

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

CORE SERVICES REVIEW

BENCH MARKING

- The Social Services Department is comprised of Ontario Works and Social Planning and Program Support.
- No formal comparators or benchmarks exist for Social Services. A review of the Ontario Centre for Municipal Best Practices and Ontario Municipal CAOs Benchmarking Initiative websites reveals that benchmarks are being established in a number of areas, but are not currently available for Social Services.
- The following performance indicators have been derived from program standards contained in Ministry guidelines, Provincial Services Agreements and/or program targets associated with Ministry initiatives. Limitations with available provincial comparators have been noted as applicable.

Ontario Works

Intake

- Provincial guidelines stipulate that applicants have the right to receive a decision about eligibility within four working days of initial contact where the applicant has provided all requested information.
- Service standard is difficult to measure accurately.
- According to provincial reports, in Lambton it took an average of 3.4 days to make a decision during the period July 2005 (after Intake Screening Unit dissolution) to February 2006. This compares to an average of 6.6 days provincially and 7.5 days across the South West Region for the same time period.

- Provincial reports are useful to discern intake screening trends but are not an accurate indicator of whether the performance standard is met.
- Variations in intake screening procedures across the province affect the statistical measure and relevancy of comparisons, i.e. the average number of days to decision increases to 4.4 - 7.4 days in Lambton when adjustments are made for local intake screening procedures.

Consolidated Verification Process (CVP)

- Ontario Works Regulation 4 state that a recipient's eligibility must be reviewed at regular intervals. Further, provincial guidelines indicate that a financial review must be conducted once every twelve months.
- The Consolidated Verification Process (CVP) ranks cases for financial reviews based on identified risk factors including the need for an annual file review.
- \$90,706 additional revenue is available to Lambton on an annual basis for the achievement of provincial CVP targets.
- In 2005, 563 reviews were required to update cases that had been on assistance for at least 12 months; a further 2% per month of the total caseload or 407 reviews were identified as a CVP target.
- In total, 970 cases were required to be reviewed in 2005. 1166 were actually completed.
- Provincially, 17 of 47 Consolidated Municipal Services Managers (CMSM) did not meet provincial CVP targets, although all qualified for full incentive funding as they achieved at least 75% of their target.
- Cumulative results for the 7,369 reviews conducted in Lambton since CVP implementation in 1999 to December 31, 2005 indicate that 62% of files reviewed resulted in no change to entitlement (74% provincially), 23% were terminated (17% provincially), 8% were assessed an overpayment

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

CORE SERVICES REVIEW

(5% provincially), 4% were owed arrears (2% provincially) and 2% resulted in a change to monthly entitlement (3% provincially).

Participation Agreement Reviews

- Provincial guidelines stipulate that a Participation Agreement must be reviewed every three months, or more frequently if there are changes to the agreed upon employment assistance activity.
- In 2005, 8,227 Participation Agreement reviews were conducted of which 72% were completed within the required time frame. This compares to a provincial average of 60% and a South West Region range of 61-74%.

Employment Outcomes

- Employment outcomes and targets will form the basis for employment assistance funding in the future and a Service Plan is being developed for implementation during 2006 and 2007.
- In 2005, provincial reporting occurred on the following employment outcomes with no associated targets although a comparison to 2004 actual data was provided.
 - Average monthly caseload of 1761 (1663 in 2004)
 - 17% of the caseload had earnings (18% in 2004)
 - An average of 301 cases per month had earnings (301 in 2004)
 - Average monthly earnings \$518.79 (\$501.75 in 2004)
 - An average of 189 cases per month exited OW (155 in 2004)
- Other CMSM data is available but there is little relevancy in a comparative analysis as performance is dependent on local caseload dynamics, composition, economic factors and strategic areas of program emphasis.

Eligibility Review

- Ontario Works Regulations recognize the role of Eligibility Review Officers and provide specific powers. Provincial guidelines require that CMSMs demonstrate the capacity to provide the function.

