



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

# **Ontario Works Service Plan**

**2015 - 2016**

**August 7, 2015**

# ONTARIO WORKS SERVICE PLAN

**Delivery Agent:** Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board

## **Section 1: Ontario Works Vision and Mandate**

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB recognizes the ongoing Economic Challenges that have developed in the past years. Our catchment area is one that relies heavily on resource based industries. Those have been affected greatly with the global economy. As a result, we see job losses, work shortages and downsizing. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has noticed a steady caseload as clients apply for assistance for a variety of reasons and as well the equal amount who exit the system due to employment. We have also seen an increase of repeat clients who exhaust other financial resources (example: EIB, RRSP, etc.). The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB is well positioned to address these factors. 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**

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB offers in house training and also refers clients to other community agencies for training and services. These services include life skills development, skills training, employment readiness workshops, employment assessment/counseling and training subsidy programs. Our integrated staffs are trained to offer the skills and training necessary to facilitate most of our employment programs. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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 *Options / Focus for Change and Quick Start*. These programs were designed to engage the harder to serve clientele in making positive changes in their lives and is comprised of an in class life skills training with a work placement component.

Intensive Case Management has been an important component to assist hard to serve clients move towards employment. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has targeted the following two (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.

A method of success that DSB has is to foster a more intensive focused approach with clients. Case Managers adopt a role of coaching participants towards a specific goal and developing an action plan. These individuals are seen more frequently and their participation agreement amended based on achievements or challenges that clients are faced with. Particular emphasis is on breaking goals down into attainable steps to independence. This has become increasingly necessary for approximately 20% of the current caseload. These individuals have multiple challenges that needs to be addressed before employment can be considered. As well, under the direction of the Ontario Works Program Supervisor, regular “Case Conferencing” occur. This allows Case Managers to bring forward cases they feel would benefit from the “Intensive Case Management” practice. The ultimate goal of this practice is to recommend appropriate interventions that will allow the client to move forward and assist in his or her personal development / growth. This program was not built to be a short term fix. As it promotes independence, we also acknowledge that success is measured differently. Many of these clients continue to become successfully employed; or enrolled in education/training programs; or become a more productive member of the community with evident increased self-confidence. Over the next two years, the DSB will better monitor the outcome of this initiative.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB continues to provide the Community Placement Program as a tool / option to assist its clients in achieving their employment goals.

The Employment Placement Training Subsidy continues to be a successful program. This program offers training subsidies and human resource services to employers that hire our ‘employment ready’ clients. This program assists 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 ‘employment ready’ and who lack experience to find and maintain gainful employment. This program is 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. This program has maintained a 50% hiring rate for 2013-2014.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB continues to offer many of its own training programs. We offer a wide variety of skilled training courses. Our roster of courses include soft skills training such as Customer Service Excellence, and Follow your True Colors, and required training such Safe Food Handling course and First-Aid / Automated External Defibrillation only to name a few. These courses are very successful in assisting our clients to attain basic job skills to increase their chances of finding gainful and meaningful employment. Our 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 and needs. The Mining Sector also has a strong influence on our communities as many of our residents commute to the large urban centers 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

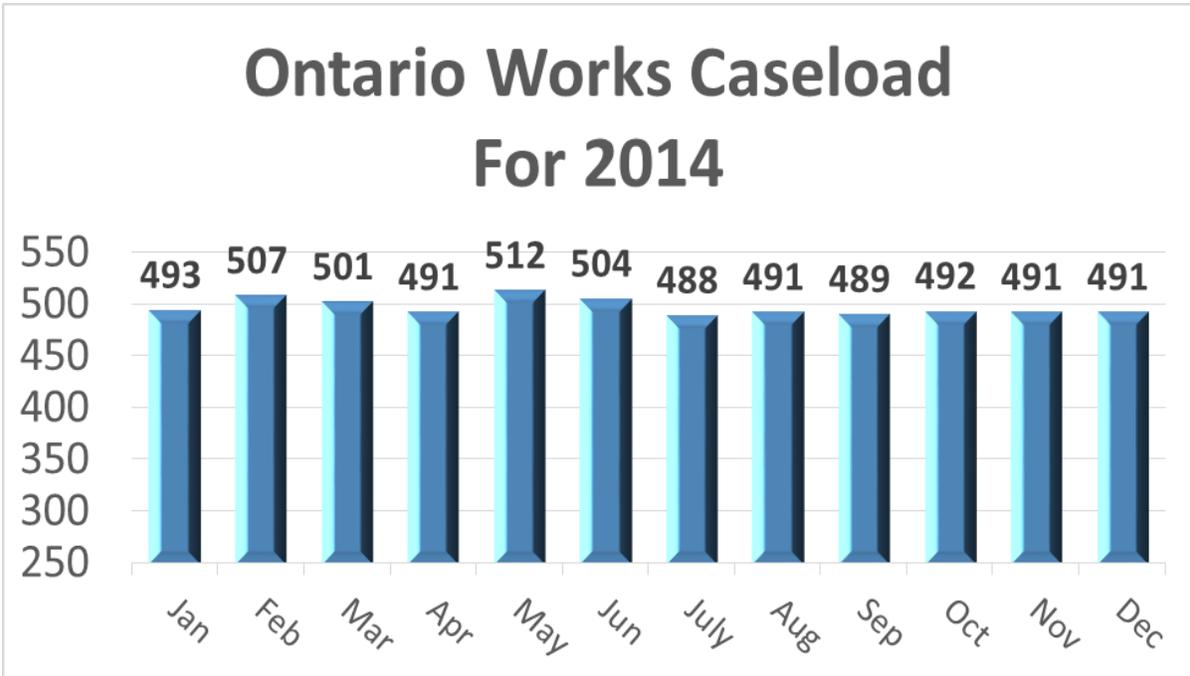
The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB's caseload consists of the following (as of May 2, 2015):

