



March 2, 2015

Hon Helena Jaczek  
Minister of Community and Social Services  
6th Floor, Hepburn Block  
80 Grosvenor Street  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1E9

Dear Minister:

**RE: Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) Implementation Review**

Thank you for establishing a review of the Social Assistance Management System (SAMS). This timely announcement has been received very positively by our members.

NOSDA members continue to have significant concerns with the implementation of SAMS, and were encouraged by your memo to the frontline staff acknowledging some of those difficulties we see on a daily basis. NOSDA members want to help and are offering to assist your staff in providing detailed insight into SAMS implementation difficulties. Only from working from a client-facing approach can we expect to ensure that system fixes are impactful.

As we noted in our previous correspondence, there needs to be a clear working group committee structure and reporting relationship with performance outcome and evaluative measures to support our joint effort in serving the citizens in our communities. The setting of agendas, meeting dates and committee structure should be developed jointly and collaboratively and not autocratically as they are now. As partners in implementation and deliver, this only makes sense. Further, we ask the present supports put in place during this transition time be maintained throughout the review process.

More creative solutions to help us deal directly with SAMS and indirectly with the wake of issues that its implementation has created would be most appreciated. We ask that the implementation of fixes be ongoing – that is, the program be continuously improved through joint action, both in terms of the technology as well as through ongoing policy development, and that the implementation of further functionality be jointly planned with the municipal sector.



Finally, we ask that NOSDA be consulted as a whole when undertaking the Review process. Our Chief Administrative Officers Working Group are our most senior executives who jointly and individually can provide you and your team excellent advice on how to move forward in fixing the SAMS change management process. We can provide advice on all aspects of the implementation, from the impact on clients and their experience, to the organizational changes that this process has dictated.

The implementation process to date has been fraught with difficulties that we have been attempting to deal with independently, let us work with you to identify solutions to the problems inherent to the SAMS implementation going forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gary W. Scipnick!".

Gary Scipnick, Chair

cc. Catherine Matheson, President, OMSSA  
Pat Vanini, Executive Director, AMO  
Al Spacek, FONOM  
David Canfield, NOMA