- In 2005, 676 investigations were conducted by three eligibility review officers. Overpayments totaling \$348,736 were assessed in 242 cases, with 13 files being terminated, and monthly entitlement being reduced in 28 files. 57 investigations remained ongoing at year end. The remainder of investigations involved allegations where information was already known to the office or there was insufficient evidence to proceed.
- Data is collected internally and corresponding information is not available for CMSMs across the province.

Family Support

- Ontario Works Regulations recognize the role of Family Support Workers and provides specific powers. Provincial guidelines require that CMSMs demonstrate the capacity to provide the function.
- In 2005, two Family Support Workers completed 727 support interviews. \$15,506 in monthly support payments was negotiated. \$31,455 in monthly support was assigned, with \$302,414.86 being recovered on active assignments. 177 support waivers were completed and 375 referrals were pending at December 31, 2005.
- Data is collected internally and corresponding information is not available for CMSMs across the province.

Social Planning and Program Support

Program Reviews

- Review and audit function is required under regulation and provincial guidelines.
- In 2005, 29 reviews were completed in Ontario Works (4), Homelessness (10), National Child Benefit Reinvestment (6), and Children's Services Department (9). Based on the findings, formal reports were compiled including analysis and recommendations.

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

CORE SERVICES REVIEW

- Reviews include contact with other CMSM's to research alternate approaches to service delivery, assist with the development of best practices and make recommendations.

Project Development

- Develop and update agreements which support community partnerships in the delivery of mandated services. In 2005, 4 agreements were updated for legislative programs.
- Develop procedures in response to legislative changes for a consistent approach to service delivery across the department. In 2005, 5 policies and 6 procedures were developed directly relating to Homelessness, NCB, Children's Services and Ontario Works
- Development of templates used internally and by community partners in order to provide a consistent approach to service delivery and to assist community partners in meeting County and Ministry funding and compliance requirements. In 2005, 7 templates were developed.
- Produce reports including annual National Child Benefit (NCB) Reinvestment Strategy Summary Report, Homelessness Report and Ontario Work Trends and Economic Indicators Report. In 2005, 5 additional reports were completed to support legislated programs, Ministry submissions and requests from County Council.
- Developed 3 comprehensive operational tools to support service delivery in the department.
- In 2005, 4 projects were completed related to Corporate Standards (2), Space Planning (1) and Ontario Disability's Act (1).
- In 2005, 2 comprehensive training packages were developed and delivered.
- In 2005, 5 presentations were developed and delivered in support of Homelessness, NCB, Children's Services and Ontario Works.

Business Planning

- In 2005, 2 Business Plans and 2 Ministry Service Plans were developed; 2 formal submissions were made to the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) and Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO).
- Support staff participated in provincial roundtable discussions focusing on rural homelessness. County plan presented as innovative model.
- Provide input to OMSSA on homelessness, NCB and Children's Services for advocacy purposes.
- Reviewed recently developed Homelessness Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS), computerized tracking for case management. Lessons learned will be used in establishing performance indicators.
- Develop project initiatives for legislative programs in response to community need, i.e., development of Special Needs Service Delivery Model which involved public consultation, research, Request for Proposal, development of model, implementation.
- Maintain the County of Lambton Accessibility Plan as legislated by the Ontario Disabilities Act. Annually, plan is produced for Council approval. Work to develop and maintain the plan is ongoing.

LSCC Facility Management

- Maintain the County's interest with the landlord and the other partners. Provide switchboard and maintenance services. Responded to numerous requests for presentations, information and tours have been delivered to Cabinet Ministers, government agencies and potential community partners.
- Assisted in development of Space Plan for Community Health Services Department.

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

CORE SERVICES REVIEW

BEST PRACTICES

- The Ontario Centre for Municipal Best Practices has produced Best Practice reports for roads, transit, waste management, water and sewer only.
- The following are examples of local best practices in Social Services.

Ontario Works

Understanding Poverty

- Dr. Payne's academic research utilized as foundation for the development of strategies to support social assistance recipients in the transition to sustainable employment.
- All social services staff participated in facilitated discussion sessions.
- Lessons learned are being applied in case management and used as the basis for employment programming, business planning and project development across the department.

