



NOSDA Issues Book

June 2015

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PART 1:

1.0 NOSDA BACKGROUND

The Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) is an incorporated body that brings together Service Managers in Northern Ontario who are responsible for the local planning, coordination and delivery of a range of community health and social services. These services represent a significant portion of the social and community service infrastructure in all Northern Ontario communities, and account for a large share of the property taxes that municipalities dedicate to these services.

NOSDA is composed of ten District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), a form of governmental board unique to Northern Ontario, and one municipal Service Manager (City of Greater Sudbury) that cover the entire geography of Northern Ontario (with the exception of First Nations) from the Manitoba border to the Quebec border.

1.1 NOSDA's Mission:

NOSDA coordinates the effective delivery of human services to the people of Northern Ontario with the support and collaboration of its member organizations. NOSDA champions healthy social development and accessible labour-market development in Northern Ontario communities

NOSDA members currently plan and coordinate the delivery of public services and infrastructure programs across the North that result in measurable gains to the quality of life of Northerners through:

- Providing financial and other supports to persons in financial crisis and/or having difficulty entering or re-entering the labour force;
- Creating, maintaining and providing affordable and social housing;
- Providing quality early learning and child care services to promote child development while enabling parents' educational/skills upgrading and employment; Delivering emergency medical services in times of medical crisis in areas that have undertaken to do so
- Addressing homelessness through funding and delivering diverse emergency shelter and homelessness prevention services.

1.2 NOSDA's Values:

A Statement of Our Core Values:

- NOSDA will aid its member organizations and its local municipalities by demonstrating **creativity, responsiveness, and efficiency** in the planning, design and delivery of human services and is willing to explore innovative and evidenced-based ways to **achieve results**

- NOSDA will help its stakeholders to be **respectful and enabling** in their relations with our clients and to be accountable to taxpayers, as well as being **model employers** and **good 'corporate citizens'**
- NOSDA will work to earn the reputation among government agencies and other organizations, as **a good partner** and an **authoritative voice**, focused on Northern clients and communities

1.3 Strategic Priorities:

NOSDA's strategic goals are:

- 1. To Lead, Promote Linkages and to Collaborate.** This will be accomplished by expanding Service-Delivery Partnerships and by improving stakeholder communications and advocacy with like-minded organizations, municipalities and urban Aboriginal communities
- 2. To Realize our Potential.** This will be accomplished by expanding the scope and impact of human services delivery; and by becoming a "trusted advisor" to governments
- 3. To Innovate.** This will be accomplished by advancing the Service-System Manager model of delivery; and by promoting research into best practices and innovative delivery.
- 4. To Improve Outcomes for Persons in our communities through Productivity, Efficiency and Effectiveness.** This will be done by advising on standards for performance and program effects; by identifying and advocating for removal of barriers to policy and program success; and by enhancing the organizational capacity of NOSDA and its member organization.

PART 2: ISSUES

2.1 CHILD CARE:

2015

2.1.1 Early Years System

Background: The Ministry of Education has continued to transform the Early Years System for children and their families and continues to reiterate their commitment to stabilizing and enhancing the licensed child care services for children from birth to age four. However, despite Provincial commitment to stabilizing the licensed child care system, Northern Ontario remains fragile and has been further threatened by the mitigation of 4 and 5 year olds into the school system. NOSDA supports a childcare system that provides access to all children and seeks continued and substantial investment from Ontario to develop such a system.

Issue: Despite Provincial commitment to stabilizing the licensed child care system, Northern Ontario remains fragile and has been further threatened by the mitigation of 4 and 5 year olds into the school system.

Action: NOSDA supports a childcare system that provides access to all children and seeks continued and substantial investment from Ontario to develop such a system.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA will continue to work with the Province to create a childcare system that provides access to all children. NOSDA has written a letter to the Ministry of Education on this matter on May 20, 2015. The letter can be found in [Appendix A](#).

Update: A teleconference was held June 16, 2015 with Ministry of Education officials to discuss this issue.

2014

2.1.2 Early Years Policy Framework

Background: The Ministry of Education has proceeded to build on the Early Years Policy Framework by integrating Early Years programs into Best Start Child and Family Centres. CMSMs and DSSABs are key municipal partners in child care service system management but the current administration and funding system for Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYC) was established along provincial ridings and not along municipal service management areas. NOSDA recommended that the Ministry of Education be requested to recognize CMSMs and DSSABs as the lead municipal partner for child care service system management for OEYC's and Best Start Child and Family Centres, that OEYC's be realigned according to CMSMs/DSSABs regions and that the service management for OEYC be transferred to CMSMs and DSSABs, including Data Analysis Coordinators and Early Literacy Specialists.

Issue: The administration and funding systems for Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYC) were established along provincial ridings and not along municipal service management areas.

Action: NOSDA recommended that the Ministry of Education be requested to recognize CMSMs and DSSABs as the lead municipal partner for child care service system management for OEYC's and Best Start Child and Family Centres, that OEYC's be realigned according to CMSMs/DSSABs regions and that the service management for OEYC be transferred to CMSMs and DSSABs, including Data Analysis Coordinators and Early Literacy Specialists.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA will continue to offer their services to the Ministry of Education to address this matter.

Update:

2.1.3 Child Care Modernization Act

Background: The recent Child Care Modernization Act provides for extended day care programming for 6-12 year olds in schools that meet the minimum enrollment thresholds. However, access to extended day care programming continues to be a challenge in small rural schools because small schools and their third party operators are permitted to opt out of extended day care. NOSDA recommended that the Ministry of Education amends the CCMA agreement to require that smaller schools and their third party operators provide extended day care programming for children ages 4-12 in all schools, regardless of minimum numbers of students so that parents and families have equal access to services in line with the Ministry's vision for a seamless education experience for 4-12 year olds across Ontario.

Issue: Access to extended day care programming continues to be a challenge in small rural schools because small schools and their third party operators are permitted to opt out of extended day care.

Action: NOSDA recommended that the Ministry of Education amends the CCMA agreement to require that smaller schools and their third party operators provide extended day care programming for children ages 4-12 in all schools, regardless of minimum numbers of students so that parents and families have equal access to services.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA will continue to offer their services to the Ministry of Education to make needed changes to the Child Care Modernization Act.

Update:

2.2 EMS:

2014

2.2.1 Non Emergent Patient Transfers

Background: Non-urgent patient transportation for many rural Northern Ontario centres has become and continues to be the exclusive responsibility of the local Emergency Medical Services providers with demand reaching a critical level. Emergency Medical Services providers continue to struggle to meet the emergency medical needs of the citizens of their communities due to gaining-in-place populations and increased emergency demands for service. NOSDA recommended that the government of Ontario, and more specifically the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, work with NOSDA to place a high degree of importance on this topic with the aim of providing a made in the North solution. NOSDA also met with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC), North East and North West Local Health Integration Networks (NE and NW LHINs), the Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs (OAPC), the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) and other key stakeholders to put in place a 'Made in the North' solution to the Non Urgent Patient Transfer issue.

Issue: Emergency Medical Services providers continue to struggle to meet the emergency medical needs of the citizens of their communities due to gaining-in-place populations and increased emergency demands for service.

