

THE DISTRICT OF TIMISKAMING SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD



4rth Quarter Operational Overview October 1 – December 31, 2020

CAO Report to the Board

Kelly Black, Chief Administrative Officer

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Overview

The first quarter of 2021 was a very active one in EMS. There having been comings and there have been goings and there continues to be foundational growth in terms of the workforce. The ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic evolution continues to colour most every aspect of the EMS operations from the ground up. The EMS staff and Paramedics continue to rise to the occasion and in spite of the ever-present risk of direct exposure as an inherent part of the job we have been successful in keeping the workplace and staff safe. The first quarter has seen the departure of the interim EMS Chief Robert Smith who completed his term with us at the end of February, and the installation of Deputy Chief Steven Beaton as the new Acting Chief.

Here are a few of the other accomplishments in the first quarter:

- Englehart weekend night shifts which had been 4 hours onsite and 8 hours on call, has been upgraded to 12 hours onsite. This improves area coverage and response times
- A tiered response agreement was entered into with the Earlton Fire Department
- A very high percentage of our EMS staff have received their COVID vaccinations during the 2nd and 3rd weeks of March

Staff Planning and Reorganization

Certainly, the most active area for EMS in the first quarter involved staffing.

We had posted for four Superintendent positions in the fourth quarter of 2020, and by mid-February we had three of them on the road and active. These three came from within our internal EMS ranks. We continue to seek the right person for the fourth position. One of the challenges is that these are new positions for our service and those who fill the positions will be builders, setting the standard for what the position will look like in the future. It takes a special individual to fit that role. The three that are in place have been doing an exceptional job thus far. We are also expecting to have two Team Leader positions in play soon as well. These positions will be unionized Paramedics from within our service who will backfill for Superintendents as needed on a temporary basis covering for vacation and sick leave. Both the Superintendent and Team Leader positions represent the fulfillment of the EMS reorganization plan which had its conceptual inception more than year ago and so it is very exciting to see the plan coming together.

There have been some departures from our EMS staff in this quarter and this, combined with moving two full-time and one part-time from the paramedic staff into management, meant that we had a need to hire more part-time district float positions. Offers were made to six individuals, four of whom are presently active and accepting shifts which has been very helpful to maintain staffing levels on the road. Another is anticipated to be starting in the near future and the sixth had declined the offer of employment.

EMS Fleet Vehicle Update

The Off-Road Unit is now in service with a completed protocol for deployment in place. There are still some staff needing to complete their training on the unit which had to be deferred as a result of the provincial shut-down orders, but enough staff are in place to deploy the unit. We have also taken possession of the tow vehicle. It is being fitted for an MOH radio and then it will be put on-line as the main superintendent vehicle.

Community Paramedicine (CP)

The DTSSAB applied for and received funding from the LHIN for the delivery of Community Paramedicine in Timiskaming. EMS was able to start delivery of the program in the early part of 2021 by establishing staff as Community Paramedics within our service. Community Paramedics Dan Lemay and Michele Rivard have done a great job at getting the CP program up and running with Deputy Chief James Besley's oversight and we have received several expressions of appreciation from our community partners for the benefit that this program is bringing to the community. This program has been funded through the LHIN and is time limited up to the end of March 2021; however, we have been able to stretch the funding to continue delivery of CP through to the end of April 2021. The DTSSAB has submitted an application for additional CP funding through the LHIN and MOH; however, there has not been any response to date. We anticipate notification of a successful funding application in the coming months.

Defibrillator

The Timiskaming EMS has acquired 14 new LifePac Defibrillators to replace our current aging units. This was a joint acquisition with Sudbury-Manitoulin and Nipissing EMS services, and we expect our new units to arrive in early May.



EMS CALL VOLUME

The increase in call volumes indicated in the chart below represent scene calls. It is difficult to explain the dynamics of such calls, but it would suggest that people have become somewhat more comfortable calling an ambulance than they have been in the previous quarter. All other numbers are within expected ranges.

