



# OASIS

## focus

A PUBLICATION OF ONTARIO AGENCIES SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS · SPRING 2012

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I am pleased to announce that the OASIS membership continues to grow as we welcomed five new agencies this month bringing our membership to a total of 164. Our new member agencies are Community Living Mississauga, Community Living Meaford, Harmony in Action (Windsor), Family Counselling Centre of Brant, Inc. and Family Respite Services Windsor Essex.

On March 27, 2012 the Ontario Government released the Provincial Budget. While it was encouraging in this economic environment that agencies are not faced with a cut in funding, it has still left agencies struggling with how to deal with increased costs and the impact of negotiated settlements. The Budget also did not address the ever increasing wait list for services. OASIS will not be issuing a formal comment on the Budget until it has been passed by the legislature. The OASIS Labour Relations Committee will be undertaking a survey of the membership to determine the impact of the recent union settlements on agencies and how agencies plan to deal with the agreements without additional government funding.

Over the past three years OASIS has been proud to be a co-sponsor of the Monday morning phone calls to keep developmental service agencies informed of happenings within the sector. We would like to acknowledge the administrative support and assistance provided

by Community Living Essex County and Community Living London in enabling this valuable work to continue. OASIS is committed to supporting the continuation of this service over the next year.

Judy Reid, Jane Joris, Ann Kenney and Allan Mills met with Minister Milloy in early March. While we recognized the economic reality the Government is facing, a positive discussion occurred regarding our concerns that agencies are facing due to the unfunded pay equity liability and ways that OASIS could work with the Ministry to move the transformation process forward. Offers were made to work together to help resolve our concerns with the pay equity legislation and for training opportunities to occur where lessons that were learned by other sectors who had already implemented direct funding could be shared. Following this meeting the Ministry of Finance contacted OASIS to provide an invitation to OASIS member agencies to attend a session at the end of May where several sectors will share unique partnerships and innovations.

A subcommittee of the Communications and Public Relations Strategy Committee has been formed to update the OASIS website. I encourage members to respond to the survey that you will receive in the next few weeks to give us feedback on how you utilize the website and improvements that could be made to it.

I look forward to meeting with our member agencies at the Annual Conference and AGM being held at Deerhurst Resort May 9 -11, 2012. The conference committee has been hard at work to bring you a SENSEational program.

Judy Reid, *OASIS President*



# STRATEGIC PLAN FOR OASIS

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### Board of Directors

May 8, 2012

&

May 11, 2012

Deerhurst Resort

IDEAS & ARTICLES ARE WELCOMED

Please contact

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## OASIS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Judy Reid, President

Brian Young, Past President

Jane Joris, Vice President

Volunteer

Ann Kenney, Vice President

Executive Director

Lu-Ann Cowell, Treasurer

Donna Britten, Secretary

Bonnie Dinning, Director at Large  
Directors:

L. David Barber

Mal Coubrough

Steven Finlay

Allan Mills

Jocelyne Paul

## 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.

To define the need, focus our efforts and ensure a strong business model that supports and provides leadership to our membership, the OASIS Board of Directors met in September 2011 to develop a strategic work plan. The outcomes of this preparatory work and summaries of discussions helped us to determine the 5 key areas that will lead our efforts over the next 3 to 5 years:

1. Stabilization of Agencies
2. Labour Relations
3. Government Relations
4. Working as One Sector
5. Succession Planning

Significant strides have been made over the past year on these initiatives and in strengthening our position within the Province.

The Communications and Public Relations Strategies Committee has focussed on raising public awareness about the needs of families, individuals and the developmental sector as a whole. The creation of our platform during the Provincial Election Campaign helped provide a voice that highlighted the ever growing waitlist, complexity and changing needs for those that we provide services for and the compression issues of the infrastructures of expertise that will lead the way through the Transformative Initiative. Position papers have been submitted to WSIB and the Commission for the Review of Social Assistance to identify the viewpoint of agencies in the sector. The MPP Bulletin educated the Government on the issues in the developmental sector while requesting the funds identified in the One Message - Many Voices strategy of the Provincial

Network. Recently a sub-committee has been struck to update the website to ensure that information continues to be readily and easily accessible for all.

The OASIS Board of Directors also took the opportunity on several occasions to meet with the Minister, the Deputy Minister, and Assistant Deputy Ministers to discuss the issues facing the sector and our willingness to work with the Ministry to create solutions.

The Labour Relations Committee continues to advocate with the Government on labour issues, including sessions related to alternative bargaining, social media and pay equity. The Provincial Network also provided sessions on Succession Planning.

Through our continued relationship with Queen's University, OASIS is proud of their ability to once again provide educational opportunities through the Queen's Leadership Program. Queen's University is a strong partner sharing commitment to strengthen the leadership of our sector while helping to incorporate the core competencies of the HR Provincial Network Strategy and preparing us to be responsive to the demands of our work. Another successful sold out session took place on April 15 to 20, 2012. To further enhance these efforts and be responsive to the financial constraints and succession challenges that agencies will face in the future, the OASIS Board is developing a scholarship program, so look for more details at the Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting in May.

The Board of Directors looks forward to continuing to meet your needs through further developing their strategic initiatives over the coming year.

# INNOVATIONS

## DOING MORE WITH LESS



During a time of great challenges and seemingly unending demands, “to do more with less” many organizations are finding themselves stretched to the breaking point. This sector has always demonstrated a commitment to safety, security, continuity and responsiveness, all the while advocating for inclusivity and equality for all individuals regardless of their abilities.

