

**Ministry of
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DEC 13 2013

DEC 19 2013

13-04443

DEC 17 2013

Mr. Les Gamble
Board Chair
Manitoulin-Sudbury District Administration Board
210 Mead Boulevard
Espanola ON P5E 1R9

Dear Mr. Gamble:

Thank you for providing a copy of the plan for the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Administration Board - *Moving Forward: A Plan to Address Housing and Homelessness within the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board Catchment Area* ("the Plan") - for review pursuant to the *Housing Services Act, 2011* (HSA).

In accordance with the HSA, I have reviewed the Plan and wish to provide you with comments for your consideration. I congratulate you on developing a plan which sets out 14 priority actions over the next ten years that reflect the needs of the Manitoulin-Sudbury catchment area. The Plan is evidence-based, reflects the diversity of the community, proposes unique local approaches, and caters to its demographic.

I recognize the Plan's 14 priorities are comprehensive, collaborative and people-centred. The open and transparent engagement approach taken to develop the Plan, to ensure that it reflects a wide range of interests, populations and perspectives, is commendable.

I have the following additional comments:

1. The HSA requires the Plan to show how progress towards meeting the objectives and targets relating to local housing needs will be measured. The measurements should ultimately allow the District to demonstrate the extent to which each initiative is making its desired impact.

I recognize that this is an important and evolving area and many Service Managers are working to develop their own indicators and measures relating to their specific housing and homelessness activities. In addition, the Ministry is working with Service Managers and other sector stakeholders to develop a set of common indicators which may be used province-wide in the future.

While the Plan intends to measure the impact of the elimination of the Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit, and the implementation of the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System, it could be strengthened by describing how progress towards meeting the objectives and targets in your plan will be measured.

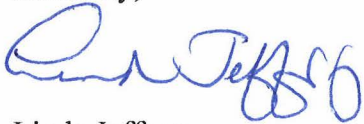
2. Ontario Regulation 367/11 under the HSA requires the Plan to address the housing needs of victims of domestic violence and accessible housing for persons with disabilities, by including:
- an assessment of the current and future housing needs within the Service Manager's service area;
 - objectives and targets relating to housing needs;
 - a description of the measures proposed to meet the objectives and targets; and
 - a description of how progress towards meeting the objectives and targets will be measured.

The Plan references a continued commitment to the prioritization of housing for victims of domestic violence, and I understand that the DSB intends to explore further policies and services in this area. However, the Plan, in its present form, could be strengthened by describing how progress towards meeting the housing needs of victims of domestic violence will be measured.

With respect to persons with disabilities, the Plan demonstrates a thorough analysis of current and future housing needs, and states objectives and targets, and proposed activities. However, the Plan could be strengthened by describing how progress towards meeting the housing needs for persons with disabilities will be measured.

Thank you for the opportunity to review Manitoulin-Sudbury's local housing and homelessness plan. I extend my best wishes to the District Services Board for its successful implementation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Linda Jeffrey".

Linda Jeffrey
Minister