



News Digest

July 2014, Issue No.15

Message from the President

The people have spoken and the Liberal Government of Ontario has been returned with a significant majority. The Premier has indicated that on July 2, 2014, MPP's will return to the legislature. She will call for a new Speech from the Throne and the reintroduction of the previous proposed budget. Having attended the budget lock-up prior to the election and had an opportunity to discuss it with one of the Chief Architects of the allocation to the Developmental Services Sector (Jonathan Bradshaw, Policy Advisor to the Minister of Community and Social Service), I am confident that the \$810M will be approved as recommended. My concern is that although the year by year allocation of funds is relatively balanced based on the reports in the budget document and MCSS is committed within the funding envelope, primarily to addressing the waiting list, how will we as agencies be asked to facilitate the transfer of funds to the end user? What liability will be attached to agencies in this process and indeed, is our understanding of the waiting list the same as the Ministries? Will we as agencies be engaged in this process before the funds are rolled out or will Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) be instructed by MCSS to make demands on agencies without consultation? These questions need to be answered ASAP so that we can be confident that the intentions of the Ministry and the outcomes for people are both positive experiences.

As the rest of the allocations from the \$810M take place going forward while at the same time information about the funding entity is unveiled, once again our question remains, "Will these be "fait accompli" decisions made by the Ministry to be facilitated through the DSO or will there be a proactive effort to consult agencies as valued partners in the system to ensure the best possible results for everyone involved?" As we have seen in recent consultations, the DSO is acting under instruction within their mandate from MCSS and if agencies feel a certain lack of communication or empathy with their DSO, it is likely as a result of the inability of the DSO to supersede the Ministries express intentions.

Bottom line, many contracts are up for renewal this summer; far too many for agencies to find replacement workers if they all go out at the same time. The Premier based on the new cabinet, looks to be prepared to take a hard line going forward on who gets what and how much they get. This too needs to be discussed not only with MCSS but the Ministry of Labour and MCYS too. Interesting that MCYS has a substantial budget increase as well and we can only be hopeful that they recognize that many of our agencies provide services to children and will need to be recognized in our contract negotiations.

OASIS will have its hands full with these issues over the summer and into the fall. We will make every effort to get the answers that we know you need to continue to meet your obligations.

The next meeting of the OASIS Board of Directors will take place on September 10-11, 2014 in Ottawa. 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 pbi-inter@uniserve.com or by phone at 1-800-961-9144.

Sincerely,
L. David Barber
President, OASIS

Will You Be Ready???

On July 14th the Liberal Party will be resubmitting their pre-election budget that included a significant allocation for the developmental sector. The most significant announcement that came with the previously proposed allocation of \$810 m was the announcement of the intention to eliminate the waiting lists for SSAH and for Passports over the next 3-4 years.

All indications thus far suggest that these same objectives and opportunities will be made available for families and individuals waiting for services and that it will occur at a much more accelerated rate of delivery. There have been discussions that have clearly stated that once the budget is approved the goal is to have these dollars “out the door” within 2-3 years. In review of previous statistics circulated and included below, this will mean a significant demand on agencies to respond to and provide for.

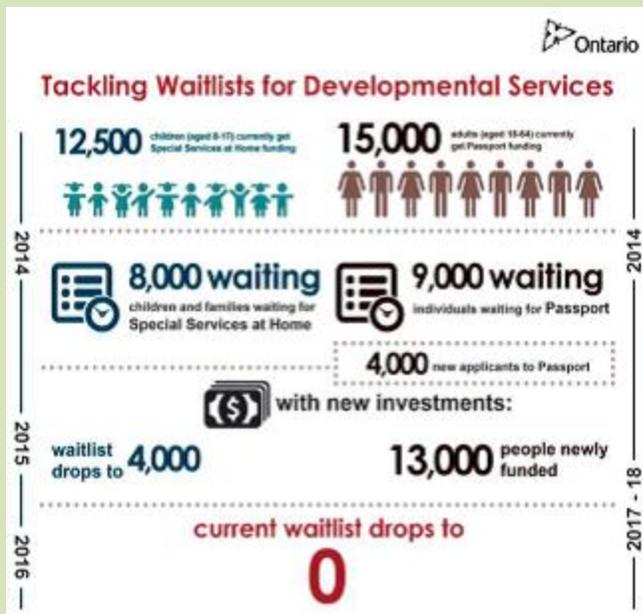
So from the prospective of a service provider, “What does this mean for you?”.

- **Advertisement**

As these dollars begin to roll-out to families they will be looking to find meaningful community based services and supports that are responsive to their respite and day support needs. For many families finding quality supports and services can be a challenge. As agencies we will need to ensure that we increase our community engagement efforts over the next few months. We need to ensure that we are using the media, access mechanisms and mailing lists, to name but a few, to inform the community of what we have to offer and on how they can access it.