Targeted Employment Programs

- Development of targeted employment programming geared to meet the needs of smaller numbers of participants with common barriers. i.e. FOCUS, Diversions, Mentoring, and Women Moving Forward.
- Programs designed to meet needs of participant demographics including job ready, sole supports, Learning Earning and Parenting (LEAP), those with criminal justice system experience, longer term recipients and those with a history of non compliance.
- Sessions are delivered in conjunction with community partners.
- FOCUS program cited as Best Practice by South West Region for forwarding to Ontario Works Corporate Placement Table.

- Upon completion, participants are assigned to Intensive Case Manager for regular assistance up to and including job maintenance support.

Employment Orientation Session

- Developed PowerPoint presentation with audio track which is viewed by applicants on computer desktop during the verification interview to fulfill provincial guideline requirement for an employment orientation session, as part of the Ontario Works assistance application.
- Resulted in streamlined process for applicants; eliminated need to dedicate staff to daily sessions; eliminated tracking and monitoring issues.
- Identified as a best practice by the Ministry and subsequently adopted by several CMSMs

Internal Restructuring

- Gallaway Report and the Way Forward Report consolidated income and employment support divisions.
- Internal planning resulted in restructured teams; elimination of 2 FTE positions; reassignment of workload.
- Increased emphasis on employment; bi-monthly meetings with employment staff to continue planning, adjust programming as needs of caseload changes

Social Planning and Program Support

National Child Benefit (NCB) and Homelessness Model

Resource allocation and funding model which:

- Funds internally delivered cost shared programs first to reduce levy.
- Then, funds externally delivered mandated programs to reduce levy.
- Then, funds community agency delivered programs which enhance County programs.

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

CORE SERVICES REVIEW

Single Access Facility Partnership Model

- LSSC as a model of service delivery for a multi-jurisdictional facility is used as the standard across Canada
- Agreement entered into with Bayside Mall to renovate old Eaton's store into a single access facility for public and private sector agencies serving "like clients".
- Consolidation of five County services into one facility.
- Partnership with Federal, Provincial and Private sector service providers entered into to deliver programs and services from one location named Lambton Shared Services centre.
- Fixed costs for 16 years.

Homeless Shelter for Youth Partnership Model

- Community agency closed youth residential programs for girls and boys prompting Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) staff to request County assistance.
- The Haven program developed and implemented as a partnership amongst Social Housing, MCSS, Inn of the Good Shepherd and Ontario Works.
- Inn provides emergency shelter services paying market rent at a social housing unit, program funding comes from MCSS and Ontario Works emergency shelter program.

Delivery of Emergency Shelter Services Model

- A former client of a local agency which helps homeless people find accommodations dies while staying at a sub-standard local hotel room.
- Consultations held involving local elected officials and stakeholders regarding need for a local hostel.
- Emergency Shelter program model using motel rooms and providing hostel like services implemented with three community agencies. Funding provided under the Ontario Works emergency shelter per diem program.

Special Needs Resource Delivery Model

- Childcare providers refuse to admit additional special needs children.
- Talks with three special needs service providers in effort to resolve child care agency concerns breakdown.
- Community consultations initiated with province to determine best model to deliver services, province pulls out of consultations.
- New service delivery model developed, Request for Proposal issued and contract for special needs services issued to one provider.

Business Continuity Plan Model

- Provincial Act requires municipal government to develop and implement emergency response plans.
- Divisional continuity plans developed to ensure business lines that must be maintained during an emergency disaster are established.
- Continuity plans address redeployment of resources during a disaster and resumption of service after the disaster.
- All social services staff provided with orientation to plan.

Program Compliance Audit Model

- Service delivery of specific programs is guided by Ministry program standards which are contained within Provincial Service Agreements and applicable Regulations and guidelines.
- Developed review methodology, compliance models, and operational tools which have been requested by other CMSMs and the Ministry.
- Results have consistently demonstrated that the department has a solid understanding of program requirements for both directly delivered and purchased service.
- Includes review of alternative service delivery options in an effort to increase efficiency and effectiveness of programs and services.