Call Volume Comparison

Q4 EMS Total Call Volume (by CACC assignment)					
Ambulance Base	Non-Urgent	Urgent	Emergent	Standby	Total
North	32	85	274	135	526
Central	11	26	76	70	183
South	10	92	288	135	525
District totals	53	203	638	340	1234
Q1 EMS TOTAL CALL VOLUME (by CACC assignment)					
Ambulance base	Non-Urgent	Urgent	Emergent	Standby	Total
North	107	136	287	101	641
Central	31	72	95	56	254
South	48	147	308	161	664
District totals	196	355	690	318	1559

Q4 EMS Interfacility Subset (by CACC assignment)				
Sending facility	Non-Urgent	Urgent	Emergent	Total
Kirkland Lake	36	19	14	69
Englehart	26	31	8	65
Temiskaming	25	17	11	53
Totals	87	67	33	187
Q1 EMS INTERFACILITY SUBSET (by CACC assignment)				
Sending facility	Non-Urgent	Urgent	Emergent	Total
Kirkland Lake	51	16	15	82
Englehart	17	41	10	68
Temiskaming	29	23	7	59
Totals	97	80	32	209

Response Time Standard Comparison

Q4 Provincial Response Time Standard Report (values are %)			
Subset	Target	Actual	Target to Actual Variance +/-
Sudden Cardiac Arrest	35	52.00	+17.00
CTAS 1	50	51.85	+1.85
CTAS 2	65	71.11	+6.11
CTAS 3	75	78.30	+3.30
CTAS 4	80	85.86	+5.86
CTAS 5	90	92.58	+2.58
Q1 PROVINCIAL RESPONSE TIME STANDARD REPORT (values are %)			
Subset	Target	Actual	Target to Actual Variance +/-
Sudden Cardiac Arrest	35	44.00	8.75
CTAS 1	50	54.54	4.54
CTAS 2	65	66.45	1.45
CTAS 3	75	78.30	3.30
CTAS 4	80	86.04	6.04
CTAS 5	90	88.24	-1.76

ONTARIO WORKS

Ontario Works Operational Performance

The following provides a snapshot of the first quarter, program operational data and performance in applications, caseload, client employment activity and financial payments.

Intake Services

The average number of applications per month in Q1 2020 and 2021 are

- 2021
 - 32 cases applications per month
- 2020
 - 58 applications per month

Note, the significantly higher average in 2020 is attributed to COVID, and the Federal emergency benefits were not in place across Canada. Increased unemployment was the primary factor.

New Applications

The percentage of application outcomes in 2020 and 2021 are:

- 2021
 - 59% of the applications were eligible
 - 5% were ineligible
 - 36% withdrew their application and, therefore, were not processed.
- 2020
 - 69% of application were eligible
 - 6% were ineligible
 - 25% were withdrawn

Note. The Ontario Works program is a financial needs model. Eligibility is determined by income and available assets. A higher eligibility percentage in 2020 correlates to the increase in applications and lower income due to lack of CERB at the time. The lower withdrawal percentage is linked to money, and fewer people had available income and assets.

Caseload

The average monthly caseload for both regular and temporary care cases for Q1 2020 and 2021 are:

Ontario Works (regular assistance)

- 2020
 - 688 active cases
 - 1,174 individuals
- 2021
 - 585 active cases
 - 1,050 individuals

Note, the significant decrease in caseload average is consistent with both provincial and regional trends. The introduction and the CERB (Canada Emergency Relief Benefits) introduced a form of universal basic income that exceeded social assistance benefits. This caused a decrease in cases as those individuals and families exited the program. Also, employment opportunities began to increase in late 2020 and lowered the caseload with more exits.

Ontario Works (temporary care assistance)

The average monthly caseload in Q 2020 and 2021 are:

- 2020
 - 35 cases
 - 63 children
- 2021
 - 33 cases
 - 56 children

Note, the Temporary Case Assistance program is not based on income and assets as it is child and guardian-focused. COVID did not have an impact on these cases from financial eligibility. The caseload trend is in line with historical trends.

Client Outcomes (Employment)

The following data relates to the performance areas of client employment and caseload in Q1.

The average number of cases with earnings:

- 2020
 - 65 cases
- 2021
 - 43 cases

The average monthly earnings per case

- 2020
 - \$791 per month
- 2021
 - \$920 per month

The average number of cases exiting for employment

- 2020
 - 8 cases
- 2021
 - 8 cases

Note, the decrease in cases with earnings is related to the increase in unemployment over the year. The change correlates to the rise in earnings per case. Those individuals with incomes who maintained or obtained employment are generally working more hours or increasing wages.

