

Please Note: Before you print, this document is 23 pages long.



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

**Ontario Works Two Year Plan
2010 – 2011**

Completed May 21st, 2010

ONTARIO WORKS SERVICE PLAN

Delivery Agent: Manitoulin-Sudbury District Social Services Administration Board
For the two year period: 2010-2011

Section 1: Ontario Works Vision and Mandate

Vision

To achieve improved employment outcomes for Ontario Works' participants, leading to sustainable employment and financial independence.

Mandate

To provide employment assistance and temporary financial assistance to people in financial need. The Ontario Works program:

- recognizes individual responsibility and promotes self-reliance through employment;
- provides temporary financial assistance to those most in need while they meet their obligations to find and maintain gainful employment;
- effectively serves people needing assistance; and
- is accountable to the taxpayers of Ontario.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB recognizes the recent Economic Challenges that have developed in the past few years. Our catchment area is one that relies heavily on the resource based industry that has been hit hard by job losses, work shortages and downsizing. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB has noticed an increase in caseload as clients exhaust other financial resources (example: EIB, RRSP, etc). The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB has positioned itself well to address these increases. We also acknowledge that there will be a greater impact on our harder to serve clients that may be competing with a more "employment ready" work pool. We are dedicated to work diligently to tailor our programs to meet the needs of our clients and communities.

Section 2: Environmental Scan

Analysis of Previous Planning Cycle

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB offers in house training and also refers clients to other community agencies for training and services. These services include life skill development, skills training, employment readiness workshops, employment assessment/counseling and training subsidy programs. Our employment staff is trained to offer the skills and training necessary to facilitate most of our employment programs. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB also provides funding for additional employment service program through other community agencies.

A successful program that we have developed in partnership with Community Agencies is *Focus for Change*. Focus for Change is designed to engage the harder to serve clientele and is comprised of an in class life skills training with a work placement component.

With the successful outcome of Focus for Change for our harder to serve clients, it was determined that there was a further need for a similar program to meet the needs of our more 'job ready' clients. Quick Start was piloted in 2007 on a trial basis in partnership with Cambrian College and was determined to be very successful. We are continuing to provide Quick Start to the Lacroche and Manitoulin areas. Due to its' proven success, in partnership with other community agencies, we are expanding this service/program to our other catchment areas during the 2010-2011 business plan period.

Intensive Case Management has been an important component to assist hard to serve clients move towards employment. In the past business plan, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB had targeted the following 2 groups:

- Participants who are marginally employable, and who have been on social assistance for more than 2 years, and are not deferred from participating for medical reasons.
- Participants who are starting employment for the first time after a long break from the labour market or individuals who have a history of short term employment that does not appear to attach them to the labour market.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB has reviewed the past success of this program. It was determined that some harder to serve clients who did not meet these two criteria could also benefit from this program. The following target group has been added:

- The Case Manager in consultation with the Intensive Case Manager has the right to refer any client that they feel would benefit from the Intensive Case Management Model.

This program was not built to be a short term fix but in the long term, many of these clients continue to become successfully employed; or enroll in education/training programs; or become a more productive member of the community with evident increased self confidence.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB continues to provide the Community Placement Program as a tool to assist its' clients in obtaining their employment goals. Community Participation has been instrumental in assisting clients with learning new skills, assessing their current skills and assessing their barriers/needs to employment. Clients continue to be encouraged to utilize this program in order to build on their skills and experience to meet with their future employment goals.

The Training Subsidy Program has been and continues to be a successful program. This program offers training subsidies and human resource services to employers that hire our 'job ready' clients. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB anticipates this program to be more utilized within the next 2 years due to the Economic challenges. This program will assist in putting our participants on a level playing field with a growing, qualified and experienced labour pool. Our purpose is to use this program to assist clients who are 'job ready' and who lack experience to find and maintain gainful employment. This program was successful in assisting the targeted group in achieving the above goals. It continues to be very successful in establishing partnerships with local businesses and community organizations.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB continues to offer many of its own training programs. In the past 5 years, we have added a Customer Service component, a Safe Food Handling course, an Automated External Defibrillation course, a Traffic Control course, and Follow your True Colors to the Work You Love to our client's training. These courses are very successful in assisting our clients to attain basic job skills to increase their chances of finding gainful employment. Customer Service related courses also help the clients address personal challenges and life skill issues. We continue to look for other training that would benefit our clients.

