



# OASIS

## focus

A PUBLICATION OF ONTARIO AGENCIES SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS · FEB 2010

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Happy New Year, I hope everyone had a safe and joyous holiday season.

Every year brings its share of hopes, dreams, goals and challenges. The coming year promises to be busy and full of challenges in the province of Ontario and for us in the Developmental Services Sector.

First and foremost there is the economy. The province has a long climb back from the economic recession and the Provincial deficit that is left in the wake of the recession. OASIS presented to the Minister of Finance on the needs of the sector and has requested continued investment to provide for Ontario's most vulnerable citizens.

Regardless of the continued investment by the province, needs within our communities continue to increase. The issue of aging parents who become unable to care for their developmentally disabled son or daughter continues across every region. I urge all member agencies to highlight this to their local MPP's. Parents who decided to keep their children out of institutions thirty, forty or even fifty years ago need to be assured that their children will be cared for when they can no longer provide the necessary care.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services posted the draft Minister's Regulation early in December. The OASIS forum on the regulation was held on Thursday, January 14, 2010.

My initial reading of the regulation leaves me with some concerns. The regulation does not address any quality control measures, standards or provision for review of those who receive individualized funding. The same level of oversight and review should apply to all agencies, organizations and individuals receiving funding through MCSS.

There is also provision for sharing sensitive information with families without a requirement for consent from the individual. I understand that this is intended to protect the individual from being taken advantage of by a service agency or agency staff but leaves the individual in the position of forever being viewed as a child.

There is also a requirement that the financial records for each supported individual must be reviewed by an auditor each year. If this references the agency's corporate auditor the cost of this review could be prohibitive for many agencies.

Representatives from the Ministry reviewed the draft regulation and its provisions at the Forum on January 14, 2010. OASIS will develop a response to the regulation. Following finalization for the two regulations the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act will be proclaimed at some date later in the year.

Unions were again invited to join us for the forum on the regulation. We continue to build lines of communication with the unions to see if we can avoid or reduce some of the negative actions we saw during the strikes in Southwestern Ontario in 2007.

Welcome to 2010. After 10 years, we will open the time capsule that was filled by OASIS members at the Conference and AGM in Kingston, 2000. We look forward to meeting in Collingwood for the OASIS Conference and AGM this coming May and reflecting on a decade of progress.

**Brian Young**  
OASIS President



## UPCOMING OASIS BOARD MEETINGS:

February 3-4, 2010  
Toronto

April 7-8, 2010  
Petrolia

May 12-14, 2010  
OASIS Conference & AGM,  
Collingwood

FOCUS is published quarterly. Ideas and articles are welcomed. Please contact **Corey Allison** [callison@lcds.on.ca](mailto:callison@lcds.on.ca)

## OASIS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## OASIS

To facilitate the sharing of ideas, resources, systems and information, OASIS will liaise with government on behalf of member organizations with the goal of improving the development of cost effective quality supports for individuals with developmental disabilities.

## HR STEERING COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy Steering Committee is very pleased to announce the launch of the Core Competencies Pilot Project. Application forms for agencies to request participation in the pilot project have been sent to Executive Directors. It is intended that the selected pilot agencies will reflect the diversity of the agencies in our sector. The twelve to fifteen pilot sites will receive training and resources to position themselves as Regional Leaders when core competencies are implemented province wide.

With the launch of the Pilot Project, the Core Competencies Committee has met their deliverables. We would like to thank the committee members for their outstanding work and dedication to ensuring the highest standard of quality in the Hay Group report: "Building Human Resource Capacity: Core Competencies for Ontario's Developmental Services Sector". As you are aware, this report has set the foundation for all the work in the Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy.

As we begin the implementation of core competencies for employees in developmental services through the pilot project, Bob Butella, Executive Director of Community Living Guelph Wellington and past-chair of the Core Competencies Committee, has agreed to chair the Implementation Committee. This committee will provide feedback and recommendations to the Steering Committee on the impact and province wide implications of the pilot project. We look forward to the work that this committee will be providing when it commences.