Employment Assistance to ODSP Recipients

The average monthly cases in Q1 2020 and 2021 are:

- 2020
 - 25 cases
- 2021
 - 15 cases

Note, the number of cases dropped due to COVID impacts on service delivery. This trend is in line provincially and regionally. Focus on client stability with basic needs, shelter, additional financial support, and safety is the focus. However, with the start of Q2 2021, the Province is now making it a service priority to reestablish support for ODSP life stabilization and employment support. Senior program management is cooperating to develop a strategy that meets our mutual service delivery demands and client services across programs at the local level.

Social Assistance Payments

The following represents the average number of individual payment transactions (excluding any cancelled payments) and the monetary amount of payments issued in the Q1 of 2020 and 2021:

The average number of payments, amounts, and cost per case and individual:

- 2020
 - 1,018 payments per month
 - \$597,673 per month
 - \$828 per case per month
 - \$509 per individual per month
- 2021
 - 842 payments per month
 - \$519,566 per month
 - \$841 per case per month
 - \$495 per individual per month

Note, costs per case vary from Q1 2020 and 2021 due to caseload and the number of benefits approved. Increased access to basic education and skills development, broadband access and financial support for hygiene and safety products. The slight decrease in the cost per individual is mainly due to the family composition. There are fewer single-person cases that have a higher demand for benefits.

Activity Briefing

Local Service Availability during the Pandemic

Although the pandemic introduced new and changes to our public access to services and businesses, Ontario Works is an essential service. Under the provincial mandate, service must be available at all times due to the nature of the vulnerable population that we serve.

In line with our Pandemic Roadmap, staffing level in-office and in-person vs virtual service levels vary. However, during operating hours, clients have access to communicating with program staff. During our most restrictive level in the Pandemic Roadmap, services are available by phone, at the offices, but outside of our entry doors. A phone is available in the vestibule in the North office and the College Boreal's foyer of the South office. While not ideal, it does provide a point of service for those individuals without a phone.

In less restrictive levels, in-person meetings based on need is allowed in a specific meeting room. Staff are directed to reduce the need for clients to drop off or pick up documents or payments - promotion of virtual service tools and risk-based decision making is expected.

Social Services Modernization

The Ministry's ongoing Business Innovation and Implementation Branch (BIIB) is working with staff from across the Ministry to make staff's work easier and better help social assistance recipients. Current activities in modernization are MyBenefits and Electronic Document Management (EDM).

MyBenefits is an online service available to residents of Ontario who are active Ontario Works or ODSP recipients. It is available 24/7 and allows clients to see their payments and letters and report changes through their desktop, tablet, or mobile phone. It works on all of the latest major internet browsers. New features are in development, and the most recent addition is Messaging. This feature enables secure messaging between clients (MyBenefits) and Caseworkers (SAMS).

MyBenefits give recipients more choice and flexibility in getting, managing, and reporting information to us. Correspondingly, this provides our program staff more time to focus on high-impact work with recipients because they spend less time manually inputting recipient information, processing changes, opening/sorting mail and handling incoming phone calls.

Locally, Caseworkers continue to enrol their clients in the MyBenefit program. Recent demands on Caseworkers were made to increase the number of clients registered through active efforts and conversations. Our local actions are in line with the Ministry's awareness campaign that began in March of this year. The message and program expectation are paperless by default.

The Electronic Document Management (EDM) model was developed as part of the Ministry's Social Assistance Reform mandate. EDM provides the foundational base for enhanced user experience, administrative efficiencies, and process optimization by digitizing paper into digital records accessible through the Social Assistance Management System (SAMS).

The EDM model consists of a suite of services, including:

- Digital Mailroom Document Digitization
- Master File Digitization
- MyBenefits Document Upload
- Staff/Site Document Upload
- 2-Way Messaging

Digital Mailroom Document Digitization focuses on how mail and other incoming documents are received and processed in the local office. When implemented, all incoming documents (mail, fax, drop-offs, and related actions) are redirected/communicated to a digitization vendor. These documents are scanned/digitized with the digital copies made accessible through SAMS.