Action: NOSDA recommended that the government of Ontario, and more specifically the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, work with NOSDA to place a high degree of importance on this topic with the aim of providing a made in the North solution. NOSDA also met with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC), North East and North West Local Health Integration Networks (NE and NW LHINs), the Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs (OAPC), the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) and other key stakeholders to put in place a 'Made in the North' solution to the Non Urgent Patient Transfer issue.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA will continue to offer their services to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to address this matter and will continue to work with stakeholders to improve the North.

Update:

2.3 HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS:

2015

2.3.1 Request to Redefine 'Deep Core Need' as Applied by MMAH

Background: A major issue related to affordable housing in the North is that the Province and the Federal Government are not investing in housing in areas where affordable housing is needed, causing affordable housing shortages. This is due to the current definition of the so-called 'deep core housing need' in a formulaic fashion that does not take into consideration what has been learned about how this allocation model and previous allocation models (population, unit counts, etc.) are inappropriate for the realities of the North and likewise for most Southern Ontario Service Managers with a large rural component. NOSDA recommends that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing addresses the definition and NOSDA will work with MMAH to develop a valid, funding formula approach appropriate for rural and Northern Ontario.

Issue: The Province and the Federal government are not investing in housing in areas where affordable housing is needed, causing affordable housing shortages. This is due to the current definition of the so-called 'deep core housing need' in a formulaic fashion that are inappropriate for the realities of the North and likewise for most Southern Ontario Service Managers with a large rural component.

Action: NOSDA recommends that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing addresses the definition and NOSDA will work with MMAH to develop a valid, funding formula approach appropriate for rural and Northern Ontario.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA will work with MMAH to update the definition of 'deep core housing need' and to develop a valid formula appropriate for rural and Northern Ontario. A letter was sent to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on May 20, 2015 regarding this issue and the letter can be found in [Appendix B](#).

Update:

2.3.2 Homelessness Data Collection in Northern Ontario (HIFIS)

Background: NOSDA received funding from the Community Development and Homelessness Partnering Directorate (formally Homelessness Partnering Strategy) of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada to prepare a pre-feasibility report on the implementation of the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS); and this project was successfully completed in July, 2014. It was found that the HIFIS system, as a shelter-based system, does not take into account the issue of 'hidden homelessness' and thus has limitations in relation to its inability to track homeless persons in Northern and rural areas. NOSDA recommends that the Federal and Provincial Governments work with NOSDA and Northern and rural communities to develop a more robust homelessness data collection system to enable greater service system management of the homeless population. It should also be ensured that the definition of homelessness being developed by the Provincial Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness is reflective of northern and rural experiences of homelessness.

Issue: It was found that the HIFIS system, as a shelter-based system, does not take into account the issue of 'hidden homelessness' and thus has limitations in relation to its inability to track homeless persons in Northern and rural areas. The definition of homelessness also needs to be redefined to include northern and rural experiences of homelessness.

Action: NOSDA recommends that the Federal and Provincial Governments work with NOSDA and Northern and rural communities to develop a more robust homelessness data collection system to enable greater service system management of the homeless population.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA will offer their services to the Federal and Provincial Governments to develop a better homelessness data collection system. NOSDA sent a letter to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on May 20, 2015 regarding this matter and the letter can be found in [Appendix B](#).

Update:

2.3.3 NOSDA Housing and Homelessness Plan Roll Up

Background: Part of the NOSDA Strategic Plan 2013-2016, included a section whereby Service Managers expressed an interest in having a Pan-Northern Roll-Up of provincially mandated Housing and Homelessness Plans. The initial Roll-Up was prepared by a consortium consisting of NOSDA, Housing Services Corporation, and the Ontario Municipal Services Association in the spring of 2014 to identify common patterns, concerns, programming, and advocacy themes across Northern Ontario.

Issue: Service Managers are interested in having a Pan-Northern Roll-Up of provincially mandated Housing and Homelessness Plans but the plans must be updated.

Action: NOSDA has written a letter to the North East and North West Local Health Integration Networks (NW and NE LHIN's) regarding this matter and is requesting collaboration in the development of improved supportive housing. The letter can be found in [Appendix B](#).

Follow Up Required: The Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy (LTAHS) requires that the housing and homelessness plans be updated by service managers. This work is currently on going (June 2015).

Update:

2.3.4 Long-Term affordable Housing Strategy

Background: NOSDA will be submitting a Long-Term Housing Strategy Update. NOSDA will be sharing a roll-up of the submission to FONOM and NOMA to align their positions.

Issue: NOSDA must prepare and submit a Long-Term Housing Strategy Update.

Action: The Housing Working Group is currently preparing a submission and will share it with the CAOs once completed for feedback.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA will share their submission with FONOM and NOMA once it is finalized.

Update:

2014

2.3.5 “Digging Deep: How Mining Can Support Northern Ontario Housing Initiatives”

Background: Ontario’s rich mineral landscape generates considerable wealth of over \$9 billion per year and employs over 23,000 people. However, mining’s socio-economic and environmental costs and benefits are unevenly distributed. NOSDA accepts the findings and recommendations in the paper prepared by Housing Services Corporation entitled “Digging Deep: How Mining Can Support Northern Ontario Housing Initiatives” dated September 2013. NOSDA Executives and CAO Table was to be tasked with analyzing this valuable paper, share it with the Northern Policy Institute and investigate the engagement of other stakeholders into the dialogue on social infrastructure in resource-based communities.

Issue: Mining’s socio-economic and environmental costs and benefits are unevenly distributed.

Action: NOSDA accepts the findings and recommendations in the paper prepared by Housing Services Corporation entitled “Digging Deep: How Mining Can Support Northern Ontario Housing Initiatives”. The NOSDA Executives and CAO Table was to be tasked with analyzing this valuable paper, share it with the Northern Policy Institute and investigate the engagement of other stakeholders into the dialogue on social infrastructure in resource-based communities.

Follow Up Required: A presentation of housing and mining in northern communities was presented at the Annual General Meeting in April 2015.

Update:

2.3.6 Need for Federal Funding for Social and Affordable Housing in Canada

Background: There is an urgent need for the Federal Government to return to the table as a partner with the Provinces and Territories in funding long-term social and affordable housing for our most vulnerable residents. NOSDA is very concerned that federal funding for social and affordable housing is declining and that the Federal Government appears to be exiting its previous long-term commitment to addressing the social housing needs of the country. NOSDA communicated to the Minister of Employment and Social Development stressing the need for a national housing strategy and requested that the Federal Government returns to the table and collaborate with Provincial/Territorial Housing Ministers to develop a long-term plan that addresses the need for social and affordable housing across the country.

Issue: The Federal Government needs to return to the table as a partner with the Provinces and Territories in funding long-term social and affordable housing for our most vulnerable residents.

Action: NOSDA communicated to the Minister of Employment and Social Development stressing the need for a national housing strategy and requested that the Federal Government returns to the table and collaborate with Provincial/Territorial Housing Ministers to develop a long-term plan that addresses the need for social and affordable housing across the country.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA will continue to work with the Federal Government and key stakeholders to develop a long-term plan that addresses the need for social and affordable housing.

