



Oasis Bi-Monthly Newsletter. Follow our top stories and stay up to date on current events in our community! Want more? Visit Oasionline.ca

President's Message

We commend MCSS for moving so quickly to address the wait list on SSAH and the significant progress made with Passport Funding. We also acknowledge that there has been some concession to the residential accommodation wait list but nowhere near the overwhelming need. Our challenge is not only playing catch-up but also recognizing that new growth in demand takes place each and every year. Strengthening agencies so that they can continue to respond to community needs should be taken into consideration at the same time as we are addressing individualized funding.

The lingering question of Pay Equity continues to haunt us. OASIS met with the Minister Responsible for Women's issues, the Hon. Tracey MacCharles, and her Policy Advisor, Rebecca Caldwell, and I believe based on her mandate letter from Premier Wynne, that for the first time in many years we may have someone in government who is sincerely interested in seeing us make some progress on this file with the Minister of Labour. In addition, we have a meeting scheduled with the Hon. Mitzie Hunter Associate Minister of Finance to discuss how the Not-for-Profit Sector will be impacted by the new Ontario Retirement Pension Plan.

OASIS is now over 185 members strong and growing each and every month. We are a trusted partner with MCSS. We have been extended the opportunity to meet with those ministries wherein we have common ground and the truly dynamic change in transparency and co-operation between ministries is only just beginning to yield positive results.

Sincerely,

L. David Barber
President
OASIS

Latest News

Building Stronger Communities

OASIS Member Agency and recipient of MCSS-Innovations Funding in 2014, The Participation House Project (Durham Region) is leading the way in transforming not only the Developmental Disability Sector but the broader community.

Through the development of a service model referred to as “the pillars of independence” PH has provided adults with developmental disabilities a catalogue of community based learning opportunities where they can customize their schedule to fit their individual needs and interests.

Using the Abilities Centre as their home base PH provides hands-on life skills programs while participants have the opportunity to attend the recreation and arts programs available through their membership fees at the Abilities Center. Beyond the home base PH professionals help participants reach out to the broader community to access the many resources and opportunities in their surrounding communities.

Here are some comments from families who have participated in some of PH's programs:



Roddy's Mother

- Roddy's independence is showing in other areas of his life
- Takes a more active role in day to day activities, hygiene, dressing, volunteers with laundry, cooking and cleaning
- For the first time, I am beginning to feel that he is ready to live independently from me
- Through this program and 'others' like Life Readiness, he is acquiring skills and confidence
- He has a wonderful quality of life and enjoys telling others about your programs
- I love to watch him utilize his new skills in taking the bus or taxi and the rapport he has built with the drivers
- He is developing his future, one skill at a time!!

Amy's Advocate

- The Community Activation Program has assisted Amy with her independence in the Community
- The smaller group settings have provided support and learning opportunities for Amy in the community through volunteerism, vocational and recreation opportunities

Durham Catholic School Board

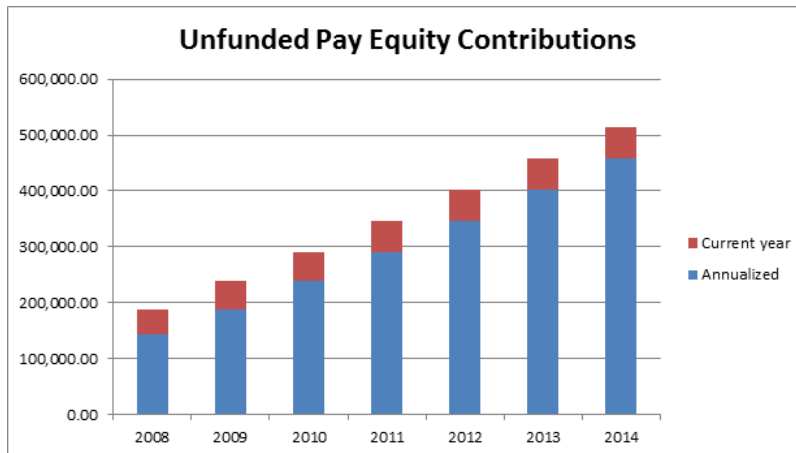
- Through the donation of books made to PH, the volunteers read to the children and provide each child a book to take home; more importantly this program provided an opportunity for the children to witness the abilities and qualities of individuals with a disability from their community

It is through strong OASIS member agencies that we are seeing opportunities like these change the lives of people with and without disability. If you would like to learn more about the valuable services that our members provide or be connected with someone in your community please do not hesitate to contact us at abrown@clsm.on.ca.

Equal Pay Day delivers bitter reminder to developmental services workers

Pay equity for developmental services workers continues to be a contentious issue, whether an agency is maintaining its legislated requirement within existing funding or are finding themselves in a position where they cannot meet their obligations. Here is an example of an OASIS member agency who has maintained payments to their staff and the dilemma the agency faces over the next thirty years if the Government of Ontario does not provide financial relief to agencies.

