



Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board (RRDSSAB)

2006 Annual Report

I am pleased to be able to provide a Report on our past year at the RRDSSAB. It is an opportunity to reflect on the impact our organization has had on District families - primarily our most vulnerable citizens - our seniors, single parents, low-income families, individuals challenged by intellectual, physical or mental disabilities, those afflicted with illness or addictions, and those finding themselves in emergency situations, etc. RRDSSAB Services are geared to basic human needs - shelter, food on the table, life skills, supports and training for gainful employment, supports for healthy child development, and emergency services. The staff and I are always hopeful that we have been able to effect positive change in many family's lives in our District throughout the year.

2006 HIGHLIGHTS

Land Ambulance

- The RRDSSAB Board chose a direct delivery model for Land Ambulance Services at the beginning of 2006, therefore, the majority of our time in the Land Ambulance Program was spent preparing for a smooth transition to occur, including the transfer of 47 Paramedics and one Clerk from Riverside Health Care Facilities Inc and the Atikokan General Hospital.
- RRDSSAB was issued its Certification to deliver Land Ambulance, following a successful evaluation by a Ministry of Health & Long Term Care Interview Team. The new service name will be the Rainy River District Emergency Medical Services (RREMS).
- Ed Carlson and Trevor Johnson were hired as EMS Supervisors for the District.
- A new Service Crest was chosen through a contest resulting in 26 submissions. Local Paramedic, Mary Waghorn, was the winning Crest Designer. Runner -up was fellow Paramedic, Marty Emond.
- A Union representation vote resulted in CUPE being named as the successful representative, and a transition agreement was successfully negotiated. Paramedic, Stan Vlotaros has been elected Vice-President of the Local and has been assigned as the primary contact for EMS.

- A lease agreement was reached with Atikokan General Hospital for the Atikokan Ambulance Base.
- Riverside chose to retain the existing base in Fort Frances, therefore 801 Scott Street was purchased for the new station. In addition, we entered into a two year lease purchase agreement for 32 Florence Street in Emo. Services will continue to be provided out of the existing bases through temporary lease agreements, while renovations take place. The existing Rainy River base has been purchased.
- Land Ambulance funding was adjusted for First Nations and the unincorporated areas. Adjustments were also made to our base funding, in order to bring us closer to a 50/50 funding level; the Province has indicated that 50/50 funding will be achieved by 31 March, 2009.
- A Heliport for Seine River has been approved with final development scheduled for the spring of 2007. Transport Canada has approved a tentative location for the Fort Frances Heliport adjacent to the LaVerendrye Hospital site.
- Health Services Manager, Dan McCormick and Personnel & Policy Officer, Joanne Spence, are to be commended for leading the transfer process. They have done an incredible job to ensure a successful transfer.

Child Care/Best Start

- RRDSSAB supports several prevention and early intervention programs, and specialized services for children with special needs throughout the District.
- Funding is allocated by the RRDSSAB for Special Needs Resourcing which provides staff, equipment, supplies or services, so that children with special needs can be integrated with their peers into Child Care Services or Children's Recreation Programs.
- RRDSSAB provides Wage Subsidy to enhances salaries and benefits for employees of Day Cares, Nursery Schools, Children's Resource Centres, Special Needs Programs, and licensed Home Child Care Providers.
- Resource Centres throughout the District receive funding to provide a range of support services to care-givers of young children in their care-giving role, including parenting information and supports, and special training programs.
- Fee Subsidy is financial assistance provided for families in need so that their children can attend licensed child care services or recreation programs. In 2006, 111 children throughout the District benefitted from Fee Subsidy.

- The RRDSSAB assisted in the development of the Best Start Integrated Implementation Plan for the Rainy River District. Phase 1 of the Plan allowed us to expand Child Care Services in the District by 35 spaces. A new Child Care Centre has been opened in the Town of Rainy River for 26 spaces and the existing program at the United Native Friendship Centre in Fort Frances was expanded by 9 spaces.
- Ann Anderson of the Rainy River District School Board is Chair of the Best Start Network which is now concentrating on the creation of Early Learning Hubs throughout our District.
- Thank you to Children's Services Manager, Kim Gardiman and her staff, and our many community partners who have done a tremendous amount of work this year to ensure our District children are off to a good start and have the supports they need to reach their maximum potential.

