



***OASIS INFORMATION BULLETIN
TO ONTARIO MEMBERS OF PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT***

March 2003

Dear Member of the Ontario Legislature:

As part of OASIS's ongoing efforts to communicate issues of importance for our member agencies, we have prepared this Information Bulletin for the Spring Session of the Legislature, briefly outlining current topics of concern to the Developmental Services sector. OASIS agencies provide service to intellectually handicapped citizens in your riding. We appreciate the positive feedback that we received from MPP's regarding previous issues, and look forward to continuing discussions with both MPP's and the Ministry of Community, Family & Children's Services on these matters.

New Funding:

In the Budget of June 2002, there was an announcement of an additional \$67.4m for the Developmental Services Sector. We were pleased to see Minister Elliott announce that the Government was committed to the Multi-Year Plan (\$197 m over 5 years), and we look forward to the commitment being maintained over the remaining 3 years. However, we are now wondering where the money has gone!

The total of \$67.4m this year included Revitalization dollars for agencies to address their low wages and legal obligations (i.e. Pay Equity) of \$18.1m; Capital and related operating dollars of \$15.4m and \$10.3m respectively, to reduce ever increasing waiting lists; and, Specialized Services of \$3.9m to assist those with extremely challenging needs.

Given the fact that the Ministry has chosen to not share the formula used for Revitalization dollars (which they had shared in 2001-02) we have no way of determining whether all of the funds announced have been allocated. We do know that most agencies received a 1% increase, which by our calculation is approximately \$8m. Even allowing for the fact that some agencies received more, there is still some accounting to do!

As for the Capital allocation of \$15.4m and the related operating allocation of \$10.3m, the Sector has been informed that while a process began in February concerning the distribution of these funds, no money will be available this fiscal year. Similarly, we have heard nothing about the \$3.9m allocated to Specialized Services.

So despite repeated requests, we can only wonder where the money has gone while the waiting lists continue to grow!

Election Campaign Issues:

During the next provincial election campaign, representatives from OASIS member agencies will be attempting to meet with all candidates in each riding. It is the hope of OASIS's Board of Directors that current MPP's will be receptive to such requests. Topics of concern to OASIS members that will be discussed during these meetings include:

- Lengthy waiting lists for services for individuals still residing at home with elderly parents, in communities across the province
- Despite recent Government funded increases, salary levels in the developmental services sector are low compared to the broader public sector
- Inter-ministerial cooperation regarding ways to support the increasing number of elderly individuals within the sector
- Eroding infrastructure of the sector, as a result of no increases in operating funding in over 10 years, and the resulting negative impact on the quality of care
- Levels of ODSP support available for individuals with an intellectual handicap

We hope that you find this summary to be of assistance as you resume your responsibilities within the Legislature and debate issues of social concern to the people of Ontario. We encourage you to obtain further details on these matters from the OASIS website at: www.oasionline.ca.

Sincerely, Paul Wilson, President