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

CORE SERVICES REVIEW

- Purchase of service programs are examined for improved efficiency opportunities in policies, reporting, financial tracking and program delivery methods.

Internal Restructuring

- Devolution of services requires the creation and implementation of business plans that resulted in new program delivery business lines.
- Business lines which are broad in scope, e.g. Homelessness, have an impact not only on the overall community but also several County departments required in all cases extensive research, planning and engagement of the community and county staff.
- Designation of Lambton as a Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) and the creation and implementation of Homelessness and National Child Benefit programs with other new business lines necessitated the development of local social planning expertise. The creation of a community services area within Social Services ensure provided for the effective and efficient deployment of specialized expertise and skills across the Division and that consistent planning principles were employed with all initiatives.

PROVINCIAL FUNDING COMMITMENTS

Ontario Works

- Ontario Works social assistance payments are to be shared at 80% provincial and 20% municipal. Historically the province has maintained its commitment for full cost sharing.
- Ontario Works administration costs are to be shared at 50% provincial and 50% municipal; however the province has not funded administration expenses at 50/50 since the 1980's. In 2006, cost sharing was at 49% provincial and 51% municipal (\$43,522).

- Ontario Works employment assistance costs are to be shared at 80% provincial and 20% municipal. Full cost sharing occurred until 2005 when the impacts of a 2003 provincial cap were fully realized. The 2005 budget was set based on an expectation of 80:20 costs sharing however the actual was 61% provincial and 39% municipal.
- Municipalities assumed cost sharing responsibilities for 20% of social assistance payments under the Ontario Disability Support Program as well as for 50% of administration costs commencing January 1, 1998 due to provincial downloading.

Social Planning and Program Support

- Provincial funding commitments in this area are to be shared at 50% provincial and 50% municipal.
- In 2005, cost sharing for administration was at the legislated 50:50 level. Funding for Social planning forms part of the overall Cost of Administration Provincial funding envelope (see Ontario Works Administration).

ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF DELIVERY

- Ontario Works Act and Regulations or Day Nurseries Act and Regulations do not provide for the privatization of the delivery of social assistance or child care management by CMSMs.
- Ministry service agreements for the Homelessness Prevention Program and the National Child Benefit Reinvestment Strategy do not provide for the privatization of delivery by CMSMs.

Ontario Works

- The social assistance system was overhauled from 1995 through 2002, culminating in the implementation of a new service delivery model.

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

CORE SERVICES REVIEW

- CMSMs are responsible for delivery of the new system within provincial standards and regulatory requirements.
- As part of ongoing program management, staff has considered the following approaches for alternative delivery methods to program components or functions.

Intake Screening

- Applicants contact to secure Ontario Works financial assistance.

Options for delivery of intake screening function:

1. Status quo – quick eligibility assessment
2. Contract out
3. Utilize clerical support – no eligibility assessment
4. Modify current approach

Option 1 – Status Quo

- Initial telephone screening by 2 caseworkers utilizing locally developed Central Booking System Technology (CBS). Eligible applicants are booked an appointment with an income support caseworker to conduct the verification interview and complete the application. Ineligible applicants are informed at contact and provided with options.

Advantages

- Provides effective client service for vulnerable members of the community as applicants may be in financial crisis, fleeing abusive relationships, facing eviction, utility/heat shut off, or sudden unemployment.
- Applicants provided with eligibility assessment at initial point of contact.
- Able to respond with same day verification interviews for crisis applicants.
- Referrals made to appropriate community agencies and programs.
- 24.6% of calls were screened out in 2005 (June – Dec) and not booked for a verification interview.

- Caseworker preferred method of delivery as relationship building needed for effective case planning begins with information gathering at the verification interview.

