be the responsibility of Case Managers. Requests for formal childcare to facilitate participation are referred to Intake for screening. Following this screening, Children’s Services Representatives determine the eligibility of both social assistance recipients and non-social assistance recipients for subsidy in accordance with the Day Nurseries Act and District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board policies and procedures.

3.2 Oversight Strategy

Program oversight remains an area of priority and continuous improvement for Social Services. While we are now out of the SAMS crisis mode and data is available, this was not the case for part of the previous planning cycle. In fact, the finance department only completed its required SAMS reconciliations in 2017. For this reason, monitoring program delivery and expenditures has been difficult as numbers could not be confirmed until the reconciliations were complete. With that said, under “normal” circumstances Program Directors do receive supplementary detailed financial reports monthly from the finance department on expenditures to date. These reports are relied on heavily to oversee operations in relation to the program budget.

Quality assurance, program integrity and transparency continue to be high priority areas for Social Services and DNSSAB in general. Through monthly file reviews by the Supervisors and the monitoring and analysis of various Cognos and financial reports along with various other data sources, the Director of Employment and Social Services monitors overall program delivery, customer service standards and direct client benefit expenditures. DNSSAB has also implemented a performance management program that ties the competencies of Staff to DNSSAB’s core values, mission and vision and strategic plan. Further to these strategies, Social Services is also in the process of creating well defined expectations and service benchmarks for all classifications. In an effort to further enhance program oversight, Ontario Works Supervisors are also responsible for internal reviews and social benefit tribunal hearings, a function that was previously held by Eligibility Review Officers prior to their elimination at the local level.

While program Directors absolutely have oversight of their program area, it is essentially the finance department who carries much of the responsibility and work for ensuring that the integrity of the financial information being presented to the Ministry, through subsidy claims submissions, are accurate and reflect actual expenditures. Various detailed spreadsheets are utilized extensively by finance staff to

assist with the reconciliation process. All financial information is presented in accordance to generally accepted accounting principles issued by the Financial Accounting Standards Board. DNSSAB's approach to reporting financial information to the Ministry, the Board and the public has been to ensure transparency at all levels.

DNSSAB also has local policies to further assist staff with various activities to increase accountability and ensure that consistent practices are being used to govern DNSSAB business. Examples of these policies are:

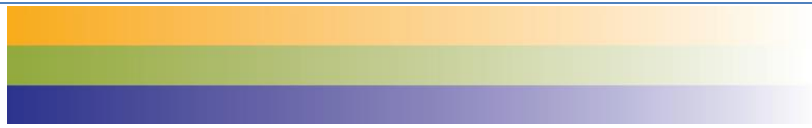
- Asset Capitalization Policy
- Citizen Financial Disbursements Policy
- Purchasing Policy
- Disposal of Assets Policy
- Investment Policy
- Whistleblower Policy

Risk management plays a significant role in Social Services oversight strategy as identifying risk in all activities prior to implementation is essential to effective planning. By ensuring that changes and decisions are made in a consultative manner, Social Services have managed to identify and mitigate possible areas of risk on various occasions. Anticipating what could go wrong and identifying what decisions need to be made to prevent a negative outcome are routine exercises that Social Services employs when making decisions. These exercises can result in a cost savings on resources, protection of DNSSAB's reputation as an organization, and a reduction in liability - all of which promote effective and efficient operations.

In order to further strengthen DNSSAB's contract management processes, in 2016, a Contract Management Specialist position was created to provide expertise, support and guidance to the senior management team. This position is responsible for developing and maintaining a contract management system to ensure all contracts have been properly executed, are in compliance with the contract terms and conditions, and remain current. These contracts include property, capital and operating leases, purchased service agreements and settlements. The position will liaise with legal counsel in developing and managing contracts. It will further be involved in the negotiating of contracts and resolving contract disputes. In addition to contract management this position will work closely with the Manager of Purchasing to provide support and expertise in the formal bid/purchasing processes of goods and services for the organization. This position will develop, implement and provide oversight of a contract management system that will include the development of policies and procedures to ensure contract are well within regulatory guidelines and requirements.

The chart below summarizes the main tools and/or activities that are utilized by Social Services to ensure compliance in all areas of program delivery.

PROGRAM OVERSIGHT	Table 8 FUNCTION	TOOLS/ACTIVITY
	Program Monitoring	Social Assistance Operations Performance Reports Cognos Reports Client Surveys Manual trackers OW Extranet Data SAMO Data Prairie Fyre Reports to track intake activity Alignment of Strategic Plan with Program Mandates Subsidy Claim Guide
	Staff Competency	Annual Competency Based Performance Reviews Ongoing staff training on both financial and employment assistance Continuous Learning and Professional Development Opportunities Talent Management Plan Succession Planning to ensure transfer of knowledge Employment Suitability Testing as part of interview process
	Risk Management	Dedicated EVP Team effective April 2017 Strategic Plan/Mission/Vision Clear Local OW, HR and Board Policies Standardized Operational Procedures Effective Communication Monthly File Reviews by Supervisors Review of detailed monthly financial expenditure reports Document Management Protocols Dedicated position to records management Board engagement for direction on high level decisions Approval Escalation Processes Strong Contract Management processes including multiple sign offs by DNSSAB authorities Separation of Duty Processes Detailed HR Policies to clarify expectations Internal Whistleblower Policy Internal Purchasing Policy Internal Reviews and Social Benefit Tribunals completed by Supervisor Strict adherence to third party request and MFIPPA processes
	Program Reporting and Accountability	Monthly Board Reports on Caseload/Intake/Outcomes MCSS Reporting Board Reports posted on DNSSAB website to ensure transparency FSW's and Case Managers to continue to pursue all potential sources of income



		(support, EI, WSIB etc) Pay Directs to Landlords/Utility Companies where appropriate Monitoring and actioning of fraud allegations
--	--	--

3.3 Analysis of Resources

Many say that the only constant in the delivery of Social Services is change and the previous planning cycle certainly did not disappoint in this area. It is expected that the current cycle will bring more of the same as the province moves forward with their social reform agenda. In order to respond pro-actively to these changes, adequate funding to administer and deliver services is essential to fulfilling mandated requirements and maximizing employment outcomes. Investing funding allocations into service methodologies that provide the highest return on investment without sacrificing quality is the key to delivering effective services. It is also imperative that we are progressive in monitoring and measuring work output in conjunction with staff, client satisfaction and cost effectiveness.