Master File Digitization is the process where active client master files will be transferred to a scanning vendor (Nimble is the vendor of record) to be scanned/digitized and uploaded to SAMS for future access and storage. Locally, EDM will over time, remove physical document storage on-site and the square footage it requires. EDM will also reduce staffing resources in handling physical documents and paper.

Our DSSAB requested early onboarding to this service. However, with COVID and shifts in priority at the Ministry level, we are scheduled for summer 2021. That timing, understandably, remains dynamic.

Ontario's New Vision for Social Assistance, Recovery and Renewal

Detailed information was presented to the Board at the February 2021 regular meeting of the Board. To summarize, the new vision for social assistance aims to create an efficient, effective, and streamlined social services system that focuses on people, connecting them with a range of services and supports to respond to their unique needs and address barriers to success. It is a critical enabler to a whole-of-government approach to accessing human services that will help more people succeed in employment and support better outcomes in other areas of life, like health and education. The pandemic has caused a protracted economic downturn. For some, a longer than expected absence from employment and, as such, will take an all-of-system approach to achieve economic recovery and support people back into jobs. That is why we need to act now and accelerate work towards this critical transformation to support Ontario's economic recovery. The initial phase is the review and realignment of services and centralization of functions to the Province.

The first significant activity is Centralized Intake. Prototype pilots began early this year, and the working model is in place. We have requested an early onboarding into this evolution to Centralized Intake. We were accepted to start the transition in June. Centralized Intake means that the Province will process all Intake and applications from the local office and the Online Social Assistance Application (OASA.) Applications for Temporary Care Assistance and Emergency Assistance will remain with our offices and processed by our Caseworkers. The reason for this is the complex nature of these applications, and our office is better equipped to handle these cases and make rapid decisions and connections to community services as is appropriate.

These two types of applications are minimal because the average number per month is about one to two cases. Per the vision of this renewal and transformation, Centralized Intake will reduce the staffing resources we assign to application services. Therefore, we can better align our performance in high-impact personal services like life stabilization activities.

Program Staffing

The Q1 Ontario Works staffing complement includes:

- Director of Client Services, accountable and responsible for all program delivery, funding and the provincial service contract and operational performance.
- Two, Ontario Works Supervisors, accountable for a team in each office and front-line, daily services, work assignments, and staff performance management. (12-month temporary positions filled with existing program staff)
- Six, Caseworkers responsible for program case management and ongoing case management.
- Two, Case-Aides responsible for administrative supports directly related to Ontario Works and case management.
- One, Eligibility Review and Case Presenting Officer responsible for program integrity. Primary duties include fraud prevention (including coordinating with law enforcement and the Crown, Appeals proceedings, Tribunal Hearings and the Enhanced Verification Process, an audit-based program to confirm that client eligibility is correct.

Note that during this time of transformation of employment services, the implementation of a life stabilization program, and centralizing financial functions to the Province, our staffing strategy must remain flexible. Management, casework, and administrative roles must remain pragmatic, flexible, and able to pivot and adapt as the Social Assistance model evolves.

HOUSING SERVICES

Central Wait List

During the first quarter of 2021, 41 Applicant households applied for housing in our District. The following table displays Applicant Status Distribution.

Table 1: Overview of Applicant Status Distribution in Q1

Applicant Status	Chronological	Applicant #	Applicant %
Eligible	22	22	53.7%
Housed	3	3	7.3%
Canceled	3	3	7.3%
Pending	7	7	17.1%
Ineligible	2	2	4.9%
Applied	4	4	9.8%
Total	41	41	100.0%

As at March 31, 2021 the Centralized Waitlist count included a total of 238 Eligible Applicant Households. The table below is an overview of the breakdown.

Table 2: Breakdown of Eligible Applicants on Waitlist

Client Type	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom	5 Bedroom
Special Priority	-	-	1	-	-
RGI	52	8	-	-	-
High Need	119	17	22	11	4
Market Rent	2	2	-	-	-

2021 Household Income Limits (HILS)

Every year we receive a notification which provides an update on approved amendments to *Ontario Regulation 370/11* under the *Housing Services Act, 2011* to update the Household Income Limits and High Need Income Limits. The updated Household Income Limits and High Need Income Limits are based on information provided by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) as required under the *Social Housing Agreement, 1999*.