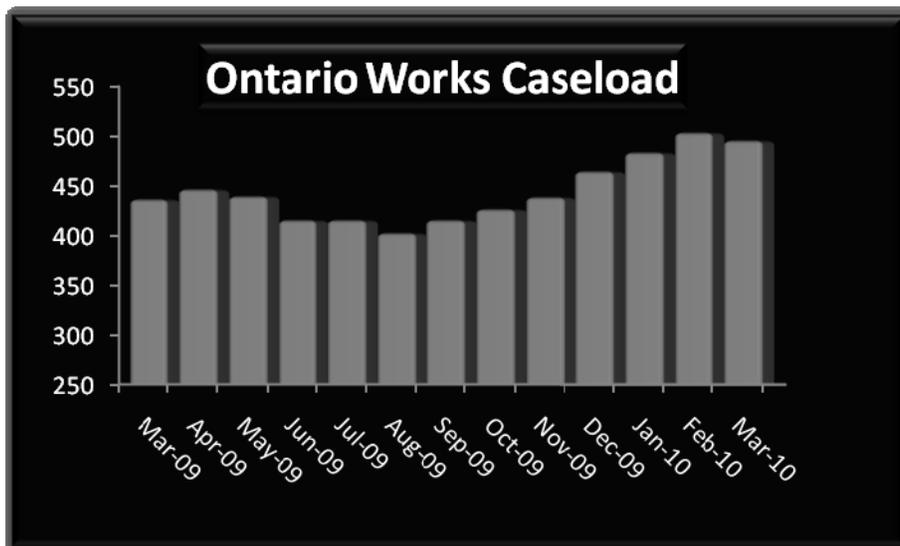
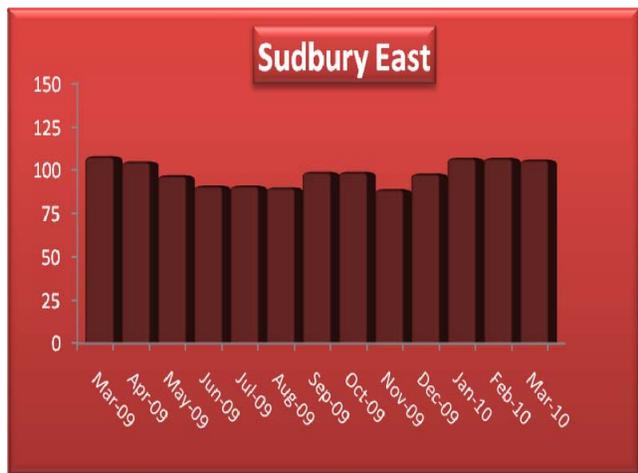
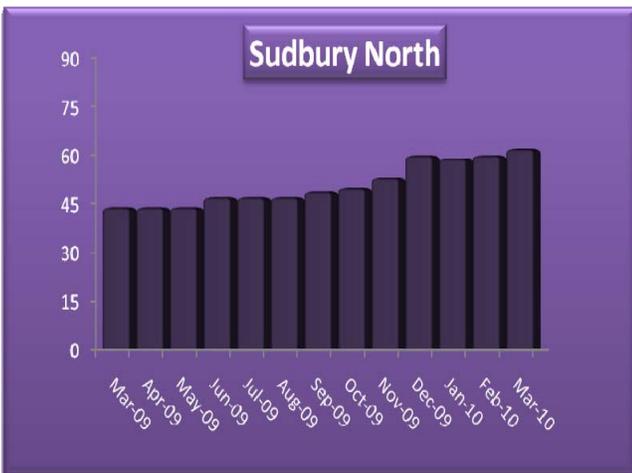
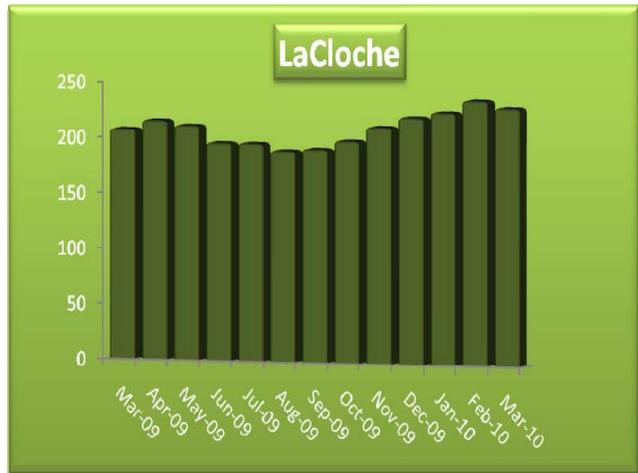
External Influences

Forestry and tourism are the two main employers within our catchment area with many rural and often geographically isolated communities that all have very real and distinct characteristics, needs and aspirations. The Mining Sector also has a strong influence on our communities as many of our residents commute to the large urban centres for employment in the mining and mining related fields. A major challenge in all of our communities is that none of them have public transportation which impacts every aspect of their lives. Each of our communities varies widely in their needs and community resources.

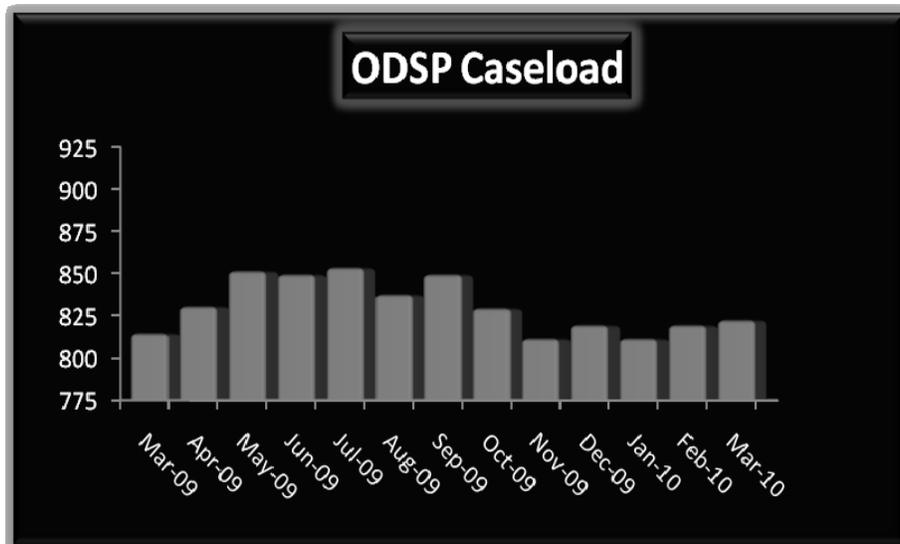
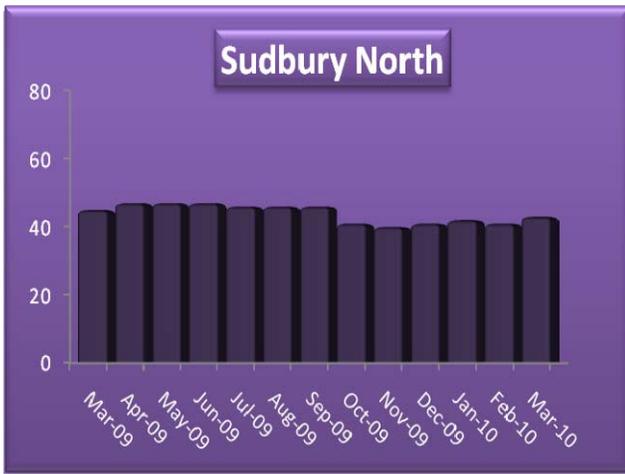
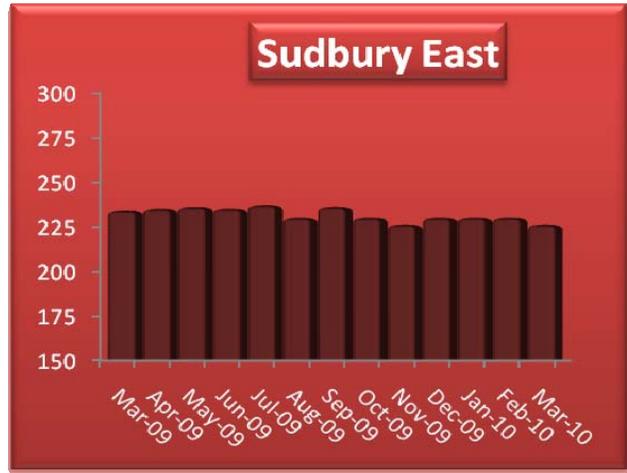
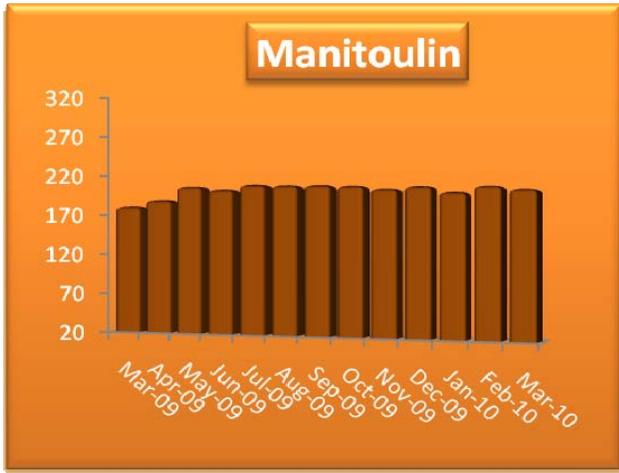
Caseload Description