In 2017, the Nipissing OW Program budget has increased year over year by about \$647,000 or 2.9%. Conversely, due to the continuing upload of social services costs, the required municipal contribution has decreased year over year. The cost drivers of the budget continue to be cost per case and average monthly caseload, both of which, ultimately impact administration costs leaving cost containment in this area a challenging endeavor.

The risk associated with the administration of OW financial benefits is that there is no upside limit to the potential costs. This reality is of great concern to Municipalities. However, the ongoing provincial upload has served to alleviate much of this concern with the municipal share of financial benefits now only being at 2.8%. As caseloads fluctuate in response to variables that service providers often have very little control over, predicting resource needs can often be difficult. The fact that the current funding model continues to be driven by the achievement of employment and earnings outcomes can also be problematic, as the work involved with serving clients with multiple barriers who are distanced from the labour market is not the activities that drive the employment funding envelope.

The impact of the cost sharing cap on discretionary benefits also remains an area of concern for Administrators. While it is understood that in this fiscal environment, financial controls are needed when expenditures appear to be climbing and budgets are declining. However, it remains unclear if this was the best approach to take to ensure that these costs were contained. It is also unclear what the impact will be if services and/or benefits are reduced in order to remain within the cap as a reduction in the supports available to clients can create cost pressures in other areas. To date, Social Services has managed to maintain service levels and control expenditures, however, this may or may not be sustainable depending on the future needs of the caseload.

Ultimately, in order to manage in this environment, every opportunity to optimize resources, allocate and align policies and funding to the needs of our clients -while minimizing administrative costs wherever possible - is critical. Full utilization of available funding to support clients continues to be the goal for Social Services. However, full utilization is not always possible when access to funding is only available when dollars are matched by an already strained Municipal levy. Despite this, the DNSSAB Board was very generous during the previous cycle in supporting various initiatives in order to maximize cost sharing opportunities. As you will see in the Submission, a renewed financial commitment has once again been made by the Board for the 2017/2018 cycle.

Social Services will continue to take every opportunity to find efficiencies and work smarter. While SAMS has come a long way since the submission of the 2015/2016 Service Plan, staff continue to report that it simply takes longer to complete transactions in SAMS than it did in SDMT. Staff continue to spend unreasonable amounts of time focusing on administrative tasks, interpreting and applying a myriad of rules and navigating complicated software solutions. In order to maximize outcomes, intensive interventions that require Case Managers to spend more time with their clients and less time on administrative tasks is required. Social Services is optimistic that this reality will be addressed through the Province's modernization project to simplify the delivery of social assistance in Ontario.

SAMS training has also placed financial pressure on Service Providers. For example, for Case Managers, Social Services experience working with the modules is that it takes approximately 8 weeks for a new hire to learn what they need to know to work with the system. This does not include shadowing time, training on provincial directive or local policies. This investment is substantial and it is becoming increasingly difficult to contain costs in this area.

Leveraging community partnerships, sharing/pooling resources when possible and seizing opportunities to apply for various grants through sole and joint procurement to explore innovative ideas to poverty reduction, are other key activities that have enabled Social Services to better support the needs of the clients it serves and remain on budget. Nipissing Travellink and the Nipissing Poverty Reduction Through Education program are two excellent examples of these activities.

DNSSAB Corporate Services also plays an important role in Ontario Works program management. This includes the financial and administrative support from Finance & Administration, and employee development and talent management through the Human Resources Department. Research and analysis will also play an increasingly important role during this planning cycle, as we endeavor to understand more about our caseload and its interaction with the local labour market and economy. And finally, the Communications Department will be relied upon to help us with our action steps, particularly stigma reduction, and increasing public education and awareness around programs and services.

3.4 Overview of Learning Supports

Despite best intentions Social Services acknowledges that it has not made much progress in this area, leaving the normalizing of SAIL an unmet goal. Staff turnover, cost, and scheduling challenges, along with a long list of other program needs continually de-railed plans to complete the SAIL training modules. To date, DNSSAB staff have only received training on two of the five core competencies of SAIL: Module 1, the Coach Approach and Module 5 Problem Solving Interventions. The remaining three modules, Essential Communication Skills, Models of Employability, and Interventions of Engagement were to be the focus for the previous planning cycle.

Now that the challenges with SAMS are no longer overshadowing SAIL training as a departmental priority, Social Services has finally come up with a plan that is viable and cost effective to meet the ongoing SAIL training needs. DNSSAB has partnered with the District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board to have a 3 day SAIL “Train the Trainer” Training session delivered at the end of May by Marianne Seaton. The objectives of the training are to;

- Re-familiarize staff with the SAIL curriculum
- Develop District specific application scenarios for SAIL delivery to staff
- Develop indicators of success for SAIL implementation; how will the use of SAIL competencies be identified and measured in the workplace
- Develop a training implementation and normalization plan for SAIL training in the District

Marianne will be delivering the training to three DNSSAB staff; our two (2) Staff Trainers and a member of our SAIL Committee. We feel that this approach will best meet our immediate and long term SAIL training needs. As we are fortunate to have trainers on-site having them trained to be able to deliver the SAIL curriculum will ensure that our current staff receive training on the remaining three modules as well as ensure that new staff are introduced to the SAIL curriculum. Having SAIL trainers on-site will also allow us to ensure SAIL competencies are being incorporated on the front line, in ongoing training, supervisor communications, staff meetings and the interview process.