Update:

2.3.7 Utility Scale

Background: The Housing Services Act, 2011, O. Reg. 298/01, Determination of Geared-to-income Rent under Section 50 of the Act, sets tables to be used by Service Managers for utility costs and these tables have not been updated to reflect true economic increases in utility costs since devolution in 2000. NOSDA recommended that the Province of Ontario, immediately adjust the utility tables within the Housing Services Act, O. Reg. 298/01, to reflect the true cost of utilities in Northern Ontario and that the Province of Ontario provide a mechanism within the tables, to annually adjust the tables relative to true economic costs to ensure local municipalities are not disadvantaged in future years.

Issue: The Housing Services Act, 2011, O. Reg. 298/01, Determination of Geared-to-income Rent under Section 50 of the Act, sets tables to be used by Service Managers for utility costs and these tables have not been updated to reflect true economic increases in utility costs since devolution in 2000.

Action: NOSDA recommended that the Province of Ontario, immediately adjust the utility tables within the Housing Services Act, O. Reg. 298/01, to reflect the true cost of utilities in Northern Ontario and that the Province of Ontario provide a mechanism within the tables, to annually adjust the tables.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA will continue to offer their services to the Province to update the regulation and to adjust the utility tables.

Update:

2.3.8 Surplus Properties

Background: The disposition of surplus property by School Boards is governed by Regulation 444/98 of the Education Act, which provides for a list of bodies to receive notice proposals that include a Municipality in which the property is located, an upper-tier Municipality and Local Service Boards. However, DSSABs/CMSMs have not been specifically identified in the regulation, resulting in inconsistent interpretation of DSSABs/CMSMs as either a Municipality or Local Service Board. CMSMs/DSSABs in Northern Ontario are being excluded even though CMSMs in all other areas of the Province are recognized under regulation 444/98. NOSDA recommended that the Ministry of Education be requested to acknowledge and take all steps necessary, including amending existing regulations to guarantee DSSABs be formally included in the list of bodies receiving notice for surplus property disposals under Regulation 444/98 of the Education Act.

Issue: The disposition of surplus property by School Boards is governed by Regulation 444/98 of the Education Act, which provides for a list of bodies to receive notice proposals that include a Municipality in which the property is located, an upper-tier Municipality and Local Service Boards. However, DSSABs/CMSMs have not been specifically identified in the regulation and are being excluded.

Action: NOSDA recommended that the Ministry of Education be requested to acknowledge and take all steps necessary, including amending existing regulations to guarantee DSSABs be formally included in the list of bodies receiving notice for surplus property disposals under Regulation 444/98 of the Education Act.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA will continue to offer their services to the Ministry of Education to update existing regulations to ensure DSSABs are included in the list of bodies receiving notice on surplus properties.

Update:

2.4 ONTARIO WORKS:

2015

2.4.1 Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) Software Delays

Background: The Ministry of Community and Social Services has launched a multi-year Social Services Solutions Modernization Project (SSSMP) to enhance the delivery of social assistance through technology and business renewal. However, NOSDA has concerns regarding the structure implementation of the new Social Assistance Management System (SAMS). The concerns are:

- There is less time available for case management due to SAMS implementation.
- SAMS implementation has created back logs of work.
- The SAMS system browser is not compatible with other browsers or other Ministries' programs such as Child Care.
- There are high direct and indirect human and financial costs due to SAMS implementation.

Therefore NOSDA is working in close partnership with MCSS to ensure successful implementation. NOSDA also requests that the Government of Ontario assume 100% responsibility for all short and long-term costs associated with SAMS implementation.

Issue: NOSDA has concerns regarding the implementation of the new Social Assistance Management System (SAMS).

Action: NOSDA is working in close partnership with MCSS to ensure successful implementation of SAMS. NOSDA also requests that the Government of Ontario assume 100% responsibility for all short and long-term costs associated with SAMS implementation.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA wrote a letter to the Premier January 19, 2015 expressing their concerns regarding SAMS. The letter can be found in [Appendix C](#). NOSDA has since received responses from the Premier and Richard Steele, ADM of the Social Assistance Operations Division. NOSDA will continue to work closely with MCSS to ensure the successful implementation of SAMS.

Update:

2014

2.4.2 Provincial Announcement of Social Services SAMS Software Delays

Background: The Ministry of Community and Social Services has launched a multi-year Social Services Solutions Modernization Project (SSSMP) to enhance the delivery of social assistance through technology and business renewal. The project has faced significant challenges and the tentatively planned go-live date of this new technology has now been re-scheduled again as a result of the delays in data conversion. The municipal service managers have gone to considerable expense and time to train staff, thus incurring unexpected costs associated with the recurring delays. NOSDA requested that the Minister of Community and Social Services to provide enhanced funding to cover 100% of the cost of the additional staff and related costs associated with recurring delays in SAMS implementation.

Issue: The Ministry of Community and Social Services has launched a multi-year Social Services Solutions Modernization Project (SSSMP). The project faced significant challenges and the tentatively planned go-live date of this new technology was re-scheduled again as a result of the delays in data conversion. The municipal service managers went to considerable expense and time to train staff, thus incurring unexpected costs associated with the recurring delays.

Action: NOSDA requested that the Minister of Community and Social Services provide enhanced funding to cover 100% of the cost of the additional staff and related costs associated with recurring delays in SAMS implementation.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA will continue to work with the Ministry of Community and Social Services to improve the implementation of SAMS.

Update:

2.4.3 RGI vs Utilizing Maximum Social Assistance Rates

Background: Service Managers are bound by the Housing Services Act, 2011, O. Reg. 298/01, Determination of Geared-to-income Rent under Section 50 of the Act, in the calculation of rent for Social Housing Tenants. However, these tables have not been adjusted since devolution of Social Housing in 2000. NOSDA recommended that the Province of Ontario make amendments to the current tables within the Housing Services Act, 2011, O. Reg. 298/01, Determination of Geared-to-income Rent under Section 50 of the Act, to permit Service Managers to utilize the maximum allowable shelter rates for recipients of Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program when calculating rent changes for these Social Housing Tenants.

Issue: Service Managers are bound by the Housing Services Act, 2011, O. Reg. 298/01, Determination of Geared-to-income Rent under Section 50 of the Act, in the calculation of rent for Social Housing Tenants. However, these tables have not been adjusted since devolution of Social Housing in 2000.

Action: NOSDA recommended that the Province of Ontario make amendments to the current tables within the Housing Services Act, 2011, O. Reg. 298/01, Determination of Geared-to-income Rent under Section 50 of the Act, to permit Service Managers to utilize the maximum allowable shelter rates for recipients of Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program when calculating rent changes for these Social Housing Tenants.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA will continue to offer their services to the Province of Ontario to improve the current tables in the Housing Services Act, 2011, O. Reg. 298/01, Determination of Geared-to-income Rent under Section 50 of the Act.