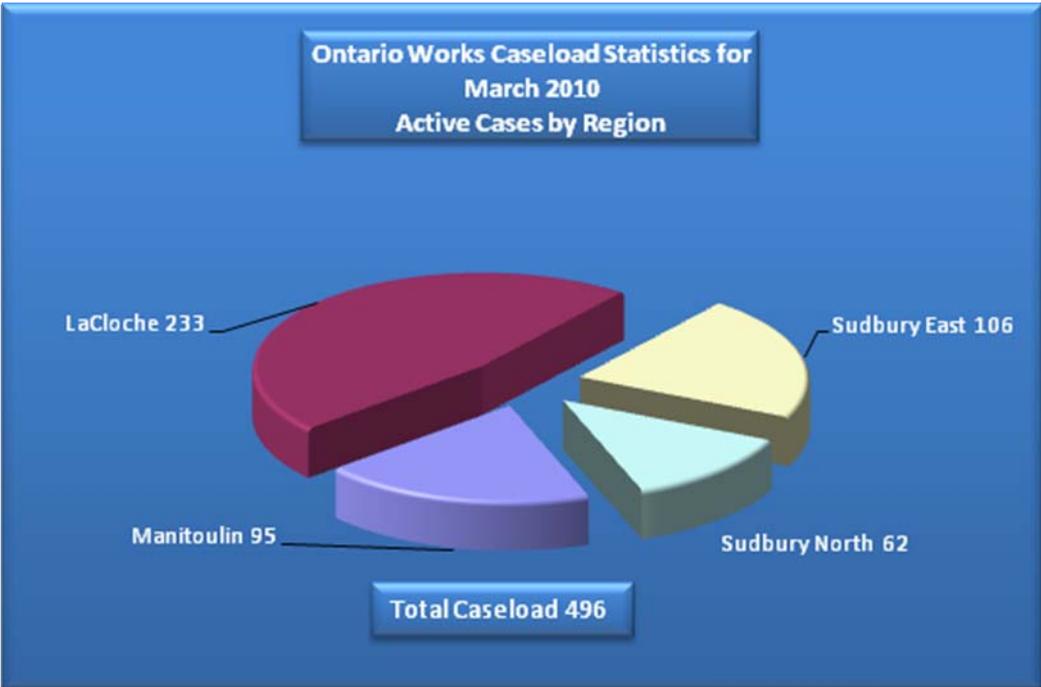
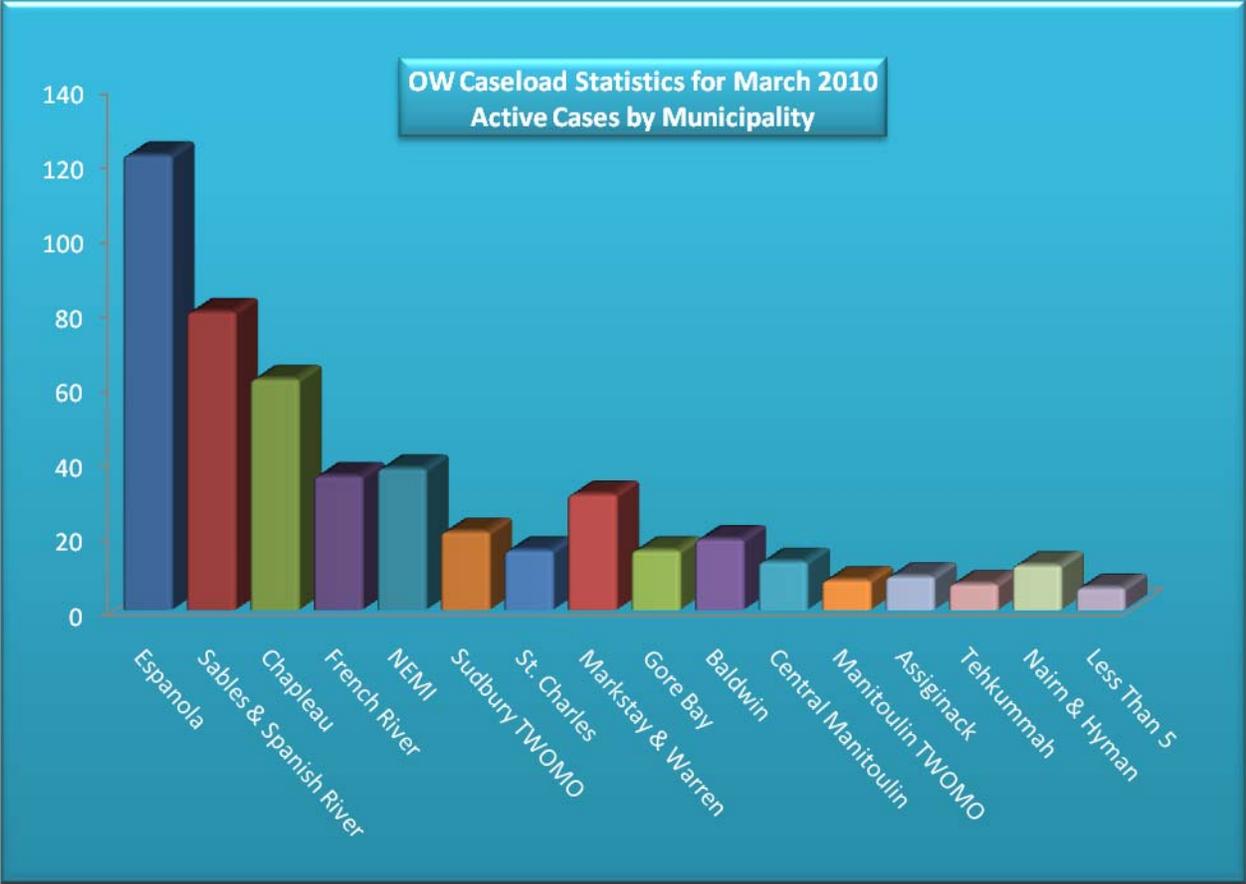
The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB's caseload consists of 233 Ontario Works participants in the LaCloche area; 106 in the Sudbury East area; 95 in the Manitoulin Island area and 62 in Sudbury North totaling 496 (as of March 31, 2010).