In addition, we plan to renew our efforts to promote SAIL as part of our workplace culture through our SAIL committee, training and activities. This includes activities designed to highlight SAIL competencies, continuing to promote SAIL through our SAIL “Waves of Applause” bulletin board to recognize staff demonstrating a SAIL competency and SAIL-a-bration activities to promote and normalize SAIL competencies.

3.5 Strategy to Deliver French Language Services

DNSSAB’s CAO has recently been in communication with MCSS on the expectations of DNSSAB on the provision of French language services, specifically with respect to the DNSSAB website. This communication was in response to a complaint received by the Office of the French Language Commissioner of Ontario. At the time of writing, these discussions remain ongoing therefore no details will be provided at this time. In the interim, the following information noted in the 2015/2016 Service Plan remains relevant.

As a designated transfer payment agency under the French Languages Services Act, DNSSAB is required to undertake a review every three years to ensure that it remains in compliance with the designation criteria. In March 2015, DNSSAB submitted its Agency Designation Plan and Evaluation Tool to MCSS to confirm its compliance. DNSSAB takes this designation seriously and while there is still work to be done in the area of translation, it strives to ensure that services and communications are consistent with the following guiding principles:

- French Language Services are now a right according to the French Language Services Act;
- The District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board advocates for the pro-active delivery of French Language Services as means to communicate effectively to and optimally used by French- speaking clients and the public;
- The Board is committed to the provision of high quality French Language Services in a culturally sensitive manner;
- The Board promotes equivalency/specificity of services provided;
- Services and corresponding supports (advertisements, documents, brochures, etc.) are preferably produced in both official languages or can be made available in both official languages upon request;
- The District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board equally offers educational incentives to Staff with respect to French Language upgrading courses.

The DNSSAB Management Team is responsible to ensure that the guiding principles outlined above are implemented, monitored and maintained throughout all business activities. In order to achieve these requirements, DNSSAB has developed a partnership with College Boreal to complete mandatory testing on all candidates applying to bilingual job bulletins to ensure that the candidates level of proficiency meets the needs of the program areas ranging from a level 1 to a Superior level 4.

The table below illustrates what has proven to be an acceptable representation of bilingually designated front line direct delivery Staff in all District offices. Positions without front line client service responsibilities are not included in the numbers. It is also important to note that currently both the Mattawa and Sturgeon Falls sites have bilingual compliments of 100% due to the high numbers of French speaking residents in these areas. In addition, while only the positions noted



below are “designated” bilingual, a much higher proportion of front line staff with client service responsibilities (25) are fluent in both official languages as bilingualism is taken into consideration as being an asset through the recruitment process.

Table 9. Total Front Line Direct Delivery Counts	Unilingual	Bilingual	Percentage of Compliment
Case Managers (24)	24	8	33.3%
Receptionist (1)	0	1	100%
Client Support Worker (7.5)	3	4.5	60%
Staff Trainers (2)	2	0	0%
Family Support Workers (1)	0	1	100%
Employment Marketing Specialist (1)	1	0	0%
Employment Services Trainer (1)	1	0	0%
Employment Support Workers (4)	3	1	25%

3.6 Business Practices

In order to ensure efficient and effective customer service, Social Services has always operated with a focus on continuous improvement. Service delivery methodologies that are effective today may prove to be ineffective in the future in a changing environment. Being able to adjust business practices and realign service strategies to meet performance targets and the needs of a changing caseload can often present a challenge. Frequent legislative changes, changes in the needs of the local labour market and broader regional economy are also variables that result in social assistance delivery agents having to adjust policy and practices often on very short notice.

The information under Oversight Strategies in Section 3.2 describes some of the mechanisms used by Social Services to ensure Program compliance and integrity. Social Services will continue to utilize these mechanisms and is confident that the Program is being delivered in accordance to legislative requirements, program directives and Ministry standards.

DNSSAB’s Strategic Plan is rooted in delivering client centered services that are effective and efficient. In order to achieve this, business practices and models of delivery often have to change with the needs of the caseload. Throughout this document Social Services’ plan to transform Nipissing’s employment service delivery model has been explained. To date, no significant changes to Social Services business

practices have been required in order to implement the various stages of the model. As always, Social Services expectations with respect to performance will continue to be to meet or exceed existing standards. While Social Services has gone to great lengths to anticipate what challenges the new model will bring, it is recognized that changes in business practices may be required as the delivery of the model evolves. Social Services has committed to monitoring and analyzing the outcomes of this change to evaluate its overall effectiveness on meeting or exceeding targeted achievements. By the next service planning cycle, Social Services is optimistic that it will be able to report that these changes have reaped the anticipated result of maximizing outcomes. It is important to note however that the achievement of outcomes is only one piece of the puzzle, as service model changes can have other benefits on client service delivery in general. An update on whether or not these strategies will prove to be more effective and efficient will be provided in the 2018 Addendum.

4.0 OUTCOME STRATEGIES

4.1 Service Strategy

The chart below illustrates Social Services current employment strategies, the rationale for these activities, their status and their relationship to the achievement of outcomes. Many of the strategies are priorities that are expected to be multi-year projects and or activities that will remain relevant for many years to come. Strategies that are more related to strengthening the foundation of the overall service delivery model will be marked as “Foundational”. With that said, it is important to note that this foundational work also impacts outcomes in that the activities better prepare the department to deliver services effectively.



