# From Fragmentation to Unity: Harnessing the Power of Complex Adaptive Systems for a Collaborative Future

**OBRC**

**September 27, 2024**

**R. Walsh**

# Welcome!

**We have a range of organizations and roles here.**

- CEO's and Executive Directors

- Financial Management (most senior financial person in your organization).

- Operations

- HR

- IT

- Anyone who is all the above?

- What did we miss?

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## About Us:

**OASIS** is the **provincial association** representing publicly funded organisations that provide services and support to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

We support our member agencies in delivering quality services and advocating for the sector's sustainability, innovation, and effectiveness.

# OASIS in the Eco System

**OASIS** works at the **exosystem** which consists of the institutions, systems, and entities that **do not directly engage** with the individual but influence their environment and the services they receive.

OASIS acts as **a Central Hub,** a **Facilitator of Collaboration,** and an **Advocate for Systemic Change:**

## OASIS's Strategic Role:

- **Bridging Fragmentation:** By facilitating shared learning and collaboration, OASIS helps transform a fragmented sector into a more **unified, adaptive system**.

- **Driving Systemic Innovation:** We identify opportunities for system-wide change and help agencies integrate innovative solutions to ensure better outcomes for individuals with IDD.

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# OASIS 2024/2025 Strategic Priorities

## Viva Goals

Home    About

Admin portal

### OASIS

OKRs    Initiatives    Dashboards    Analytics    Settings    Updates

Following

Time Period: All    ×    Team: OASIS    ×    + Add filter

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| | Summary ⓘ | | | | 0% |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | Title | Owner | Aligned to | Time Period |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| > | ⊙ 2022 to 2024 Priorities | Robert Wa... | Not aligned to any OKRs | 2022 - 2... |
| > | ⊙ Objective 1: Enhance Member Viability and Accountability | Robert Wa... | Not aligned to any OKRs | 2022 - 2... |
| > | ⊙ Objective 2: Strengthen Member Professional Competencies | Robert Wa... | Not aligned to any OKRs | 2022 - 2... |
| > | ⊙ Objective 3: Advocate for a strong sector and equitable services | Robert Wa... | Not aligned to any OKRs | Annual 2... |
| > | ⊙ Objective 4: Foster Collaboration and Information Sharing | Robert Wa... | Not aligned to any OKRs | 2022 - 2... |

### Sidebar
OASIS

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# Identified Member Priorities

**Strategic and Financial Planning:**

- **Service Costing and Planning**: Starting with costing and planning sets the foundation for managing services and resources.

- **Revenue Generation**: Outline how funds will be generated to support services.

- **Cost Reduction Strategies**: Reducing costs while maintaining quality.

**Operational and Infrastructure Concerns:**

- **Efficiency and Effectiveness**: Once the financials are addressed, focus on improving operations to ensure efficient use of resources.

- **Innovation and Change**: Highlight the importance of innovation to drive improvement and adaptability.

- **Housing and Capital**: Consider infrastructure needs and how to ensure sustainability in service delivery.

**Sector-wide Issues:**

- **Policy Development**: Move into broader system-wide policy changes needed for the sector.

- **Wait List Reduction**: Address the pressing issue of waitlists, a significant policy and operational challenge.

- **Funding**: Ensure sufficient resources are available to tackle operational and system-wide issues.

**Labour and Governance Issues:**

- **Sector Compensation, Wage, and Labour Issues**: These issues are closely tied to policy and operational challenges.

- **Coordinated Bargaining**: Explore collective efforts in negotiation and workforce management.

- **Pay Equity**: Address equitable compensation, exposure and legislative change

- **Good Governance**: Strengthen organizational governance to ensure effective achievement of the mission consistent with the stated values.

# From OKRs (KPIs) to Collective Impact: A Personal Reflection on Navigating Complexity

# Complex Adaptive Systems

**Diverse Agents:** A CAS consists of many **individual agents or components**, each with unique behaviors, goals, or functions. These agents can be people, organizations, animals, or even cells. Each agent operates based on local rules and interacts with other agents within the system. In DS I've seen many different organizations with different operational models and specialties).

**Interconnectedness and Interactions:** Agents within a CAS are **highly interconnected,** and their actions impact one another. The overall behaviour of the system emerges from these interactions rather than from the behaviour of any single agent. The agents are often influenced by their local environment and the actions of others.
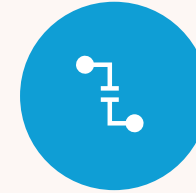
**Nonlinear Relationships:** In a CAS, relationships between agents and outcomes are **nonlinear**, meaning small actions can have disproportionately large effects and vice versa. Cause and effect are not always predictable, and outcomes can vary widely from what was expected. A small policy change might create significant shifts in how organizations operate, or a minor funding adjustment could cause widespread service disruption.
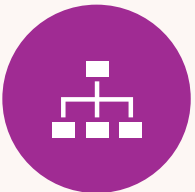
**Decentralized Control:** There is no **central authority** controlling a CAS. Instead, control is distributed among agents, with each making decisions based on local information. The system operates through self-organization, rather than a top-down command structure. No single agency or government body fully controls the developmental services system—solutions emerge from multiple stakeholders).