Update:

2.5 OTHER ISSUES:

2015

2.5.1 DSSAB Capital Borrowing from Infrastructure Ontario

Background: DSSABs are corporations created pursuant to the District Social Services Administration Board Act (the “**DSSAB Act**”) and are also governed by Parts I, III and VII of the Corporations Act (Ontario). DSSABs have also been provided with Natural Person Powers and can contract in their own names, including contracting to borrow funds. However, DSSABs are not eligible to access Infrastructure Ontario (IO) funds for any of its programs where other CMSMs and other municipalities can. Therefore, NOSDA recommends that the Ministry of Infrastructure amend the Ontario Infrastructure and Land Corporations Act in order for DSSABs to be eligible applicants under the Infrastructure Ontario Loan Program.

Issue: DSSABs are not eligible to access Infrastructure Ontario (IO) funds for any of its programs where other CMSMs and other municipalities can.

Action: NOSDA recommends that the Ministry of Infrastructure amends the Ontario Infrastructure and Land Corporations Act in order for DSSABs to be eligible applicants under the Infrastructure Ontario Loan Program.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA has written a letter to the Ministry of Infrastructure regarding this issue on May 20, 2015 and the letter can be found in [Appendix D](#).

Update:

2.5.2 NOSDA Request to Align DSSAB and Municipal Council Terms

Background: There is a major inconsistency between the Municipal Act and the DSSAB Act in the definition of the end of a municipal council term and the end of a DSSAB Board term; and the inconsistent definition results in a gap between the end of a Municipal Council term which is November 30th and the December 31st end of term for DSSAB Board members. NOSDA requests that MCSS amend the Regulation 278/98 made pursuant to the DSSAB Act to align DSSAB Board Terms with Municipal Council terms as set out in the Municipal Act in time for the 2018 Municipal Election or state in the Regulation that the DSSAB Board will not meet in the month of December of an election year.

Issue: There is inconsistency between the Municipal Act and the DSSAB Act in the definition of the end of a municipal council term and the end of a DSSAB Board term.

Action: NOSDA requests that MCSS amend the Regulation 278/98 made pursuant to the DSSAB Act to align DSSAB Board Terms with Municipal Council terms as set out in the Municipal Act in time for the 2018 Municipal Election or state in the Regulation that the DSSAB Board will not meet in the month of December of an election year.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA has sent a letter to the Ministry of Community and Social Services on May 20, 2015 requesting that this issue be addressed and the letter can be found in [Appendix D](#).

Update:

2.5.3 Ministerial Clarification of Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) and District Social Service Administration Boards ADD to Other ISSEs

Background: NOSDA questions the net result of the published reports of the uploading of municipal service costs, and feel recent Ministerial correspondence may be misrepresenting the true nature of the uploads and the OMPF reductions that many Northern Ontario municipalities have experienced. The OMPF program has been significantly restructured since the 2012 Review and the provincial uploading was tax neutral but by no means were there any savings to the municipalities as the province reduced the OMPF by the same amount of the provincial upload. It is difficult to discuss the OMPF and the implied savings with our municipal partners when both the municipal partners and the DSSAB's cannot interpret the provincial calculations. NOSDA recommends that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of Finance hold a meeting to discuss the OMPF calculations and the provincial uploads with NOSDA and its constituent members, and that every effort be taken to ensure wide spread agreement on the results.

Issue: NOSDA questions the net result of the published reports of the uploading of municipal service costs, and feel recent Ministerial correspondence may be misrepresenting the true nature of the uploads and the OMPF reductions that many Northern Ontario municipalities have experienced.

Action: NOSDA recommends that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of Finance hold a meeting to discuss the OMPF calculations and the provincial uploads with NOSDA and its constituent members, and that every effort be taken to ensure wide spread agreement on the results.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA has sent a letter to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on this matter on May 20, 2015. NOSDA will continue to work with the Ministry to fix this issue. The letter can be found in [Appendix D](#).

Update:

2.5.4 Relationship Building

Background: NOSDA has made headway in building a stronger relationship with the Local Health Integration Networks (LHIN's). NOSDA has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS) and the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC) with the goal of continuing to strengthen their relationship with each organization. NOSDA has also been strengthening their relationship with FONOM and NOMA to create a united voice for the North.

Issue: NOSDA needs to continue strengthening their relationships with stakeholders.

Follow Up Required: NOSDA will continue to strengthen relationships and partnerships with its stakeholders.

Update:

Appendix A: 2015 Child Care Letters

May 20, 2015

Hon. Tracy MacCharles
Minister of Children and Youth Services
14th Floor, 56 Wellesley St W
Toronto ON
M5S 2S3

Dear Minister MacCharles:

RE: 2015 NORTHERN ONTARIO SERVICE DELIVERERS ASSOCIATION (NOSDA) – CHILD CARE RESOLUTION

As you know, NOSDA is composed of ten District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), a form of governmental board unique to Northern Ontario, and one municipal Service Manager (City of Greater Sudbury) that cover the entire geography of Northern Ontario (with the exception of First Nations) from the Manitoba border to the Quebec border.

NOSDA members plan and coordinate the delivery of public services and social infrastructure programs across the North that result in measurable gains to the quality of life of Northerners, including the provision of quality early learning and child care services to promote child development while enabling parents' educational/skills upgrading and employment.

The following resolution regarding child care was **APPROVED** by the delegates at the April, 2015 Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) Annual General Meeting held in Thunder Bay and reads as follows:

Resolution # 2015-3

WHEREAS It has been 8 years since the release of the Pascal Report “*With our Best Future in Mind*” and the Ministry of Education has continued to transform the Early Years System for children and their families; and

WHEREAS the Ministry continues to reiterate their commitment to stabilizing and enhancing the licensed child care services for children from birth to age four and has identified the early years as the most important in child development and has a profound and long-lasting impact on their future development and well-being; and

WHEREAS despite the Provincial commitment to stabilizing the licensed child care system, licensed child care in Northern Ontario still remains a fragile system and the viability of child care providers has been further threatened by the migration of 4 and 5 year olds into the school system; and

WHEREAS the current system of funding for licensed child care only provides sufficient funding to provide quality, licensed child care for approximately 20% of the children aged 0 to 4 years.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT NOSDA fully supports a child care system that provides access to all children, regardless of family income and circumstance, and seeks continued and substantial investment from Ontario to develop such a system.

Both the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) and the Federation of Northern Municipalities (FONOM) passed this recommendation unanimously at their respective Annual General Meetings this past month. We appreciate engaging our municipal partners in issues that affect our common client group: the citizens of Northern Ontario, and that support for this resolution is universal across all Municipal jurisdictions across the North. Further, we believe this indicates the gravity of the child care situation in Northern Ontario and the need for dialogue between District Social Service Administration Boards, Northern municipalities and your Ministry to address this issue.

We would be pleased to meet with you and your staff to discuss this further. Please have your staff contact us to arrange for such a meeting.

We look forward to hearing from, and working with you.

Sincerely,

Iain Angus, Chair

Cc: Hon. Kathleen Wynne, Premier
Hon. Liz Sandals, Minister of Education
Gary McNamara, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
Al Spacek, President, Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)
David Canfield, President, Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA)

May 20, 2015

Hon. Liz Sandals
Ministry of Education
14th Floor, Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto ON M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Sandals:

**RE: 2015 NORTHERN ONTARIO SERVICE DELIVERERS ASSOCIATION (NOSDA) –
CHILD CARE RESOLUTION**

As you know, NOSDA is composed of ten District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), a form of governmental board unique to Northern Ontario, and one municipal Service Manager (City of Greater Sudbury) that cover the entire geography of Northern Ontario (with the exception of First Nations) from the Manitoba border to the Quebec border.