Table 10. OUTCOME STRATEGY 2017/2018 SERVICE PLAN UPDATE	RATIONALE	OUTCOME(S) TARGETED	STATUS
Increased focus on job retention strategies.	Recidivism continues to be a challenge for Service Providers. While all outcomes are beneficial, long term sustainable outcomes are the goal. For this reason, Social Services built this function into the job description of the OW Employment Marketing Specialist. Retention services are also built into the Get Trained Workers Coordinator job description through the Purchase of Service Agreement.	All Measures	Complete Work on-going
Division of Caseload into Employment Service Categories Life Stabilization Preparing for Employment Job Ready	To more effectively target the employment related needs of the caseload based on a client's distance from the labour market. Each service category will have defined strategies to help guide staff as they case plan to move clients along the employment continuum. Targeted workshop development and opportunities to leverage services already available in the community will be essential to this model.	All Measures	On-going
Innovative Approaches to Engage Employers Get Trained Workers Marketing Campaign	In order to ensure that Employers are aware of the services available marketing is required. Billboards along with other mediums will be used to promote the Get Trained Workers program.	All Measures	On-going
Enhanced Employer Engagement and Incentives Partnership with the North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce 100 Jobs Pilot	Ensuring that the availability of incentives to hire social assistance recipients is essential to reducing financial risk for small and medium size employers. These efforts can	All Measures	On-going

	often give social assistance recipients the advantage they need over other candidates.		
Enhanced Staff training and Professional Development	Ensuring that front line staff have the tools required to deliver quality, client centered employment services that are targeted to meet the individual needs of clients is essential to the achievement of outcomes.	Foundational	On-going
SAIL Train the Trainer Training	SAIL “train the trainer” training will support the delivery of employment services. Developing internal capacity to deliver the training is essential to ensuring that SAIL is delivered cost effectively	Foundational	On-going
Nipissing Poverty Reduction through Education Program (partnership with Canadore College)	Post-Secondary education is increasingly becoming a requirement in the labour market and is directly connected to a client’s ability to earn a living wage. A great deal of work and effort is put in by OW staff to market and promote participation in N-Prep.	None, as exits to post-secondary is not currently a targeted outcome.	On-going
Enhanced Case Management Role Transitional Support Worker	As mentioned earlier in this Plan, ensuring that clients have access to the expertise that they require to improve their employability is essential to the achievement of outcomes. For this reason, it was felt that dedicating a position to the needs of clients with mental health and addiction issues was necessary to more effectively meet the needs of this target group.	All Measures	On-going
Identify target groups within service categories to develop targeted workshops/training	Aside from specialization in the area of mental health and addiction, there are other targets groups within the caseload that would benefit from targeted training (sole support parents, older clients, clients	All Measures	On-going



	applying for the first time, clients with criminal records, youth etc)		
Focus on employability at the first point of contact – Intake Level	Determining a client’s level of employability earlier in the process can often expedite the ability for service providers to engage clients in employment related activities. If successful, this change in time should have a positive impact on length of time on assistance data.	All Measures	On-going
Maintenance of a local employment services database.	One of the greatest challenges Social Services has had over the years has been the matching of clients in receipt of social assistance to available job opportunities. To date, OW Administrators have not been provided with a system solution to this problem. For this reason, Social Services through a third party agreement had a database developed that assesses a participants level of employability and stores their skills, level of education etc. for the future matching to employment and/or an employment or community placement. In order to ensure that the skills being captured are aligned with the labour market, the National Occupational Classifications are imbedded into the database to help guide how skills are captured which will further assist with effective matching. The other key deliverable associated with the	Foundational	On-going

	<p>project relates to the report functionality that the database will have which will further enhance Social Services ability to understand the caseload and target strategies by service category. Further enhancements to the database are targeted for 2017/2018. One of these enhancements will enable specific SAMS data to interface with the database to reduce the amount of data entry required to enter the caseload, inclusive of ODSP participating clients.</p>		
--	--	--	--

4.2 Linking Strategies to Outcome Measures

As mentioned earlier setting and achieving performance targets is challenging due to the relatively high risk of unpredictability in the local labour market or the broader regional economy. Therefore, ensuring that careful consideration is given to all decisions related to service methodologies is essential as failure to align services with the needs of the clientele can directly impact performance outcomes.

This Plan highlights some of the employment initiatives that are currently underway to maximize outcomes. Section 4.3 below provides further detail on how these strategies are linked to the achievement of the employment and earnings targets set for 2017.

Earlier on in the Plan, Section 2 illustrates the volatility in achieving performance targets month over month. While Social Services has made every effort over the years to understand the reasons behind these fluctuations, the answers often remain unclear leaving Administrators vulnerable to potential recoveries. This potential for recoveries has served to discourage Administrators to take any unnecessary risks when setting targets.

In order to further mitigate risk, as a last resort Social Services understands that it can also take advantage of the opportunity to renegotiate targets mid cycle if it appears that achievements will not be met to ensure that funding levels are not jeopardized.

The following data was utilized to set the targets identified on the following page for 2015:



1. Social Assistance Operations Performance Reports – outcomes up to March 2017
2. Historical data for past years to confirm trend lines

The use of historical data between November 2014 and January 2016 to set targets for 2017 may or may not prove to be useful in the current environment due to the impact that SAMS had on the delivery of employment services. As achievements were negatively impacted during this period the ability for Administrators to use this data to set benchmarks is limited.

As overall achievements on employment and earnings were a mixed read for the previous cycle, setting targets for 2017 was challenging. However, as outcomes are known for Q1 of 2017, this information was taken into consideration when setting targets for the first quarter. For Q1, no adjustments were required to the baselines in order to meet the targets recorded. Modest increases have been set on all targets due to the change in the service delivery model being in its infancy. As explained in section 4.1, while Social Services has a sound rationale for why the model was changed, it also recognizes that even the best laid plans can fail. Time will be needed to confirm how the changes will influence outcomes. However, despite the modest increases, as always Social Services will continue to strive to achieve and exceed targets on all Measures.

In recognition of the in-year fluctuations in performance, Social Services has again avoided straight line projections in setting the targets. Consistent with the previous planning cycle, employment outcomes have been weighted heavier than earnings outcomes as it believed that current service delivery strategies will have a greater impact on overall outcomes on these measures. For 2017, 400 points have been assigned to earnings and 600 points have been assigned to employment.

The table that follows illustrates the weighting assigned to each measure, the targeted improvement as well as the targeted outcomes. As mentioned above, close monitoring will be required in order to confirm if targets need to be re-negotiated mid-year.