Community Living South Muskoka (CLSM) has already endured four years of funding freezes, while incurring costs and meeting our legislated pay equity obligations. Pay equity legislation requires the agency to provide 1% of the prior year's payroll to our employees each year until the proxy pay equity target is met. To date, the Government has not funded approximately \$500,000 worth of pay equity expenses leaving CLSM to find the funds internally. Our pay equity obligation will not be met until 2046 and we still have an additional \$1.7 million that we are obligated by legislation to provide to meet the proxy pay equity target rate. If the Government does not provide additional funding to address this legislated requirement or amend the legislation the impact on CLSM will be the loss of approximately 60,000 service hours once pay equity is fully achieved every year. The future impact on CLSM is one full time position every year for the next 32 years or 34% of our fulltime work force if the government does not provide funding to offset this legislated liability. This is not acceptable.



To manage this unfunded liability and ensure that staff receives the pay equity they are legally entitled to the following measures have been taken over the past few years:

- Consolidated two group homes into one new group home
- Reduced management team by 3 positions
- Reduced group home staff by 5 positions when homes consolidated through attrition
- Call-in hours eliminated in vocational services
- Delayed filling vacancies, maternity leaves, and sick leaves
- Reduced repairs and maintenance budgets
- Established administration contract for shared services with OASIS

ACTION ALERT

In late March, OASIS President David Barber and Executive Director Michelle Marshall met with the Honourable



Dr. Helena Jaczek, Minister of Community and Social Services.

OASIS continues to be an engaged and active partner with government, working together to help end waitlists for critical services. Our agencies are the vehicle by which that can happen, and we discussed the many innovative case management approaches that our members have adopted in recent years to stretch every dollar.

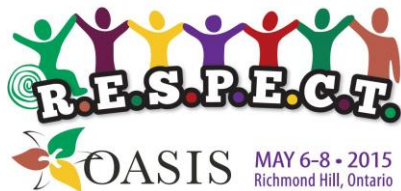
For example, OASIS agencies have already begun

initiatives such as group purchasing, working to save taxpayers' dollars. Our agencies are the experts at delivering services most efficiently for people who are in need.

The Minister concluded the meeting by agreeing to attend OASIS' 18th Conference and Annual General Meeting in May.

We were also pleased to learn that MPP Soo Wong will be continuing the important work of the Select Committee on Developmental Services, heading up a committee that will continue to move things forward. As per our discussion, OASIS will be pleased to participate in this committee.

OASIS 2015 Conference



At the beginning of May, OASIS held its 18th Conference and Annual General Meeting in bustling Richmond Hill, one of the most multicultural communities in the Greater Toronto Area. The theme of this year's conference was R.E.S.P.E.C.T. – a big bold word with a gentle meaning. Faith + Culture + Inclusion = Respect – n'est pas?

Sold out, with over 350 CEO's, Executive Directors, Senior Managers and Board Members, the conference was a huge success and we would like to thank the speakers and attendees for contributing to a week-long inspirational discussion. We'd especially like to thank the Faith and Culture Planning Committee and its co-chairs, Dwayne and Arlene. We'd also like to thank MCSS Minister, Helena Jaczek, and ADM for attending OASIS 2015 and for their words of appreciation to our members as they recognize the valuable work they do. Their presence reinforced the strong commitment to our partnership.

Finally, congratulations to the following award recipients:

- Gerry Sutton Scholarship – Marion Graves, Simcoe Community Services
- George Braithwaite Scholarship – Judy Pryde, Community Living Burlington
- President's Scholarship – Krista Haiduk-Collier, Community Living South Muskoka
- Annie Oliver Award for Excellence – Michelle Palmer, Community Living London

We look forward to seeing you all at our 2016 conference in Niagara Falls. Stay tuned for more information to come!



Community News

Community Living Sarnia-Lambton focused on employment transitioning, still valuing sheltered workshop

The Sarnia Observer recently reported on the strides OASIS member agency Community Living Sarnia-Lambton is making on training to employment. Read the full article [here](#).











Innovation News

Since late last year, the DSO Provincial Network has established four strategic priorities, with a working group established for each priority. We recognize that these groups are closely linked to one another and that some of our work overlaps among the four. The Ministry of Community and Social Services is fully supportive of this work and has assigned key contacts to each working group. The priorities and working groups include:

1. The Relationship with MCSS. This priority seeks to establish a respectful, effective and healthy working relationship between
2. The DSO Provincial Network and the Ministry of Community and Social Services to achieve common purpose. This is being lead by Marie Lauzier, DSO Central East Region, and Michael Maunula, DSO Northern Region.
3. Communications and Relationship Building. This priority is focused on the public understanding of the role of DSOs, and the DSOs' relationship with stakeholders, including families, DSO agencies, and the community, as well as strengthening internal DSO Network Communications. This priority is being led by Anna Lacelle, DSO Eastern Region.
4. Provincial Consistency. This priority is tasked with developing a strategy and an implementation plan to define required areas for provincial consistency, using the DSO Policy Directives as the Foundation. This work is being led by Gary Whetung, DSO Central West Region.
5. Information Management. This priority is focused on the DSO/MCSS partnership for the information management system (DSCIS) and for the development of required business practices to better benefit adults with Developmental Disabilities, their families, DSOs and the Ministry. This group is being led by Chris Symons, DSO South West Region, and Jeffrey Hawkins, DSO North East Region

CONTACT US

							
<u>OASIS President</u>	<u>Administrative Support</u>	<u>OASIS Secretary</u>	<u>OASIS Treasurer</u>	<u>Business Resources</u>	<u>Labour Relations</u>	<u>Webmaster</u>	<u>OASIS Board Contact List</u>

		
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