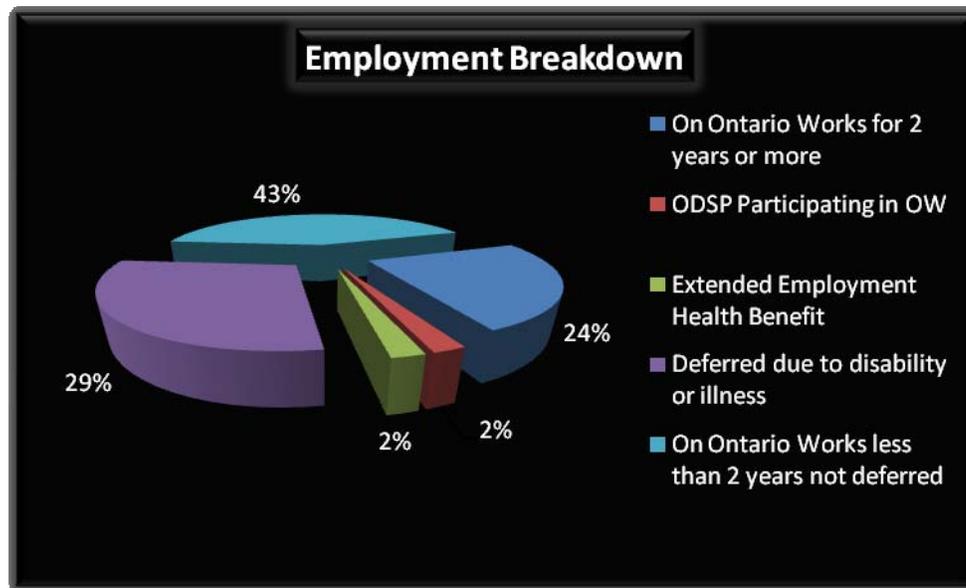
Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB Ontario Works Statistics



Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB ODSP Statistics







Of these 496 Ontario Works cases, 24% have been on for a period of 2 years or more; 29% of our caseload are deferred due to some type of disability or illness, some of which should qualify for ODSP; 2% are ODSP spouses and dependant adults (for employment purposes only); 2% are receiving Extended Employment Health Benefits only and the remaining 43% have been on for a period of less than 2 years and are not deferred from participating.

Local Labour Market

In the past, there has not been any labour market information specific for our area. Most of our statistics have been combined with the City of Greater Sudbury. As such, a committee was created in 2007 with service providers and economic partners to work with employers within our area to more accurately develop labour market information in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB catchment area.

In 2008, we successfully partnered with LAMBAC and they took the lead in contracting with several companies to collect data from local businesses for the Manitoulin Island and LaCloche areas. This information was gathered, organized and added to a web based program that is accessible by stakeholders and the general public. We are expanding this program to our other two catchment areas in Sudbury East and Sudbury North during the 2010-2011 Business Plan period.

Partners in the LaCloche-Manitoulin Economic Development Network Committee include:

- LAMBAC (LaCloche-Manitoulin Business Assistance Corporation)
- Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Administration Board
- Cambrian College, Espanola and Manitoulin campuses
- Sudbury Vocational Resource Centre, Espanola office
- Economic Development Officer, Town of Espanola
- Ministry of Northern Development & Mines
- First Nations

A District wide Business Directory has been developed. This program allows employers to enter their employment statistics online and indicate their future workforce needs, thus facilitating the dissemination of this information to the public. Such information allows educational institutions to plan their course offerings and curricula to meet the anticipated demand for skilled labour. This employer-demand information allows unemployed or underemployed individuals to target their job search to become employable with these employers.

Labour market information that is current and accurate will be a useful tool for municipal and first nation economic developers as they recruit new business investment, and as they advise local business people on their hopes to expand or diversify their operations. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB plans to use this information to assist our clients in their future training needs that will compliment the local labour market's needs. This information will be available to other agencies and businesses for their own needs.

Community Engagement

LaCloche & Manitoulin Areas:

- **Education / Training:** The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB has partnered with Cambrian College -Espanola and Little Current Campus to deliver life skills courses for hard to serve participants called Focus for Change and Quick Start. We have also partnered with Literacy agencies to ensure all participants who were unsuccessful in completing the Literacy test, are referred for an assessment. These assessments are used as part of the planning process for developing individual participation agreements. These agencies also deliver upgrading courses to our Ontario Works participants to assist them in obtaining their employment goals.
- **Employment:** The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB ensures that appropriate referrals are made to community agencies such as Sudbury Vocational Resource Centre, Job Connect & LAMBAC for employment services. These employment services may offer a variety of services that may include resume writing, job search skills, interview skills, wage / training subsidies, self employment, job retention skills and life skills.
- **Other services:** Many of our clients have multiple barriers that are personal in nature. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB relies heavily on referrals to local community partners for services such as mental health & addictions, family & children services, housing and crisis interventions
- **Enhanced Employment Services for Vulnerable Persons Funding:** The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB received funding from the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) for a period of 18 months to address local issues. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB has partnered with Sudbury Regional Hospital Regional de Sudbury – Espanola Mental Health & Addictions. With the funding a ½ time Mental Health Worker was hired. The Mental Health Worker provides priority screening / assessment and referral coordination to Ontario Works clients. The purpose is to alleviate the waiting list for referrals. Client is seen faster. This will ensure a continuity of service for those individuals. It is hoped that with this priority screening, client / patients will receive appropriate care and referral.

