



Report To:	Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Board
From:	Donna Moroso, Director of Integrated Social Services and Gilles Plouffe, Ontario Works Program Supervisor
Date:	November 22, 2012
Re:	Social Services Solutions Modernization Project – Site Readiness Issue Report

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide the DSB Board Members with information regarding the Social Services Solutions Modernization Project (SSSMP) and the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB's Site Readiness Plan.

## **Overview**

The implementation of the new technology also known as the Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) means that there will be some changes to the way business is done. For our site to be operationally ready for the new technology in the fall of 2013, staff will need to address the impacts of our local business processes, roles, and any peripheral systems currently in use. The SSSM Project will require staff to complete specific activities related to the areas of interest.

## **Background**

The implementation of the Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) which will replace our current technology for the Ontario Works Program, will take place in the Fall of 2013. Local sites are responsible and accountable for the implementation of SAMS, working in partnership with the Social Services Solutions Modernization Project (SSSMP).

The Regional Change Leads (RCLs) and Local Change Implementation Coordinators (LCICs) will provide support to the Site Lead, throughout the Site Readiness process so that staff can develop a Plan to address the needs of our site.

On September 18<sup>th</sup>, the Director of Integrated Social Services attended a one day 'Site Readiness Launch' at which time the project provided the site leads with tools and a guide to assist them in the development of their site plan.

The tools and the guide will also assist staff in preparing our Local Site Readiness Plan and Local Site Readiness Tracking Tool.

## **Planning**

To prepare for the Site Readiness Plan, the staff are required to complete 3 documents:

1. Local Environmental Scan
2. Local Site Readiness Plan
3. Local Site Readiness Tracking Tool

### **Local Environmental Scan**

The initial Site Readiness activity is to conduct a Local Environmental Scan. The purpose of the Local Environmental Scan is to identify and understand factors that may impact the launch of SAMS at our office.

Using the Local Environmental Scan Template as a tool, staff will consider the impacts and risks of several factors, including:

- training and training readiness,
- timing of training and implementation activities,
- labour relations,
- organizational capacity,
- corporate initiatives,
- technology,
- physical operations,
- engagement and support,
- communications

For each of the factors, the Local Environmental Scan Template has a number of questions that will generate discussion, help staff anticipate areas that require attention and which of the site readiness categories could be impacted. There may be other factors relevant to our local site that staff can also include in our Environmental Scan. This exercise will assist staff to identify risks, mitigation strategies and will form the activities to be included in our Local Site Readiness Plan.

The Local Environmental Scan is a required activity but does not have to be submitted to SSSMP.

## **Local Site Readiness Plan**

The Local Site Readiness Plan is a framework that our site will use to manage local site readiness activities leading up to implementation. It will clearly describe:

- local roles and responsibilities
- local governance and approvals process
- the process for internal monitoring of risks, issues and progress while Site Readiness activities are underway.

The mitigation strategies for the risks that emerge from our Local Environmental Scan will be detailed in our Local Site Readiness Plan. Under each of the site readiness categories staff will explain what actions will be required to mitigate the risks.

The Local Site Readiness Plan Template will help staff to build their Plan. The Plan Template outlines the basic structure and provides guidance on what should be included in each section and sub-section of the plan.

## **Local Site Readiness Tracking Tool**

The Local Site Readiness Tracking Tool will serve as the “to do” list for all the tasks and details that need to be completed for the successful implementation of SAMS at our site.

The Local Site Readiness Tracking Tool will address each of the site readiness categories from a local perspective and will act as a resource for the site leads and the staff throughout the site readiness process by giving a snapshot of what is on track for completion, what is behind schedule and any mitigation that is required.

## **Opportunities & Challenges**

DSB staff has already been engaged in preliminary reviews of the new Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) and to date staff has embraced the new technology. There are many features within the new systems which will make delivering services to our client user friendly and efficient.

The Regional Change Leads (RCLs) and Local Change Implementation Coordinators (LCICs) have been a great support to the DSB and our staff in developing a better understanding of the new systems functionality and how we will need to change our business practices to match the new system interfaces.

The implementation of the new system will require DSB staff to review all existing Integrated Social Services procedures and update them to ensure they are consistent with the new systems functionality.

The initial staff training requirements for the new system will occur over a 9 week period commencing in August 2013. Based on early estimates each staff member within the Integrated Social Services department that delivers Ontario Works will be required to attend between 10 to 30 hours of training. The training will be a combination of e-learning, self-study and instructor facilitated on line learning. Since all of the training will be on-line, that does mean CMSM/DSSAB's will be avoiding the additional costs associated with staff travel, accommodation and meeting rooms. Additionally staff will be in their local office during training which means once their training segment is complete, they can return to their regular duties.

The province will provide train the trainer sessions to all CMSM/DSSAB's but we will be required to find our own trainer to train our staff. There are currently no funds allocated by the province to CMSM/DSSAB's for the re-deployment of local staff to act as trainers and local champions. There are also no backfill dollars when staff are performing work required to implement the new system. This will definitely be a challenge for some CMSM/DSSAB's who do not have any Ontario Works Administration dollars available for this purpose. In the case of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB, the [Revised Ontario Works Funding Approach](#) will take effect on April 1, 2013 which means we are losing \$154,651 in provincial funding under the Ontario Works program. This loss of funding coupled with the training and staffing requirements of the new Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) will definitely be a challenge. Staff are working with NOSDA and the province to look at possible solutions.

## **Conclusion**

The Local Site Readiness Plan and the Local Site Readiness Tracking tool are to be approved by the Ontario Works Administrator and due to SSSMP on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012.

Following the approval of our Local Site Readiness Plan, our approved status updates will be shared with SSSMP. SSSMP will provide staff with a summary sheet to help staff capture our updates and progress.

Staff will continue to work with NOSDA and the province to look for solutions to the training and staffing requirements as the new system is implemented in the fall of 2013.