Disadvantages

- Workload management is challenging as call volumes fluctuate, i.e. experience has demonstrated that higher volumes are experienced daily between 10:00 and 3:30; volume is higher during early part of the week.
- Coverage must be maintained during illness/vacation which impacts across office.
- Some duplication of effort continues as caseworkers enter basic information in CBS and again in provincial Service Delivery Model Technology (SDMT).

Option 2 – Contract Out

- Seven Regional Intake Screening Units (ISU) in place across the province from 2000-2005. November 2004 AtFocus *Incorporated Review of Intake Screening Units* commissioned by the Ministry concluded that ISUs were no longer an acceptable alternative. Ministry announced closure of ISUs and return of intake screening function to local offices effective June 15, 2005.

Option 3 – Utilize Clerical Support

- Clerical support staff would record requests for assistance in SDMT and book verification interview appointments for all callers.

Advantages

- Clerical support wages rates are lower than caseworker wage rates.
- Minimal duplication of effort as eligibility information gathered at verification interview stage.

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

CORE SERVICES REVIEW

Disadvantages

- Anticipated cost savings would not be achieved.
- 2 FTE clerical support positions would be recruited at an additional cost of \$86,422.
- 2 FTE caseworkers would need to be redeployed to income support to manage potential 24.6 % increase in number of appointments booked. Caseload ratio per worker would move from 107:1 to 95:1 (March 2006).

Option 4 – Modify Current Approach

- Employ strategies to increase productivity during down times while maintaining the flexibility to respond to increased volumes.
- Schedule verification interviews for screeners every other day, increasing or decreasing as volume warrants; add SDMT set up (4 screens) to screening function.

Advantages

- Maintains existing client service level for vulnerable members of the community.
- Income support caseworkers maintain interview and SDMT skills during 6 month rotation into the screening function.
- Initial set up by screeners in SDMT will save 5 – 10 minutes/interview conducted.

Disadvantages

- Workload management will remain a challenge as call volumes fluctuate.
- Coverage issues continue during periods of illness/vacation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the current service delivery model for the delivery of intake screening be maintained as it provides the best level of client service for vulnerable members of the community in a cost effective manner.
2. That Ontario Works implement strategies to modify its existing service delivery approach to improve productivity while maintaining the flexibility to respond to increased volumes.

Learning, Earning and Parenting (LEAP)

- Mandatory employment program for young parents between the ages of 16 and 21 to assist in the completion of high school, development of parenting and employment skills.
- Social Planning and Program Support is currently conducting a Compliance Review of the program.

Options for delivery of LEAP

1. Status quo – delivered under agreement with YMCA
2. Ontario Works direct delivery

Option 1 – Status Quo

- Delivered under agreement with the YMCA of Sarnia-Lambton.
- Monthly financial assistance component delivered by 1 FTE caseworker in Ontario Works.
- Winner of the Donner Canadian Foundation Award of Excellence in the Delivery of Counseling Services in 2002.

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

CORE SERVICES REVIEW

- LEAP commenced during early years of Ontario Works implementation when in-house expertise and staff resources were limited resulting in decision to seek alternative approach to delivery.

Advantages

- Provides direct connection for young parent with an additional community agency for support.
- YMCA LEAP coordinator is able to foster a coaching relationship with young parents as eligibility concerns are managed by Ontario Works.
- YMCA provides value added or in-kind services at no cost i.e. parents may attend YMCA programs if undersubscribed; YMCA memberships provided on high school graduation.

Disadvantages

- Lack of Ontario Works control over employment assistance expenditures for LEAP participants.
- Requires Ontario Works caseworker dedicated to LEAP in order to manage financial assistance eligibility in addition to YMCA administration.
- Monitoring participation in education, parenting and employment programs does not meet Ontario Works requirements.
- Communication between agencies can be challenging.

Option 2 – Ontario Works Direct Delivery

- Direct delivery of LEAP by Ontario Works. Termination of the agreement with the YMCA.

Advantages

- More control over employment assistance expenditures, resulting in potential reduction to County levy.

- Ontario Works staff possess the skills and expertise to deliver the program.
- Builds on success of Intensive Case Management model.
- Effective monitoring of participation in education, parenting and employment programs may improve outcomes for parents.

