



News Digest

February 2015, Issue No. 23

Message from the President

The Board of Directors of OASIS is an open, transparent and elected body of volunteers whose sole purpose is to serve the interest of our members and the people they support. To that end we have attempted over the past several years to hold our Board Meetings all over the Province of Ontario so that members could come together and participate in our discussions and deliberations and bring their local concerns to our attention. We have invited Ministry people, key note speakers and committee members of OASIS to address the Board and make themselves available to respond to our members concerns.

At a recent Board meeting we discussed the merits of selecting a fixed location for our meetings in order to reduce costs and make it easier for members to come together with us at their convenience. Our outreach to members was not resulting in increased attendance at our Board Meetings and it was felt that the travel costs and the absence from work experienced by our volunteers may be creating a burden that was not necessary given the limited demand for us to host a meeting in any given area. That being said, for the 2015/16 meeting period we will hold our Board meetings at a fixed location in Hamilton (Staybridge Suites Hotel) for the duration of that term of office through to May 2016 with the exception of our October meeting which will be held at the Festival Inn in Stratford, Ontario.

For the 2016/17 meeting period, we will offer to hold our meeting at any member's location where they approach us prior to May 2016 and identify that they will attend and host the meeting and they will assure us that there is sufficient support from local members within the immediate vicinity to attend that meeting. Where we have no member approach us prior to May 2016, we will again establish a fixed meeting location for the balance of our meetings during the 2016/17 period. The Board felt that if there was a groundswell of interest in having us come to a specific area for whatever reason we should be flexible enough to respond in a positive way but also recognized that there needed to be a time frame established so that we could get the best deal from our fixed location.

Please note that OASIS will meet with MCSS Minister Jaczek on Monday, March 23, 2015 to discuss our three identified priority issues, the merits of the proposed Ontario Government Pension Plan and issues relative to our Operations Pressure Survey.

The next meeting of the OASIS Board of Directors will take place on April 1-2, 2015 in Niagara-on-the-Lake. We have heard from past attendees that they found the meetings valuable, enlightening and time well spent. Here is what two of our attendees from last month's meeting said:

"I was delighted to attend the February OASIS Board meeting. The atmosphere was welcoming and energizing. The Board demonstrated the importance of representing a

solid voice in the developmental services sector. The meeting provided additional context of provincial initiatives which helped to understand the overall direction of transformation in the sector. I want to thank the Board members for creating an accepting and engaging environment.” – Colleen Zakoor, Executive Director, Community Living Newmarket Aurora District.

“As a new Executive Director OASIS has been a consistent source of vital, accurate, timely information and communication. OASIS has deepened my knowledge of the critical issues facing our sector across the province and allowed me to become an active participant in shaping it’s future. OASIS has broadened my understanding, further strengthened my skills and ignited my passion for this work.” – Adam Smith, Executive Director, Vita Community Living Services & Mens Sana Families for Mental Health.

We hope that you can join us or if you have ideas or concerns that you will contact me prior to the meeting. I can be reached by email at president@oasisonline.ca or by phone at 1-800-961-9144.

Sincerely,
L. David Barber
President, OASIS

Workforce Stability

Dave Ferguson, Chair of the OASIS Labour Relations Committee, has continued to be the lead for the Employer’s group involved in the recent Workforce Stability Discussions. Despite best efforts, there have been many areas of confusion and/or disagreement since the Discussions concluded in December. Dave has been involved in several discussions with the Ministry in efforts to ensure clarity and consistency. Dave has also provided updates & responded to questions during the regular provincial conference calls. He remains available to OASIS members that might have questions, & can be contacted at: dferguson@ocapdd.on.ca

Board Meeting Highlights – February 18-19, 2015 - Newmarket, ON Developmental Services Ontario (DSO)

The Board congratulates Marie Lauzier on her new appointment as Chair of the DSO Provincial Network and extends their great appreciation and well wishes to Lea Pollard who has served in the role for an extended period of time. Through Lea’s leadership the challenges, recommendations and voices of the DSO agencies were centralized, shared and heard. We were happy to hear about the continued progress of the DSO as Marie Lauzier, Chair of the DSO Network, joined the Board meeting and provided an update of the work of DSO. Working with a consultant they have developed four strategic priorities. Working groups have been established to tackle each priority, which include:

- Working Relationship with the Ministry
- Communication and Relationship Building
- Provincial Consistency
- Information Management

OASIS Board of Directors has made a commitment to continue the conversation with the DSO Provincial Network and to share regular updates with our members on the progress of this new endeavor. Please watch for these through our regular Digests and our soon to be introduced “E-blasts”!

Electronic Funds Transfer

To ensure Board members, Committee members and vendors receive payments accurately and on time OASIS has established an Electronic Funds Transfer program. More information and the application form can be found at:

<http://oasisonline.ca/documents/electronic-funds-transfer/>

2015-2016 Membership Renewal Fee

The Board approved a motion to keep the 2015-2016 Membership renewal fee at \$1,500 for existing members, and \$750 for the first year for new members.

Pre-Budget Consultation

As part of 2015 pre-budget consultations, representatives from the OASIS Board of Directors met with Finance Minister, Charles Sousa, in both Toronto and Ottawa. To read the full presentation go to: <http://oasisonline.ca/top-stories/2015-pre-budget-submission-to-the-ontario-ministry-of-finance/>

Communications and Public Relations

This past month has been a very busy month for OASIS with representation and submissions to Government for the Provincial Budget Consultation and in response to the proposed Ontario Pension Plan. Thank you to those members who helped elevate awareness on a local level through having conversations with your MPPs. Together we can ensure that our voices are heard.