Homelessness Program

- The Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Program (CHPP) continues to be provided through our organization. The Program is funded 100% by the Province. The Homelessness fund, which concentrates on keeping individuals in their homes, was accessed by 818 households to the end of our third quarter, i.e. September, 2006; annual statistics are not yet available. Several support services such as District food banks and advocacy for individuals threatened with eviction or requiring shelter are also funded or provided by our staff.

National Child Benefit Strategy

- The National Child Benefit Strategy (NCBS) continues to target services for children from low-income families. Various initiatives throughout the District are supported including nutrition programs targeting low income/at-risk children, the Children's Creative Arts Program at the Atikokan Crisis Centre and the provision of financial subsidy so that low-income children can participate in early intervention and sports & recreation programs with their peers. The funding was accessed 2,809 times to the end of September, 2006; annual statistics are presently being calculated. Thank you to our community partners who work so closely with us to ensure that these children are included.

Victims Services

- The RRDSSAB has been serving as the temporary host of the Ministry of Attorney General's Alternate Victim's Services Program, working closely with a Steering Committee consisting of representatives of the OPP, Police Services

Board/Community Policing Committee, United Native Friendship Centre, Provincial Courts, Probation, Family & Children's Services, Aishewaadiziwin Health Access Centre, and the RRDSSAB. Services including court accompaniment, community education, information & referral, personal safety and sexual assault services, and a victim crisis assistance and referral services program (VCARS) is provided. In October, Monika Huminuk was hired as the Program Manager and the application for incorporation began. Once the Steering Committee becomes incorporated, the RRDSSAB will no longer serve as host. We wish Monika well in her new accommodations - she has been a pleasure to work with.

Ontario Works

- Ontario Works continues to provide the following services: Financial assistance for basic needs & shelter; Assistance in obtaining child and spousal support payments; Coverage of mandatory benefits such as prescription drug coverage, vision, dental, diabetic supplies, medical transportation, winter clothing, community start-up, and child care payments; Employment Services such as resume' development, employment workshops, access to fax, computers and telephones, and life skills training; and Additional financial incentives for parents between the ages of 16 & 21 years of age participating in our Learning, Earning & Parenting Program.
- In July, 2006, a new Federal initiative, the Universal Child Care Benefit, was introduced that provides direct financial assistance to parents on behalf of children under the age of six. The benefit is paid in installments of \$100 per month per child and is not considered as income for the purposes of Ontario Works social assistance.
- Ontario Works staff are now expected to increase opportunities for long-term sustainable employment for recipients of the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and their non-disabled spouses and dependent adults.
- Several new important initiatives were introduced this past year including a regulatory change to provide a 2% increase to the OW rates effective 01 December, 2006.
- The average monthly # of participants for OW was 225. The average length of time to employment for those who did not have earnings at the time of entry to assistance was 5.42 months. Roughly 10% of the caseload received employment income. The percentage of caseload exiting OW to employment was approximately 17%. Average # of participants receiving Job Training per month was 15 and the average # receiving basic education/training was 54/month. In 2006, eighty individuals participated in voluntary placements through the Community Placement Program to develop important job skills.

- OW Manager, Shelley Shute, and her staff have concentrated on employment skills and job-readiness throughout the year and began the process of streamlining the intake process for all clients and tenants of the RRDSAB programs. Thank you for your excellent work.

Social Housing

- The RRDSAB provides safe, affordable housing through the RRDSAB Housing portfolio which is comprised of 74 family units and 224 senior/singles units. In 2006, we housed 61 new tenants in RRDSAB Housing.
- One of the Housing Department's major responsibilities is to ensure that Housing Providers throughout the District are compliant with provincial and federal legislation and local policy. During 2006, Operational Reviews were completed on Providers within the District, whereby strengths and areas of growth are identified for the individual Provider. RRDSAB staff then work with Provider staff and Boards to develop individualized plans for their facilities.
- A full time custodial and maintenance staff ensure that RRDSAB buildings are in good condition and repairs are completed in a timely manner. Preventive maintenance takes place throughout the year so that high repair costs are avoided and tenants are assured a safe, healthy environment.
- RRDSAB staff are now providing complete management and maintenance services for three Non-Profit Providers in the District including Fort Frances Municipal Non-Profit Housing, Faith Housing and Atikokan Native Urban Housing. Centralizing administration results in cost efficiencies, uniformity of service and assurance of compliance.
- We have continued our partnership with Northern Independent Living Services (NILS) for supportive housing at Lady Frances Place in Fort Frances for 10 non-senior single apartments. We hope to expand support services into other areas of the District.
- The RRDSAB has submitted a Proposal to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing for the Affordable Housing Program, Homeowner Repair Component, which is 100% provincially-funded. This Program, if funded, will allow lower-income individuals and families to repair their homes to acceptable standards so that they can stay in their own homes and communities as long as possible. Eligible client groups include households on or eligible to be on the Social Housing wait list, the working poor, individuals with disabilities, Aboriginals, and seniors. We expect to have a decision on our Proposal early in the new year. Thank you to the Social Housing staff for working on this extremely worthwhile project.
- Congratulations to Jacques Fiset, Custodian/Maintenance Repairman for completing 25 years of service with Social Housing.