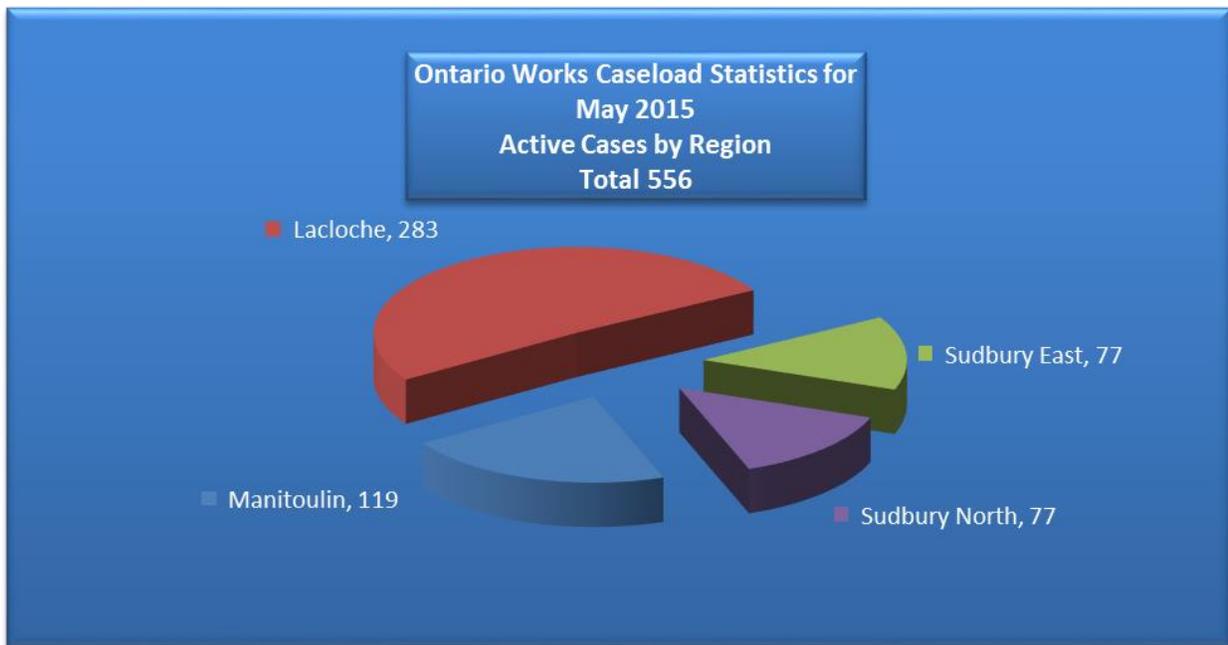
LaCloche:	283
Sudbury East:	77
Manitoulin Island:	119
Sudbury North:	77
Total:	556

Of these 556 Ontario Works cases:

- 729 individuals have Outcome Plans / Participation Agreements
- 8% are involved in Education
- 29% have been on for a period of 2 years or more
- 12% are deferred due to being a single parent, some type of disability or illness, some of which should qualify for ODSP
- 2% are ODSP spouses and dependent adults (for employment purposes only)
- 7% are receiving Extended Employment Health Benefit

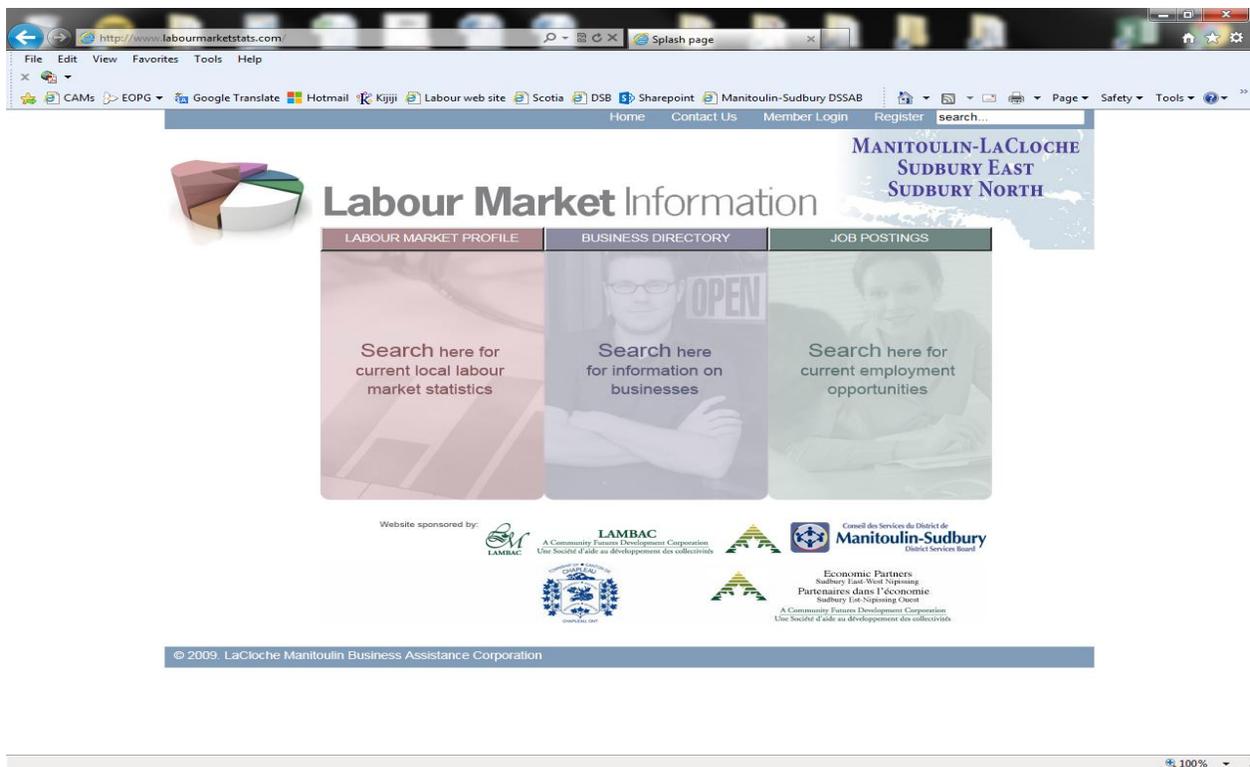
**Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB  
Ontario Works Statistics**





## 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 DSB 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. 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. The website includes all of our catchment areas and is reviewed and updated yearly. 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. They will be able to provide advice to local business people on their hopes to expand or diversify their operations. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB continues to use this information to assist its clients in their future training needs that will complement the local labour market's needs. This information is available to other agencies and businesses for their own needs.



