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## Can This Collaboration Be Saved?

### Factors that can make or break any group effort

If you've been part of a collaboration or partnership that really worked, you know how powerful that can be. You were part of a group that accomplished important things together. You helped to create a community climate in which people see that it is possible for very different groups and individuals to come together and get things done. On the other hand, if you've been involved in a collaboration that stalled or crashed and burned, you know how frustrating and wasteful that can be.

Wouldn't it be nice to know in advance which way the collaboration will go?

In preparation for the 2006 OASIS conference's theme, "The Power of Collaboration and Partnership", many factors influencing successful collaborations and partnerships are considered.

Collaboration and partnerships are a large and growing part of the landscape for community development work. Often it makes sense and leads to good results.

Yet the timing is not always right, nor the ingredients in place for a successful collaborative effort.

Although there's no foolproof way to predict the outcome of any undertaking that involves people and organizations working together, a few basic checkpoints can be quite revealing.

And if you're already involved in a collaborative effort, these same checkpoints can help your group recognize strengths and work on weaknesses.

In the sense we are discussing here, collaboration and partnership goes beyond informal cooperation or occasional coordination of efforts. It is a long-term, well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve common goals. It involves genuine sharing of authority, accountability, resources and rewards. Often, when there is a need, a crisis, or an opportunity, partners come together to accomplish something that they cannot do alone.

Continued page 4 - "Collaboration"

## 2006 OASIS Conference and Annual Meeting

May 3, 4 and 5, 2006  
Oakwood Inn, Grand Bend

Hosted by  
Lambton County Developmental Services,  
St Francis Advocates,  
Community Living South Huron and  
Community Living Sarnia and District

## "The Power of Collaboration and Partnership"

Keynote Speaker: Stuart McLean

## President's Message

**M**y goal in providing these brief remarks is to present a perspective regarding the most salient issues of the year just past and to venture a prediction that 2006 is very likely to go on record as one of most important in terms of the future delivery of developmental services in Ontario.

The Deputy Minister and his senior staff met with the Partnership Table (PT) in November to update members regarding the progress of development related to transformation since our last meeting in June. You will be aware of various announcements of targeted funding, community planning initiatives, passports for community living, changes to ODSP entitlements and administration, recent briefings of a modern concept of a funding reform for developmental services and a proposed common assessment tool; all of which should be taken as a package that shows Ministry commitment to bring-about substantive change.

One area of investigation which has received little or no study is a mixed bag of measures including; trusts, wills and changes to the tax system. If you are aware of expertise in those areas, this is an excellent time to bring forward proposals and/or the relevant expertise. A range of incentives directed toward families to engage in long term estate planning that benefit their offspring should be part of the mix of transformative measures that are brought forward for review by government. Please give consideration to bringing your proposals to OASIS for input the PT.

While work on Transformation has been adversely affected by the legal challenge related to the closure of the facilities, staff has also been working feverishly to present to government, concrete funding proposals that would enable substantial progress

on transformation beginning in fiscal year 06/07.

Public consultation on transformation will not occur before late spring or early summer.



**George Braithwaite**  
President, OASIS

The Partnership Table will discuss the format and process for consultation at its next meeting in February.

There are a host of other items that merit some discussion but none will have more importance to you than the Provincial Network's engagement in promoting competitive wages for the Sector. A small group met with Minister Papatello on 13 Dec., 05. The Minister understands the ramifications of an uncompetitive wage structure but it is equally clear that the government will insist that new money serve more people. Balance is the word! The Network will undertake additional work in the area of competitive wages, pay equity and labour unrest. Stay tuned!

The next OASIS Board meeting is scheduled for the 22 and 23rd of March, 06.

In the meantime, I hope that each of you enjoy a productive and happy new year.

George Braithwaite,  
President  
OASIS

Upcoming OASIS  
Board meetings

March 22 & 23  
Toronto

May 2 & 3  
Pre-AGM  
Grand Bend

AGM  
May 5  
Grand Bend

OASIS extends a special thank you to Vicki Howard of Simcoe Community Services for authoring the Children's Mental Health Response. Additional thanks to Board member, Brian Young, for his involvement.

### Past recipients of the Annie Oliver Award

Gordon Anton (2004)  
Nominated for drafting of discussion paper that led to formation of OASIS and for his leadership with OASIS online communications.

Helen Havlik (2005)  
Nominated for her volunteer involvement within the developmental services sector - OASIS Board member for 9 years; local Board member for 20 years and OASIS rep. on OPADD, among many other accomplishments.

