



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Sudbury/Manitoulin

Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale
Sudbury/Manitoulin



Conseil des Services du District de
Manitoulin-Sudbury
District Services Board

Year End Report

Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board (DSB) &
Canadian Mental Health Association- Sudbury/ Manitoulin
(CMHA-S/M)

April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021

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Context for 2020

On March 17th, 2020, the Ontario Government declared a State of Emergency due to the ongoing risk posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which impacted the way that the Canadian Mental Health Association – Sudbury/Manitoulin (CMHA-S/M), along with several other community agencies and businesses, were able to conduct services.

On March 18th, 2020, CMHA-S/M suspended all in-person services excluding programs that were designated as *essential services* (i.e., emergency shelter, residential programming). Face-to-face services were offered based on immediate, urgent needs only. Individuals accessing support through our Housing Case Management program (previously Transitional Community Support) were offered telephone or virtual services. Those without access to these means, or those missing contact information were mailed a letter indicating the change in service provision along with an explanation of how to access services. In early April 2020, CMHA-S/M issued temporary lay-off notices and redeployed staff to essential programs to meet the increasing ongoing needs of the agency. The Manitoulin Sudbury District Service Board (Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB) implemented precautionary measures to protect the wellbeing of its tenants and closed all common rooms within their buildings. This resulted in the suspension of CMHA-S/M groups and in-person brief services offered in these buildings, including the suspension of Community Paramedicine Clinics.

With the switch to virtual services and the abovementioned closure of community rooms, the Housing Case Managers were unable to fulfill their regular duties. However, with the combined efforts of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB and CMHA-S/M staff, the duties of the position significantly changed to reflect the needs of the tenants they support. During the year, the Housing Case Managers provided support with the following special projects:

Special Projects

- Food Basket deliveries (x3 to each building in Manitoulin, LaCloche and Sudbury East)
- Cookie Basket delivery (x1 to each building in Manitoulin, LaCloche and Sudbury East)
- Virtual check ins for all residents of Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB buildings including Sudbury East (dependant on access to contact information)
- Support with Flu Shot clinic set-up (LaCloche and Little Current buildings)
- Tax Clinic support
- Crime Stoppers groups x4
- Support with calls for air conditioners

- Collaboration with community agencies to support residents (i.e., can we get consent for BLANK AGENCY to contact you to support with ABC).
- Supporting individuals who live in private market housing in LaCloche or Manitoulin and receive a rent supplement from CMHA-S/M, to maintain their housing.

Over the summer months CMHA-S/M's Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) committee developed and prepared to roll out our Return to Workplace (RTWp) Framework, which outlined and guided how we would continue to meet the needs of individuals accessing our services and slowly integrate offering in-person services again. The RTWp Framework was launched on September 8, 2020, with the ability to offer additional in-person services to those whose programming needs could not be met via virtual/telephone services. On September 21, 2020 CMHA-S/M again opened our doors to the public, allowing walk-in services and intakes. The Framework also recognized the complex needs of those supported by the Housing Case Management team, thus outlining a safe protocol for workers to provide in-person services as needed.

Services began to resume in our "new normal" in mid-September 2020. Our new normal included increased telephone support, while still being able to offer in-person services to those who needed direct hands-on support, or those without access to reliable virtual services. The two Housing Case Managers were able to provide regular services to individuals on their caseloads, and more referrals began to roll in, until the additional Stay at Home Order was put into effect December 26, 2020, resulting in services reverting to default virtual operations. The Stay-at-Home Order was lifted in late February 2021, however, the District of Sudbury/Manitoulin entered lockdown again early March 2021.