The Awareness and Marketing Committee is finalizing an agreement with a marketing firm selected through a competitive process. Over the next few months they will work on developing and implementing an Awareness and Marketing campaign. One of the key aspects of this work will include a website that will showcase the work of the Strategy and will provide a forum for sharing information and promoting the Developmental Service Sector as a career of choice in Ontario.

The Agency Based Training Committee continues the task of analysing the training surveys. They are also investigating and discussing how agency based training can be recognized throughout the province as well as receiving recognition in the colleges.

The Best HR Practices Committee would like to thank everyone who participated in the focus groups conducted by this committee from September- November of 2009. The committee members are now reviewing the focus group notes and will begin analysis and follow-up in February.

The Steering Committee would like to commend the Gap Analysis task group of the Program Standards Committee on their well thought out and thorough gap analysis that compared the Core Competencies, as developed by the Hay Group, to the Developmental Service Worker Diploma Program Standards and the Developmental Service Worker Apprenticeship Learning Outcomes. This report will be shared with MTCU to be used in their pilot review of both the program standards and learning outcomes. The Program Standards Committee will continue their work on recommendations for agencies to link with and actively participate in processes that influence colleges that educate those that will work in our sector.

The Human Resource Shared Interest Committee has reviewed the "Building Human Resource Capacity:

Core Competencies for Ontario's Developmental Services Sector" and discussed "Guiding Principles and Core Objectives of Core Competency Model." They have also reviewed the pilot project plan and made recommendations to the Steering Committee to ensure that the perspective of the direct support staff is considered in the implementation. This committee would like to thank Robert Hickey, from Queen's University, for his assistance in these discussions.

If you have any questions or comments about the work of the Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy or any sub-committees please do not hesitate to contact myself or the project coordinator, Holly Duff ([hollyduff@sympatico.ca](mailto:hollyduff@sympatico.ca)).

Wishing everyone all the best in 2010,

**Steven Finlay, MSW**

Co-Chair,

Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy Steering Committee

*Executive Director*

Community Living Oshawa Clarington

[sfinlay@communitylivingoc.ca](mailto:sfinlay@communitylivingoc.ca)

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSFORMATION

"Organizations that build robust infrastructure—which includes sturdy information technology systems, financial systems, skills training, fundraising processes, and other essential overhead—are more likely to succeed than those that do not. This is not news, and nonprofits are no exception to the rule." *Standford Social Innovation Review: The Nonprofit Starvation Cycle* by Ann Goggins Gregory and Don Howard.

Infrastructure in government funded services, particularly in Developmental Services, is under assault. Since 1998 Ontario Developmental Service providers have been limited, by MCSS policy, to administration costs of no more than 10 percent of their MCSS funded budgets. This policy imposed and enforced by a government that last year bragged about reducing their own administration costs from 15 to 12 percent.

If last year's Increased Community Capacity Initiative (ICCI) is any indication, there seems to be a misguided perception on the part of government that Developmental Service agencies are flush with cash. Initially it seemed government was determined to reduce agency admin costs to 8 percent. This seemed to be at the heart of the of the ICCI exercise. Later we were told that if we bit the bullet on ICCI it would give us some credibility with government that Developmental Services was doing its part. There is still no rational explanation as to why Developmental Services was centered out for a Capacity Initiative when all other government funded services were left alone. It still remains to be seen how Developmental Services will fare in the upcoming budget.

Increasingly agencies are being called to task for their administrative costs, particularly with regards to the new individualized funding milieu. Families wonder why agencies are charging up to 10 percent admin on services provided through individualized funding contracts. Government is also increasing scrutiny on admin costs. In one case an agency was asked to justify and breakdown an administration allocation of 2 thousand dollars on a 36 thousand dollar budget to serve an individual. The rationale of MCSS was that the cost was excessive given that the agency

already had existing infrastructure in place. It was pointed out, to government, the very exercise of justifying a 7.2 percent administration cost involved infrastructure supports and services.