Slow but steady continues to be the economic outlook for most of the Sudbury and Manitoulin Districts. Similar to last year, Greater Sudbury and District are still being impacted by the sluggish pace of the mining industry. This continues to impact on jobs in mining and those in the mining supply services sector, although it is reported that other parts of the mining cluster such as research and development projects continue to grow. These fluctuations are not new and have been part of our history for a long time – sometimes the industry is booming and at other times the global pendulum swings as demand for product and commodity prices drop. Although mining continues to be a significant part of the regional economy, it is not the only economic driver. In fact, it is the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) that form the economic backbone of our area. This is especially true for the Manitoulin District’s top three industries: *Retail Trade, Accommodation & Food Services* and *Construction* which are driven by agriculture and tourism. These industries also lead the way in the Sudbury District but for other economic reasons (*note: information taken from the 2014 Sudbury-Manitoulin Workforce Planning Board*).

Labour market conditions are dependent on many factors. The Sudbury and Manitoulin Districts are no stranger to these shifts and like many across Ontario, were affected by our last recession and the influence of local industry. Housing start up, the population is slowly growing, and the economic outlook is strong.

While we have a diversity of industries across our urban, rural and remote areas, there are some consistent themes and challenges that continue to emerge. In some cases, these challenges leave us with more questions than answers. While it is well recognized that increased education increases job prospects and future potential salary, there

seems to be a growing disconnect between employer needs/expectations vs. post-secondary graduate job expectations. A similar gap is emerging for lower skilled and entry level jobs where the expectations of employers are not being met by those looking for work. While there are many examples of successful matching, time after time, employers are voicing their concerns about the lack of basic and essential skills in prospective employees. This includes skills such as math and English and computer literacy, as well as attitudes and behaviors reflected in team work, punctuality, commitment, dress, etc.

This information is noted as we believe that having current urban information is crucial in order for Case Managers to properly plan and assist clients in developing sound and well informed employment plan.

### ***Community Engagement***

#### **LaCloche Area:**

- **Education / Training**: The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has partnered with Cambrian College -Espanola Campus to deliver life skills courses for harder to serve participants called “Options”. We also work with Cambrian College –Espanola Campus- 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. This agency also delivers upgrading courses to our Ontario Works participants to assist them in obtaining their employment goals.
- **Employment**: The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB ensures that appropriate referrals are made to community agencies such as Employment Options, March of Dimes & 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 DSB relies heavily on referrals to local community partners for services such as but not limited to, Espanola Mental Health and Addiction, Espanola Family Health Team, Espanola Hospital Crisis Intervention, Espanola Helping Hand Food Bank and Sudbury Community Credit Counselling.

#### **Manitoulin Island Area:**

- **Education / Training**: The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has partnered with Cambrian College -Espanola Campus to deliver life skills courses for harder to serve participants called “Options”. We also work with Cambrian College –Espanola Campus- 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. This agency

also delivers upgrading courses to our Ontario Works participants to assist them in obtaining their employment goals.

- **Employment:** The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB ensures that appropriate referrals are made to community agencies such as Employment Options, March of Dimes & 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 DSB relies heavily on referrals to local community partners for services such as Sudbury Mental Health and Addictions Centre-Manitoulin Site, Manitoulin Child Poverty Task Force, Family & Children Services, Manitoulin Health Centre Crisis Interventions and Sudbury Community Credit Counselling.

### **Sudbury East Area:**

- **Education / Training:** In the Sudbury East Area, we have partnered with Alpha en Partage to deliver Literacy and upgrading more specifically the ACE (Academic and Career Entrance) and ILC (Independent Learning Centre), Focus for Change, Quick Start & Computer courses. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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. It is noted that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has provided Alpha en Partage with additional funds to replace the loss in funding to support ACE and ILC courses. While this will keep the services for the residents in the Sudbury East Region for the next year, a long term permanent solution is required.
- **Employment:** The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB ensures that appropriate referrals are made to community agencies such as Employment Options / Options Emplois, Sudbury Vocational Resource Centre, YMCA employment services & 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 DSB relies heavily on referrals to local community partners for services such as Sudbury East Mental Health & Addictions, Centre de Santé and Aide aux Séniors.

## **Sudbury North Area:**

- **Education / Training**: In the Sudbury North Area, we have partnered with, Formation Plus, Contact North and the Chapleau Learning Centre. We have also partnered with these 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 DSB ensures that appropriate referrals are made to community agencies. Since 2010 the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has been the Service Provider for Employment Ontario –Employment Service. The Chapleau office, through an integrated approach, ensures that the full suite of Employment Services (Employment Ontario) is offered to this specific area. We ensure that Ontario Works participants take advantage of the EO-ES. This employment service offers a variety of services that includes resume writing, job search skills, interview skills, life skills and job specific training, self-employment, job matching and job retention skills. This suite of services include the new Canada-Ontario Job Grant program. This relationship is very unique. We are one (1) of only six (6) DSSAB / MCSMs that have contracts with MTCU to offer the full suite of employment services.
- **Other services**: Many of our clients have multiple barriers that are personal in nature. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB relies heavily on referrals to local community partners for services such as Turning Point, PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise family & local School Boards and Chapleau Children Services.

## **Section 3: Program Management**

### **Service Delivery Rationale**

#### **Ontario Works -Intake and Emergency Assistance**

Where applicants approach a local office they are encouraged to apply on line, by telephone or person contact. If by walk in they are given an intake application form to complete. Where an applicant calls in to apply for assistance, they are directed to an Integrated Program Assistant who will input their basic information in the provincial database. Applicants can also apply for assistance by printing the application on the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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 DSB's Healthy Communities Fund can be accessed. The HCF is a result of the consolidation of funding from five provincial homelessness-related programs.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB's Healthy Communities Fund is comprised of four separate service components:

1. Emergency Shelter Solutions
2. Housing With Related Supports
3. Other Services and Supports
4. Homelessness Prevention

Local non-profit community organizations such as food banks can access the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB'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 DSB'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.