NOSDA members plan and coordinate the delivery of public services and social infrastructure programs across the North that result in measurable gains to the quality of life of Northerners, including the provision of quality early learning and child care services to promote child development while enabling parents' educational/skills upgrading and employment.

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Resolution # 2015-3

WHEREAS It has been 8 years since the release of the Pascal Report "*With our Best Future in Mind*" and the Ministry of Education has continued to transform the Early Years System for children and their families; and

WHEREAS the Ministry continues to reiterate their commitment to stabilizing and enhancing the licensed child care services for children from birth to age four and has identified the early years as the most important in child development and has a profound and long-lasting impact on their future development and well-being; and

WHEREAS despite the Provincial commitment to stabilizing the licensed child care system, licensed child care in Northern Ontario still remains a fragile system and the viability of child care providers has been further threatened by the migration of 4 and 5 year olds into the school system; and

WHEREAS the current system of funding for licensed child care only provides sufficient funding to provide quality, licensed child care for approximately 20% of the children aged 0 to 4 years.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT NOSDA fully supports a child care system that provides access to all children, regardless of family income and circumstance, and seeks continued and substantial investment from Ontario to develop such a system.

Both the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) and the Federation of Northern Municipalities (FONOM) passed this recommendation unanimously at their respective Annual General Meetings this past month. We appreciate engaging our municipal partners in issues that affect our common client group: the citizens of Northern Ontario and that the support for this resolution is universal across all Municipal jurisdictions in the North. Further, we believe this indicates the gravity of the child care situation in Northern Ontario and the need for dialogue between District Social Service Administration Boards, Northern municipalities and your Ministry to address this issue.

We would be pleased to meet with you and your staff to discuss this further. Please have your staff contact us to arrange for such a meeting.

We look forward to hearing from, and working with you.

Sincerely,

Iain Angus, Chair

Cc: Hon. Kathleen Wynne, Premier
Hon. Tracy MacCharles, Minister of Children and Youth Services(MCYS)
Gary McNamara, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
Al Spacek, President, Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)
David Canfield, President, Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA)

Appendix B: 2015 Housing and Homelessness Letters

May 20, 2015

Hon. Ted McMeekin
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
17th Floor, 777 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5G 2E5

RE: 2015 NORTHERN ONTARIO SERVICE DELIVERERS ASSOCIATION (NOSDA) –

REQUEST TO REDEFINE ‘DEEP CORE NEED’ AS RELATED TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

As you know, NOSDA is composed of ten District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), a form of governmental board unique to Northern Ontario, and one municipal Service Manager (City of Greater Sudbury) that cover the entire geography of Northern Ontario (with the exception of First Nations) from the Manitoba border to the Quebec border.

NOSDA members plan and coordinate the delivery of public services and social infrastructure programs across the North that result in measurable gains to the quality of life of Northerners, including the creation, maintenance and provision of affordable and social housing.

The following resolution regarding child care was **APPROVED** by the delegates at the April, 2015 Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) Annual General Meeting held in Thunder Bay and reads as follows:

Resolution # 2015-4

WHEREAS a major issue related to affordable housing in the North is that the Province and the Federal governments are not investing in housing in areas where affordable housing is needed, causing affordable housing shortages and

WHEREAS this is due to the inherently flawed application of current definition of the so-called ‘deep core housing need’ in a formulaic fashion that does not take into consideration what has been learned about how this allocation model and previous allocation models (population, unit counts, etc.) are inappropriate for the realities of the North and likewise for most Southern Ontario Service Managers with a large rural component;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing address the fundamentally flawed Deep Core Need definition and that NOSDA work with MMAH to develop a valid, funding formula approach, appropriate for rural and Northern Ontario.

Both the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) and the Federation of Northern Municipalities (FONOM) also passed this recommendation unanimously at their respective Annual General Meetings this past month. We appreciate engaging our municipal partners in issues that affect our common client group: the citizens of Northern Ontario and that support for this resolution is universal across all municipalities in the North. Further, we believe this indicates the gravity of the affordable housing situation in Northern Ontario and the need for dialogue between District Social Service Administration Boards, Northern municipalities and your Ministry to address this issue.

We would be pleased to meet with you and your staff to discuss this further. Please have your staff contact us to arrange for such a meeting.

We look forward to hearing from, and working with you.

Sincerely,

Iain Angus, Chair

cc: Gary McNamara, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
Al Spacek, President, Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)
David Canfield, President, Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA)
Janet Hope, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH)

May 20, 2015

Hon. Ted McMeekin
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
17th Floor, 777 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5G 2E5

Dear Minister McMeekin:

RE: HOMELESSNESS DATA COLLECTION IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

As you know, the Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) is comprised of ten District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), a form of governmental board unique to Northern Ontario, and one municipal Service Manager (City of Greater Sudbury). Together, they cover the entire geography of Northern Ontario (with the exception of First Nations) from the Manitoba border to the Quebec border. NOSDA members plan and coordinate the delivery of public services and social infrastructure programs across the North that result in measurable gains to the quality of life of Northerners, including the creation, maintenance and provision of affordable and social housing.

The following resolution regarding Homelessness Data Collection in Northern Ontario was **APPROVED** by the delegates at the April, 2015 Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) Annual General Meeting held in Thunder Bay:

Resolution # 2015-5

WHEREAS NOSDA received funding from the Community Development and Homelessness Partnering Directorate (formally Homelessness Partnering Strategy) of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada to prepare a pre-feasibility report on the implementation of the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS); and

WHEREAS this project was successfully completed in July, 2014; and

WHEREAS it was found that the HIFIS system, as a shelter-based system, does not take into account the issue of 'hidden homelessness' and thus has limitations in relation to its inability to track homeless persons in Northern and rural areas; and

WHEREAS most Northern Ontario communities do not have any homeless shelters;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the following recommendations be adopted:
That the Federal and Provincial Governments work with NOSDA, Northern and rural communities to develop a more robust homelessness data collection system to enable greater service system management of the homeless population; and**

That we ensure that the definition of homelessness being developed by the Provincial Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness is reflective of northern and rural experiences of homelessness; and

That NOSDA members, in partnership and cooperation with the Federal and Provincial Governments increase their respective and collective understanding of homelessness through:

- **ensuring service managers have the administrative capacity to collect and analyze homelessness data across Northern Ontario**
- **the development of reliable, accurate and meaningful homelessness data in Northern Ontario**
- **the facilitation of sharing and analysis of homelessness data in Northern Ontario,**
- **working in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres to ensure service providers have cultural awareness training as it relates to the collection, application and use of homelessness data pertaining to aboriginal peoples, particularly the use and understanding of the term 'Aboriginal Indicator' when using HIFIS; and**

That NOSDA share this report with its partner organizations and others as appropriate.