Table 11

Proportional Weighting of Earnings and Employment Measures				?
	Assigned			Earned
	Year 1		Total	Year 1 – Points
1: Average Monthly Employment Earnings per Case	200		200	
2: Percentage of Caseload with Employment Earnings	200		200	
3: Percentage of Terminations Exiting to Employment	300		300	
4: Percentage of Caseload Exiting to Employment	300		300	
Total	1,000		1,000	

Note: Outcomes have a standard Minimum and Maximum Weighting. Minimum: 0 Maximum: 600

OUTCOMES: EARNINGS AND EMPLOYMENT ?

1: Average Monthly Employment Earnings per Case						?
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1-Q4	
2016 Actuals	\$731	\$729	\$743	\$760	\$741	
2017 Forecast Baseline	\$731	\$729	\$743	\$760	\$741	
Targeted Improvement from Baseline	0.30%	0.30%	0.30%	0.30%	0.30%	
Targeted Improvement (\$)	\$2	\$2	\$2	\$2	\$2	
Target	\$733	\$731	\$745	\$762	\$743	

Points Assigned: 200

2: Percentage of Caseload with Employment Earnings						?
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1-Q4	
2016 Actuals	12.53%	13.01%	13.93%	15.37%	13.71%	
2017 Forecast Baseline	12.53%	13.01%	13.93%	15.37%	13.71%	
Targeted Improvement from Baseline	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	
Targeted Improvement (%)	0.06%	0.07%	0.07%	0.08%	0.07%	
Target	12.59%	13.08%	14.00%	15.45%	13.78%	

Points Assigned: 200

3: Percentage of Terminations Exiting to Employment						?
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1-Q4	
2016 Actuals	18.63%	25.77%	22.27%	27.18%	23.46%	
2017 Forecast Baseline	18.63%	25.77%	22.27%	27.18%	23.46%	
Targeted Improvement from Baseline	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	
Targeted Improvement (%)	0.09%	0.13%	0.11%	0.14%	0.12%	
Target	18.72%	25.90%	22.38%	27.32%	23.58%	

Points Assigned: 300

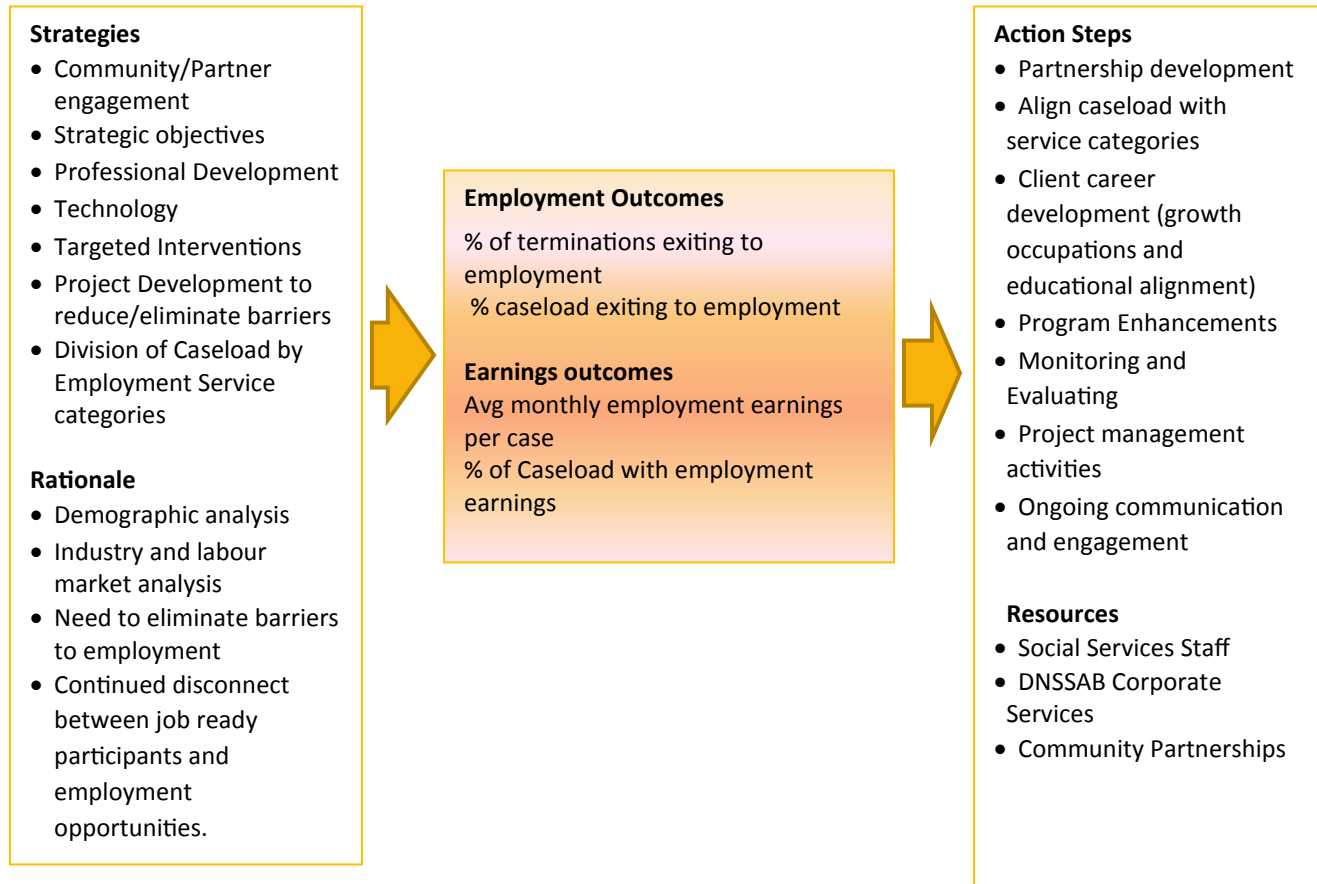
4: Percentage of Caseload Exiting to Employment						?
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1-Q4	
2016 Actuals	1.33%	1.66%	1.78%	2.24%	1.75%	
2017 Forecast Baseline	1.33%	1.66%	1.78%	2.22%	1.75%	
Targeted Improvement from Baseline	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	
Targeted Improvement (%)	0.01%	0.01%	0.01%	0.01%	0.01%	
Target	1.34%	1.67%	1.79%	2.23%	1.76%	