Table 3: HILS set out as directed in O. Reg 370/11 for Rent-Geared to Income Households

RGI Household Income Limits				
Bachelor	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4+ Bedroom
\$25,500	\$31,500	\$38,500	\$42,000	\$50,000

High Need Household Income Limits				
Bachelor	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4+ Bedroom
\$15,000	\$18,900	\$23,100	\$25,200	\$30,000

Unit Turnover for Public Housing Portfolio

Tenants move out for several reasons. Number of move-outs are consistent year after year regardless of the reason tenants vacate. Table 2 below outlines some of the reasons for tenants vacating our properties.

Table 4: Five Year Overview of Move Outs January through March

Reason for Move-Out	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Health Reasons	5	4	3	5	3
Left District	2	0	0	1	2
Move to Private Rental Market	1	1	2	4	1
Deceased	1	0	6	4	2
Evicted	1	1	1	2	2
Transfer	4	2	5	3	5
Non-Given	1	2	5	0	5
Employment	0	2	0	0	0
Total	15	12	22	19	20

24-Hour Emergency Call Stats

Northern Communications has been handling the after-hours calls for all our housing units and we have experienced minimal changes in our buildings since 2013. Northern Communications has contact numbers and directives for emergencies including a list of Contractors. With most calls going directly to the Maintenance Supervisor or Housing Services Manager there has been a significant decrease in the amount of pointless staff call-outs. 40 calls in total were received in Q1 of 2021. Any non-urgent calls are logged and emailed to the office on the next business day.

Table 5: Represents calls and action taken in first quarter of 2021

Reason for Call	January	February	March	Action
Smoke Alarm	•		•	Call-Out
No Hydro	•		•••••	Contractor
Leak/Plumbing	•		•	Contractor
Need new shower head	•			Next Day
Lock-Out	•		•	Next Day
No Heat	•••	•	•	Contractor
Washing machine not spinning	•			Next Day
Mouse in Unit	••			Next Day
Exit door not latching	•			Next Day
Toilet/Sink back-up-plugged	••	••	••	Contractor
Elevator not working		••	•	Contractor
No Hot Water		•••	••	Next Day
Smell of Gas		•		Contractor
Need anti-slip mat for tub		•		Next Day
Above toilet cabinet fell		•		Next Day
Smell of Chemicals /Vent			•	Next Day
Total Calls	14	11	15	

Provincially/Federally Funded Programs

Home for Good (HFG)

In May 2017, the DTSSAB submitted a response to the expression of interest issued by the Ministry of Housing for Home for Good (HFG) funding. In mid-September 2017, we received notification from the Ministry that we were successful and would be receiving funding in the amount of \$287,400 over 3 years. The Ministry has continued funding our District with HFG funding for Year 4 and 5 with an additional \$283,840. HFG is an ongoing investment to support the goal of ending chronic homelessness by 2025. The DTSSAB continues to partner with the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) and the Northeast Local Health Integration Network (NELHIN).

Table 6: Home for Good Allocation

	2017/2018 YR 1	2018/2019 YR 2	2019/2020 YR 3	2020/2021 YR 4	2021/2022 YR 5
Annual Allocation	\$63,560	\$111,920	\$111,920	\$111,920	\$111,920

Social Infrastructure Fund (SIF)

We continue to deliver SIF funding under the Housing Allowance component which assists 12 households in our communities. A Housing Allowance is a subsidy paid directly to a household in need of rental assistance. Table 7 below outlines the funding allocation for Timiskaming during a 6-year duration.

Table 7: SIF Housing Allowance Allocation

SIF Housing Allowance Funding					
2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
\$12,000	\$18,300	\$37,200	\$37,200	\$37,200	\$26,948

Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative & Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (COCHI & OPHI)

In 2019, the Province announced the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) funding to replace the federal Social Housing Agreement funding that expires each year, beginning in 2019-20. The federal government acknowledged that their funding for social housing was declining over time and through their funding of COCHI federal social housing investments would be maintained at about the 2018-19 levels. Over the period that federal expenditures had been declining, municipal expenditures on social housing have been growing. This funding can be used to repair, regenerate, and expand community housing and to protect affordability support for tenants.

The Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI) funding was also launched in 2019-20, providing flexible funding to Service Managers to address local priorities in the areas of housing supply and affordability, including community housing repairs, rental assistance, tenant supports and affordable homeownership.

