

## Board Correspondence

May 2024

Date	From	Subject
April 2, 2024	Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health	English Link: <a href="https://www.ontario.ca/page/chief-medical-officer-health-2023-annual-report">https://www.ontario.ca/page/chief-medical-officer-health-2023-annual-report</a>
April 11, 2024	Temiskaming Shores Public Library	Invite for a collaborative approach to homelessness in our community.

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**RE: Collaborative approach to homelessness**

Dear Service Provider,

The Temiskaming Shores Public Library serves the City of Temiskaming Shores and the surrounding area. The library provides educational and leisure materials, learning databases, eBooks and eMagazines, non-traditional library materials, access to high speed internet via wireless connection and our public access computers, printing, scanning and faxing services and programs for all ages. The library strives to be accepting, inclusive, accessible, cooperative, inspirational, resourceful, innovative, adaptable, and to provide services with integrity.

The library is a low-barrier, community space. On any given day one can find 5-10 unhoused or semi-unhoused individuals spending time in the library to sit and warm up (or cool down), regroup, relax, access resources via wifi and our computers, and of course read. This sometimes has led to safety issues, and issues of perception of safety as users of all ages and from all walks of life, and library staff and volunteers, balance needs and services in a public environment.

The library board and staff have a great interest in keeping open spaces in the library low-barrier and available to all, while seeing to the needs and priorities of all users of the library. To do so, the library would like to use a collaborative approach to information sharing, training, policy sharing and agreements. We very much would like to work with other organizations who are managing many of the same matters to find some solutions that will meet the needs of persons experiencing homelessness and those of the users of library and community services.

This is an open letter to invite discussion and collaboration in our community as we navigate the needs of those who visit, reside, work, go to school and find leisure activities here. The library board would like to host a discussion around these issues in the near future if there is interest.

Best wishes,

Rebecca Hunt, Library CEO  
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