### **Ontario Works -Eligibility determination / review and eligibility 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 DSB participates in the Eligibility Verification Process (EVP). As per the EVP process, we ensure that all participants that require EVP are completed within the allowed timed. All Case Managers and our Eligibility Review Officer (ERO) are involved in the EVP 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.

### **Outcome Management**

- Upon application for Ontario Works several mandatory documents are explained to the participant and signed. One of the documents is an Outcome Plan - Participation Agreement. This document is essentially a plan for participant to meet effective integrated supports that help them prepare for finding and keeping employment. 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 DSB and its partners.

### **Employment Services, Training and Workshops**

- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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 DSB 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 DSB 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, Boater Safety, Traffic Control, and Service 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, Collège Boréal and Alpha en Partage.

- Participants who are currently working continue to receive earnings exemptions as outlined 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 DSB 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.

In 2013, of the 509 active participants, a total of 223 participants were involved in an education activity.

In 2014, of the 519 active participants, a total of 174 participants were involved in an education activity.

## **Employment Placements**

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB will continue to provide assistance to local employers in the recruitment, matching and job retentions. The participants are 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).

For 2013: 8 placements > 50% hired after the placement

For 2014: 11placements > 55% hired after the placement

- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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.
- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB recognizes that some participants may need the support of additional coaching and mentoring to maintain employment or complete training or make that important next step on their career path. Once placed with employers, Case Managers regularly follows up with the employer and the participant to determine what level of intervention is required if any. Where the need for Job Retention support is indicated, participants and employers are provided with peer coaching and mentoring, more frequent or long follow-up, ongoing employment counseling during and after employment and placement and access to other community supports if required.

## **Community Placements**

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

## **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 DSB ensures that all participants are registered with the local employment agencies in order to obtain summer employment.

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

In 2013-14 only one (1) participant utilized this option.

## **Child Care**

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

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

Consistent with Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB policy, parents will be allowed to determine the child care option of their choice, be it informal or formal care. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB will allow parents to determine which child care setting they wish to place their children in; however, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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 DSB 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 DSB 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 the Healthy Communities Fund and possible Discretionary benefits the participant can access funds 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.

The Housing Services Act, 2011 prescribes priority rules for households who are or have experienced domestic or family abuse. Applications for Special Priority are given immediate attention, but at the very least are reviewed, and the applicant advised of their eligibility within 7 days of receipt of the completed information. Applications for Special Priority are reviewed and Approved by the Social Housing Program Supervisor (SHPS), or in the absence of the SHPS, by the Director of Integrated Social Services.

### **Oversight Strategy**

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB staff abides by the OW Directives and regulations first and foremost. The DSB also has local policies and procedures that enhance and clarify directives.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB staff accurately track and maintain records and supporting documentation for all social assistance related expenses and recoveries. They also ensure that information input on monthly claim forms is accurately captured in SAMS. As part of this process, subsidy claims submissions are reconciled to the accounting software through banking reconciliations. They submit a complete and accurate Subsidy

Claim Form with appropriate supporting documentation to the Ministry of Community Social Services by the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the following month. It is to be noted that due to the new technology (SAMS), MCSS is not ready for organizations to submit Form 5's online. MCSS is currently advancing the funds ahead of time. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB is struggling to balance the bank. We are waiting for more information from the Ministry on how to process Subsidy Claims online.

## **Analysis of Resources**

### **Financial**

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB goes through vigorous financial audits exercises on a yearly basis. These are completed by outside accredited bodies. Monthly financial reports are prepared and reviewed by staff.

### **Staffing**

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has a human resources specialist that over sees all staffing and human resources issues. The DSB has a Human Resources manual that is posted on SharePoint for all staff. The DSB also abides by the CUPE Collective Agreement in regards to job posting etc.

### **Community**

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB recognizes the importance of community resources, networking and partnerships. The DSB is in constant contact with its local partners. A detailed community resources repertoire is updated regularly to ensure to most recent information is available. This information is shared with staff, clients and participants.

## **Integrated Social Assistance Monitoring Framework (ISAMF)**

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB is an active member in the ISAMF. ISAMF focuses on accountability, performance reporting, risk management and monitoring. Through the Operational Indicators reports and Ontario Works Subsidy claims preparation, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB will continue to focus on and measure work to organizational excellence, service excellence as well as accountability.

- **Operation Indicators:**

*Note: The most current Operational Indicators provided by the Ministry are dated September 2014.*

## September 2013

Description	Provincial	Northern	MS DSB	DSB% Province	DSB% North
Caseload	240,850	9,403	441	0.18%	4.69%
Applications	19,811	1,187	49	0.25%	4.13%
Applications Granted	13,277	749	33	0.25%	4.41%
Screening date to Grant (calendar days)	7	7	5	71.43%	71.43%
EVP completed	4,625	164	6	0.13%	3.66%
Exit due to Employment	2,579	105	11	0.43%	10.48%
Number of cases reporting earnings	23,270	971	72	0.31%	7.42%
Average # of months on assistance	24	19	21	87.50%	110.53%
Number of cases in Job Search	197,146	8,678	479	0.24%	5.52%
Number of cases in Education	72,896	2,959	223	0.31%	7.54%

## September 2014

Description	Provincial	Northern	MS DSB	DSB% Province	DSB% North
Caseload	235,827	9,621	436	0.18%	4.53%
Applications	19,273	1,146	60	0.31%	5.24%
Applications Granted	12,714	680	30	0.24%	4.41%
Screening date to Grant (calendar days)	7	9	9	128.57%	100.00%
EVP completed	2,929	57	11	0.38%	19.30%
Exit due to Employment	2,600	116	9	0.35%	7.76%
Number of cases reporting earnings	23,270	971	72	0.31%	7.42%
Average # of months on assistance	25	20	24	96.00%	120.00%
Number of cases in Job Search	197,669	8,895	495	0.25%	5.56%
Number of cases in Education	67,041	2,841	174	0.26%	6.12%

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB will continue to strive and attempt to meet priorities. It is important to note that regular reports provided by the Ministry would assist in reviewing and ensuring that provincial standards are met if not exceeded.