Table 8: Phase I COCHI and OPHI Confirmed Funding

Program Name	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI)	\$31,482	\$65,077	\$45,846
Ontario Priority Housing Initiative (OPHI)	\$327,500	\$169,700	\$264,100

Community Housing Updates

Featured buildings for Q1



37 Lake Street is located on the shores of the Montreal River in Elk lake. This building is also known as Evergreen Apartments. This multi-unit building has 2 stories and 19 units, 4 of which were converted into 2 story 2-bedroom units. The building was built in 1975. Maximum rents in this building are \$595 for a 1 bedroom and \$692 for a 2 bedroom. Rents also differ according to household income. There is a laundry room on the ground floor.



390 Lakeview Avenue is in the Southern part of the City Temiskaming Shores known as North Cobalt. This multi-unit building has 2 stories and 12 units. The building was built in 1972. Maximum rent in this building is \$604 but varies based on household income. Laundry rooms are available on both floors.



42 Churchill Drive is in Kirkland Lake just a short walk from downtown. This multi-unit building has 2 stories and 32 units. All units are 1 bedroom. The building was also built in 1972. Maximum rent in this building is \$640 but varies based on household income. Laundry rooms are available on both floors.



29 Miller Avenue is at the South end of Cobalt. This multi-unit building has 2 stories and 23 units. All units are 1 bedroom. The building was built in 1974. Maximum rent in this building is \$601 but varies based on household income. Laundry rooms are available on both floors.



30 Ninth Avenue is one of four buildings in Englehart. This multi-unit building only has 1 story making all units accessible at street level. There are 10 one-bedroom units. The building was built in 1973. Maximum rent in this building is \$608 but varies based on household income. A laundry room is also available in this building.

Conversion to a fully modified unit

During the first quarter of 2021 the Housing Services Program completed the renovations of a unit at 370 Broadway Street in Haileybury. This unit is a fully modified wheelchair accessible unit. A household in our District will benefit of a wheelchair friendly home. The unit includes wheelchair accessible doorways to accommodate passage, a non-slip resistant easy to maintain flooring, open concept living area, and lower kitchen cabinets and counters with accessible knee space on the bottom. The bathroom was also renovated to include a roll-in shower and a pocket door.

Below are images of the completed unit:

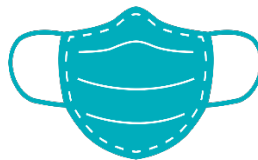


Covid-19 Update

During Q1 of 2021, the Housing Services Program continues to use best practices and all necessary precautions based on Public Health Guidelines including: wearing of masks, physical distancing, providing hand sanitizer, staying home if not well and working alternate hours to minimize potential for exposure. On March 19, 2021, four residents in one of our buildings tested positive for the Covid-19 virus leading public health to declare a low-risk exposure at the building. DTSSAB staff collaborated with the Timiskaming Health Unit by assisting in contact tracing and identifying tenants over 80 who were eligible to receive the Covid-19 vaccine. As a precautionary measure the Health Unit also conducted testing on site for tenants and staff as required. Tenants were provided with Information Notices to maintain open communication, as well as, masks were distributed to every unit. Cooperation and collaboration with the Timiskaming Health Unit was key in mitigation further low-risk exposure for tenants and staff.

The safety of our residents and staff continue to be our primary concern and, we are committed to do our part to prevent the spread of the virus.

WEAR A MASK



My MASK protects YOU and your MASK protects ME

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Introduction

The first week of January saw Child Care programs pivot to provide Targeted Emergency Child Care for School-Aged children, at no cost to eligible parents, from January 4-8, 2021. Given the favourable local situation, our programs were authorized to return to regular programming as of January 11th and continued to provide services to families to the end of the first quarter. With the Ministry moving to a one-symptom screening model towards the end of February, staffing levels in our child care centres continued to be a challenge as educators were now also needing to self-isolate when either themselves or a member of their household exhibited any new or worsening symptom of COVID-19. Educators continue to anxiously await the day when they can receive their vaccination.

Early ON/ON y va centres on the other hand have remained closed and were prohibited from offering in-person programming. EarlyON centres continued to provide services to families through a variety of service delivery methods such as: offering virtual programming, preparing activity kits that families could pick up and complete with children at home, and continuing to offer a variety of resources via Facebook pages.