Community Partnerships

During this past year, there were several partnerships created to reflect the needs of the community. This ranged from partnering with Manitoulin Family Resources, Better Beginnings Better Futures, and Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) to provide food supplies to tenants in the Manitoulin, LaCloche, and Sudbury East areas. A partnership was also formed with Sudbury Crime Stoppers to conduct a Crime Stoppers Group in Gore Bay, Little Current, Mindemoya, and Manitowaning.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB continues to work United Way Centraide to conduct tax clinics, as well as Public Health Sudbury & Districts for flu clinics to tenants. Housing Case Managers played a more significant role in providing clinic information to tenants through their additional duties with the onset of COVID-19.

Measures

CMHA-S/M utilized the following measures to evaluate performance outcomes on an individual, program and system level (*please note that the special **projects** that the Housing Case Managers supported with were captured as brief services or groups*):

1. Case Management Services
 - Areas of support
 - # of areas of support per individual
2. Referrals
3. Group Services
 - Type and instance of groups offered (i.e., Paramedicine Clinics)
 - Attendance rates
4. Brief Services
 - # of brief services to individuals
5. Individual/Systems Impact Survey

Additionally, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB collects data regarding:

1. Tenancies at risk/preserved
 - # of referrals that have received a notice/warning, **or**, without support from HCM, would receive a notice/warning
2. Police Calls
 - # of calls placed by tenants
3. Paramedic Service Calls
 - # of calls placed by tenants
4. Resident Complaints
 - # of complaints received from tenants
5. Resident Move Outs
 - # of tenant move outs
 - Reasons for move outs

Outcomes

Summary of Services

During 2020, the Housing Case Managers' time was allocated to a variety of tasks, some outside of their normal duties. A summary of services offered are as follows:

- 23 individuals supported through case management
- 206 direct contacts (in-person or telephone) with individuals on caseload
- 49 direct contacts with individuals in other CMHA-S/M programs (i.e., Rent Supplement)
- 66.6% of referrals with "at risk" tenancies were preserved
- 3,180 brief services offered

Case Management Services

Case management is a collaborative, client-driven process for the provision of quality health and support services. The Housing Case Managers, in partnership with Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB, provide case management services to support individuals to maintain their tenancy. Housing Case Managers provide support to tenants in achieving their goals, particularly in wellness strategies, maintaining their living environment, activities of daily living skill development and social interactions to reduce crisis, hospitalization, eviction, and homelessness.

In 2020, a total of 9 referrals for case management services were made, 8 for the LaCloche area. In addition, 14 individuals continued to receive case management support from referrals that were provided in the previous fiscal year. A total of 23 individuals received case management services in 2020 from the Housing Case Management program. There was a significant decrease in caseload numbers for Manitoulin, going from 20 in 2019 to only 9 in 2020. This is due to the significant service restrictions during COVID and face to face supports being limited to urgent situations only. In addition, there were reduced opportunities to be present in the buildings and observe who may benefit from a referral to housing case management services.

Even with clear limitations to providing services, Housing Case Managers were still able to provide support to individuals in several areas.

Some of the areas that the tenants were supported with included:

- 24 Instrument Activities of Daily Living
 - 11 cleaning

- 1 planning/preparing meals
- 4 shopping
- 8 budgeting/financial concerns
- 4 Mental health
- 1 Substance use
- 4 Other health issues
- 2 Childcare
- 1 Education/volunteering/employment
- 1 Annual paperwork
- 5 Neighbour Conflict
- 1 Social Connection
- 9 Other (i.e., eviction notices, relocating)