## Overview of Learning Supports

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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 DSB 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 all 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. Consideration of same is given to new staff. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB ensures that the SAIL approach continues to be a focus when dealing with clients and the community.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB staff has been involved and continues to actively participate in all related activities that pertains the Social Services Solution Modernization Project. It is to be noted that one of our staff has been seconded to the project as one of the Local Change and Implementation Coordinator.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB continues to engage its staff in training in order to improve client service. In the past two years, staff have been trained on issues such as addictions and mental health, preventing workplace burnout, Labour Market Information, First Nations Health Benefits only to name a few.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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 Integrated Program Assistant are the input of the Income Reporting Statements and the completion of the Discretionary Benefit requests. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB strongly encourage the participation in the Exempt Based Income (EBI) reporting. Currently 80% of the case load is on EBI. This is reviewed at every Participation Agreement review. These, along with other tasks assigned to the Integrated Program Assistant allow the Case Managers to spend more time directly with their clients.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB also uses service providers when it is more cost effective. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB also recognized the individual and organizations expertise. For example, the service providers provide a series of structured skills training such as "Options", Focus for Change and the Quick Start program. 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 DSB 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 DSB currently has enough bilingual staff to adequately service the entire DSB area. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB will continue to monitor our French Language services to ensure compliance with the French Language Service Act.

## **Business Practices**

In light of the new computer system, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has started a review of its current local policies and procedures. The preliminary review is complete. As the SAMS becomes more stable, certain policies and procedures may require additional revisions.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has fully moved toward electronic filing. All documents are scanned and filed electronically in a system called DOCU Explorer. Original mandatory / Ministry required forms are kept on file as well as scanned to the DOCU X program. This software is available and can be viewed by all staff at all locations. This practice is acknowledged and approved by MCSS.

## **Section 4: Outcome Strategies**

### **Service Strategy Rationale**

It is the policy of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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 DSB 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 DSB expects to offer its participants several different services. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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 Centers 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 DSB 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 DSB 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, Service Excellence, The courses are offered free of charge to all Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program recipients.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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, Mental Health and addictions, Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centers, Chapleau Adult Learning Centre, all local Economic Development Corporations along with numerous others.

For Sudbury North, since 2010 the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has been the Service Provider for Employment Ontario –Employment Service. The Chapleau office, through an integrated approach, ensures that the full suite of Employment Services (Employment Ontario) is offered to this specific area. We ensure that Ontario Works participants take advantage of the EO-ES. This employment service offers a variety of services that includes resume writing, job search skills, interview skills, life skills and job specific training, self-employment, job matching and job retention skills. This suite of services include the new Canada-Ontario Job Grant program. This relationship is very unique. We are one (1) of only six (6) DSSAB / MCSMs that have contracts with MTCU to offer the full suite of employment services.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB offers life skills training through referrals to community agencies. We are the funding source for these programs. In the next 2 years, we will continue to offer “Options”, Quick Start and Focus for Change programs. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB staff meets with the services providers regularly to ensure that client needs are met. An extensive review of the life skills program offered by Cambrian College was completed in 2014. It was determined that the Focus for Change and Quick Start would be merged together. The revised model is now called “Options”. A series of new life skills / job preparation workshops have been developed and are being offered to all Ontario Works and ODSP Participants residing in the Lacloche and Manitoulin Island arrears.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB continues 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 are considered for Intensive Case Management. This group may include sole support parents who have children that are not attending school full time but will be in the near future. The Case Managers will focus on the Asset Base

Approach in order to empower clients in making sound and informed decision. 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. 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 endeavours. Case Managers work closely with these individuals in order to establish and monitor an action plan. Cases are identified by way of case conferencing. Under the direction of the Ontario Works Program Supervisor, regular "Case Conferencing" occur. The ultimate goal of this practice is to recommend appropriate interventions that will allow the client to move forward and assist in its development. The 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 DSB 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 DSB will continue to provide assistance to local employers in the recruitment, matching and job retentions. The participants are 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 DSB will continue to use 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.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB recognizes that some participants may need the support of additional coaching and mentoring to maintain employment or complete training or make that important next step on their career path. Once placed with employers, Case Mangers regularly follow up with the employer and the participant to determine what level of intervention is required if any. Where the need for Job Retention support is indicated, participants and employers are provided with peer coaching and mentoring, more frequent or long follow-up, ongoing employment counselling during and after employment and placement and access to other community supports if required.

As for participants who are working, it is the policy of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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

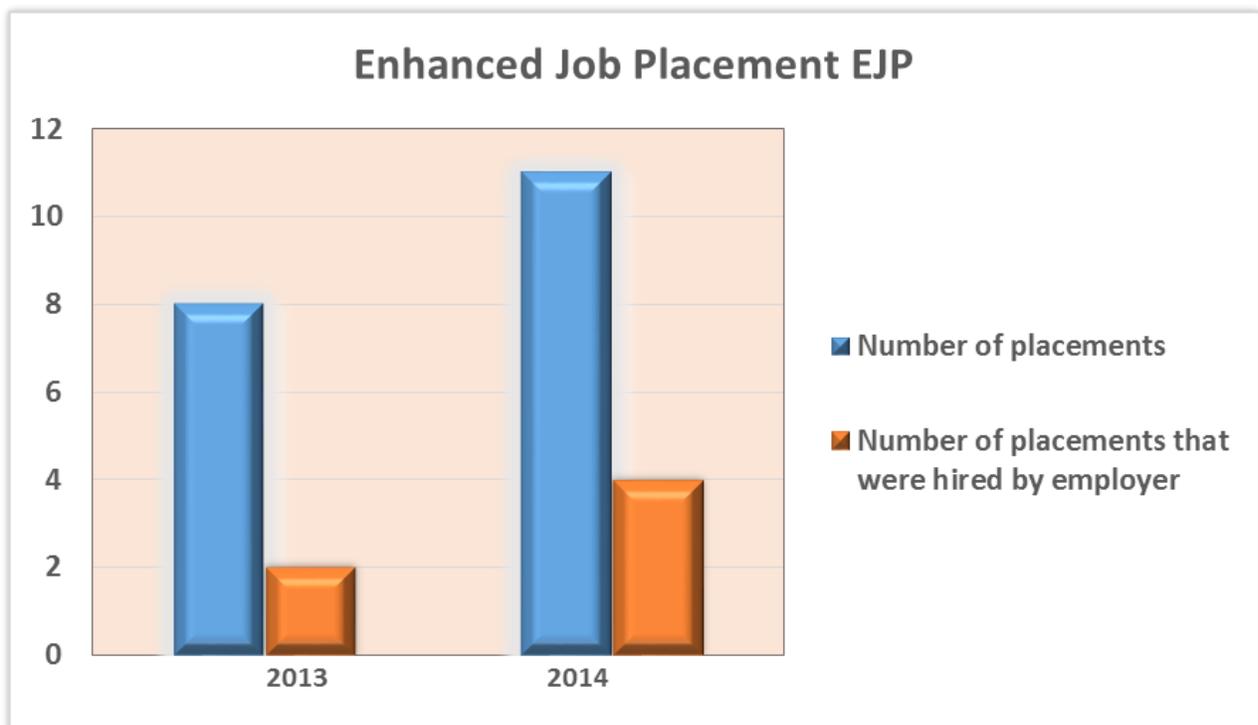
improving their prospects of becoming financially independent. This may include job searching, workshops, training or participating in a Community Placement. All participants working will be assisted in updating their resumes and skills in order to improve their likelihood of total independence from Ontario Works assistance.