Points Assigned: 300

4.3 Action Steps and Resources

The diagram below summarizes the key strategies and action items described in this report that will help to achieve improved employment outcomes and self-reliance for clients. Key action items for the current planning cycle will include enhancing partnerships, staff development, development and implementation of projects, re-alignment of caseload based on service needs and individual career development. In order to be successful in the delivery of employment services to move clients in receipt of social assistance into sustainable employment, it is imperative that Social Services have its finger on the pulse of the local labour market and economy. A broad view of current labour supply and demand, as well as the future needs of the labour market, is essential to effective planning in the area of employment services. To that end, staff will be concentrating more effort this planning cycle on business and market analysis, with the end goal of better preparing clients to meet the needs of business and the local labour market.

Figure 16



4.4 Stakeholder Linkages

The DNSSAB defines its stakeholders as any individual or group that can have either a positive or negative impact on its ability to realize the mission and vision. The Board has defined six stakeholder groups which include: our clients/citizens; employees; service delivery partners; governments/funders; Board of Directors; and the community.

Recently, DNSSAB renewed its strategic plan to 2020, resulting in a continued focus on service integration and holistic approaches. To date, efforts in coordinating and integrating services in the community have resulted in numerous partnerships and linkages with common service providers in the form of planning tables, referral protocols, community service delivery and planning, and contracted programs and services.

These relationships allow Social Services to broaden its effectiveness and leverage resources to better meet the diverse needs of the caseload. Examples on how Social Services accomplishes this is listed below:

- ❖ Joint events and collaborative planning with Economic Development Organizations on job fairs and get job ready events broadens the reach of Social Services to reach employers.
- ❖ Partnership and Purchase of Service Agreement with the North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce on business after hours events, marketing, employment placement, job development and Get Trained Workers helps to remove the stigma associated with the delivery of social assistance.
- ❖ Strong partnerships and protocols with the wide variety of services offered by Employment Ontario to compliment OW employment programming allows Social Services and the clients it serves, to benefit from the vast amount of knowledge and expertise available throughout the employment services network.
- ❖ Strong partnerships/protocols/Service Agreements with the education sector both at the literacy and basic skills level up to post- secondary assist Social Services to promote these activities as being a pathway out of poverty.
- ❖ Partnership with the healthcare sector to deliver dental services to social assistance recipients helps to illustrate the inherent linkages between these two service sectors.
- ❖ Purchase of Service Agreement with the Business Centre assists Social Services with ensuring that the appropriate expertise required to help a client to pursue entrepreneurship is available.
- ❖ Partnerships/Protocols with local NGO's assist Social Services with ensuring that any gaps left by the system are met in the community.
- ❖ Partnership/protocols with local women's shelters assist Social Services to ensure that this target group receives the sensitive services required when dealing with issues related to violence against women.
- ❖ Partnership/protocols with local addiction and mental health service providers assist Social Services with ensuring that the level of expertise required to assist participants with this barrier is available.
- ❖ Client engagement sessions and/or feedback processes will help to inform Social Services on whether or not the current service delivery model is meeting their needs.
- ❖ Engagement opportunities to meet with other OW Service Providers through various tables, NOSDA/OMSSA etc. allows Social Services to learn and benefit from the experiences of its peers on the delivery of effective employment strategies.

4.5 Addressing Service Gaps

Identifying and addressing service gaps throughout the district continues to be a key priority for Social Services. Due to the size of Nipissing District and the unique needs of our rural versus urban areas, Social Services must ensure that our service delivery model meets the needs of all clients and not only the clients residing in the larger urban centers. In order to enhance Social Services ability to identify and

address service gaps, DNSSAB has taken a leadership role in facilitating service provider networks that work collaboratively on ways to re-align existing resources to better meet the needs of our clients. This has proven to be an effective tool for DNSSAB to promote holistic services through an integrated service model. Through various initiatives and participation on various Tables, members of the DNSSAB management team and front line staff, along with other dedicated community partners have managed to close or reduce service gaps on a number of fronts. Continued collaboration and consultation will remain a priority as we move forward to ensure that an integrated approach to decision making is sustained over time.

Social Services continued role in the administration of the Nipissing Innovation Fund, which funds projects to support the needs of low income individuals and families, is a perfect example of how aligning resources with the needs of the community can reap positive rewards. By investing these dollars into innovative programs that seek to fill gaps through a focus on prevention, Social Services is optimizing and allocating resources in a manner that can impact future generation's thus reducing potential future dependency on social assistance programs.

The following highlights a few of the on-going initiatives that demonstrate the commitment of Social Services to reduce service gaps in the community.

Dental Initiative with North Bay Regional Health Centre (NBRHC)

Access to dental services for many clients in receipt of social assistance continues to be a service gap and barrier to employment not because there are not enough dentists, but because some dentists refuse services to social assistance clients due to the low rates. In November 2014, Social Services approached its Board of Directors seeking approval for a dental pilot project using municipal funding that would be delivered in partnership with the NBRHC using the existing infrastructure through their dental clinic. Since that time, the uptake on this initiative has been lower than expected. For this reason, the clinic recently expanded its services to ODSP as well. Social Services partnership with the dental clinic is a good example of how a multi-ministerial approach to a human service problem that crosses mandates can be effective.

