



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND CAO

### *TBDSSAB Advocates for Partnerships with Mental Health & Addictions in recognition of Mental Illness Awareness Week*

**October 7, 2020** – In recognition of Mental Illness Awareness Week, The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board would like to advocate for partnerships to support mental illness in the District of Thunder Bay.

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) is the service system manager for Child Care and Early Years programs, Community Housing, the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative and Ontario Works for the District of Thunder Bay. TBDSSAB's vision is to provide quality services within the context of a commitment to social justice and recognition of people's potential to achieve self-sufficiency. In the District of Thunder Bay, supporting the self-sufficiency of the most marginalized cannot be done without partnerships in place to support mental illness.

Though TBDSSAB is not a mental health and addictions service provider, we have seen first-hand the impact that mental illness has had on the people we serve. There is a correlation between income and housing insecurity and mental illness. The mental illness hospitalization rate in the district of Thunder Bay is historically more than double the provincial rate. In our housing units, we've identified a significant need for mental health and addictions supports for many of our tenants. Over half of our referrals to outside services for tenants are to seek additional mental health supports, and tens of thousands of dollars are spent each year on property damages related to mental illness. To provide the best possible case management for our tenants, systemic change is needed to increase partnerships between social services and mental health services.

At the 2020 Rural Ontario Municipal Association Conference this past January, the TBDSSAB Board of Directors advocated for the Ministry of Health to facilitate the development of stronger partnerships between service managers and the LHIN, with additional resources committed to mental health and addictions agencies for direct support.



**THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD**

This Mental Illness Awareness Week, we want the community to know that we understand that self-sufficiency cannot be achieved without supporting mental health, and we will continue to advocate for the needs of the people we serve.

Sincerely,

William (Bill) Bradica  
Chief Administrative Officer

Lucy Kloosterhuis  
Board Chair

-30-

**For more information, please contact:**

Carole Lem, Communications & Engagement Officer, 807-766-4219, [media@tbdssab.ca](mailto:media@tbdssab.ca)