Disadvantages

- Value added services provided by YMCA are lost to parent.
- Loss of award winning nationally recognized program.
- Loss of unique partnership with YMCA in delivery of service for vulnerable client group.
- Loss of attachment to a second community agency that can provide direct support to a young parent.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That a review of the agreement with the YMCA be undertaken.
2. That consideration is given to the direct delivery of LEAP by Ontario Works.
3. That in consideration of the nationally recognized YMCA LEAP program, that Social Planning and Program Support expand the current compliance audit to include a formal comparative analysis with other CMSMs including approach, outcomes and delivery cost per parent (staff and client employment assistance benefits).
4. That Social Planning and Program Support provide information on value added or in-kind services provided by the YMCA.

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

CORE SERVICES REVIEW

5. That Ontario Works review the Social Planning and Program Support compliance report and provide recommendations to County Council regarding the future of LEAP program delivery.

Specialized vs Integrated Case Management

- Different approaches are taken across the province to case management including the assignment of one caseworker to manage both financial and employment assistance (integrated) or the assignment of a caseworker to manage financial assistance and second worker to manage employment assistance (specialized). In some offices, an integrated worker may also perform the consolidated verification function.
- CMSM experience across the province has demonstrated there is no ideal approach. Some offices have moved to a new model and then back in an effort to find the best approach.

Options for delivery of case management function:

1. Status Quo – specialized model
2. Integrated model

Option 1 - Status Quo

- Lambton has employed a specialized model since 1996 and has modified the approach over time to take advantages of opportunities to integrate employment planning into financial delivery. Caseworkers are assigned to one function including income support, employment support, community placement/workshop delivery and development, employment placement, intensive case management or consolidated verification (file updates).

Advantages

- Focused approach during interviews with targeted issues being addressed by workers with particular expertise.
- More than one worker involved with a client provides different perspectives and a team approach to case planning.
- Employment support and community placement workers focus on employment planning which fosters development of supportive, coaching role as opposed to eligibility monitoring and compliance.
- Community placement workers also manage placement agreements with volunteer agencies, design and deliver employment workshops, and follow up with intensive case management.
- Income support and consolidated verification workers are trained to manage the complexities of SDMT and 800+ eligibility rules.
- Program integrity enhanced as file updates are completed by a different caseworker than the day to day case manager.
- Income Support caseworker can manage financial eligibility for 90 – 120 cases.
- Employment Support caseworkers can manage employment planning for 220 – 250 participants; provide intensive case management for 5 – 10 participants at a time.

Disadvantages

- Causes some confusion for clients with more than one caseworker.
- Communication between caseworkers can be challenging.
- Lack of technology supports for employment, community placement and consolidated verification caseworkers as SDM reports are only produced for income support caseload.

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

CORE SERVICES REVIEW

Option 2 – Integrated Model

- Integrated delivery of income support, employment support and consolidated verification case management functions by one caseworker.

Advantages

- Client has one worker responsible for all aspects of case management.
- Community placement caseworker continues in role to manage placement agreements with volunteer agencies, design and delivery employment workshops, and follow up with intensive case management.

Disadvantages

- Increased expenditures as an additional 5 FTE caseworkers would be required in order to reduce caseload ratios to 50:1 in order to accommodate workload.
- Longer appointment times will be required for clients as additional information must be covered at each contact. Leads to information overload for clients.
- Employment planning will take secondary role to financial case management, negatively impacting outcomes for clients.
- Significant training component and learning curve involved in moving staff to integrated model – technology, procedures, community resources, eligibility rules etc.
- Current skill set does not accommodate integrated approach as not all caseworkers would be able to successfully transition to integrated role.
- Stress levels would increase and morale would be negatively impacted.

Option 4 – Contract Out

- Ontario Works Act and Regulations do not provide for the contracting out of the delivery and management of the program.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the current specialized case management delivery model be maintained.