Nipissing Travellink Transportation Pilot

Transportation remains a significant barrier for clients residing in the outlying areas of Nipissing District where there is no access to public transportation. The Nipissing Travellink Pilot as explained in Section 1 is an excellent example of DNSSAB's efforts to collaborate with its partners to develop a solution to a significant gap in service. While it is clear that Nipissing Travellink will not alleviate this barrier beyond its end date in March 31, 2018, the data compiled from the Pilot should greatly assist the Ministry with their future planning. The results of the Pilot will also serve to inform Municipalities on what a local transportation initiative could look like in their communities. Opportunities for public/private partnerships beyond the pilot period have already surfaced and will be reported on in the 2018

Addendum if the details associated with implementation are deemed viable by all parties. If there are no solutions beyond March 2018, this service gap will once again leave social assistance recipients and those living on low incomes with very few options to change their circumstances.

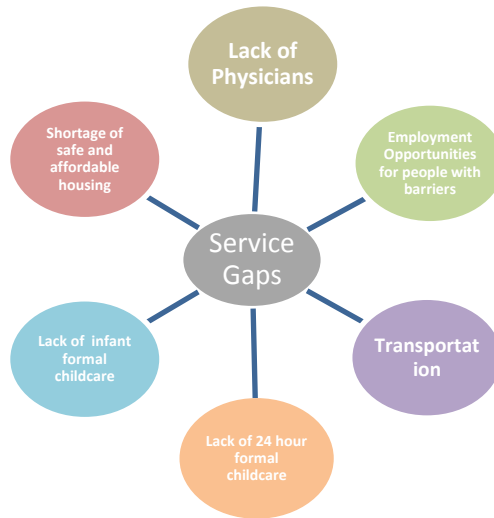
Access to Mental Health and Addiction Services

DNSSAB’s CAO and Board have been very active in their advocacy efforts to engage the Northeast Local Health Integrated Network on the issue of access to mental health and addiction services throughout the District. As Nipissing, has been considered a hub for these services for many years due to the location of the previous North Bay Psychiatric hospital, the caseload has a significant representation of participants with these barriers. Over the past few years, DNSSAB’s CAO has been making every effort to highlight the linkages between social assistance and healthcare programs. His most recent concern relates to wait times and the lack of available information by program. The other challenge with access to mental health and addictions services in the District is that there appears to be a lack of supports working in the community for populations with higher needs and a lack of inpatient mental health beds. As most of the services are located in the urban centre this can also present a significant barrier to those without access to public transportation. For this reason, MCSS through OW and ODSP are forced to absorb the transportation costs under mandatory benefits to get participants to the services.

Other Gaps

The following figure illustrates some of the remaining gaps that continue to impact a client’s ability to secure and maintain sustainable employment and/or access the program most suitable to their needs. While several of these gaps are beyond the scope of Social Services, this does not mean that Social Services does not have a role to play in the area advocacy. Social Services can confirm that a lot of work is currently underway at DNSSAB to address the gaps noted under childcare and housing. The creation of additional infant childcare spaces is on the immediate radar of the Children’s Services department and changes to how affordable and subsidized housing programs will operate under the DNSSAB Housing Portfolio are also on the horizon due to legislative changes within their respective Ministries.

Figure 17



In order for the human service network to be effective, every opportunity to take advantage of integration and collaborative planning must be taken. A multi-ministerial and holistic approach is required in order to ensure that the full spectrums of a client’s needs are met as they are interconnected on many levels. It is clear that more work needs to be done to align programs and services within the broader human service network. Building these relationships and repairing these disconnects is not only cost effective for tax payers but will also enhance the quality within the service system as a whole.

4.6 Increased Employability Strategies

Over the years a great deal of effort has gone into moving case management away from a transactional reactive model to a more pro-active client-centered service utilizing a holistic wrap-approach to better meet the needs of clients in receipt of social assistance. However, technology and complicated cumbersome program requirements continue to make this goal a challenging one. In times of austerity where funding is strained at all levels, creative solutions are required in order to meet the complex needs of clients living in poverty. As mentioned earlier, there are inherent overlaps between this Section and Section 4.1 however using the template definition of increased employability, the following strategies are currently being utilized by Social Services to promote self-reliance and financial independence to influence positive employment and earnings outcomes:

Table 12. Employability Strategy	Linkage to Self-Reliance/Financial Independence and positive employment and Earnings Outcomes
Strategic employment services that are targeted to a participants distance from the labour market. The division of the caseload into	Providing individualized client service that recognizes their unique service needs increases their confidence and ability to connect to the labour market. This in turn

defined service categories facilitates this strategy.	can result in positive employment and earnings outcomes.
Expedited employment services from the point of contact to reduce the amount of time a participant is in receipt of social assistance.	It is well documented that the longer a participant is in receipt of social assistance, the lower their self-confidence is. By bringing the focus of employment services to the first point of contact at the time of application, participants move along the employment continuum faster with better results.
Public Education	Enhance opportunities to educate the public to increase awareness of the Ontario Works Program and decrease stigma. Over time these efforts should assist with re-profiling the Ontario Works program as an employment program with skilled labour and not “welfare” with all of the attached negative connotations.
Address transportation barriers to minimize social isolation from employment, programs and services.	Nipissing Travellink is an excellent example of a strategy designed to address this barrier for participants. Participants that are isolated often do not make meaningful connections with the labour market or their communities.
Increased focus on literacy and life skills.	Participants without the basic skills needed to engage with their communities and/or employment have great difficulty achieving financial independence in a labour market that is becoming increasingly competitive and knowledge based.
Partnerships with post-secondary institutions	Post-secondary education is increasingly becoming essential for participants to exit social assistance dependency into employment that provide at least a living wage or greater. It is directly related to elevating a client out of poverty.
Increase opportunities to volunteer through community placements.	Volunteer placements can increase a participants self-confidence and assist them with connecting to the labour market.
Continued advocacy with the healthcare sector.	DNSSAB will continue to take every opportunity to make the necessary linkages with the healthcare sector



	<p>to promote collaborative planning on common issues. Holistic services that meet the complete needs of participants are the key to creating healthy communities. This relationship between poverty, health and wellbeing is empirically well known. Efforts to address one without considering the other are simply destined to fail resulting in poor outcomes for clients and an increased strain on the tax payer.</p>
--	---