Sudbury East Area:

- **Education / Training:** In the Sudbury East Area, we have partnered with Alpha en Partage to deliver Literacy and upgrading, Focus for Change, Quick Start & Computer courses. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB ensures that all participants who were unsuccessful in completing the Literacy test, are referred for an assessment. These assessments are used as part of the planning process for developing individual participation agreements.
- **Employment:** The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB ensures that appropriate referrals are made to community agencies such as Sudbury Vocational Resource Centre, YMCA employment services, Job Connect & Economic Partners for employment services. These employment services may offer a variety of services that may include resume writing, job search skills, interview skills, wage / training subsidies, self employment, job retention skills and life skills.
- **Other services:** Many of our clients have multiple barriers that are personal in nature. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB relies heavily on referrals to local community partners for services such as mental health & addictions, family & children services, housing and crisis interventions
- **Enhanced Employment Services for Vulnerable Persons Funding:** The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB received funding from the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) for a period of 18 months to address local issues. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB has partnered with Alpha en Partage in delivering this service. With the funding, a Community Liaison Officer was hired. The purpose of this position is to develop relationships with clients / students and agencies. The Community Liaison Officer will work in collaboration with the local Ontario Works office, Alpha en Partage and other agencies to ensure that students / clients concerns / issues / barriers are addressed. With this enhanced service, it is hoped that students contact hours are increased and that their individual vocational plan is on track. It is hoped that students will be able to complete their basic education.

Sudbury North Area:

- **Education / Training:** In the Sudbury North Area, we are partnered with College Boreal, Formation Plus, Contact North and the Chapleau Learning Centre. We have also partnered with Literacy agencies to ensure all participants who were unsuccessful in completing the Literacy test, are referred for an assessment. These assessments are used as part of the planning process for developing individual participation agreements.
- **Employment:** The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB ensures that appropriate referrals are made to community agencies. *As of August 1, 2010 the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB will be offering all services offered by Employment Ontario.* The Chapleau office will have dedicated staff to ensure that all Employment Ontario services are offered to this specific area. We will ensure that Ontario Works participants take advantage of the EO services. These employment services may offer a variety of services that may include resume writing, job search skills, interview skills, wage / training subsidies, self employment, job retention skills and life skills.
- **Other services:** Many of our clients have multiple barriers that are personal in nature. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB relies heavily on referrals to local community partners for services such as mental health & addictions, family & children services, housing and crisis interventions

Section 3: Program Management

Service Delivery Rationale

Intake and Emergency Assistance

- Where applicants approach the local office by walk in, they are given an intake application form for completion. Where an applicant calls in to apply for assistance, they are directed to an intake worker who will input their basic information in the provincial database. Applicants can also apply for assistance by printing the application on the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB web site. All applicants will be contacted within 48 hrs for an appointment and will be seen within 4 working days. Where an applicant is in need of emergency assistance they will be seen on the same day where appropriate.
- In instances where individuals require services other than Ontario Works financial or employment assistance, we have staff that are knowledgeable on the resources and services that are unique in each of our communities. A wide range of other information is also available in our Resource Centers and on our web site that can direct individuals to the nearest service provider.
- In emergency situations, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB's Healthy Communities Fund can be accessed. This fund is comprised of three separate provincial initiatives. The funding for this program is received through:
 - Ministry of Community & Social Services (MCSS) Homelessness Initiative
 - Ministry of Community & Social Services (MCSS) Energy Fund
 - Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing (MAH) Rent Bank Program

Local non-profit community organizations such as food banks can access the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB's homelessness funding to assist individuals in emergency situations. By funding these organizations, we assist in helping to fill a local gap in service.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB's in-house program provides both the financial security to support individuals and families' basic needs in emergency situations, and the tools to assist them develop transitional solutions to their circumstances.

Eligibility determination / review and consolidation verification

- In determining eligibility, Case Managers are required to complete a Verification Interview (as per Ontario Works directives). The interview consist of verifying:
 - Personal information
 - Income and expenses
 - Support issues
 - Assets
 - Accommodations
 - Additional information
 - Participation requirements

- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB participates in the Consolidated Verification Process (CVP). This ensures that all participants that require CVP are completed in a timely manner. In 2009 we also included the Eligibility Review Officer (ERO) in the completion of all CVP's where they are flagged in the 'high' category. The ERO continues to assist in this process.

Family Support

- Upon application, an applicant will be required to complete a 2212 (Declaration of Support and Maintenance) for each absent person that may have an obligation to provide support.
- The Family Support Worker continues to monitor the support activities which may include attending Family Court, determining support adequacy, negotiating private agreements and working with other "family" agencies.
- In cases of the absent person (payor) having no ability to provide support; or there is a history of family violence, a temporary waiver may be considered. In certain cases a permanent support waiver may be necessary.

Participation Management

- Upon application for Ontario Works several mandatory documents are explained to the participant and signed. One of the documents is a Participation Agreement. This document is essentially a plan for participant to meet effective integrated supports that help them prepare for finding and keeping jobs. The document is tailored to each individual participant's needs.
- Part of the application process requires that each client complete an Employment Information Session. This session informs the client in detail of all the participation requirements and employment services offered by the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB and its partners.
- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB requires that all participants must job search as one of their Participation Agreement activities.

Employment Services, Training and Workshops

- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB offers a fully equipped Resource Centre in each of its office locations. This includes resources such as job banks, access to computers with various software programs, internet access, telephones, photocopiers, fax machines, printers and other related tools. Our Resource Centers also offer books on resume writing, job search skills, job boards, and newspapers; however, these services are primarily utilized by our more independent participants.