Our message to carry forward is:

OASIS believes that in order for us to meet the objectives of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 we need to begin to plan as a fully integrated community. This belief can be extended to government. Every ministry across the government has goals and priorities aimed at addressing the Act. However, to be truly effective in meeting the needs and to increase the capacity of our communities we must begin to respond as a community.

The solution starts when our policies and practices of working in isolation of each other stops and where we all begin to work together to create a comprehensive multi-faceted approach that is cross sectorial and reflective of all interests and abilities.

HOW TO IMPROVE SERVICES FOR ONTARIO'S MOST VULNERABLE

1. *Ensure increased funding is used to implement programs that fit a long-term developmental services strategy*

We commend the government for its recent funding injection of \$810 million. This investment means the sector has the money necessary to stabilize wait-lists and address current issues. However, the province must ensure funding is appropriately allocated for the long-term stability of the sector.

✓ **ASK**

That the Minister of Finance ensures that new funding earmarked to address growing waitlists for services is disbursed in a manner that is most impactful for Ontario's most vulnerable, taking into account the key role played by local agencies.

2. *Work with agencies to form an inter-ministerial committee on developmental services*

The Government of Ontario must consider how the developmental services sector can be included within an integrated strategy to address poverty and the need for accessible and affordable housing.

Part of this integrated strategy must include the formation of an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Developmental Services. The committee was the first recommendation in a report from the Select Committee on Developmental Services. Creating an IMCDS would enable Ontario's ministries to work with agencies to develop integrated long-term solutions. The government recognized the complexity of the sector and noted that the coordinating and integrating services is one of its priorities.

✓ **ASK**

That the government create an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Developmental Services.

✓ **ASK**

That OASIS, as the voice for Ontario's agencies, have a permanent seat on the IMCDS.

3. *Creative solutions: the brighter prospects divestiture dividend*

The Huronia Regional Centre in Orillia, and other decommissioned properties, should be divested and the proceeds reinvested as a *Brighter Prospects Dividend*. This would be similar to 2011, when the government sold the Rideau Regional Centre site.

✓ **ASK**

The government must undertake a comprehensive survey and appraisal process of unused properties and assets in the sector. The revenue generated from these divestitures must go directly to relieving pressure on waitlists.



Rotman School of Management

Last week ADM Karen Chan welcomed participants to the Leadership Development Program being offered to the Broader Public Sector through the Rotman School of Business and in partnership with the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Over the course of the next year 31 leaders from across the broader public service sector will have the opportunity to learn, share and grow through thought

provoking content provided by prominent and outstanding faculty. The first module of 6 concluded this past week with a focus on three main areas:

- conceptual framework for leadership and management strategies
- the importance of reflection
- beginning the process for peer coaching in assisting each individual in guiding a personally identified and led, agency improvement project. This is to be completed over the next 12 months.

The MCSS has committed to funding another group of OASIS members to attend the next cycle of learning that will begin this coming Spring. We encourage Future and Current Developing Leaders to keep watch for the announcement of this opportunity and to submit your name for consideration to attend this next enrollment. The curriculum and discussions are thought provoking and challenging and are intended for Senior Directors and Executive Directors who will have longevity in the sector.

OASIS Sensory Partners

Roxanna Spruyt-Rocks, Executive Director of DeafBlind Ontario, attended the meeting and provided an update on the work of the OASIS Sensory Partners. The group has been making well-received presentations to DSO's around the province to describe the challenges and types of supports needed for deaf/blind individuals. Similar to the DS HR strategy, the Intervener service sector is working on an HR strategy. First communications will be coming out shortly.

2015-2016 OASIS Membership Renewal

2015-2016 OASIS Membership renewal packages were sent out over the ED and Finance listserves recently. Please make cheques payable to OASIS and send to:

Amanda Brown
OASIS Administrative Support
c/o Community Living South Muskoka
15 Depot Drive
Bracebridge, ON P1L 0A1

OASIS 2015 Conference

Our 2015 OASIS Conference is fast approaching. Learn more about our Conference here: <http://oasonline.ca/top-stories/oasis-2015-conference-registration/>

Conference Highlights:

Our Gala event will take place on Wednesday May 6th. Enjoy a fabulous evening with fantastic entertainment. Learn more about our evening speakers:

Justin Hines

Justin is no stranger to physical pain. Being born with Larsen Syndrome, a joint dislocation condition that keeps him in a wheelchair, has helped Justin deal with the many challenges faced in life. As a progressive condition, doctors told him early on that the continuous

curvature of his spine would not take much issue until late on. The timing of that diagnosis came earlier, just as he was preparing to record new songs.

Judge Butler

Audiences all over North America have been bowled over by Judge Dan Butler's personal and professional perspectives, his whirlwind delivery, gentle humour, and remarkable insights into the human condition. Dan Butler draws on his experience as a father, a manager and a regional director for the National Conference of Synagogue Youth, He has been a judicial law clerk, a prosecutor, a family court hearing officer and a family court mediator, successfully settling over 1,100 custody cases. How do we enhance our relationships with people and The Almighty? How can we be happy even in the face of adversity? What makes us unique?