Since that time, both the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) and the Federation of Northern Municipalities (FONOM) passed this recommendation unanimously at their respective Annual General Meetings. Support for this resolution is universal across all Municipal jurisdictions in the North. We believe this indicates the gravity of the need for better data collection on housing and homelessness in Northern Ontario and the need for dialogue between District Social Service Administration Boards, Northern municipalities and your Ministry to address this issue.

We would be pleased to meet with you and your staff to discuss this further. Please have your staff contact us to arrange for such a meeting.

Sincerely,

Iain Angus, Chair

Cc: Gary McMamara, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
Al Spacek, President, Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)
David Canfield, President, Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA)
Janet Hope, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH)

May 20, 2015

Louise Paquette, CEO
North East Local Health Integration Network
40 Elm Street, Suite 247
Sudbury, ON
P3C 1S8

Dear Ms Paquette:

RE: HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PLAN ROLL UP

As you know, the Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) is comprised of ten District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), a form of governmental board unique to Northern Ontario, and one municipal Service Manager (City of Greater Sudbury). Together, they cover the entire geography of Northern Ontario (with the exception of First Nations) from the Manitoba border to the Quebec border. NOSDA members plan and coordinate the delivery of public services and social infrastructure programs across the North that result in measurable gains to the quality of life of Northerners, including the creation, maintenance and provision of affordable and social housing as well as addressing homelessness through funding and delivering diverse emergency shelter and homelessness prevention services.

The following resolution regarding the Housing and Homelessness Plan Roll Up was **APPROVED** by the delegates at the April, 2015 Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) Annual General Meeting held in Thunder Bay. The resolution reads as follows:

Resolution # 2015- 6

WHEREAS part of the NOSDA Strategic Plan 2013-2016, included a section whereby Service Managers expressed an interest in having a Pan-Northern Roll-Up of provincially mandated Housing and Homelessness Plans and

WHEREAS the initial Roll-Up was prepared by a consortium consisting of NOSDA, Housing Services Corporation, and the Ontario Municipal Services Association in the spring of 2014 to identify common patterns, concerns, programming, and advocacy themes across Northern Ontario and

WHEREAS material in that Roll-Up document was provided by Northern Ontario DSSABs in order to share objectives and strategic actions as well as identify areas of common concern; and

WHEREAS this roll-up was successfully completed in November, 2014; and

WHEREAS there were four areas where there was universal consensus among all NOSDA members.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the following recommendations be adopted by NOSDA members:

That NOSDA members be encouraged to employ an Integrated Service Delivery approach and share best practices in the delivery of social housing when and where possible; and

That NOSDA and its members advocate for Investments in Affordable Housing; and

That NOSDA members promote the development/creation of Supportive Housing/Housing with Supports with community partners/stakeholders (e.g. LHIN's, CCAC's, MMAH, MCSS); and

That NOSDA members encourage the preservation of existing housing stock within each member jurisdiction and across Northern Ontario

Since that time, both the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) and the Federation of Northern Municipalities (FONOM) passed this recommendation unanimously at their respective Annual General Meetings. So the support for this resolution is universal across all Municipal jurisdictions in the North. We believe this indicates the gravity of the housing situation in Northern Ontario and the need for dialogue between District Social Service Administration Boards, Northern municipalities and local, Northern Health Integration Networks to address this issue.

We would be pleased to meet with you and your staff to discuss this further. Please have your staff contact us to arrange for such a meeting.

We look forward to hearing from, and working with you.

Sincerely,

Iain Angus, Chair

Cc: Gary McNamara, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
Al Spacek, President, Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)
David Canfield, President, Northern Ontario Municipalities Association (NOMA)
Laura Kokocinski, Chief Executive Officer, North West Local Health Integration Network (NWLHIN)
Janet Hope, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH)

May 20, 2015

Laura Kokocinski, CEO
North West Local Health Integration Network
975 Alloy Drive, Suite 201
Thunder Bay, ON
P7B 5Z8

Dear Ms Kokocinski:

RE: HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PLAN ROLL UP

As you know, the Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) is comprised of ten District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), a form of governmental board unique to Northern Ontario, and one municipal Service Manager (City of Greater Sudbury). Together, they cover the entire geography of Northern Ontario (with the exception of First Nations) from the Manitoba border to the Quebec border. NOSDA members plan and coordinate the delivery of public services and social infrastructure programs across the North that result in measurable gains to the quality of life of Northerners, including the creation, maintenance and provision of affordable and social housing as well as addressing homelessness through funding and delivering diverse emergency shelter and homelessness prevention services.

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WHEREAS part of the NOSDA Strategic Plan 2013-2016, included a section whereby Service Managers expressed an interest in having a Pan-Northern Roll-Up of provincially mandated Housing and Homelessness Plans and

WHEREAS the initial Roll-Up was prepared by a consortium consisting of NOSDA, Housing Services Corporation, and the Ontario Municipal Services Association in the spring of 2014 to identify common patterns, concerns, programming, and advocacy themes across Northern Ontario and

WHEREAS material in that Roll-Up document was provided by Northern Ontario DSSABs in order to share objectives and strategic actions as well as identify areas of common concern; and

WHEREAS this roll-up was successfully completed in November, 2014; and

WHEREAS there were four areas where there was universal consensus among all NOSDA members.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the following recommendations be adopted by NOSDA members:

That NOSDA members be encouraged to employ an Integrated Service Delivery approach and share best practices in the delivery of social housing when and where possible; and

That NOSDA and its members advocate for Investments in Affordable Housing; and

That NOSDA members promote the development/creation of Supportive Housing/Housing with Supports with community partners/stakeholders (e.g. LHIN's, CCAC's, MMAH, MCSS); and

That NOSDA members encourage the preservation of existing housing stock within each member jurisdiction and across Northern Ontario

Since that time, both the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) and the Federation of Northern Municipalities (FONOM) passed this recommendation unanimously at their respective Annual General Meetings. Therefore support for this resolution is universal across all Municipal jurisdictions across the North. We believe this indicates the gravity of the housing situation in Northern Ontario and the need for dialogue and partnerships between District Social Service Administration Boards, Northern municipalities and the Northern LHIN's to address this issue.

We would be pleased to meet with you and your staff to discuss this further. Please have your staff contact us to arrange for such a meeting.

We look forward to hearing from, and working with you.

Sincerely,

Iain Angus, Chair

Cc: Gary McNamara, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
Al Spacek, President, Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)
David Canfield, President, Northern Ontario Municipalities Association (NOMA)
Louise Paquette, CEO, North East Local Health Integration Network (NELHIN)
Janet Hope, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH)

Appendix C: 2015 Ontario Works Letters

January 19, 2015

Hon. Kathleen Wynne
PREMIER AND PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL
Government of Ontario
Room 281, Legislative Building
Queen's Park, Toronto ON
M7A1A1

Dear Premier:

**RE: Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) Implementation:
A Critical Problem for Northern Social Service Deliverers**

The Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) is an incorporated body that brings together Northern Ontario's 11 Municipal Service Managers. We are writing to you to make you aware of the difficult situation your government has placed social service deliverers in as we try to move forward with implementing your government's Social Assistance Management System (SAMS).