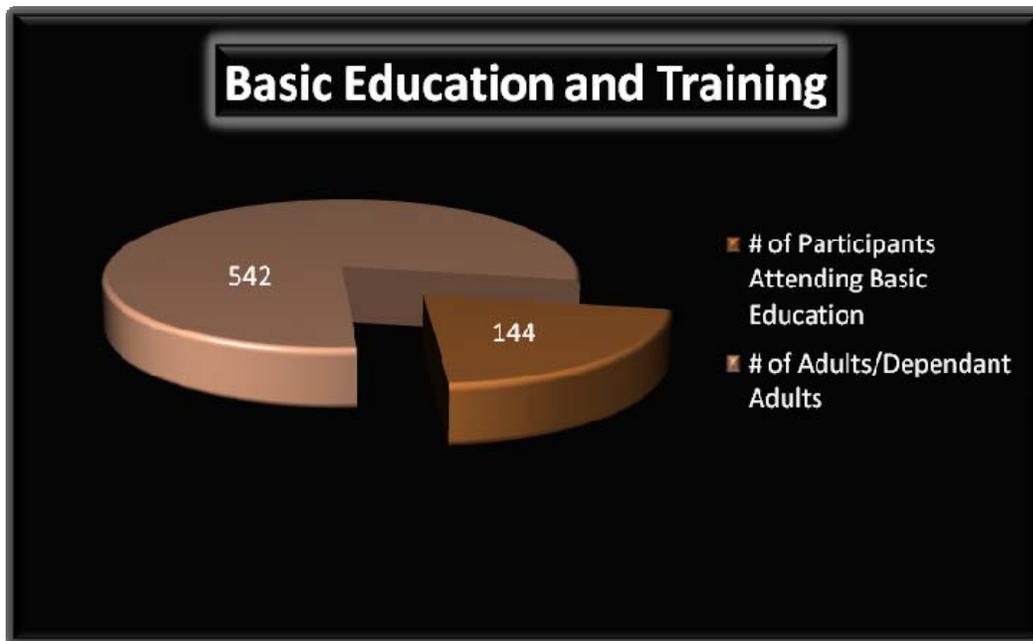
- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB ensures that appropriate referrals to other community agencies are made. These referrals include a variety of services such as resume writing, job search skills, interview skills, job retention skills and life skills. While participating in these workshops, clients may be assessed as to their literacy and numeracy skills.
- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB also offers numerous courses such as First Aid/CPR, Automated External Defibrillation, Safe Food Handling, WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System), Chainsaw Certification, Smart Serve, Follow your True Colors To The Work You Love, Boater Safety, Traffic Control, Team Excellence, Service Excellence, Communication Excellence, Self Excellence and Ethical Excellence. These courses are offered free of charge to all Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program recipients. Referrals for additional employment services/training can also be made to local organizations such as Cambrian College, Sudbury Vocational Resource Centre, College Boreal and Alpha en Partage.
- Participants who are currently working continue to receive earnings exemptions as outlines in the legislation. They will continue to be assessed by their Case Manager as to the best fit in order to move them forward from Ontario Works to becoming totally independent of social assistance.

Basic Education

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB is committed to raising the level of education and has developed partnerships with local educational institutions to meet the needs of our clients. As part of the Ontario Works Act, all clients that do not have a grade 12 are required to complete a Literacy Assessment.

Clients are strongly encouraged to use the services of local educational institutions to upgrade their level of education. This may include Literacy and Numeracy, Upgrading, High School, Adult Education, Correspondence courses, College and University courses.

Of the 542 adults/dependant adults on the caseload there was an average of 144 participants attending basic education, upgrading or Literacy programs for the first 3 months of 2010.



Employment Placements

- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB will continue to develop jobs for its participants in the local job market. The participants will be carefully matched by Case Managers to ensure long-term successful employment. Staff will be available to monitor placements and offer placement services for employer (i.e. screening participants, and offering interviewing space).
- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB uses Enhanced Job Placement Program (EJP) to assist clients who could benefit from gaining work experience, who may not otherwise be able to obtain employment. Our main goal is to find a placement that will ensure the participant's long-term attachment to the labour force without any need for further or future social assistance. It is imperative that the participants who participate in the EJP program are carefully screened to ensure the success of the placement.
- Once placed with employers the staff regularly follows up with the employer and the participant to determine what other support may be required in order to ensure continued attachment to the labour force.

Community Placements

- The Community Placement Program is an excellent tool that can be used to assist participants in gaining valuable skills and experience.

- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB encourages clients to find a Community Placement in the clients' field of interest or towards an established employment goal. Community Placements assist participants to gain new skills to update to their resume. This also gives them the opportunity to work within their community and feel productive while networking and gaining valuable references.
- Some of our Community Placements are Self Declared. These Self-Declared Community Placements allow for participants to remain anonymous regarding their financial status with employers/volunteer organization. Self Declared Placements are often found by clients i.e.: a hockey coach.

LEAP

All participants involved in LEAP are enrolled in a secondary education within their local communities. In addition, our LEAP participants are required to complete a mandatory parenting program. This can be accomplished through the existing parenting programs that are available at local secondary schools. At the end of each school year the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB ensures that all participants are registered with the local employment agencies in order to obtain summer employment.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB will focus on enhancing the participation in this activity by strongly encouraging voluntary participation its' over 18 (year old) LEAP clients.

Child Care

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB is the Service System Manager for Child Care services within the District of Sudbury and Manitoulin.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB is funded under Ontario Works employment to provide formal and informal child care to eligible Ontario Works participants. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB is committed to the strategic management of its child care allocation to support clients' transition from Ontario Work to employment.

Consistent with Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB policy, parents will be allowed to determine the child care option of their choice, be it informal or formal care. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB will allow parents to determine which child care setting they wish to place their children in; however, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB will encourage the use of formal childcare where feasible.

OW participants who are gainfully employed or receiving training allowances will:

- Initially be expected to access the OW Formal and Informal dollars in order to cover their child care costs.
- In cases where earnings exceeds OW entitlement and the participant becomes ineligible for social assistance; their application and income test will be processed in the same manner as any other individual seeking formal child care subsidy assistance.

- In cases where no formal child care system is available, the OW child care exemption will be utilized to ensure economic stability for the family unit. The intent here is not to deny OW child care exemptions but rather to use them as a last resort; thereby promoting attachment to the public child care system and the labour force as opposed to an attachment to the Social Assistance system. These cases will be monitored closely and there will be assistance provided for participants with additional needs or benefits in order to encourage and maintain attachment to the main stream labour force.

Participants who are participating in OW Employment measures but not receiving any income from their participation will be covered by formal or informal funds available in the OW Employment Child Care allocation.

Victims of domestic violence

- Presently the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB offers referral services for victims of domestic violence to organizations such as; Genevra House, Haven House, Mental Health Clinics and Social Housing. Each office has a directory listing of local resources available in their communities.
- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB has a policy to temporarily defer Participation requirements for up to twelve months in order to allow these participants to attend counseling sessions and meet with their local professionals to enable them to heal both mentally and/or physically before entering a job search or educational program.
- Through Community Start-Up and Maintenance the participant can access monies for moving expenses, rent deposits, hydro deposits and household furnishings with some type of verification from a professional that the participant is required to move. In many cases, a counselor will simply issue a letter to the Case Manager supporting the move of the participant.

Staff Training/Overview of Training Supports

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB continues to provide a range of services to support the key employment outcome strategies, including administrative supports to staff, the streamlining of administrative functions and the cost effective use of goods and services.

Staff training has always been a priority of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB to ensure that they are always up to date on the continued changes to Ontario Works programming. Our staff is also educated on the most recent best practices in order to provide quality service to clients.

Management and staff have recently attended and successfully completed the comprehensive Supportive Approaches to Innovative Learning (SAIL). All modules were offered to all staff, including staff from other departments and as well service providers such as Cambrian College, College Boreal, Alpha en Partage and the Mental Health & Addiction Program. The feedback received has been very positive. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB will ensure that the SAIL approach continues to be a focus when dealing with clients and the community.