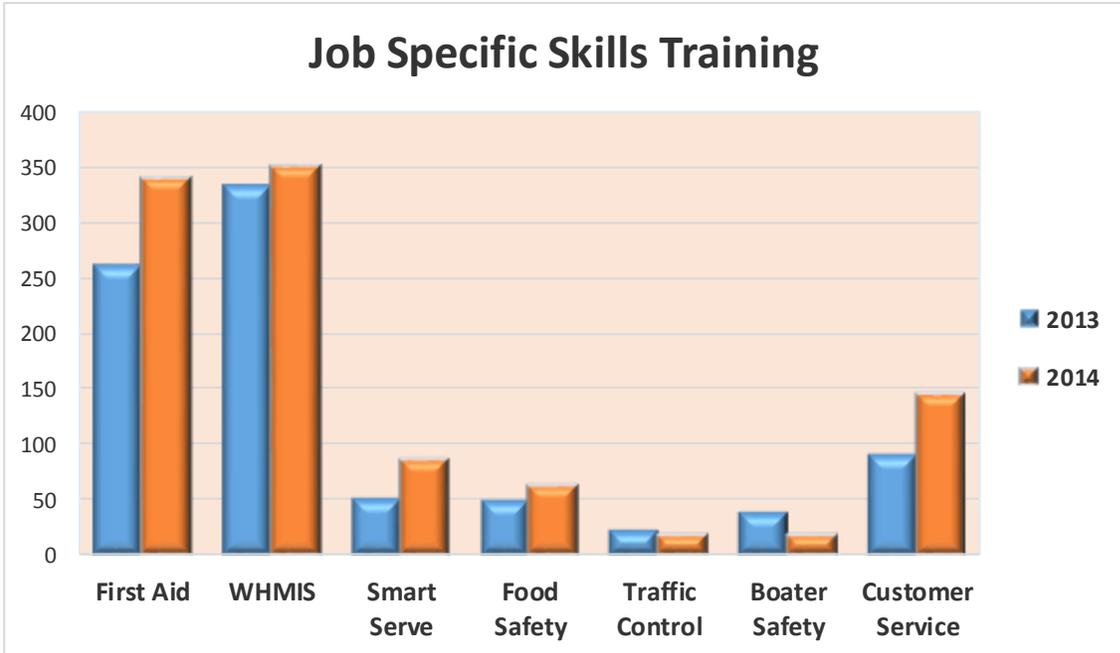
Working participants are required to job search for better paying positions or supported with further training if needed to become totally independent of social assistance.

### Link Strategies to Outcome Measures

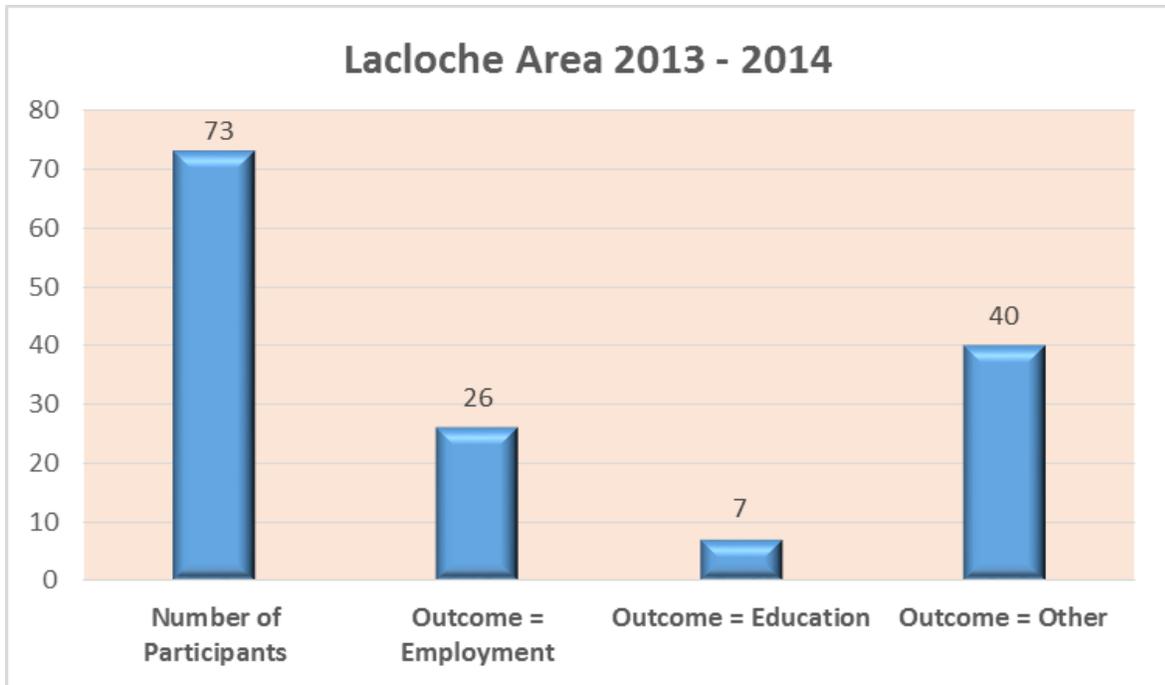
The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB reviewed the Operational Indicators reports regularly. Those reports were not made available on a regular basis therefore very difficult to monitor and address issues or concerns. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has not received any Operational Indicators since September 2014. Once SAMS is more stable and reliable, it is hoped that those reports will be provided on a regular basis.