4.7 Monitoring Service Strategies

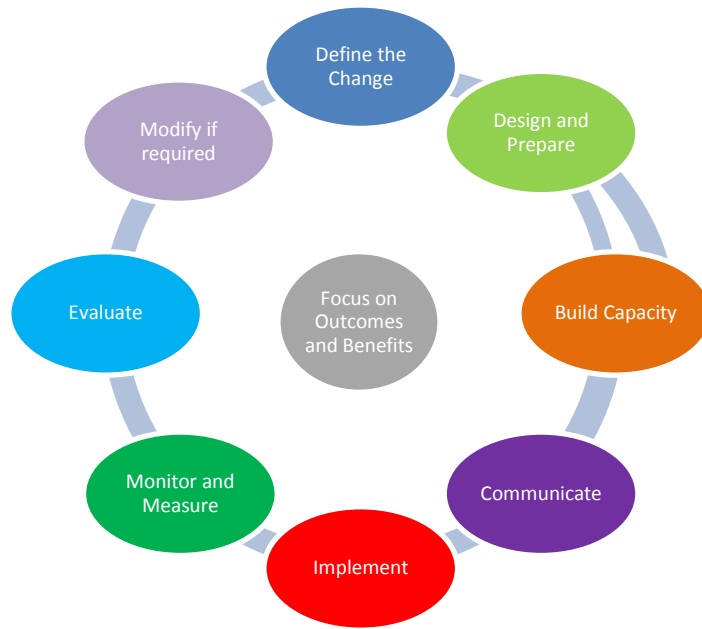
Monitoring Service Strategies is often a change management exercise. Now that reports are accessible and there is more trust and confidence in the data, Social Services is once again utilizing various Cognos reports along with the Social Assistance Operations Performance Reports to inform it’s planning. Various other peripheral tracking mechanisms developed locally are also used extensively to ensure that program administration remains on track. This monitoring is key to ensuring that variances are identified early in order to investigate the cause of the variance and develop a solution. This analysis enables Social Services to adjust service delivery strategies and/or modify local policies or procedures as required to ensure that the work of Staff is aligned with the achievement of outcomes.

Social Services relies heavily on whatever data is available to evaluate the effectiveness of its service strategies in order to ensure that there is an ample return on investment. Social Services monitors and reports on targeted outcomes and program expenditures monthly to the Board. Ad hoc reports and presentations on various other topics related to data and social service delivery are also utilized to further educate and inform. In addition, Social Services also uses available data associated with other CMSM’s and DNSSAB’s to confirm how DNSSAB compares to the outcomes and achievements in other regions. Pro-active engagement to seek feedback from Community Partners is also planned for this cycle to ensure that internal changes within Social Services are not having an unintended negative impact on other programs or the community at large.

The following diagram illustrates the process that Social Services uses when designing and implementing a new service strategy. It is important to note that when it becomes clear during any stage of the process that a project or initiative is not achievable or will have adverse effects on the intended outcomes, the project is discontinued or postponed until a solution can be found.



Figure 18



The table on the following page illustrates how the main strategies discussed in this Plan will be monitored.

Table 13. Change	How Change will be Monitored
Intake Model Changes	<p>Social Assistance Operations Performance Reports will be used to confirm turnaround time to ensure that the new model is not impacting wait times.</p> <p>Cognos reports will be used to confirm that the client/staff ratios per employment service category remain reasonable and balanced to ensure that customer service standards are met.</p> <p>Staff and client feedback will be sought on the effectiveness of the change.</p> <p>Cognos reports confirming the length of time on assistance will be monitored to confirm if the intake changes will result in shorter times on assistance for the job ready.</p>
Separation of Caseload in 3 Employment Service Categories	<p>Cognos Reports to confirm increased participation rates in all service categories.</p> <p>Social Assistance Operations Reports will be used to confirm if</p>



	<p>there is an increase in employment and earnings outcomes. Staff and client feedback will be used to confirm overall satisfaction with the service delivery model change. Effective development of targeted workshops based on service categories. Referral and completion rates on participation activities.</p>
Employment Database	<p>Social Assistance Operations Performance Reports will be used to confirm the impact of the database on the number of Employment/Earnings outcomes. Database reports on the number of participants matched to employment through the database. Get Trained Workers reports on the number of employers working with the program.</p>
Enhanced Partnership with Chamber of Commerce	<p>Number of participants in Employment Placements through Service Agreement.</p>
Get Trained Workers Marketing Strategy	<p>Increased number of Employers signing up with GTW Program. Number of participants matched to employers through GTW Program.</p>
Public Education	<p>This strategy is difficult to monitor however in time these efforts should result in an attitudinal shift in how the general public views social assistance recipients. Increased interest for employers to work with OW or the GTW program may be indicators of this shift.</p>
Partnerships with Post-Secondary Institutions and basic literacy programs.	<p>Cognos reports confirming the number of participants exiting the program due to OSAP income to attend a post-secondary program. Cognos reports to confirm the level of participation in education related activities and completion rates.</p>
Increased advocacy efforts with other sectors such as healthcare.	<p>Number of invitations to consult and collaborate with sectors outside of social assistance.</p>



Due to the number of initiatives currently underway or targeted for the current cycle, Social Services will ensure that leads are assigned to all projects. This “ownership” will help to ensure that oversight is in place in order to avoid project objectives being inadvertently missed. However, as mentioned earlier, Social Services recognizes that even the best laid plans can sometimes fail. It is the lessons learned within the failures that provide us with greater insight into the needs of the caseload. The other component that is often missed with respect to ensuring the effective monitoring of service strategies is to set realistic and achievable goals that are manageable within the service planning cycle. While Social Services is hopeful that it has met this criteria, it recognizes that the goals targeted for the 2017/2018 cycle are ambitious but hopefully achievable.