Accommodations

- After a lengthy review process, the Board chose to purchase an existing building and empty lot at 450/460 Scott Street to accommodate new offices for the RRDSSAB. Renovations/construction began through a construction management model. Thank you to the Chair, members of the DSSAB Building Committee, Board and staff who have worked on the project. Your time and extraordinary efforts are appreciated.

2006 Budget Summary

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>	
Board Administration	54,800	54,800	
DSSAB Administration	83,500	66,843	
Ontario Works	7,351,810	7,124,937	
Child Care	1,368,064	1,368,820	
Best Start	810,418	-	100% prov
Victims Services	55,825	-	100% prov
NCBS	52,000	52,000	
Homelessness	61,800	61,800	100% prov
Land Ambulance	4,725,447	4,144,795	
Rent Bank Fund	18,928	19,377	100% prov
Social Housing	2,753,706	2,857,694	
	<u>17,336,298</u>	<u>15,751,066</u>	

Please note that the overall budget increase was 10.1%, however the actual Municipal increase for 2006 was 0% due to an increase in Provincial funding for Land Ambulance.

Administration

- Special thanks to our Administrative staff, including our excellent Finance Department and Judy Koski, Administrative Assistant who ensure that the organization runs smoothly and that our Program staff have the supports and information they need to reach their specific Service Goals.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Donna Dittaro, CAO

RRDSSAB Board Member & Staff Listing

RRDSSAB Board Members and Area of Representation

Glen Armstrong/Gerry Marchuk, Rainy
River

Linda Armstrong, Dawson

Dennis Brown, Atikokan

John Callan, Rainy River Central

Barb Cournoyer, Alberton

Wade Desserre, Rainy River West

Tannis Drysdale, Vice Chair, Fort
Frances

Russ Fortier/Gary Judson, Emo

Gary Gamsby, Morley

Michael Lewis, Rainy River East

Valerie Pizey, Chair, Lake of the Woods

Peter Van Heyst, Chapple

Emily Watson, LaVallee

RRDSSAB Staff

Wayne Acree, Custodian, Rainy River
Krista Ballard, Employment Support
Worker
Mildred Beck, Assistant Manager of
Finance
Cheryl Bodnar, Information Systems
Coordinator
Brian Burkart, Atikokan Van Driver
Jeannette Cawston, Best Start
Coordinator
Donna Dittaro, Chief Administrative
Officer
Ross Donaldson, Maintenance Supervisor
Leanne Eluik, Manager of Finance
Dianne Faragher, Finance Clerk
Sheila Faykes, Income Maintenance
Worker
Jacques Fiset, Custodian/Maintenance,
FF
Kim Gardiman, Children's Services
Manager
Gary Godin, Eligibility Review
Officer/Family Support Worker, Housing
Cathe Hoszowski, RRDSSAB Housing
Manager
Marie Howells, Income Maintenance
Worker

Myrna Jacobs-Beachy, Maintenance
Clerk
Michelle Korpi, Tenant Placement
Coordinator
Judy Koski, Administrative Assistant
Heidi McCarthy, Income Maintenance
Worker
Dan McCormick, Health Services
Manager
Ron Oswald, Custodian, Fort Frances
Theresa Redford, Custodian, Rainy River
Chris Rittau, Custodian, Fort Frances
Shelley Shute, Ontario Works Manager
Fred Sinninghe, Finance Clerk
Joanne Spence, Personnel & Policy
Officer
Kim Tarrant, Family Support
Worker/Eligibility Review Officer, Ontario
Works
Maureen Thomson, Customer Service
Clerk