Staff have also been trained in Non Violent Crisis Prevention/Intervention, Suicide Prevention/Intervention, Communication Workshop, Accessibility Training and Dealing with difficult clients. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB continues to engage its staff in training in order to improve client service.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB believes in providing a softer approach in dealing with its clients. Ontario Works is a very paper oriented program. In order to give Case Managers more quality time to work closer with their clients, the administrative functions have been streamlined within our offices. Two of these tasks transferred to the Intake Worker are the input of the Income Reporting Statements and the completion of the Discretionary Benefit requests. These, along with other tasks assigned to the Intake Worker allow the Case Managers to spend more time directly with their clients.

To further decrease the administrative functions of a Case Management, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB has piloted two new programs with Income Statement and Electronic Filing system.

Some of the employment functions have been directed to the Employment Staff. This allows the Employment Staff to work more intensively with client's employment needs and barriers. They are also responsible for working with ODSP spouses and dependant adults that have employment participation requirements. This allows the Case Managers to work more closely with some of the other client's personal needs as well as leaving the more employment ready clients in the hands of the Employment Staff.

The employment staff is also responsible to maintain an Intensive Case Management caseload. This caseload is comprised of harder to serve client with multiple barriers that require a more intense intervention and longer involvement. This allows the primary Case Manager more time and flexibility to complete the Income Maintenance aspect of their duties for these and other clients.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB also uses service providers when it is more cost effective. For example, they have provided a Focus for Change and a Quick Start program that is more cost effective than the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB running this program themselves. The clients are also benefiting from this as the program is an offsite program. We continue to look for ways that will improve current services by being open-minded.

Strategy to Deliver French Language Services

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB has developed an intensive, fully comprehensive plan to deliver French Language services in our catchment areas. An analysis of our current services has proven that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB currently has enough bilingual staff to adequately service the entire DSSAB area. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB will continue to monitor our French Language services to ensure compliance with the French Language Service Act

Business Practices

During this past year, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB has reviewed their current local policies and procedures. Many of these policies were updated to reflect changes to the Ontario Works Program, inflation and the downturn in the economy. The policies were also revised to address service gaps within our programs. These changes effected: Ontario Works Discretionary, Children Services, Healthy Communities Fund, and Our Kids Count. For example: mileage rates were increased to match the Northern Health and Travel Grants rate.

Section 4: Outcome Strategies

Service Strategy Rationale / Linking of Strategies / Actions Steps and Resources / Stakeholder Linkages

It is the policy of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB that all Ontario Works recipients are required to attend an Employment Information Session in order to gain knowledge about the programs and services that are available to them through the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB and community partners.

A current resume is required for each participant. If the participant is not able to provide one, a referral can be made to an organization in order to assist the participant with the task of completing their resume.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB expects to offer its participants several different services. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB offers a well-supplied Resource Centre in each of its office locations. This includes resources such as job banks, access to computers with various software programs, internet access, telephones, photocopiers, fax machines, printers and other related materials. Our Resource Centres also offers books on resume writing, job search skills, job boards, and newspapers; however, these services are primarily utilized by our more independent participants.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB ensures that appropriate referrals to other community agencies are made. These referrals include a variety of services such as resume writing, job search skills, interview skills, job retention skills and life skills. While participating in these workshops, clients may be assessed as to their literacy and numeracy skills.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB offers numerous courses such as First Aid/CPR, Automated External Defibrillation, Safe Food Handling, WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System), Chainsaw Certification, Smart Serve, Follow your True Colors to the work you love, Boater Safety, Traffic Control, Team Excellence, Service Excellence, Communication Excellence, Self Excellence and Ethical Excellence. The courses are offered free of charge to all Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program recipients.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB will continue to build and maintain relationships with community stakeholders for the benefit of our participants. These relationships can be used as a resource or tool to assist our clients in establishing a better quality of life. Linkages have already been developed with local organizations such as Cambrian College, Sudbury Vocational Resource Centre, College Boreal, Alpha en Partage, North Channel Literacy, Mental Health, Chapleau Adult Learning Centre, all local Economic Development Corporations along with numerous others.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB offers lifeskills training through referrals to community agencies. We are the funding source for these programs. In the next 2 years, we anticipate offering a minimum of 22 Quick Start and Focus for Change programs.

- Focus for Change was developed in partnership with the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB and local agencies. This program is a 6 week in class lifeskills training with a 2 week work placement component. This program is designed to engage the harder to serve clientele.
- Quick Start was also developed in partnership with the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB and local agencies. This program is a 2 week in class lifeskills training with a 4 day job trial with a local employer. This program is geared to the 'job ready' participant.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB will continue to offer Intensive Case Management services for our hardest to serve clients. Participants who have been on social assistance for more than two years and not deferred from participating for medical reasons and are marginally employable. This group may include sole support parents who have children that are not attending school full time but will be in the near future. They involve meetings on a bi-weekly basis or as warranted in order to work through the participant's employment history in order to develop the best plan of action for them. This will be a participant focused activity that will ask individuals to examine their past failures and successes in order to determine a plan that makes sense for them whether it is a long term or short term plan. The Case Manager also focuses on their family situation and determines what influences they have at home that affect their success and failures in their endeavors. Case Managers work closely with these individuals in order to establish and monitor an action plan. The Intensive Case Manager also works closely with any community agencies that may be involved with the participant or the participant's family unit such as Children's Aid, Mental Health Clinic, Probation, etc. The intent here is to ensure that all community agencies involved, are working collaboratively in the best interests of the participant and the participants family.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB encourages Community Placements where appropriate in the participants' field of interest or towards an established goal. Community Placement assist participants to gain new skills, updates to their resume, to try new and different experiences, the opportunity to work within their community and feel productive while networking and gaining valuable references.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB will continue to develop jobs for its participants in the local job market. The participants will be carefully matched by Case Managers to ensure long-term successful employment. Staff will be available to monitor placements and offer placement services for employer (i.e. screening participants, and offering interviewing space).

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB uses Enhanced Job Placement Program (EJP) to assist its' clients who we feel could only benefit from gaining work experience, who may not otherwise be able to obtain employment. Our main goal is to find a placement that will ensure the participant's long-term attachment to the labour force without any need for further or future social assistance. It is imperative that the participants who participate in the EJP are carefully screened to ensure a proper match with the employer and ensure success of this program.