Child Care

A. Targeted Emergency Child Care - week of January 4 to 8

Targeted Emergency Child Care for school-aged children services were provided at 4 child care centres and a number of home child care providers during the week of January 4 to 8 with approximately 35 children receiving services daily. Offering emergency child care to our frontline works enabled ongoing delivery of core services within our communities such as, but not limited to, health care, retirement and long-term care, mail delivery and special needs education.

B. Safe Restart Funding

Safe Restart Funding announced in 2020 needed to be spent by March 31, 2021. Child care providers were asked to submit monthly claims to the DTSSAB for COVID specific expenses incurred up to and including March 31st such as:

- Additional personal protective equipment
- Enhanced cleaning
- Additional staff to meet health & safety requirements
- Support for operators with vacancies due to lower enrolment in programs
- Support for operators to cover child absenteeism
- Support where there may be short term vacancies locally as child care centres adjust to the health and safety requirements
- Support for child care staff absenteeism where staff need to stay home because they or their children are sick or need to self-isolate; and
- Minor capital required (less than \$5,000) in accordance with the Ministry's reopening operational guidance or local public health requirements.

DTSSAB is expecting to flow all remaining Safe Restart Funding by the end of April.

At this time, no further COVID specific funding has been announced by the Province. DTSSAB remains optimistic that additional funding may be announced as child care providers have continued to incur additional expenses beyond March 31st.

C. Additional Re-investment Funding

A \$66M Province-wide re-investment of 2020 underspending was announced by the Ministry in February. A total \$329,276 re-investment allocation was cash flowed to the DTSSAB in March 2021 with the expectation of being fully spent by March 31, 2021. The approach and parameters for the additional funding could be spent on the same types of expenses outlined above for the Safe Restart Funding. DTSSAB is expecting to flow entire allocation out to child care providers by the end of April.

D. Lower Enrollment

Enrollment levels continued to be lower across all centres during the first part of 2021 due to:

- Reduced demand for services due to the pandemic;
- Staff shortages; and
- Conscious limitation to ensure compliance with Health & Safety protocols.

Most providers reported operating at 50-60% of their licensed capacity.

DTSSAB was able to help offset the added pressure of the resulting decrease in revenue of child care providers with Safe Restart Funding up to and including March 31, 2021.

E. Family Discount

The Family Discount program entitling families with two or more children attending licensed child care centres or home child care to a flat rate discount of \$10.00 per day on their second and subsequent children was reinstated as of January 1, 2021 after being suspended in 2020 to offset additional pandemic related costs.

As a result, an estimated 95 Timiskaming families received an average of \$12,000/month in discounts for the first three months of 2021 for a total of \$36,000. Children's Services intends on maintaining the program throughout 2021; however, we may need to adjust or suspend the program upon receiving updated directives from the Ministry.

F. Early Learning Preschool Readiness Programs (ELSRP)

The ELSRP programs that were initially expected to reopen January 2021, continue to be suspended until further notice as community activities related to preschool readiness are not possible. The Children's Services team is currently discussing the possibility of offering a condensed summer version of the program with interested providers.

G. Capital Projects

School Boards and CMSMs/DSSABs received a memo on December 16, 2020 inviting them to submit joint requests for capital funding for child care centre additions and/or renovation projects in schools by January 29, 2021. At that time, only one potential project in Timiskaming had been identified. The school Board, child care provider and the DTSSAB submitted a joint application for funding and are waiting for a response from the Ministry of Education on the status of the application. If the funding request is approved, this project would add 6-10 infant spaces in the District of Timiskaming.

Discussions are ongoing with other child care centres regarding renovations that would see considerable floor plan changes that would not only improve program quality but also alleviate existing safety challenges.

EARLYON/ON y va Child and Family Centres

EarlyON/ON y va centres continue to be prohibited from offering in-person programming. Centres have continued to do an excellent job of providing a variety of virtual programming, resources and activity kits for families. The Collaborative has also taken this opportunity to develop a detailed re-opening plan to be able to resume in-person programming once permitted.

Children's Services Quality Assurance Program

The Children's Services' quality assurance program continued during the first quarter.