A few years ago OASIS undertook research with regards to central admin costs in Developmental Service agencies. On average admin costs were 8.6 percent and 6 percent of that was specific to wages. Various charitable research organizations feel administrative costs between 10 and 20 percent is acceptable. In addition there is a growing sentiment that using a traditional model of reporting admin costs is limiting and does not present a true picture of the reality of agency operations. Charitable Intelligence Canada speaks to ratios that matter and feel the value of volunteer hours and donated goods should be added in the overall mix when reporting administrative costs. For one agency this type of reporting reduced admin costs from 12.9 percent to 7.5 percent.

The government's Transformation agenda is placing new pressures on agencies. Increased reporting guidelines, individualized planning, mandatory training for staff all add to the costs of central administration. The plan to individualize funding for all persons served will mean new ways of accounting and reporting for all agencies. Most agencies will struggle with inadequate technology and training in trying to address new policy directives and will need to increase staffing in order to be compliant with new government reporting methodologies. A missing piece in Transformation is any kind of research or information specific to agency capacity issues.

The public sector is held to a different standard than the private sector. For the most part it is fair that we are held to a different standard because we exist on other people's money. But what if the standard is unrealistic and actually impedes efficiency? The banking sector knows good technology infrastructure and highly trained and efficient staff has a direct correlation with profit and shareholder value. Banking administrative costs according to Standard and Poor's global classification structure is around 19 percent. The same classification structure shows retail at 30 percent.

MCSS funders cannot expect success with its Transformation agenda unless more realistic attitudes towards central administration costs are developed. At a recent conference on Social Enterprise, Tim Draiman, the Executive Director of Social Innovation Generation remarked "Organizations are cannibalizing their infrastructure to stay afloat." He also pointed out the obvious by stating organizations "...do not invest into infrastructure at anywhere near the same level as the private sector." The private sector recognizes adequate investment in infrastructure is essential to sustainability and profit. It is time we (agencies and government alike) recognize the obvious; sustainable quality services for persons with Developmental Disabilities are intrinsically tied to adequate and ongoing investment in infrastructure.

**Don Seymour, MBA**

Executive Director,  
Lambton County Developmental Services

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT - DO WE MEASURE UP?

Investing in people can be a hard sell. Investors want to see return on investment. In the for-profit business world, the decision to invest can be determined by the economic value that an investment would bring, that is, growth or improvement on any product or service. However, in the not-for-profit sector the return on investment is often more of a social value, a concept Harvard Business School defines as 'resources combined to generate improvements in the lives of individuals or society as a whole'. Though social value has intrinsic worth, it is often difficult to measure or quantify. Therefore, without factual projections based on precise calculations, an investment in people may seem like more of a risk.

For many agencies in the Developmental Services sector we are asking our community and stakeholders to invest in people every day. It's simply a part of our mission. Sometimes we're asking a local artist to teach people we support their craft, or asking a local business to employ someone with a disability, or donors to consider a gift, or volunteers to give their time. For a donor or volunteer, there is risk in every request because we cannot guarantee a successful outcome. But what we can do is re-define success so that it is not measured by the outcome, but by the opportunity to grow, in which case, there is success merely in taking a risk and investing in people. After many years of risk-taking, agencies in our sector have the stories and numbers to prove the worth of investing in people with disabilities. The following are examples taken from Lambton County Developmental Services where investing in people has had real, measurable pay-offs.

Take Steve, an active resident in his community, who enjoys spending his time volunteering at the local food bank. Every Tuesday he goes to the food bank to unpack donations, sort food items and prepare hampers to be picked up. For Steve, this volunteer role is extremely rewarding because of the relationships he has built with the other volunteers there. Recognizing the increasing need in his community for food donations, Steve has decided to go one step further and organize his own food drive. He is asking his friends, family and community, through posters and personal requests, to help raise awareness and generate new donations for the Christmas season.

At LCDS it is one of their greatest fears that when their community supports them, people with disabilities are viewed as the charity, a burden on the system that they are helping to relieve. We are working to educate our community in hopes of a shift in perspective from donating to charity to investing in people. The story of Steve and his role at the food bank is testimony to the power of that kind of investment.

What is the difference between donating to charity and investing in people? Though it may seem like only semantics, to invest in a person is to recognize them for their valuable gifts and abilities, not their deficiencies. And by recognizing or seeing their gifts, we allow

ourselves and our community to be changed by them. It is our hope that when people support Developmental Services, they feel that they are making an investment that brings a significant return not only to the recipient, but to the donor and their broader community.

Another powerful demonstration is Brenda's story. Brenda can't walk down the street without bumping into someone she knows from the church she attends or the library where she volunteered for many years. A few years ago Brenda was diagnosed with cancer, but with support from her family and friends, she was ultimately able to beat cancer and become a survivor. Since June 2003, Brenda and her family have taken on a major fundraising project to raise money for cancer through their Relay for Life team, Legacy Lappers. Using creative efforts such as penny drives, yard sales and baking pies, they have raised a total of 99,740 dollars! Through all of her volunteer efforts, Brenda has become an important thread in the community tapestry. When people support Developmental Services they are helping people like Brenda become valuable citizens recognized for their unique gifts that extend outward to impact and improve the entire community.

For some, stories may not be enough. They may argue that value can only be measured in numbers. In that case, let's examine the story of Andrew, a new tenant in an affordable housing project. Had Andrew been recognized only for his disability, he may never have had the opportunities that have shaped his life. Andrew has learned to live independently in his community and developed expert customer service and retail skills that make him an excellent employee at the St. Vincent de Paul store. Since Andrew has successfully moved into his new apartment he can live and work independently meaning that he is now able to work five days a week if he chooses. To demonstrate the economic impact of this situation, consider that a person earning minimum wage working five days a week earns \$10,000 more annually than a person receiving social assistance. Not only does this relieve the burden on tax dollars, but that money will most likely be reinvested in the local economy further contributing to economic development.

Maybe investing in people is not such a hard sell. When worth can be measured both in economic and social values, there is strong evidence that return on investment far exceeds expectations when it comes to the Developmental Services sector.

**Corey Allison,**

Director of Marketing and Fund Development  
Lambton County Developmental Services

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## ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITY

OASIS is now offering one advertising opportunity per issue for businesses and organizations that target the Developmental Services sector. If you are interested in purchasing advertising space in the OASIS Focus Newsletter, please contact **Corey** at **519.882.0933 ext. 40** or through email at **callison@lcds.on.ca**.



# ROCK-ON!

## 13TH ANNUAL OASIS CONFERENCE

BLUE MOUNTAIN RESORT  
COLLINGWOOD, ON  
MAY 12-14, 2010

### CONFERENCE FEES:

(includes meals)

Full Conference Registration	<b>\$365</b>
Non-Member Registration	<b>\$425</b>
Golf at Monterra Golf Course	<b>\$80</b>
Le Scandinave Spa Baths Experience	<b>\$40</b>

### ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION OPENS JANUARY 26, 2010

**PAID** Full Conference Registrations received by February 26th, 2010 will be entered into an Early Bird Draw.

**ALL** Registration Forms must be submitted by March 26th, 2010

### ACCOMMODATION:

(Village at Blue Suites)

You are responsible for booking your accommodation directly with Blue Mountain Resorts: **1-877-445-0231** or <http://groupreservations.bluemountain.ca>

**Group Name: OASIS**

**Group Reservation No. 31Z0Y1**

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 12

8:00 am - 11:00 am	OASIS Board Meeting
12:00 pm - 6:30 pm	Conference Registration
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Golf - Monterra Golf Course
	Le Scandinave Spa
	Shopping & Tour of Village
5:30 pm - 6:30 pm	Meet & Greet
7:00 pm	Dinner & Entertainment

### THURSDAY, MAY 13

7:00 am - 8:30 am	Buffet Breakfast
8:30 am - 9:45 am	Opening Speaker - Warren Evans
9:45 am - 10:45 am	Opening of Exhibits
	Coffee Break
9:45 am - 6:30 pm	Silent Auction
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Sessions
12:00 pm - 2:45 pm	Lunch Break
	Keynote - Peter Jenson
2:45 pm - 3:45 pm	Sessions
3:45 pm - 4:30 pm	Coffee Break/Exhibits
5:15 pm - 6:30 pm	Hospitality Suite - 2011
7:00 pm	Dinner
	Time Capsule
	Entertainment

### FRIDAY, MAY 14

7:30 am - 9:00 am	Buffet Breakfast
9:00 am - 10:30 am	Presentation - Steven Finlay
10:30 am - 10:45 am	Coffee Break
10:45 am - 11:45 am	OASIS AGM

**Inquiries to: [rock-on@simcoecommunityservices.ca](mailto:rock-on@simcoecommunityservices.ca)**



## *Announcing the next evolution in Group Insurance solutions for the Social Service and Not-For-Profit sectors*

Wentworth Financial Services has been providing assistance to the Social Service and Not-For-Profit sectors in Canadian communities since 1984. Today, we are proud to announce our next step in support.

We have created an innovative product that provides all the benefits of a typical association program without the inherent risk of being tied to another organization's poor experience and high claims. The Wentworth/Cowan Social Services Plan (W.C.S.S.P.), offered exclusively through Wentworth Financial Services and our parent company Cowan Insurance Group, is an association plan designed to address the specific needs of community service organizations.

We understand the needs of Social Service and Not-for-Profit organizations and how they can differ greatly from those of businesses and other organizations.

### **Potential Premium Holidays**

In years when the association runs well and claiming levels are appropriate, any surplus premiums collected will be credited back to the organizations that are participating members in the Wentworth/Cowan Social Services Plan. Wentworth Financial will take no portion of these funds in any form because we feel it's important that the full benefit goes back to your organization.

In years when the association's claims may run above expectations, there will be no credit paid back, BUT there will also be no penalties against your organization as each group is rated individually. So, if your experience is better than the overall experience of the association, you will not be negatively affected by the other members' performances.

### **Lower Rates, Better Expenses**

Even though each group will be treated as an individual in terms of pricing and experience, the rates offered are based on the strength of the W.C.S.S.P. as a whole. This means better-than-market rates and expense levels than if you were marketed on your own.

### **Higher Non-Evidence Limits and Plan Maximums**

Your employees will have access to higher maximums on benefits such as Life Insurance and Long-Term Disability than would normally be offered. In addition, they will receive higher volumes of coverage on the amount of insurance available before medical evidence needs to be supplied. This means better protection for your employees and their families, along with a more competitive compensation package to help your organization attract and retain quality employees.

### **Retiree Benefits**

Through the W.C.S.S.P., you will be able to offer retiree benefits tailored specifically to your Executives/Directors and other employees. This coverage will have separate experience from your active employees, which is an added layer of protection for your group. This option is growing, and we hope to release some ground-breaking options in 2010.

\*Free Disability Management Review: As an added benefit, when you become an W.C.S.S.P. client, you will receive a free 1-hour review of your Disability Management services.

These are just a few of the benefits built into the Wentworth/Cowan Social Services Plan. More information will be coming to your attention shortly, but know that this plan is designed specifically with the needs of your organization in mind.

Wentworth Financial Services has been specializing in financial products and services for individuals, families and businesses for over 25 years. We are a division of Cowan Insurance Group. For more information about the Wentworth/Cowan Social Services Plan, please contact Gary Hepburn at [wcssp@wentworthfinancial.com](mailto:wcssp@wentworthfinancial.com). For more information about our organization visit [wentworthfinancial.com](http://wentworthfinancial.com) and [cowangroup.ca](http://cowangroup.ca).

**We care about what you care about.**

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