Once placed with employers the staff regularly follows up with the employer and the participant to determine what other support may be required in order to ensure attachment to the labour force.

As for participants who are working, it is the policy of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB to not interfere with their current employment unless it is assessed that this is hindering them from ever obtaining total financial independence. Working participants will continue to work with their Case Managers to further enhance their skills and their abilities thereby improving their prospects of becoming financially independent. This may include job searching, workshops, training or participating in a Community Placement. All participants working will be assisted in updating their resumes and skills in order to improve their likelihood of total independence from OW assistance.

Working participants are required to job search for better paying positions or supported with further training if needed to become totally independent of social assistance.

Addressing Service Gaps

In the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB catchment area, transportation is a major barrier for people in our communities. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB is unique in that there is no public transportation available other than regional Grey Hound services and 2 of our municipalities also have Taxi service. The DSSAB's local policy offers 41 cents per km (tied to the Northern Health and Travel Grant) to those participants who do have access to transportation for their participation expenses. For those who do not have transportation, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB has purchased 7 vans to assist clients in getting to training and education opportunities. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB offers these vans to community organizations to assist them in bringing participants into their programs. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB further assists the organization in recruiting volunteer drivers through our Community Placement Programs. Even though there are major transportation barriers within our district, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB has made efforts to address this dilemma.

Lack of licensed child care continues to pose a real barrier in our remote communities. Many of our clients struggle with finding adequate, reliable child care so that they can go to work or participate in work related activities that will help them find future employment. It is hoped that with the funding through the Ministry of Children's Services this will alleviate some of the issues that continue to arise.

The shortage of doctors in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB catchment area continues to be another major area of concern. This means that recipients with medical problems that need to see a physician cannot do so. This limits their possibilities to deal with their medical issue so that they can move themselves on a path to gainful employment. Another key concern is those participants that should be deferred from participating in Ontario Works or referred to ODSP, are not able to get the proper assessments needed as there are no doctors available.

Increased Employability Strategies

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB provides an integrated service whereby clients can access Housing, Child Care and Ontario Works services all under one roof, thus making it easier for client when finding employment.

Other strategies we use are Enhanced Job Placement and Extended Employment Health Benefits, Human Resources to ensure our client's job retention.

Outcome Measure 1A – Average Employment Earnings

For the calendar year 2009 the average monthly earnings for employed Ontario Works participants was \$819.60 per month. The highest month being October at \$897.76 and the lowest being May at \$750.69.

Additionally the number of earners on Social Assistance has dropped from a high of 86 earners to 63 in 2009. March 2010 had 72 earners on Social Assistance. Due to the delicate economic environment we find ourselves in and the fact that our caseloads have increased in the last fiscal quarter, we feel that setting the 2010 target at **\$687.00** is a realistic and attainable goal.

Outcome Measure 1B – Average Employment Earnings at Exit

For the calendar year 2009, the average amount of earnings at exit for employed Ontario Works participants was \$1481.31. The highest month being November at \$2,374.01 and the lowest being April at \$251.68.

The average for this measure is extremely volatile and is based on actual number of exits each month where the participant exited with earnings on the budget. The average earnings at exit will also be affected by the implementation of the Ontario Child Benefit and the restructuring of the Ontario Works rates.

For the calendar year 2010 we have set the average target at \$870.00. We feel this figure is warranted as a majority of our earners are sole support parents and if they exit with earnings, the maximum OW entitlement was restructured and therefore the amount of earnings reported at exit will also be lower.

Outcome Measure 2A – Percentage of caseload with Employment Income

For the calendar year 2009, the percentage of clients employed while receiving Ontario Works was 13.58%. The highest month being July at 16.74% and the lowest being November at 11.56%.

The number of earners on Social Assistance has dropped from a high of 86 in 2009 to 72 in March 2010. With the increase in caseload for the last quarter of 2009 and since the maximum entitlement has been reduced for cases with children, there will be less ongoing cases with earnings. For the calendar year 2010 we have set the average target at 10%. This target is based on 2009 figures and 2010 projections. We feel this target is realistic and manageable.

Outcome Measure 2B – Percentage of Caseload exiting to Employment

For the calendar year 2009, the percentage of caseload exiting to employment was 23.78%. The lowest month was April 2009 at 12.5% and the highest month was July 2009 at 43.18%.

This target is based on the number of cases exiting social assistance each month and how many of the cases that exited, did so for employment reasons. During 2009, the total number of exits ranged from a low of 23 cases in April to a high of 51 cases in June. The number of cases exiting to employment ranged from a low of 1 case in February and a high of 11 in July. Since the number of earners has declined from a high of 86 in 2009 to 72 in March 2010 that also means that the number of cases that will possibly exit due to employment will also be reduced. For the calendar year 2009 we have set the average target at 9%.

Monitoring Service Strategies

In order to be successful, we need to measure the success of our clients and measure the changes in the labour market. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB will use SDMT reports as well as local system generated reports to ensure the integrity and success of the program.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB will continue to monitor their clients to assess their needs on an individual basis so that we can provide the proper training and services to help them become self reliant. The Employment Staff follow up on all clients who find or exit to employment to review their need for any employment related assistance for job retention. In order to assist them in maintaining their employment, some of the services that we may offer are:

- Enhanced Job Placement Programs to employers
- Extended Employment Health Benefits (providing clients with health benefits as well as mandatory benefits)
- Human Resources
- Further training relating to their employment

The second part of maintaining a successful program is to monitor the local Labour Market conditions. This has been a challenge as the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB's catchment area is wide spread and most of our statistics include the Greater City of Sudbury and other CMSM areas. In the Lacloche/Manitoulin Island area, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB, partnered with local agencies to develop a local Labour Market database specific to that area. We are also working closely with other Economic Development Corporations and stakeholders in our other catchment areas to develop similar databases. By monitoring the success of our clients and the changes in local Labour Market trends, we will be able to ensure the success of this 2 year Work Plan. This will also assist us if needed to adjust our Outcome Measures Targets as we see fit.

Summary

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB has now delivered the Ontario Works program for 11 years. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB has managed to adapt to all the changes in programming, technology and funding. The Ontario Works caseload has decreased from a high of approximately 900 cases to its current level of 496 cases. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB now faces the challenge of assisting the harder to serve participants who require more in-depth assessment, training and time commitment on the part of the Ontario Works staff in order to see them reach their full potential. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB is also starting to see a gradual increase in our caseload due to the economic downturn Labour Market. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB is prepared for the challenge and this 2 year plan is a step in the right direction to achieving our goals and those of the participants.