**Co-evolution:** The system and its agents **co-evolve**—meaning that as agents adapt to changes in their environment, the system itself also evolves, creating new conditions that require further adaptation. As the external environment changes (e.g., new policies, demographic shifts), the agents and system continue to evolve in tandem, leading to new behaviours or structures (e.g., agencies adapting to changing funding landscapes or client needs).

**Sensitivity to Initial Conditions:** CASs are often **highly sensitive to initial conditions**, meaning that small differences at the start can lead to vastly different outcomes over time (often referred to as the "butterfly effect"). Systems can diverge significantly from small variations in starting conditions or inputs

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# Self-Organization

• In developmental services, many organizations act independently, often due to the unique needs of their populations and localized conditions. However, the lack of coordination leads to inefficiencies. A key feature of CAS is **self-organization**, where systems adapt and organize themselves without central control. DS organizations already do this in silos, but with the right structure, they could self-organize into a more cohesive system, sharing innovations and better practices.

• **Opportunity**: By providing more frameworks for interaction, OASIS can serve as a facilitator of self-organization—helping local innovations scale and be adapted across the sector.

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# Emergence

• In a CAS, the interactions between smaller, independent agents (in this case, DS organizations) lead to larger systemic patterns and solutions that weren't necessarily planned but emerge from collective action. The sector has examples of successful innovations, but they are isolated. <u>More trust and collaboration could allow these small wins to emerge into sector-wide practices.</u>

• **Opportunity**: If organizations share their experiences and innovations, new solutions to shared challenges (like workforce retention or pay equity) can emerge from collective action rather than being dictated from the top.

# Feedback Loops

In CAS, **feedback loops** (both positive and negative) help systems learn and adapt. The DS sector could benefit from real-time data sharing and feedback on policy and operational initiatives. Currently, feedback is often slow, fragmented, or even nonexistent, which prevents the system from learning as a whole.

**Opportunity**: OASIS could facilitate faster, more transparent feedback loops through surveys, shared learning circles, or collaborative platforms where organizations see the immediate impact of shared data, fostering trust in collaboration.
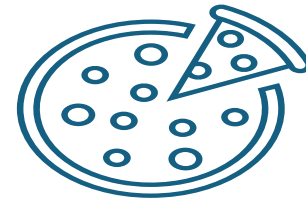
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# Diversity and Adaptation

• A CAS thrives on diversity. The different approaches taken by organizations within the DS sector—each addressing unique community or regional needs—are a strength, not a weakness. If properly connected, this diversity can lead to a more resilient and innovative sector, with organizations learning from one another's successes and failures.

• **Opportunity**: Leveraging OASIS as the central body that captures and disseminates diverse approaches could create a learning environment where best practices are adapted to fit local conditions without losing the broader, unified vision.

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# Current Priority: A Unified Value Proposition
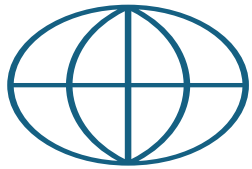
**Sector as a whole**

**Sub Segments**

**To achieve better outcomes for individuals with IDD, funders must invest in OASIS member organizations, as they are the essential drivers of quality services, innovation, and sustainable support systems**

# Table Discussions

1. How can self-organisation and collaboration improve trust in the sector? What challenges do you see with this? What strengths exist that can be leveraged?

2. What pockets of innovation are present, and how can OASIS help share them more effectively? What challenges do you see with this? What strengths exist that can be leveraged?

3. How can we better integrate strategic financial planning, operational infrastructure concerns, service pressures (e.g., waitlists, policy and funding), labour and governance issues, using ecosystem thinking? What challenges do you see with this? What strengths exist can be leveraged?
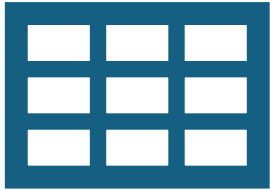
# Report Back & Discussion

## Table Report Back:

## Overarching lessons:

What struck you (surprised you) about this discussion?

Did you learn anything new?

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# Closing & OASIS Vision

- We're collecting and sharing back (feedback loops)

- We'll be building on this (self organization and emergence)

- **OASIS is:**
  - *Building unity across the sector*
  - *Bridging, coordinating across exosystem*
  - *Enhancing understanding of the sector and sub sectors to articulate a unified value proposition that ensures that governments and funders KNOW that if they truly want better outcomes for people with IDD then these funded organizations are unequivocally needed.*

- OASIS will continue to work for you… and with you… to build the responses through collective action to ensure a strong viable sector.

- **Please** leverage our resources, be part of the solutions, and ensure your organisations stay at the forefront of sector transformation.

- THANK YOU!

# THANK YOU!

**If you, your leadership or board are interested in:**

- *Wages/Labour Relations*
- *Compensation/Pay Equity*
- *Children's Services*
- *Northern Issues*
- *Small Organisation Issues*
- *Good Governance*
- *Housing*
- *GR/Public Policy*
- *Operational/Administrative Policy Development (sector coherence and efficiency)*
- *Communications*
- *Business practices*
- *Sensory Issues*

**Call us, there are ways to get engaged!**