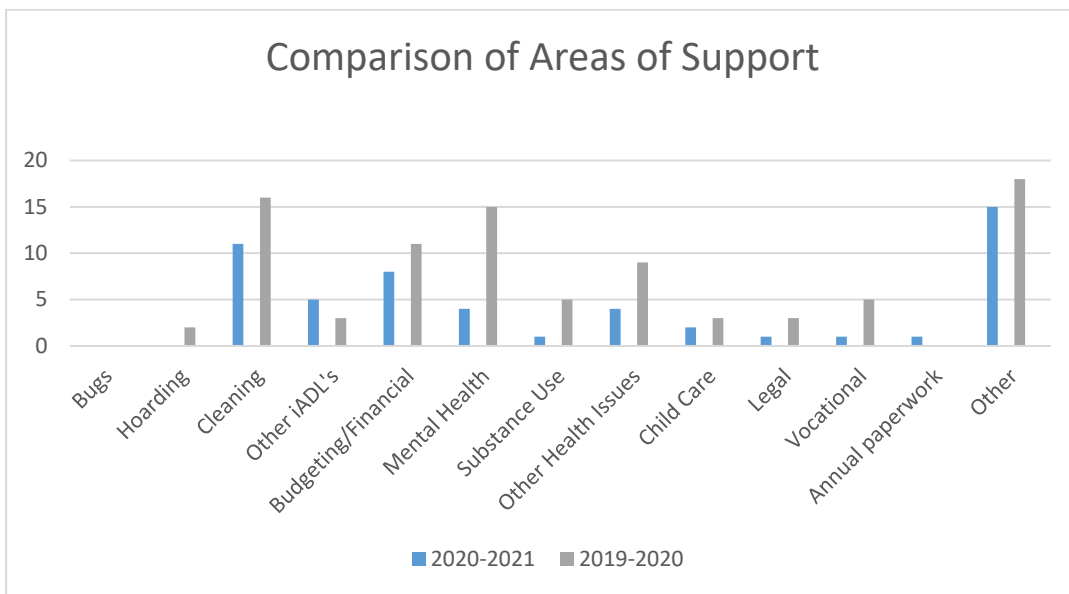


Figure 1.0

Figure 1.0 shows a comparison of areas of support offered in the previous fiscal year compared to this fiscal year. There has been a decrease in many areas of support offered, which can be explained by the lack of in-person supports being offered and disinterest in receiving virtual services, as well as an overall decrease in referrals to program.

A total of 206 direct contacts (in-person or telephone) were made during this period with individuals receiving Housing Case Management services. The Housing Case Managers also corresponded with tenants via email and regular mail, however these contacts are not included in the total contacts above.

Brief Services

3,180 brief services were offered to tenants

Brief services are available to all tenants residing in Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB buildings in Little Current, Mindemoya, Gore Bay, Manitowaning, Espanola, Massey and Webbwood, regardless of an active referral in the Housing Case Management program. Brief services are short, time limited interactions intended to provide additional supports to individuals to meet their immediate needs. During this period, brief services support included supportive listening, information and referrals to community resources, and information sharing. Brief Services are usually provided in the building common rooms on a drop-in basis, and in conjunction with groups offered during this period.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, providing brief services in the common rooms was not an option, however it was recognized that this important service needed to continue. A telephone check-in service was implemented for the Manitoulin and LaCloche area Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB buildings and then was expanded to all Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB buildings, including those located in Warren, St. Charles, Noelville and Chapleau.

Many brief services offered during this time were supportive listening and emotional support for tenants during lock down periods, as isolation was identified to be a significant challenge for individuals. Brief services also included the COVID-19 Special Projects listed in the Context for 2020 section above. This led to an increase of 1,114% in brief services over the previous year.

Groups

Housing Case Managers run a variety of groups within each building, ranging from social, skill building, support groups, information sessions, and more. Only 4 groups (Crime Stoppers) were offered this year due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Paramedicine Clinics did not continue to run through the remainder of 2020 because of limitations identified during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Group statistics are reflected through some of the additional duties mentioned above. For example, the Crime Stoppers Group, cookie basket deliveries, and food basket deliveries:

1. Crime stoppers groups (October 2020)
 - 4 groups
 - 21 participants
2. Food basket deliveries
 - 3 deliveries
 - 648 individuals served
3. Cookie basket deliveries
 - 1 delivery
 - 207 individuals served

Referrals to Community Partners

A total of 328 referrals were made to community agencies this fiscal year. Out of these referrals, 28.8% of referrals were made to “General Community Social Services”, while 23.1% of referrals were identified as “other”. Some of these “other” categories were identified as banks, legal services, dental programs, internet services, Canada Revenue Agency, budgeting programs, VON, Canada Pension Plan, Police, and more.

Referral data for this year was collected differently when compared to previous years, which may result in inaccurate statistics. There are several reasons which can provide explanation for this. To begin, at the onset of COVID-19 in March 2020, Housing Case Managers were communicated to cease collecting this data. Following the retirement of the coordinator at that time, the new coordinator requested that these statistics be captured moving forward and by different means. Originally, staff captured this data in multiple spreadsheets resulting in some data being lost or duplicated. Housing Case Managers were instructed to capture referrals using CMHA-S/M’s electronic database, however currently we are unable to pull data that will reflect details of the referrals. This is currently being adjusted to remove the need to complete additional excel sheets. In the interim, there are separate spreadsheets available to the Housing Case Managers to accurately track referrals, which will be reviewed quarterly.

Paramedicine Clinics

Paramedicine clinic data was not collected this fiscal year as they were suspended due to COVID-19. A date has not been identified as to when they will begin to run again.

Police Calls

When compared to the previous fiscal year, there were significant decreases in police calls in Webbwood and Massey, while there was a 57% increase in calls in the Espanola area. There was also a significant decrease in police calls in the Gore Bay area, moving from 27 to 9 in total. There was a rise in calls in the Manitowaning areas, increasing by 5, and similar result in Mindemoya.

The decrease in Webbwood’s numbers can be explained by an eviction of one specific tenant who was the source of several calls. The increase in calls in the Espanola area were related to noise complaints, unwanted guests, as well as illegal activity occurring the building.

Paramedic Service Calls

There was a significant increase in paramedic service calls for the LaCloche area, specifically Espanola (Figure 1.1).

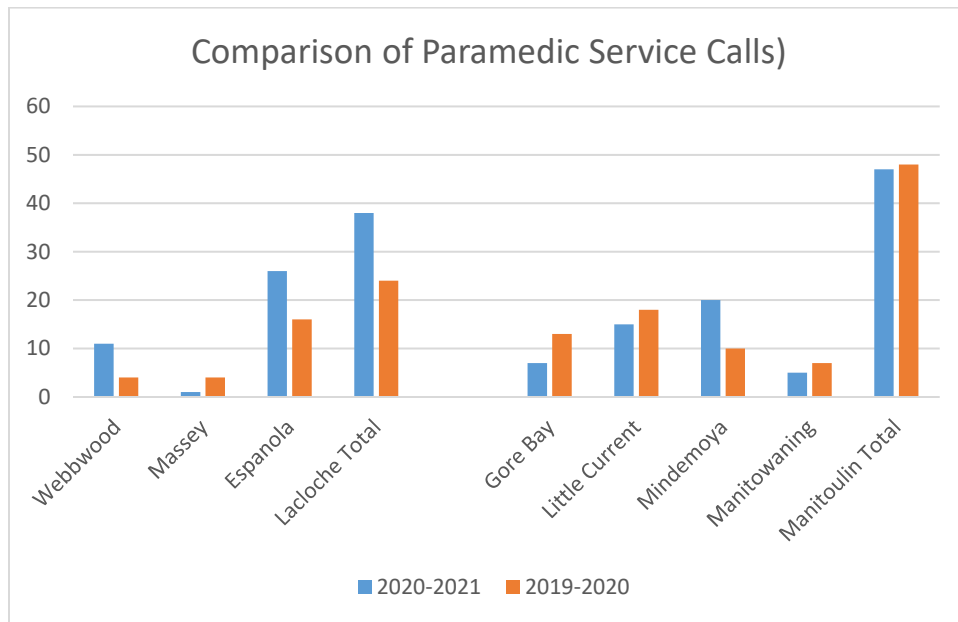


Figure 1.1

Figure 1.1 indicates a significant increase in paramedic service calls in LaCloche and almost no change in Manitoulin. The suspension of the Community Paramedicine Clinics due to COVID-19 may have contributed to the increase as several tenants were avid attendees and able to address smaller health concerns at the clinics. In previous years, there were several examples where paramedics had detected preventable illness/disease during the community clinics which may have resulted in lower calls to emergency services.

In addition, there is a growing body of evidence reporting on the impact that COVID-19 has had on the mental health of individuals. Due to several lockdowns, Stay at Home Orders, and a general fear around the virus, people have been isolated in their units and unable to go about their daily life as usual. This change in routine, excessive loneliness, and feeling of not knowing what the future holds could contribute to poor mental health and increased substance use, ultimately resulting in calls to emergency services.

Tenancies Preserved

This is new information that had begun collection in Q3 of this fiscal year, thus numbers are not comparable to previous years.

Statistics for tenancies preserved are being collected quarterly and are the result of preserving a tenancy that was defined as “at risk”. A “tenancy at risk” is defined as someone either referred to services, or currently receiving services, that without intervention would receive a notice to terminate their tenancy – which is confirmed by the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Program Supervisor. In 2020, there were a total of 6 tenancies at risk that were referred to the program. Four of those tenancies actively engaged in services and their tenancies were preserved. Unfortunately, 2 of the referrals refused services and were not successful in maintaining their housing.

Move Outs

There have been no significant changes in move out numbers when compared to the previous year, other than a slight increase in Manitoulin (Figure 1.2). Out of the total move outs, 53.8% of Manitoulin move outs were the result of a resident death or moving due to health reasons (i.e., unit not accessible, requiring long-term care, etc.). This can be explained by most buildings older adult population that occupy most units in this area. Only 1 individual in Manitoulin was provided evicted during this period.

There was a slight decrease in resident move outs overall in the LaCloche area, decreasing by two. Out of the total, 41.6% of these move outs were due to receiving notice to vacate, while the remaining move outs were due to resident deaths or for other health reasons (25%), internal transfers (16.6%), or did not provide reasons for moving (16.6%).

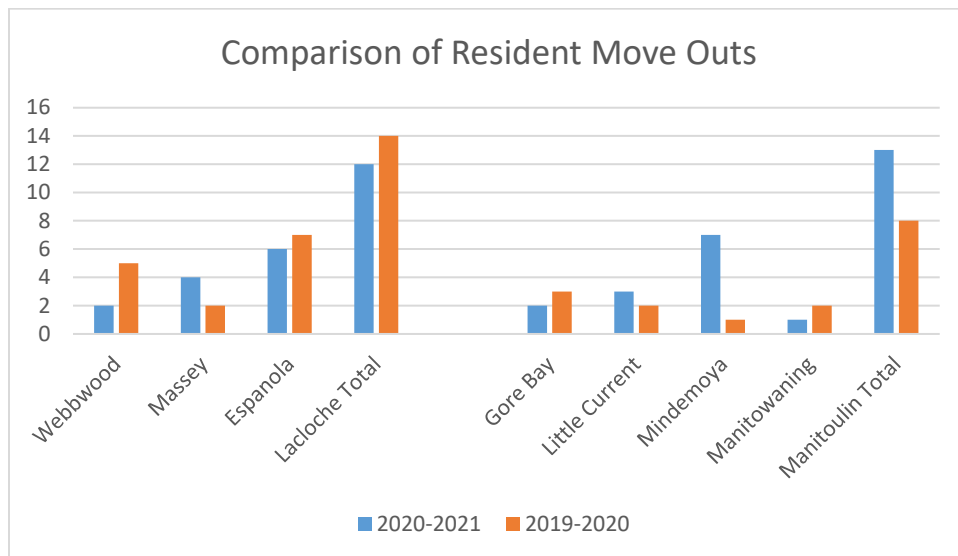


Figure 1.2

Resident Complaints

Most resident complaints this year in the LaCloche area were received from tenants in Espanola (74.6%). Many complaints received from the entire LaCloche area were related to unwanted, non-resident activity at a specific building during lock-down periods, or other tenants not wearing masks. Additionally, 28.6% were related to behaviour issues, while 20.6% were for neighbour disputes. It is difficult to prevent these from occurring as Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB only becomes aware of situations once a complaint is received, however the numbers retrieved this year can provide us insight on where services need to be directed for the upcoming year. As an example, when in-person services resume a conflict resolution skill building group may be beneficial for the tenants to address neighbour disputes.