During this time the Quality Assurance Coordinator:

- Continued to connect and support child care providers and home child care providers
- Supported child care centres with Safe Restart Funding
- Continued to support child care with ongoing projects
- Implemented monthly Quality Initiatives
- Completed Floraison Francophone program in March
- Organized and co-facilitated a Professional Learning opportunity with Dr. Diane Kashin on Play Based Learning
- Organized and facilitated a cooks networking program with one session having been offered in partnership with Timiskaming Health Unit
- Participated in online Forest and Nature Practitioners sessions along with local providers

HUMAN RESOURCES

Human Resources Review - 2021 Initiatives/Activities (Q1)

Key non-confidential Human Resources Q1 initiatives and/or activities included, but were not limited to:

□ Virtual/remote onboarding – new hires

In the context of COVID, HR has pivoted to a remote onboarding process, where individuals hired into new positions now receive a formal presentation (usually delivered at an in-person session with the Director of HR) to review the importance of the organizational policies that govern the expectations and conduct of employees of the DTSSAB.

Onboarding content also includes an important section relating to occupational health and safety. Proper onboarding is critical for external hires and individuals entering new positions, as it is essential for important messaging surrounding expectations to be communicated and reinforced effectively.

Per our usual process, and as a complement to the review of the new hire onboarding presentation, individuals are required to complete mandatory training, including health and safety-themed learning assignments, as well as review applicable DTSSAB policies.

While this method is not as personal as delivering an orientation face-to-face, remote onboarding still ensures a proper orientation to the workplace, despite COVID restrictions.

□ HR technology

HR continues to explore means of digitizing workflow and maximizing department staffing. HR and the Finance department have partnered to explore possibilities for introducing a Human Resources Information System (HRIS) which would integrate some HR and some Payroll functions that are currently performed manually and/or duplicated due to similar information being tracked or processed for different purposes. A new system would help with efficiencies for day-to-day and/or transactional duties, allow HR more time to focus on transformational employee-centred initiatives, and empower employees by providing them access and the ability to process changes to their own personal information (i.e.: change of address, contact information, view available vacation balances, etc.) by introducing an employee self-service module.

More information will be available later in 2021 following a decision regarding the introduction of HR technology.

□ Staffing/Recruitment Update

Recruitment continued to be a priority for HR during Q1.

2021 Q1 Recruitment & Staffing Summary

Closing Date	Position	Recruitment Status	Details / Comments
Jan 11	Emergency Medical Services EMS Superintendent (4 positions)	3 roles filled internally Permanent full-time Recruitment ongoing	Recruitment for the 4th Superintendent vacancy continues at this time
Jan 15	Emergency Medical Services Community Paramedic (2 positions)	2 roles filled internally Temporary assignments	Temporary assignments based on allocated Ministry funding
Jan 18	Emergency Medical Services EMS Team Leader (minimum 2 positions)	In progress Permanent assignments (for ad hoc backfilling)	Discussions continue with SEIU re: parameters surrounding the position /classification
Feb 1	Housing Services Program Assistant – Maintenance Services	Filled externally Permanent full-time	Vacancy due to internal movement (additional job duties include partial custodial support)
Feb 1	Housing Services Program Assistant – Tenant Relations	Filled externally Permanent full-time	Vacancy due to internal movement
Feb 2	Children's Services Children's Services Eligibility Worker	Filled internally Temporary full-time 12-month assignment	Vacancy due to internal movement (backfilling temporary assignment)
Feb 9	Emergency Medical Services Paramedics – South EMS Base (2 positions)	Filled internally Permanent full-time	Vacancies due to internal movement of 2 full-time Paramedics to leadership
Feb 9	Emergency Medical Services Paramedics, District Float	Filled externally Permanent part-time Recruitment ongoing	4 new Paramedics were hired to replace staff due to internal movement (recruitment continues to ensure sufficient staffing)
Feb 25	Emergency Medical Services Paramedic – North EMS base	Filled internally Temporary full-time	Backfilling for extended leave of absence
Feb 26	Ontario Works Ontario Works Caseworker – South	Filled internally Temporary full-time 12-month assignment	Vacancy due to internal movement (backfilling temporary assignment)
Mar 12	Emergency Medical Services EMS Superintendent (4 positions)	3 roles filled internally 4-year term	Roles awarded to existing Paramedics