



***OASIS INFORMATION BULLETIN
TO ONTARIO MEMBERS OF PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT
October 2000***

Dear Member of the Ontario Legislature:

In the Spring of 1999, the ONTARIO AGENCIES SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (OASIS) distributed a video "Crisis in Confidence" to all MPP's. This video presented the concerns of parents with sons and daughters who have a developmental disability in Ontario, and the serious problems they face in attempting to obtain supports and services for their children. In response to feedback from many of you concerning the video, the OASIS Board of Directors unanimously supported the decision to communicate directly with all MPP's upon the resumption of the Legislature, regarding the ongoing concerns the developmental services sector faces.

Ongoing Pressures On Local Agencies Serving People With Developmental Disabilities In Your Riding:

- Funding levels for people living with a developmental disability
 - ✓ Significant waiting lists of people waiting for services exist throughout Ontario, many of whom have been on these lists for years.
 - ✓ Included on these waiting lists are approximately 6000 families in Ontario where aging parents are the primary caregiver of adult children living with a developmental disability. These families have provided this care on average for over 40 years, thereby saving the Government millions of dollars by keeping their child out of the social service system.
- Funding levels for agencies providing supports and services in the developmental services sector
 - ✓ Wage enhancement – In May 2000, Minister Baird announced that the Ministry would "... provide the developmental services sector with an additional \$6.1 million this year, growing to \$15.2 million annually, to give agencies more flexibility to deal with the management of human resources, including wages." While the news was exceedingly welcome, as this announcement filters through the system it has become clear that the increases for individual staff are inadequate after nine years of restraint. Agencies are getting 0.8% of their MCSS subsidy in the first year of this initiative which, if passed on to staff after benefits and payroll deductions, will amount in many cases to a less than \$4.00 increase per pay period for salaries in the vicinity of \$24,000-\$26,000 per annum.
 - ✓ The sector faces a significant crisis in staffing that is manifested in high turnover rates, low morale, high incidence rates of workplace injuries and overtime costs.
 - ✓ Ongoing unfunded fiscal pressures arising out of the need for agencies to absorb the costs associated with Pay Equity and huge increases in WSIB premiums.
- Policies that enable the system to operate efficiently
 - ✓ The need for a new multi-year plan for the developmental services sector, which must include updating and amending outdated legislation such as The Homes for Retarded Persons Act.

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. The above information was gathered from the OASIS website at: www.dhagencies.on.ca.

Sincerely,

Sue Dolan, President