Social Planning and Program Support

All municipalities designated as the CMSM are required to provide service system management. The service delivery model varies between municipalities depending on size. The work is in response to legislated program requirements mandated throughout the Social and Health Services Division.

Options for delivery of service are:

1. Status Quo
2. Return function to Social and Health Services program managers
3. Contract out

Option 1 - Status Quo

- Current model is result of County restructuring due to Way Forward in 2001 and the implementation of a new service delivery model.
- Way Forward consolidated existing resources and created internal capacity to undertake program audits, conduct business and project planning, and provide community planning. Responded to legislative requirements which were not being addressed locally and new CMSM role as Service System Manager.
- LSSC facility management included in program responsibilities.
- 9 FTE were assigned in 2001; reduced to 6 FTE in 2005 during budget deliberations. Reductions resulted in further restructuring with staff performing integrated roles, i.e. planning, audit, and project development.

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

CORE SERVICES REVIEW

Advantages

- Established internal staff system with broad knowledge base of programs, community issues and business expertise.
- Ability to maintain a broad corporate and community focus in planning.
- Ability to target resources quickly and deploy where needed with minimal disruption to daily program management obligations.
- Builds and maintains relationships amongst departments, divisions and the community.
- Ensures accountability to the Ministry and the public is maintained.
- Increased efficiencies as knowledge is shared between staff and used for more than one purpose or program.
- Gives an 'arms length' perspective from the operating department while keeping the County's best interests in mind.

Disadvantages

- Communication between programs can present challenges.
- Management of competing priorities for different programs is difficult at times.

Option 2: Return function to Social and Health Services Programs

- Prior to 2001, each department either had dedicated staff or employed outside resources to undertake the development of business plans.
- Program compliance audits of purchased services were not undertaken.
- Social and Health Services program managers would assume responsibility for research, data compilation, report writing, business planning, project development, community capacity building, service agreement development, implementation of community initiatives.

Advantages

- Program manager would have more direct contact with review or project staff.

Disadvantages

- Cost savings would not be achieved as there is no existing capacity within programs to absorb additional workload, necessitating the redeployment of Social Planning and Program Support staff across the Division.
- Facility management role must be maintained.
- Inability to target resources to meet identified divisional need.
- Increased workload for program managers.
- Compliance and project planning staff would develop a narrow focus, or silo approach.
- Ability to share resources, knowledge and lessons learned diminished.

Option 3 - Out Sourcing

- County could retain responsibility for facility management. Consultants would be contracted for a fee when services are required. Special projects would require substantial additional fees.

Advantages

- Workforce reduced with the exception of facility management.
- Provides targeted and highly focused approach.
- Provides an arms length approach.

Disadvantages

- Consultant would require additional time to develop knowledge base
- No knowledge of the social issues in the community or of the CMSMs approach to overlapping issues.

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

CORE SERVICES REVIEW

- Loss of knowledge base when project ends and consultant is no longer engaged to provide service.
- Does not promote community building or maintain relationships
- Not all functions would be contracted out, requiring county staff resources to perform duties.
- Loss of flexibility to move the consultant to a new task when priorities shift.
- Loss of a consistent direct connection between the local community and the County.
- Cost of outsourcing is traditionally higher
- Reduced quantity of work for the same price.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the current service delivery model of the County Social Services Department, Social Planning and Program Support be maintained.

2. That the County of Lambton lobby the Province of Ontario to restore 50:50 cost sharing in the Ontario Works cost of administration.
3. That the County of Lambton lobby the Province of Ontario to provide 100% provincial funding for Ontario Disability Support Program cost of administration.
4. That the County of Lambton lobby the Province of Ontario to remove the National Child Benefit claw back from social assistance recipients.
5. That the County of Lambton lobby the Province of Ontario to provide 100% funding to replace the municipal funding received under the National Child Benefit claw back.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO PROVINCIAL FUNDING

- Provincial funding commitments in social services have been eroded over the years.
 - The following recommendations are made with regards to social assistance funding.
1. That the County of Lambton lobby the Province of Ontario to remove social assistance from the county tax base.