



# News Digest

*August 2015, Issue No. 28*

## *Message from the President*

I am pleased to report that we are making progress on the Proxy Pay Equity matter and that the OASIS recommendations are still under advisement with the Minister of Labour. We understand that there is a significant court case currently in progress that should it not go in favour of the government, would result in a watershed moment for Pay Equity such that our suggestions for a change in comparator and a moratorium would be a welcome reprieve. We suspect that until the court case is settled (and we understand is imminent), the government will likely hold any immediate decisions in abeyance. In the interim, many members continue to experience significant challenges and we will do everything we can to assist them where possible.

September is just around the corner and we will all begin to gear up for full return to work in the next week or so. I hope everyone has enjoyed their summer as we have had great warm weather and many sunny days with perhaps more to come. I know that the changes we are experiencing in our sector are dramatic and never ending. Change represents 90% of what we do and stability only 10%. Staff are being asked to move from a fully funded service and support model to a marketing and business model that may be perceived as alien to their understanding of what our accreditation organizations have identified as our priorities. Response times are compressed, demands on our administrative staff continue to increase and the drive to recognize economies leave fewer hands to do the work. The government of the day has allocated all of the resources they can to the Developmental Service Sector over the next three years and they are faced with an overall budgetary challenge with respect to their deficit and at the same time, MCSS is compelled to press forward with the Transformation Process. We must find a way to share with our managers, supervisors and front line staff the need to embrace change as a friend, as a means to ultimately find the balance among the needs of parents, children, government and our agencies. We are the agents of change and this change is as intense as the Industrial Revolution. We can do this but everyone has to realize that it will take all of us working together in partnership to get through it.

To this end, OASIS is more committed than ever to support the strengthening of agencies, to build on our past history and accomplishments, to never forget why we are here and for whom we work; for families, for adults and the children who depend on us. Agencies shape communities, change attitudes and create opportunities. Agencies are the foundation of the Developmental Services Sector and OASIS will lead through training and education and shared communication so that you do not stand alone but are empowered to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

The next meeting of the OASIS Board of Directors will take place on September 9-10, 2015 in Hamilton. As always, members are welcome to attend Board meetings. We welcome you

to join us or contact me prior to the meeting to share your ideas and concerns. I can be reached by email at [president@oasisonline.ca](mailto:president@oasisonline.ca) or by phone at 1-800-961-9144.

Sincerely,  
L. David Barber  
President, OASIS

### **OASIS - PSHSA Affiliate Page Goes LIVE!**



Your Health. Your Safety. Our Commitment.

### **Need Health and Safety Support?**

Every staff member, family member and client play an important role in preventing injuries and illnesses in our residential support agencies. We've partnered with Public Services Health & Safety Association to better support you in increasing awareness and understanding your rights, roles and responsibilities when it comes to occupational health and safety.

We are pleased to announce that the online Health & Safety Resources Webpage is now live! This new section of our website contains a variety of free health and safety resources, including fact sheets, checklists, web tutorials and posters, all tailored specifically to the unique occupational hazards faced by our member organizations. We invite you to check it out at <http://oasisonline.ca/oasis-affiliate-program/>.

*Public Services Health & Safety Association can provide guidance in addressing workplace health and safety concerns. Visit [www.pshsa.ca](http://www.pshsa.ca) to learn more about how you can help minimize injuries and illnesses in your workplace.*

### **Host Family Policy Directives Committee**

In follow up to the recommendations from the recent Coroner's inquest into the death of Guy Mitchell, Minister Jaczek has shared statements promising that new policy directives will be released in September. To help meet these objectives MCSS has approached provincial DS service representatives to collaborate and to review the draft policy directives for the host family program. With tight timelines in place, one or two representatives from each of the following provincial bodies will be participating in conference calls in the upcoming weeks; Community Living Ontario, OASIS and the Provincial Network.

### **Group Purchasing Webinar**

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, OASIS hosted a Group Purchasing Webinar made possible through a partnership established with the Ontario Non-profit Network (ONN) and their partner, Round Table Procurement Services (RTPS). The webinar has been posted to the OASIS website here: <http://oasisonline.ca/members-area/training-resources/> and on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J6NY8MSmLS0>. For those who

participated in the webinar, it would be appreciated if you would take a minute to complete this short online survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GMS2FRG>

## ***OASIS Executive Committee Meeting Highlights – August 12, 2015 – Hamilton, ON***

### ***Abilities Connect Fund Grant Program***

OASIS is pleased to share that the Ontario Chamber of Commerce is committed to making “Accessibility Works” a success throughout the province of Ontario. The Abilities Connect Fund is a demand-led pilot program that aims to raise awareness among employers about the benefits of hiring, integrating and retaining people with disabilities; and encourage employers to leverage an untapped talent pool to meet skills requirements within their organization. There are two funding streams available; for more information, please visit <http://www.occ.ca/programs/accessibility-works/abilities-connect/>.

The “Ready, Willing and Able” employment initiative is designed to help employers understand the value of inclusive hiring. “Ready, Willing and Able” is a national initiative of the Canadian Association for Community Living and Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorders Alliance and their member organizations. “Ready, Willing and Able” is looking for employers from all industries that want a competitive edge and are willing to make a commitment to hire someone with an intellectual disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). For more information, please visit <http://readywillingable.ca/>

### ***New OASIS Members***

Two new OASIS members were approved at the Executive Committee meeting, Quinte Vocational Support Services in Belleville and Community Living Tillsonburg in Tillsonburg. This brings the total membership to 186 agencies.

### ***Housing Task Force***

The first group of projects has been selected by the Developmental Services Housing Task Force to help expand the range of housing options and choices for adults with developmental disabilities in Ontario. A second call for proposals will coming out later this year. A list of approved projects can be found here: <http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/en/mcass/programs/developmental/htf/index.aspx#projects>

### ***Developmental Services Advisory Group***

One of the key deliverables from the Developmental Services Advisory Group (DSAG) is a comprehensive compensation study which will be funded by the Ministry. The next meetings of the DSAG and Advisory Group will occur in September.

### ***Ontario Community Hubs Action Plan***

The mandate of Premier Wynne’s Special Advisory Group on Community Hubs was to review provincial policies, research best practices and develop a framework for adapting existing public properties to become community hubs. The Special Advisor presented the group’s findings and recommendations earlier this month in a report to the government,

titled: Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan. The report is now available online: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/community-hubs>

In response to the report, OASIS issued a media release, which can be found here: <http://oasisonline.ca/top-stories/oasis-congratulates-the-government-of-ontario-on-important-first-step-in-establishing-community-hubs/>

### ***OASIS Strategic Workplan***

OASIS continues to work on its Strategic Workplan, which has been defined into six streams:

- Stability of the Sector
- Labour Relations
- Strategic Relations
- Communications
- Leadership Development
- OASIS Board Development

Once the Strategic Workplan has been finalized, it will be posted on the OASIS website.

### ***Looking for Committee Members***

The OASIS Communications Committee is seeking 2 volunteer members who have a keen interest in sharing their skills to help us raise the profile of the developmental. Together this committee helps OASIS create empowering messages and provides timely responses to industry announcements etc. As a successful applicant you would bring working knowledge with social media, possess strong written skills and have demonstrated experience in creating and implementing strategic communication strategies. If you would like to find out more about how you can volunteer and join this committee please forward your expression of interest to Amanda Brown by end of business on Monday September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