NOSDA members have significant concerns with the implementation of SAMS. Our members are presently dealing with a variety of difficulties that are directly impacting our ability to properly serve the citizens of Northern Ontario in a timely and professional manner. Some of the more prominent issues include the frustration of our clients, lengthy delays in processing, less time available for case management due to time required for SAMS implementation which is creating backlogs of work, the lack of involvement of our IT and Finance staff in advance of SAMS' development and the high direct and indirect human and financial costs related to staff overtime necessitated by SAMS' implementation.

Currently the Ministry of Community and Social Services' position is that CMSMs and DSSABs are processing information through the new SAMS. However, in many cases, information is being completed manually (pre- SDMT). Often, information is added to SAMS after staff have met with clients and only if staff have time. Manual client records are being maintained and reliance on these manual records is still being used to verify pay runs, client eligibility etc. This has masked from the Ministry, from our clients as well as from our municipal partners the true magnitude of the seriousness of the problems with SAMS. Your government must be made aware of the true "status" of the system as opposed to the SAMS status reports you and MCSS currently are receiving.

The SAMS program is not delivering the anticipated services we were told it would perform. SAMS is not being used due to significant errors in the converted database. This continues to

result in inaccurate system-generated letters to clients showing arrears paid or unpaid that do not reflect the actual client status. Also disturbing is the fact that SAMS is still not fully operational - many aspects of the program are not yet "turned on". This has provided for less issue identification 'tickets' and has forced even more workarounds to provide clients services. Most fixes are workarounds to correct programming issues. SAMS has numerous workarounds and disabled features which affect social service deliverers.

This is also creating a significant backlog of work that is being deferred - which at some point CMSMs and DSSABs are going to have to address. Costs and effect on staff have not been evaluated and are not being addressed. Premier, how can we move into a recovery mode when the system is still not stable or operating within its espoused design criteria? We are still in 'disaster mode', but it appears that this has not been effectively communicated to you or to Ministry staff. Furthermore, the Minister is continuing plans for additional program changes. To date, changes to the Addiction Services Initiative are being implemented, while changes to employment benefits are still being planned. It is imperative that all other program changes to Ontario Works cease until SAMS is fully operational.

The continued effect of the poorly designed and implemented SAMS system has resulted in outcomes in our program delivery sites that are completely opposite to the Provincial Social Assistance Reform Strategy of simplifying the rules and streamlining processes so that effort could be directed towards moving clients to employment. The valuable work on assisting our clients to employment has been ground to a halt since the SAMS implementation.

If we must accept a program that does not meet the design parameters outlined to us, why should we be expected to share the responsibility (cost & staff time) with the Province to correct the deficiencies that have been foisted upon us?

The following is a list of the major issues related to SAMS implementation facing the Service Managers across the North:

- Payment amounts on cheques do not match the cheque register. Information on cheque stubs do not reflect the correct rationale for payment. Verification of payments continue to be addressed manually. Staff have extremely limited confidence in converted data.
- Data entry for clients appears to be averaging two to three times longer to enter into SAMS as opposed to the previous system (SDMT). It has yet to be determined if this is a staff training issue, lack of coordination within the program (which may be resolved) or a 'new normal'. If it is a new normal we wonder what is the cost and implications on staff and what is the implication for the people we serve?
- Currently our staff call into the help desk with 7 to 8 issues at a time. It takes hours to get a call answered and once the call is answered, help desk staff only address 2 to 3 of the issues and request the individual call back so that they may move to another CMSM or DSSAB's issues. Resolution of the initial 7 or 8 issues takes three to four days.
- Fixes are not communicated to our staff. Fixes may address multiple issues at multiple sites; however, without communication and verification of the fix, the knowledge is not effectively communicated. Although a fix supposedly has corrected an issue; staff cannot

verify that a fix has addressed the problem until they access each client file. This is resulting in multiple re-ticketing for problems that were indicated as resolved.

- The SAMS system browser is not compatible with other browsers or other Ministries' programs such as Child Care. This has impacted on our IT resources and caused numerous workarounds locally to prevent data corruption and possible access to our programs and data.
- From a Human Resources perspective, the system has resulted in a tremendous demand on staff, both in time requirements for processing and difficulties in ensuring effective/compassionate client service. The issue of labour unrest within the Ministry only adds to the concerns regarding service delivery. Increases in sick leave and EAP programs have been noted by some CMSMs and DSSABs.
- Currently very little financial accountability features are active within the SAMS system. This has both long term and short term effects on CMSMs and DSSABs. Financial reconciliations for monthly, quarterly and annual requirements cannot be met. Many service deliverers have implemented manual reconciliations and estimates outside the SAMS program to provide information within their organization. This is currently impeding some of our year end audits, 2015 budgets, and reporting requirements.

Finally, we need to have a clear working group committee structure and reporting relationship with performance outcome measures. Currently our committees exist at the will of the Province and are not truly collaborative. If we are partners at the table then we should be treated as partners. The setting of agendas, meeting dates and committee structure should be developed jointly and collaboratively and not autocratically as they are now. Since the implementation of SAMS, even with the number of meetings we have had and the various proposals that have been communicated, little has changed at the front lines and no true fixes appear to have been achieved. Continued inaction is going to impact on CMSMs and DSSABs greatly in 2015.

Northern service deliverers are like 'canaries in a coal mine'. The effects of the necessary and ongoing changes to SAMS are more acute and quicker to impact resources (staffing and budget) in smaller DSSAB's and CMSM's. These changes also negatively impact service to our clients. The capacity and flexibility to adapt is not available to the extent of larger service deliverers in major urban areas.

Premier, SAMS implementation to date has been a failure. For the above noted reasons, we ask that appropriate resources be provided by the Province to help mitigate this unparalleled disaster in technological change management and to limit the negative effects on the clients we serve.

We do appreciate the recent MCSS proposal to establish a Virtual Northern Resource Centre for NOSDA members that will dedicate 2 hours per day for a 4 week period. This will give each NOSDA site dedicated access to SAMS experts who can assist them in resolving issues or problem cases. We think this is a very good first step and should help our staff significantly. More creative solutions to help us directly with SAMS and indirectly with the wake of issues that its implementation has created would be most appreciated.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this ongoing crisis in social service delivery in Northern Ontario. Let us work with you to identify what resources we need on a go-forward basis to correct these serious problems.

Sincerely,

Gary Scripnick, Chair

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

Appendix D: 2015 Other Issue Letters

May 20, 2015

Hon. Brad Duguid
Ministry of Infrastructure
Hearst Block, 8th Floor
900 Bay Street
Toronto ON
M7A 2E1

Dear Minister Duguid:

RE: DSSAB Capital Borrowing from Infrastructure Ontario

As you know, the Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) is comprised of ten District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), a form of governmental board unique to Northern Ontario, and one municipal Service Manager (City of Greater Sudbury). Together, they cover the entire geography of Northern Ontario (with the exception of First Nations) from the Manitoba border to the Quebec border. NOSDA members plan and coordinate the delivery of public services and social infrastructure programs across the North that result in measurable gains to the quality of life of Northerners, including the creation, maintenance and provision of affordable and social housing as well as addressing homelessness through funding and delivering diverse emergency shelter and homelessness prevention services.