So how do we maintain these lofty and needed prophecies of greatness during a time when we are being faced with so many pressures that threaten to erode the infrastructures that advance these objectives and promote specialized service supports?

Faced with this challenge and being in the position of being a smaller organization, The Participation House Project (Durham Region) took a long hard look at how they could sustain not only their organization during a time of “Transformation” but more importantly ensure that the quality of their services was not diminished by perpetuated underfunding and necessity “to cut” to meet mandated and unavoidable cost increases.

Strategically we knew that if we wanted to continue to provide more services with less we would have to find ways to access funding and opportunities beyond our Developmental Sector and within our broader community. This objective would allow us to share knowledge while building relationships that met the core objectives of safety, security, continuity, responsiveness, inclusivity and equality for all.

In 2011 and after many months of intensive discussions and exploration, The Participation House Project (Durham Region) is excited to announce their multi-level Partnership with the Abilities Centre. With a foundation of guiding principles influenced by the UN’s convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and The Accessibility for Ontarians

with Disabilities Act, 2005, the Abilities Centre will be a global leader in creating opportunities that enhance the life and citizenship of persons with disabilities through sports, arts, life skills programs, research and community capacity building.

The Centre has sought out key partners that are like-minded organizations with a proven track record of success in their field and who can bring strength to the themes of sports, arts, lifestyle and research for persons with a disability. To date these partners include, Royal Ontario Museum, The Royal Conservatory, Geneva Centre for Autism Foundation, Rick Hansen Foundation, Ryerson University, Durham College, UOIT, MaRS and The Participation House Project (Durham Region).

With access to state of the art and fully accessible facilities, including an indoor 6-lane regulation track and climbing wall, adaptable fitness equipment, music room and performing arts theatre, the Abilities Centre will work with its partners to help build community capacity. This partnership will allow The Participation House Project (Durham Region) to focus on promotion of expertise and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities while they access resources and programs from other leaders in service provision and open to the general public.

We look forward to sharing more about these successes and innovations as they evolve and as these partnerships develop.

Submitted by  
Michelle Marshall



# WHAT'S HAPPENING IS SENSEATIONAL!

BE A PART OF IT ALL MAY 9 -11 AT  
DEERHURST RESORT IN HUNTSVILLE,  
ONTARIO. OASIS CONFERENCE 2012.

## LATEST NEWS:

### Win the new iPad 3 (WiFi 4G 32GB!)

With a retail value of over \$750.00, the latest iPad will certainly be a hot item. During the conference you will have an opportunity to buy tickets (\$10 each or an arm's length for \$20). Cash only.

### Silent Auction

From Muskoka getaways to priceless art, remember to bring cash, cheque or Visa/MasterCard to bid on some great items and deals! Debit and American Express will not be accepted.

### Fireside Chat

Join the Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Minister in a conversation to discuss your issues and concerns for the developmental services sector.

Come prepared to be inspired! This year's conference is chocked full of exciting educational opportunities including three keynote speakers and 18 workshops! Find out about the latest sector developments and talk shop with colleagues to discuss, debate and deliberate.

Let your senses experience the Par 64 Deerhurst Lakeside golf course. Enjoy a modified shot-gun start with best ball format, lunch and sensory hole competitions for prizes! Limited spaces register today.

Or indulge your senses at the Deerhurst Shizen Spa - special conference packages available.

## BOOK YOUR ROOM AT THE BEAUTIFUL DEERHURST RESORT

Rooms are almost gone! Please contact Deerhurst Resort at **1-800-461-4393** to make your reservation and indicate you are with the OASIS Conference.

## REGISTER TODAY!

Go to [www.oasisonline.ca](http://www.oasisonline.ca) and register today (space is limited) to get your first choice of workshop selections.

See you in May!

"Helping those



who help others"

## We're OASSIS

### The Employee Benefits Organization

*(Spelled with two S's – just like the ASSURANCE we provide to our members!)*

#### Employee Benefit Plans Made Exclusively for Not for Profits

We understand. Each year, our agencies are challenged to find more efficiencies and cost-savings. Just like your agency, OASSIS is a Not for Profit organization - created to support people – not profits

By leveraging the combined buying power of our Not-for-Profit members and working with like-minded industry partners like Greenshield Canada and SSQ, OASSIS has delivered **exceptional rates** for over 22 years.

#### Why OASSIS?

- Customer Satisfaction from Our Annual Survey:
  - 98% Customer Satisfaction for Client Service
  - 97% Customer Satisfaction for the Rate Claims are Paid
  - 93% Customer Satisfaction for Annual Renewal Rates
- OASSIS is a **not-for-profit** organization which sets its benefit rates to cover claims and administrative costs only, with any surplus going back into the plan to ensure dependable and sustainable rates.
- Comprehensive range of Health, Dental & Disability benefit plans and options
- Full-service claims administration and account service
- Benefit plans for **all organization sizes**, for full-time & part-time employees
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  - Custom plans for agencies with 25+ employees
- Hassle-free, equitable access to ALL employees; no employees are denied coverage upon enrolment
- Canadian provider, National benefit plans, based in Toronto, Ontario

#### Visit Our Booth!

OASSIS Conference, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012,  
Deerhurst Resort, Muskoka

970 Lawrence Ave. West, Suite 104, Toronto, Ontario, M6A 3B6  
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