

## **Background**

David Landers, the previous CAO of the Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board and Fern Dominelli, CAO for the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB co-authored a paper in 2013 entitled an [Overview of Service System Management and Employment Services](#). Since 2013 the Northern Ontario Service Delivers Association (NOSDA) has been advancing the concept of Service System Management for Employment Services with four [resolutions](#) passed at the NOSDA Annual General Meetings in 2013, 2016, 2017 and 2018.

NOSDA has advanced the position that District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) and Consolidated Municipal Services Managers (CMSMs) should be the Service System Manager for the complete local employment service system, similar to the manner in which DSSABs/CMSMs are the Service System Manager for the local Child Care, EarlyON and Social Housing System.

In early June, the Honourable Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) announced that a 100 day review of social assistance would occur and that a new plan would be communicated at the conclusion of such review. In September 2018, a group of 10 Northern DSSABs/CMSMs submitted a proposal to MCCSS to be the Service System Managers of the Employment Programs in Northern and Northwestern Ontario District Service Areas.

The [proposal](#) submitted by the group of 10 Northern DSSABs/CMSMs was intended to present this government with a plan that will result in improved and long-lasting outcomes for Ontarians living in Northern Ontario requiring support in order to attain employment.

Based on the experience of a group of 10 Northern organizations being nine DSSABs and the one CMSM, the current system must improve in its planning capacity and approach to coordinating supports, programs and services as part of the Employment Ontario Program. The current fragmented and siloed approach to program delivery by the almost 1,000 different delivery agencies in Ontario results in delayed decision making, inconsistent oversight, increased cost of administration and the erroneous measuring of outputs instead of meaningful outcomes

## **Proposal Summary**

The economy in Ontario continues to change at a significant rate, and without a coordinated employment program system, Ontario will continue to see the gap between skilled labour and labour market increase in Northern Ontario.

In September 2018, the Northern group of 10 DSSABs/CMSM submitted a proposal to act as Service System Managers for the full suite of Employment Ontario programs within each of their respective jurisdictions. This bundling of Employment Ontario services within the DSSABs/CMSMs service mix is intended to create a more efficient, comprehensive, and integrated basket of services that will be easier for employers, individuals and families to access, reducing provincial administration and would be particularly attractive in the rural and remote parts of Northern and Northwestern Ontario.

The proposal promises a holistic approach to Service System Management for Employment Programs that will provide a better framework to evidence-based decision making; create a modern employment program designed to support individuals of all skill level and ability to attain employment; and ensure that all communities in Northern Ontario have equitable access to programs and services.

The DSSABs/CMSMs propose to do this at no additional cost to the Province. They believe the Employment Ontario program is adequately funded and that they can actually generate efficiencies for government through a more comprehensive, Service System Management approach. Service integration will help move from focusing on outputs to achieving outcomes in these respective local areas and actually reduce poverty and income supports dependency. Further, once promising results are produced through such a pilot, the Province will be able to reduce their contract management oversight from hundreds of Employment Ontario service agreements to as few as 47 agreements with the 47 DSSABs/CMSMs across Ontario – reducing complexity for both clients and the Province, improving outcomes and ideally improving efficiency and economy within what is currently a top-heavy administratively cumbersome system.

Under this proposal, there is no intention to change who currently delivers employment services in the City of Greater Sudbury. Our plan is to work with all employment agencies to develop the best possible coordinated system that streamlines employment services for the municipalities, employers, individuals and families within our community.

Like other DSSABs/CMSMs across Ontario, the members of this Northern group have a proven track record of Service System Management when it comes to an array of services from Social Housing to Early Years programming. The Ministry of Education recognizes DSSABs/CMSMs as the Local Service System Manager for Child Care in the [Child Care & Early Years regulations](#). The Ministry of Municipal & Housing recognizes DSSABs/CMSMs as Service System Managers within the [Ontario Housing Policy Statement](#). DSSABs/CMSMs know how to manage funding and programs to meet local needs. To be more specific, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB is the Service System Manager for Child Care and the EarlyON system, which includes 8 Child Care providers (2 home child care sites, 15 centre based sites and 4 EarlyON sites). The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB does not directly deliver any of the Child Care or EarlyON programs. We are also the Service System Manager for 5 Non-Profit Housing providers in our community.

The Northern group of 10 DSSABs/CMSM strongly believe that significant system costs savings will be realized for the Province of Ontario and municipalities in Northern Ontario. Further, that the actions under their proposal, will help ensure outcomes and not merely outputs, to meet the complex and often confusing and confounding issues that their clients currently face in getting the help they need to get a job. In fact, they believe they can generate efficiencies for the Province and municipalities through their envisioned approach.