The following resolution regarding DSSAB Capital Borrowing from Infrastructure Ontario was **APPROVED** by the delegates at the April, 2015 Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) Annual General Meeting held in Thunder Bay. The resolution reads as follows:

Resolution # 2015-7

WHEREAS DSSABs are corporations created pursuant to the District Social Services Administration Board Act (the “DSSAB Act”) and

WHEREAS DSSABs are also governed by Parts I, III and VII of the Corporations Act (Ontario), and.

WHEREAS DSSABs have been provided with Natural Person Powers and can contract in their own names, including contracting to borrow funds; and

WHEREAS DSSAB’s are not eligible to access Infrastructure Ontario (IO) funds for any of its programs(social housing(development or renovation),the capital development of child care centres, construction of mandated, or Emergency Medical Service bases in rural communities, etc.): and

WHEREAS District Social Service Administration Boards are unique to Northern Ontario and it is discriminatory that our members cannot access IO funds the way other CMSM's and municipalities can.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ministry of Infrastructure amend the Ontario Infrastructure and Lands Corporations Act in order for District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) to be eligible applicants under the Infrastructure Ontario Loan Program to provide DSSABs with the necessary financial stability needed in order to undertake capital works projects within their mandate.

Since that time, both the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) and the Federation of Northern Municipalities (FONOM) passed this recommendation unanimously at their respective Annual General Meetings. So support for this resolution is universal across all Municipal jurisdictions in the North. We believe this indicates the gravity of the housing, child care and EMS situations in Northern Ontario and the need for dialogue between District Social Service Administration Boards, Northern municipalities and your Ministry to address this issue.

We would be pleased to meet with you and your staff to discuss this further. Please have your staff contact us to arrange for such a meeting.

We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Iain Angus, Chair

Cc: Hon. Helena Jaczek, Minister of Community and Social Services (MCSS)
Gary McNamara, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
Al Spacek, President, Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)
David Canfield, President, Northern Ontario Municipalities Association (NOMA)
Janet Hope, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH)

May 20, 2015

Hon. Helena Jaczek
Ministry of Community and Social Services
Hepburn Block, 6th Floor
80 Grosvenor St
Toronto ON
M7A 1E9

Dear Minister Jaczek:

RE: NOSDA REQUEST TO ALIGN DSSAB AND MUNICIPAL COUNCIL TERMS

As you know, the Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) is comprised of ten District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), a form of governmental board unique to Northern Ontario, and one municipal Service Manager (City of Greater Sudbury). Together, they cover the entire geography of Northern Ontario (with the exception of First Nations) from the Manitoba border to the Quebec border. NOSDA members plan and coordinate the delivery of public services and social infrastructure programs across the North that result in measurable gains to the quality of life of Northerners.

The following resolution regarding NOSDA's Request to Align DSSAB and Municipal Council Terms was **APPROVED** by the delegates at the April, 2015 Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) Annual General Meeting held in Thunder Bay. The resolution reads as follows:

Resolution # 2015-8

WHEREAS there is a major inconsistency between the Municipal Act and the DSSAB Act in the definition of the end of a municipal council term and the end of a DSSAB Board term; and

WHEREAS the inconsistent definition results in a gap between the end of a Municipal Council term which is November 30th and the December 31st end of term for DSSAB Board members; and

WHEREAS a municipal appointed councilor to the DSSAB Board who does not seek reelection or is defeated in the election, cannot represent their municipality at the DSSAB Board after November 30th; and

WHEREAS this may leave the DSSAB Board with not enough members to run a Board meeting in the month of December as the DSSAB Board members do not get appointed until January of the following year; and

WHEREAS Municipal and DSSAB terms ought to coincide to ensure a smooth transition in representation and to ensure accountability and transparency for both the province and the municipalities that the DSSAB is representing; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT NOSDA requests that MCSS amend the Regulation 278/98 made pursuant to the DSSAB Act to align DSSAB Board terms with Municipal Council terms as set out in the Municipal Act in time for the 2018 Municipal Election or state in the Regulation that the DSSAB Board will not meet in the month of December of an election year; and

That copies of this resolution be distributed to the Ministers of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Community and Social Services.

Since that time, both the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) and the Federation of Northern Municipalities (FONOM) passed this recommendation unanimously at their respective Annual General Meetings. We believe this indicates the unanimity between Northern Ontario municipalities and DSSABs with regards to the term of office; and the need for dialogue between District Social Service Administration Boards, Northern municipalities and your Ministry to address this issue.

We would be pleased to meet with you and your staff to discuss this further. Please have your staff contact us to arrange for such a meeting.

We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Iain Angus, Chair

Cc: Hon. Ted McMeekin, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH)
Gary McMamara, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
Al Spacek, President, Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)
David Canfield, President, Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA)

May 20, 2015

Hon. Ted McMeekin
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
17th Floor, 777 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5G 2E5

Dear Minister McMeekin:

RE: MINISTERIAL CLARIFICATION OF ONTARIO MUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIP FUND (OMPF) AND DISTRICT SOCIAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION BOARDS

As you know, the Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) is comprised of ten District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), a form of governmental board unique to Northern Ontario, and one municipal Service Manager (City of Greater Sudbury). Together, they cover the entire geography of Northern Ontario (with the exception of First Nations) from the Manitoba border to the Quebec border. NOSDA members plan and coordinate the delivery of public services and social infrastructure programs across the North that result in measurable gains to the quality of life of Northerners.

The following resolution regarding Ministerial Clarification of Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) and DSSABs was **APPROVED** by the delegates at the April, 2015 Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) Annual General Meeting held in Thunder Bay. The resolution reads as follows:

Resolution 2015-9

WHEREAS NOSDA questions the net result of the published reports of the uploading of municipal service costs, and

WHEREAS recent Ministerial correspondence may be misrepresenting the true nature of the uploads and the OMPF reductions that many Northern Ontario municipalities have experienced; and

WHEREAS the OMPF program has been significantly restructured since the 2012 Review and

WHEREAS the provincial uploading was tax neutral but by no means were there any savings to the municipalities as the province reduced the OMPF by the same amount of the provincial upload; and

WHEREAS it is difficult to discuss the OMPF and the implied savings with our municipal partners when both the municipal partners and the DSSAB's cannot interpret the provincial calculations.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of Finance hold a meeting to discuss the OMPF calculations and the provincial uploads with NOSDA and its constituent members, and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT every effort be taken to ensure wide spread agreement on the results

Since that time, both the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) and the Federation of Northern Municipalities (FONOM) passed this recommendation unanimously at their respective Annual General Meetings. Therefore support for this resolution is universal across all Municipal jurisdictions in the North. We believe this indicates the gravity of the need to address equity in relation to the OMPF situation in Northern Ontario and the need for dialogue between District Social Service Administration Boards, Northern municipalities and your Ministry to address this issue.

We would be pleased to meet with you and your staff to discuss this further. Please have your staff contact us to arrange for such a meeting.

We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Iain Angus, Chair

Cc: Hon. Charles Sousa, Minister of Finance (MoFin)
Gary McNamara, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
Al Spacek, President, Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)
David Canfield, President, Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA)