



***OASIS INFORMATION BULLETIN  
TO ONTARIO MEMBERS OF PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT  
November 2001***

***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 Fall 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 (October 2000, April 2001 & June 2001), and look forward to continuing discussions with both MPP's and the Ministry of Community & Social Services on these matters.

**Ontario Budget Announcements**

The \$197 million announced over 5 years will be crucial to maintain, for the ongoing viability of the Developmental Services sector, and we would ask that you act to ensure that this commitment is kept. OASIS member agencies thanked the Minister of Community and Social Services, the Honourable John Baird, and Finance Minister Jim Flaherty for publicly recognizing that it is up to government to ensure vulnerable people in our society have support, and for the statement that it is a priority of this Government to care for the vulnerable. The Budget Speech correctly identified the challenges facing many parents of developmentally disabled children, and we view this announcement as an endorsement of the importance of valuing the services provided.

**Pay Equity**

Local agencies continue to face the legal requirement of making Pay Equity adjustments each year with no specific funding from MCSS for this expense. This means that some agencies are continuing to accumulate unfunded liabilities that they are unable to pay. The recent Revitalization Funding from MCSS was not targeted for this purpose, although it appears that agencies will be allowed to utilize the funds for this obligation. However, despite this infusion of funding, more than 30 agencies across the Province continue to face outstanding legal pay equity obligations.

Two legal challenges are currently underway in Ontario with respect to this matter. Four developmental service agencies have appealed their Pay Equity Orders, and recently the Pay Equity Hearings Tribunal scheduled a hearing on the matter for May 2002. The second challenge consists of a Charter Challenge by four women and five unions, claiming that the government is perpetuating wage-based gender discrimination by failing to fund on-going pay equity adjustments to workers in predominantly female workplaces who use the "proxy" method to identify the discriminatory wage gap between themselves and male job classes. OASIS hopes that the issue of who is responsible for funding these legal obligations will be resolved as a result of these actions.

**Employment Standards Act - Hidden Costs**

The recently passed amendments to the Employment Standards Act will result in further financial pressures on Developmental Services sector agencies. The elimination of the minimum number of days worked to qualify for statutory holiday pay will result in increased staffing costs for agencies in your riding. The increase varies for each agency, but the amounts range from a few thousand dollars to over \$100,000. With no corresponding funding increase, agencies will again have to look for cuts. This in turn will negatively impact on service delivery and the quality of care.

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 and other matters from the OASIS website at: [www.oasionline.ca](http://www.oasionline.ca).

Sincerely,  
Sue Dolan, President