

Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association Newsletter

February 2011—Issue 1

NON-EMERGENT PATIENT TRANSFER SURVEY OF SIX DESIGNATED DELIVERY AGENTS

Non-Emergent Patient Transfers have been a controversial issue over the past several years. Few Designated Delivery Agents (DDA's) have studies related to their non-emergent patient transfer issue and there are no NOSDA-wide studies on the issue. After a meeting with Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care officials in November, NOSDA conducted a mini-survey with the six non-municipally provided, NOSDA-member DDAs of Land Ambulance Services. This survey was completed in December, 2010. All six DDAs responded.

The responses were revealing:

Roughly 30 per cent of calls are non-emergent over the six DSSAB EMS providers.

While actual hard costs are somewhat difficult to ascertain, the consensus is there is a high cost to DDAs for providing non-emergent patient transfers. This cost also indirectly affects

Municipalities served.

Five out of six DDAs response times for emergency calls are impacted by non-emergent patient transfers. Those surveyed said balanced emergency coverage is unachievable when workers are completing non-emergency calls.

The perceptions of DDAs are that they provide timely non-emergent patient transfers, with some delays. These delays can impact on patient care. Sometimes appointments and tests are cancelled. All DDAs have met with local health care providers to explain the impact of unnecessary call upgrades. It was noted by one DDA that "non emergent transfers become emergencies at the convenience of hospitals and doctors (which may be) resulting in less efficient and more costly EMS service".

With one exception, DDAs believe the quality of EMS and non-emergent patient transfers would improve if

hospitals were to assume control of their own transfers. DDAs indicated they would be willing to work with hospitals and health care providers in their respective areas to successfully shift non-emergent patient transfer responsibilities.

All NOSDA DDAs support more political lobbying to address this problem. This remains a major problem for NOSDA's six DDAs, and will remain high on NOSDA's Advocacy Priority list in 2011.

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DISTRICT SOCIAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION BOARDS

AN INTRODUCTION FOR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

District Social Services Administration Boards or DSSABs are municipal service management organizations created by the provincial government to oversee the local planning, coordination and delivery of a range of services and programs divested to the municipal order of government.

The Provincial Government created DSSABs in January 1997 as part of their Local Services Realignment initiative.

The specific programs most DSSABs are responsible for are: Ontario Works, Social Housing, Emergency Medical Services (Land Ambu-

lance), and Early Learning and Child Care Services.

All ten DSSABs are unique to Northern Ontario.

They, along with thirty seven County, Upper Tier or regional governments make up what is often referred to as Ontario's forty-seven Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs). These forty-seven CMSMs are a significant reduction from the 196 that existed in years before.

Prior to the creation of DSSABs, upper-tier municipal government (Counties and Regional Municipalities) already existed. Most of them became the designated

CMSM for their jurisdictions. However, no equivalent existed in the North. To solve this issue, the Provincial government passed legislation in 1998 to create DSSABs.

DSSABs came into being through the DSSAB Act under the Ministry of Community and Social Services. They are corporate entities responsible for serving municipalities as well as territories without municipal organization. DSSAB boards are made up of elected officials from the municipalities and unincorporated territory in its geographic area.

Northern Ontario's eleven DSSABs and CMSMs are:

Algoma District Services Administration Board

Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board

Kenora District Services Board

Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board

District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board

District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board

Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board

District of Sault Ste Marie Social Services Administration Board

City of Greater Sudbury Consolidated Municipal Service Manager

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board

Timiskaming District Social Services Administration Board

Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association



The Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association

(NOSDA) is an incorporated body that brings together 10 Consolidated Municipal Service Managers. All ten are responsible for the local planning, coordination and delivery of a range of community health and social services that the Province of Ontario divested to them to locally manage. These services represent a significant portion of the social infrastructure of all Northern Ontario's municipalities and also account for a good share of the property taxes that Northern Ontario municipalities dedicate to the social support infrastructure of their municipalities. NOSDA is primarily composed of nine District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) that are unique to Northern Ontario; and one Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM)—the City of Greater Sudbury. Northern Ontario's municipal service managers collectively have annual expenditures in excess of \$650 million and together

"NOSDA is intended to create a political forum for reviewing and developing both policies and program delivery issues from a Northern perspective.."

employ over 1,500 people. We thus represent a significant component of Northern Ontario's economy and labour force.

We plan and coordinate the Northern Ontario delivery of public services and infrastructure programs that result in measurable gains to the quality of life of Northerners.

We are on the Web!

www.nosda.net

NOSDA functions through a Standing Committee structure. There is an Executive committee of elected officials that oversee the activities of NOSDA and there are six working groups—the NOSDA Chief Administrative Officers (CAO) Group, the Ontario Works Management Group, the Northern Service Managers Housing Group (NSMHG), the Northern Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Managers Group and the Northern Child Care Managers Group.

While their mandates vary according to their specific responsibilities, these Working Groups meet to provide a venue for the exchange of information and the development of positions on all social service and community health issues which do or could impact on the delivery of Ontario Works, Child Care, Housing Services and Emergency Medical Services in Northern Ontario. Their primary objective is to achieve the effective and efficient delivery of services in Northern Ontario through joint action and information sharing.

NOSDA has a proud ten year history: Social infrastructure development and support is the core business of its members. Our intimate understanding of local human services and social infrastructures across all of Northern Ontario explains why NOSDA's member Service Managers believe we have significant contributions to make in the development of a comprehensive health and social services network across Northern Ontario.

An Update on Ontario Works

NOSDA Advocates for Change to Cost per Case Funding Formula

Recently the Province of Ontario has announced changes to the funding of the administration and employment assistance services within the Ontario Works program. NOSDA has continually advocated the position that a cost per case funding formula is not appropriate for the delivery of Ontario Works as it does not take into consideration the issues related to delivering services over a large geographic area, and the challenges associated with northern service delivery. As a result of continual pressure from the municipal level of government regarding the increasing costs of

delivering social services, particularly during the economic downturn, the province has initiated a review of the adequacy of funding for social assistance.

The Provincial/Municipal cost sharing arrangement for basic financial and employment assistance under the Ontario Works Act changes from an 80:20 cost share to 81.2 per cent provincial share to 18.8 per cent municipal share in 2011. This is a result of the upload commitment. In addition, the full cost of the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) is fully uploaded in 2011.

NOSDA Changes

Three CAOs announced their retirement during the 2010-11 working years. Bill White of the District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board was the first to go in September, 2010. Mary Lucas of the Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board was the second to leave in October, 2010. Finally, Sten Lif of the Kenora District Services Board has announced his pending retirement date of May 2011.

Leo DeLoyde is the new CAO of Nipissing District and Melissa Harrison is the new CAO in Thunder Bay. For more information, please visit the individual DSSAB websites.

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2011 AGM

The 2011 NOSDA Annual General Meeting will be co-hosted by the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board and the City of Greater Sudbury April 4, 5 & 6 at the Radisson Hotel in Sudbury. The theme for the 2011 AGM is Economic Security for Community Prosperity. For more information please contact Chris Stewart or Sam Ramage at the information to the left.