In Manitoulin, many complaints were received from tenants in the Mindemoya building (42.2%) due to new tenants causing issues, as well as in the Gore Bay building (37.8%) In Gore Bay, most complaints were received in Q1 and Q2 and decreased significantly towards the later part of the year. Noise/behaviour/neighbour disputes make up most complaints in the Manitoulin area (60%). It is also worth mentioning that multiple complaints were regarding the same incidents.

Tenant Success Stories

There have been many success stories throughout the last year. One specific instance was a Housing Case Manager was able to involve several agencies to provide support to an ageing, frail individual. Because of this advocacy and planning, the individual was able to remain in his home for an additional 6 months independently.

Another occurrence was an individual who struggled with consuming food as they did not have a set of dentures. Although being denied by several agencies, the Housing Case Manager was eventually able to secure funding that allowed the individual to purchase a full set of dentures, which has significantly increased his quality of life.

Finally, over the course of the last year, Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB staff and Housing Case Managers have received several thank you emails, phone calls, and letters expressing their gratitude for the additional support provided, one individual specifically stating how they felt a little less lonely having received a visit from a worker.

Challenges & Learnings

Limitations to In-Person services offered during peak COVID-19 pandemic

- Several individuals expressed not being interested in receiving virtual/telephone support. This resulted in many becoming inactive until in-person services could be resumed. Although the hands-on support was halted, individuals still identified that a check in provided by the Housing Case Managers was beneficial to combat feelings of isolation and loneliness.
- Access to technology to participate in virtual services (telephone, internet) was a barrier to provide support to some tenants. As some individuals did not have access to these means, it was determined that some in-person visits were essential to ensure that individuals were able to maintain their housing.

Referrals to HCM declined significantly during COVID-19

- Only 9 referrals were made to HCM this fiscal year
- HCMs unable to be present in the building thus unable to meet people for brief services/make referrals to program
- The Landlord & Tenant Board ceased operations for the better half of 2020, resulting in less Notices being served which could have had an impact on referrals to HCM
- The inability to provide in-person services had an impact on referrals received as HCM is a hands-on program
- HCM was only able to offer “normal” services from September 2020 to December 2020

Change in CMHA-S/M Leadership and data collection methods

- This past year there have been three different Coordinators for the Housing Case Management Program. Due to turnover of staff, as well as a fast-changing environment that COVID-19 cultivated, there were miscommunications on what statistics were to be collected, and how. This resulted in missing specific information regarding referrals provided by Housing Case Managers.
- CMHA-S/M has consolidated data collection methods to avoid this problem in future.

Future Direction and Implications

Regular meetings to be scheduled as follows:

- Weekly meetings between the Community Housing Program Supervisor, the Coordinator, Housing Case Management and Housing Case Managers from CMHA-S/M to review outcomes, discuss challenges and brainstorm follow-up items.
 - CMHA-S/M has already set re-occurring meetings
- Quarterly meetings between Coordinator, Housing Case Management and Housing Case Managers to collect statistics and ensure accurate, consistent collection
- Quarterly meetings between Community Housing Program Supervisor, the Coordinator, Housing Case Management, and Housing Case Managers from CMHA-S/MM to review statistics.
 - CMHA-S/M to schedule
- Investigate opportunities to review other available data (i.e., hospital visits) to incorporate into future reports
- Expansion to Sudbury East
- Investigate technology options to improve virtual services