- **Services and Associated Contracts Developed to Respond to a Fee-For-Service Demand**

Internally agencies will need to, if they haven't already, change the paradigm of how they provide services and how they respond to inquiries about services. Gone are the days when the conversations began and ended with inquiries about vacancies. From today forward these conversations will begin with families looking to purchase your services and you will need to have a plan on how you can respond to this new way of doing business.



Introducing OASIS Board Member, Wilma Arthurs



At the post Conference Board meeting in London on May 9, 2014, Wilma Arthurs was elected as Director, Volunteer for the OASIS Board of Directors.

Wilma's introduction to the world of disability came after her youngest daughter Emilia was born 23 years ago. After surviving viral encephalitis as a baby, Emilia was left with a severe intellectual disability, autism, epilepsy and cortical deafness. Despite this, she is a beautiful young woman who is happy and makes a difference in everyone's life she touches.

Wilma quickly learned to become an advocate for everything Emilia needed in her life, and started a special therapy program for Emilia and her peers at the Robarts School for the Deaf. This program made a difference in the lives of children with autism for 6 years before funding cuts stopped the program.

Wilma became Chair of the Provincial and Demonstration Schools Council and received a lot of experience talking with Education Ministry ADM's about issues related to the Schools for the Deaf in the Province. She also became involved with Human Rights mediation and the struggles that surrounded Union strikes that closed the Provincial Schools in Ontario. When Emilia was 15, her family decided to send her to the local high school. It was then that Wilma sat on the local Adult Developmental Services Planning Group, and continues to sit on the Board of Directors for Community Living Sarnia-Lambton, and still sits on the local Teen Transition Planning Group.

In 2008, Wilma started an advocacy campaign for families on wait lists for services called the Real People Campaign. It was an avenue for families to advocate to government and the public about their needs. Through this campaign, Wilma met with many government members including the Minister of Community and Social Services and the Minister of Finance. She also attended many consultations on the New Developmental Services Act.

In 2012, Wilma's family went into crisis when her husband was diagnosed with terminal cancer and Wilma was no longer able to cope with Emilia at home on her own. They went through the terrible decision to surrender care of their beloved daughter. Wilma's husband Chris passed away in December 2012 around the same time the Ministry agreed to permanent funding for Emilia's care in a group home run by Community Living. Emilia continues to do well in her home and she has a meaningful life, which is what her family wanted for her.

In December 2013, Wilma presented to the Select Committee on Developmental Services talking about families in crisis. It was a difficult thing to do, but helpful in showing what crisis looks like.

Recently, Wilma was nominated and accepted to the Board of Directors for OASIS and hopes the experiences she's had as the parent of a child with an intellectual disability and as an advocate will be helpful.

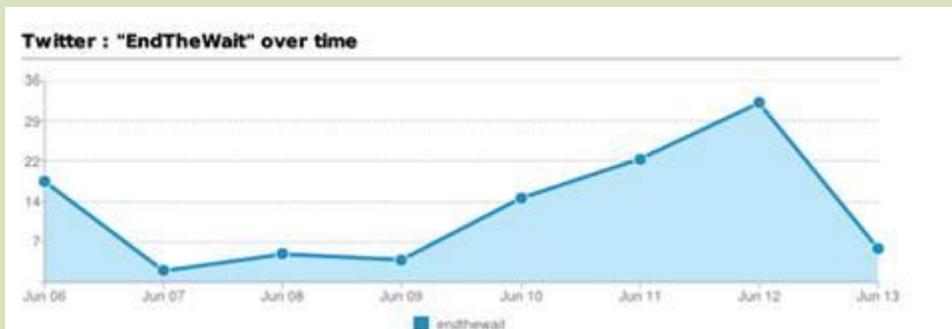
Election Campaign Wrap-Up

We'd like to thank our members for participating in the End The Wait election campaign. Below is a summary of the social media review.

May 2 2014 – June 13 2014

#EndTheWait

Tracking the #EndTheWait hashtag, we saw over 150 tweets using the phrase. Many of the tweets were tweeted in the last week of the Ontario elections campaign and the results can be seen below in Graph 1 showing most traffic on Election Day.



Graph 1 – End the wait over June 6th – June 13th

Notable Twitter handles that used #Endthewait frequently were:

- Oasis Ontario (155 followers)

- Michelle Marshall (100 followers)
- Community Living Ontario (3400 followers)
- Community Living Toronto (1600 followers)
- Community Living Belleville (600 followers)
- Karen Bell (393 followers)