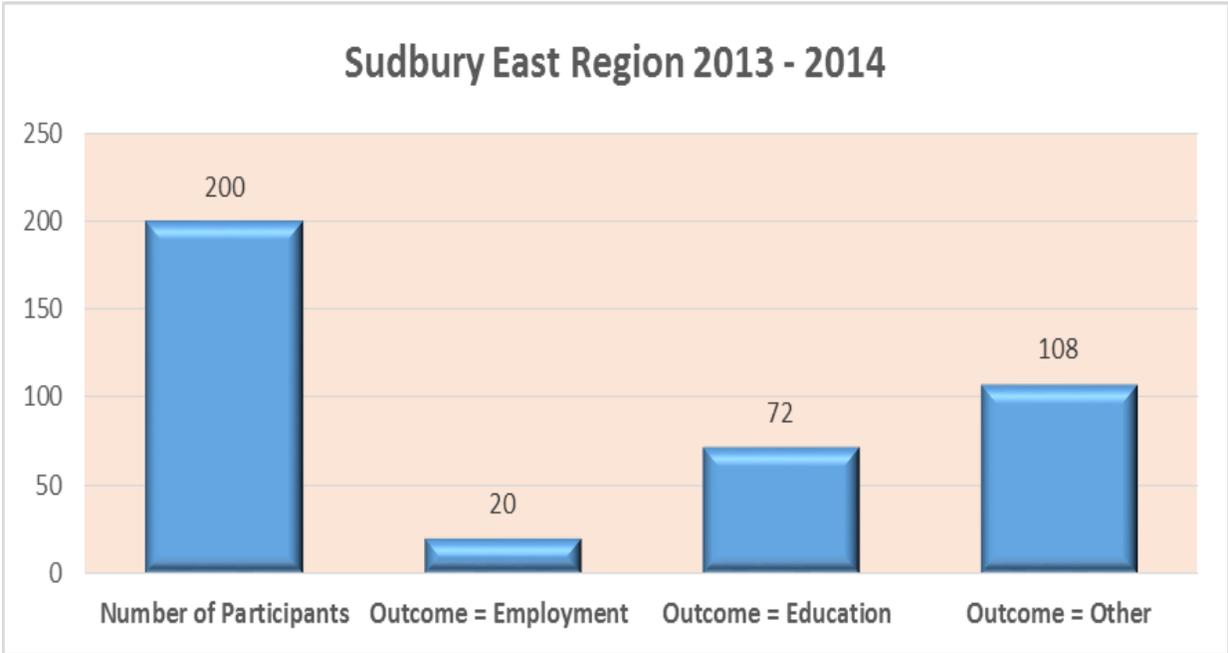
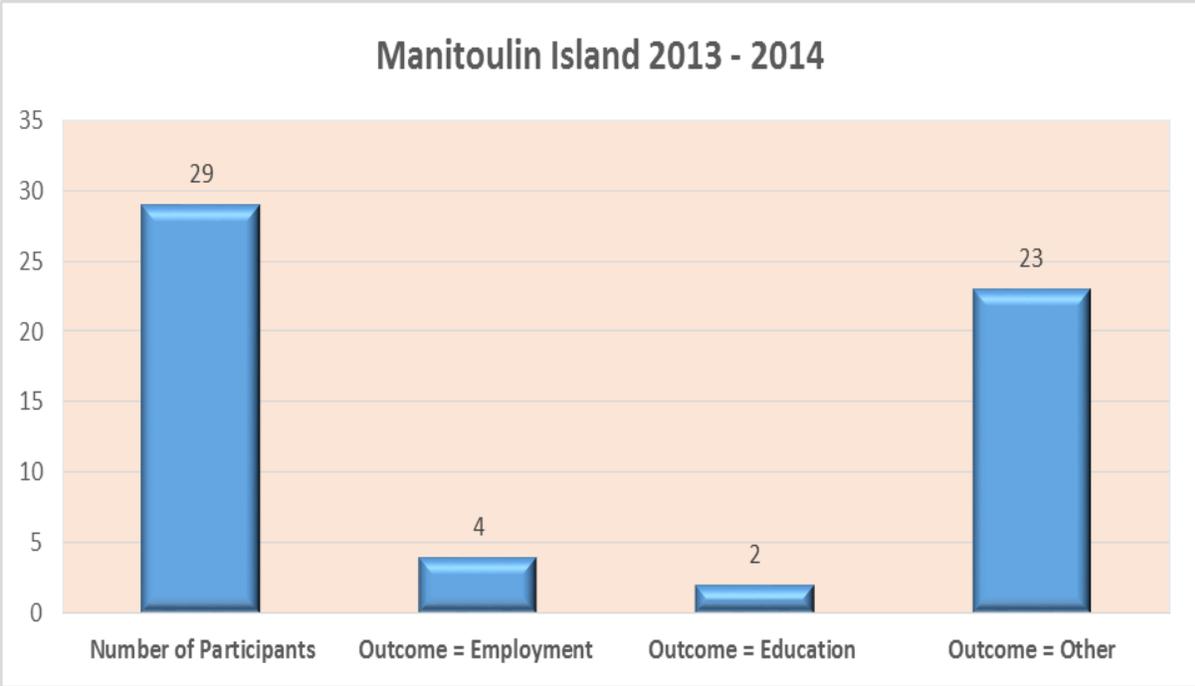
The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB captures data for its outcome measured activities. The following charts show the outcome of each activity:





**Focus For Change/Focus on Computers/Focus on Finance/Quickstart/Options**





**Action Steps and Resources**

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB recognizes the importance of capturing appropriate data in order to properly assess the effectiveness and deficiencies of outcome measured activities. To that effect, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has engaged with a review off all

its current outcome measured activities. As a first strategy, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has developed a client / customer survey. This survey has been in place since June 2013.

To date 126 surveys have been submitted. Following is a brief summary of the information that has been gathered to date:

- Was it easy to apply for Ontario Works assistance: 90% said YES
- Was it easy for you to get in touch with the right person to speak to? 93% said YES
- Are the types of job postings on the board helpful? 66% said YES
- Was the office easy to find? 96% said YES
- Did we talk to you about other needs / assistance you might have? 87% said YES

Overall, the information received from our surveys is very positive. Surveys are reviewed by the Ontario Works Program Supervisor and any issues or concerns are reviewed and addressed as soon as possible.

As a second strategy, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB is currently developing a mechanism to monitor “Performance Indicators”.

### **Stakeholder Linkages**

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB continues to work closely with its partners and stakeholders. Over the past sixteen (16) years, the DSB has developed strong relationships with its local community members. We will continue delivering employment / training programs and strategies that meet local demands. Our clients who need such interventions will continue to be referred and encouraged to move to full independence.

### **Addressing Service Gaps**

Duplication or overlap of programs and services does not appear to be a significant issue in any of catchment areas.

There were a number of gaps reported across all communities including:

- Transportation services both public and private
- After hours mental health crisis services
- Substance abuse and addiction services
- emergency shelter services
- Food security services
- Recreation services
- The reality that specialized services cannot be based in every community due to resource issues
- Access to health services

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB continues to participate in all local services groups. We continue to support local initiatives to address on-going service gaps. Through its “Integrated services” approach, the DSB has developed internal processes and services.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB is unique in that there is no public transportation available other than regional Grey Hound services, CN train and two (2) of our municipalities also have Taxi service (Espanola and Chapleau). The DSB’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 DSB has eight (8) vans to assist clients in getting to training and education opportunities. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB offers these vans to community organizations to assist them in bringing participants into their programs. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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 DSB 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 through the Best Start Program and funding through the Ministry of Education this will alleviate some of the issues that continue to arise.

The shortage of family doctors in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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 DSB provides an integrated service whereby clients can access Housing, Child Care, Ontario Works and Employment Ontario (for Sudbury North citizens) 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**

In 2013, the average monthly earnings for employed Ontario Works participants was \$748.66 per month. The highest month being September at \$894.95 and the lowest being June at \$630.71. The target for 2013 was set at **\$690.10**.

For 2014, the average monthly earnings for employed Ontario Works participants was \$800.88 per month. The highest month being August 2014 at \$944.73 and the lowest being February 2015 at \$709.73. The target for 2014 was set at **\$683.40**.

In 2013, the number of earners on Social Assistance has changed from a high of 91 in July to 52 in January. In 2014, the number of earners on Social Assistance has changed from 111 in July to 64 in February.

Due to the fact that our caseloads are showing a higher population of 'harder to serve', we feel that setting the 2015-16 target at **\$683.00** is a realistic and attainable goal.

The SAMS data and reports are inaccurate at this time therefore we are unsure whether or not these targets can be met.

### **Outcome Measure 1B – Average Employment Earnings at Exit**

In 2013, the average amount of earnings at exit for employed Ontario Works participants was \$1,749.14. The highest month being November, at \$2,324.63 and the lowest being March at \$1,095.74. The target for 2013 was set at **\$1,249.50**.

For 2014, the average monthly earnings for employed Ontario Works participants was \$1607.22 per month. The highest month being August 2014 at \$2,123.70 and the lowest being January 2014 at \$919.94. The target for 2014 was set at **\$1249.50**.

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. For the calendar year 2015-16 we have set the average target at **\$1,250.00**. 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.

The SAMS data and reports are inaccurate at this time therefore we are unsure whether or not these targets can be met.

### **Outcome Measure 2A – Percentage of caseload with Employment Income**

For the calendar year 2013, the percentage of clients employed while receiving Ontario Works was 12.08%. The highest month being July, at 15.61% and the lowest being May at 9.24%. The target for 2013 was set at **10%**.

For 2014, the percentage of clients employed while receiving Ontario Works was 13.8%. The highest month being July, at 18.58% and the lowest being February at 10.76%. The target for 2014 was set at **9.6%**.

The average number of earners on Social Assistance was 70 in 2013 and increased to 82 in 2014. At this point we have not seen any stats passed August 2014 due to the

conversion from SDMT to SAMS. Based on this, for the calendar year 2015-16 we have set the average target at **9.6%**.

The SAMS data and reports are inaccurate at this time therefore we are unsure whether or not these targets can be met.

### **Outcome Measure 2B – Percentage of Caseload exiting to Employment**

In 2013, the average percent of clients exiting Ontario Works due to employment was 29.84%, the highest month being August at 50.00% and the lowest being February at 17.24%. The target for 2013 was set at **10%**.

For 2014, the average percent of clients exiting Ontario Works due to employment was 28.4%, the highest month being July at 38.46% and the lowest being January at 4.35%. The target for 2014 was set at **11.2%**.

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 2013, the total number of exits ranged from a low of 21 cases in March to a high of 46 cases in October. During 2014, the total number of exits ranged from a low of 25 in January and May to a high of 36 cases in July and August.

Since the number of earners has declined from a high of 46 in 2013 to 36 in 2014 that also means that the number of cases that will possibly exit due to employment will also be reduced. For the calendar year 2015-16 we have set the average target at **10%**.

The SAMS data and reports are inaccurate at this time therefore we are unsure whether or not these targets can be met.

### **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 DSB will use SAMS - Cognos reports, Provincial Operational Indicators, as well as local system generated reports to ensure the integrity and success of the program.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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. Case Managers 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 DSB'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 DSB, partnered with local agencies to develop a local Labour Market database specific to that area. This database has been expanded to our catchment areas. This database is monitored and updated yearly. 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 two (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 DSB has now delivered the Ontario Works program for sixteen (16) years. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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 556 cases. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB 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 DSB is prepared for the challenge and this two (2) year plan is a step in the right direction to achieving our goals and those of the participants.