## 2006 Annie Oliver Award Nominations

The Annie Oliver Award is designed to honour an individual or organization that demonstrates excellence, innovation and leadership in the developmental services sector; an example to others through outstanding administrative processes; and through a combination of perseverance, determination and positive attitude, has assisted OASIS in meeting its mission statement. Nominations for the Annie Oliver Award are being accepted by OASIS until February 24, 2006.

Past recipients of the Annie Oliver award have included Gordon Anton (2004) and Helen Havlik (2005). Their accomplishments in the developmental sector have been outstanding; their leadership and commitment to OASIS have also demonstrated excellence and innovation.

As many of you know, Annie Oliver was the first president of OASIS. Annie helped create OASIS through a shared vision.

She used her commitment to the developmental services sector combined with intelligence, organizational skills and humour to steer OASIS's development.

She has been and continues to be, an example to all of us and an ambassador of goodwill for OASIS.



**Annie Oliver,  
1st President,  
OASIS**

## OASIS Board Nominations

There are few ways more important to the developmental services sector than to give of one's time and leadership. As OASIS President George Braithwaite notes, "2006 is very likely to go on record as one of most important in terms of the future delivery of developmental services in Ontario".

As OASIS moves closer to its 10th anniversary of inception, consider becoming a Board member of OASIS so that you can provide leadership within OASIS at this very important time in the delivery of developmental services.

Interested? You will need to seek written consent of your local agency Board and submit your nomination to OASIS on the appropriate form no later than 15 days before the annual meeting or on or about April 19th, 2006. The nomination form and accompanying written consent will need to be submitted to the OASIS nominating chairperson. To be ready to submit your name for the OASIS Board of Directors, plan ahead and discuss this important opportunity with your local agency Board.

Look for further communication from OASIS in early spring regarding the nomination process. The revitalization of the Board nomination and election process is a cornerstone of OASIS member services.

Consider how you can serve the sector through OASIS!

## CRA Release on Official Donation Receipts

Charities are required to have a reference to the CRA website on their receipts in 2006.

In addition, the place receipts are issued and the date received and the date the receipt was issued must also appear on the charitable receipt.

See the CRA website for exact wording and guidelines.

In order to make issuing receipts as simple as possible for charities and ensure that the receipts contain the additional information now required by the *Income Tax Act*, the Canada Revenue Agency Charities Directorate has recently released sample official donation receipt forms (see [www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tax/charities/pubs/receipts-e.html](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tax/charities/pubs/receipts-e.html)).

While official donation receipts issued by charities do not have to appear exactly as presented in this CRA document, the samples can be used as a guide.

It is also important to note the changes to requirements for split receipting. The purpose of these rules is to permit charities to issue donation receipts in situations where the donor receives partial consideration for the property transferred. Charities will be responsible to seek relevant information on an advantage to the donor where the need for such information is apparent to the charity.

It should also be noted that information concerning the advantage that a donor has received must also be evident on the official charitable receipt. For example, the donor pays \$50 to attend a fundraising luncheon where the only consideration received is a meal valued at \$20. The total amount received by the charity is \$50 and the value of the advantage (the meal) is \$20. Therefore, the eligible amount of the gift for charitable receipting is \$30.

Reference: [www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tax/charities/pubs/receipts-e.html](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tax/charities/pubs/receipts-e.html)

## Collaboration (Continued from Page 1)

The factors that influence success fall into six general categories: general environment, membership, structure and process, communication, purpose and resources such as,

- a rich history of collaboration or cooperation;
- representation from the groups that will influence the success of your work or be affected by it;
- all the partners understand and “buy into” the process and structure that the group will use;
- a letter of agreement can be helpful, spelling out the roles, rights, and responsibility of each partner, and perhaps even stating the basic values and philosophy of the group;
- each partner should somehow involve people at all levels of the organization;
- partner organizations must be prepared to contribute, according to its means, substantial staff hours and skills, fundraising efforts, in-kind support and funds;
- and select a leader with strong organizing and interpersonal skills.

If you want to arrive at solutions that are real and lasting, you need to get there together.

References:

Mattessich, Paul. *Collaboration: What Makes It Work* (2002), and *Community-Building: What Makes It Work* (1997).

## Quality Supports Through Competitive Compensation

Prepared by:

The Provincial Network on Developmental Services, representing:  
CLO  
OASIS  
MARC  
Great Lakes Society  
Faith and Cultural Community Group

### Objective

To stabilize the Developmental Services Sector by compensating employees in the sector with wages and benefits which are competitive, and reflective of their responsibilities and contributions to the lives of people we support.

The Community Developmental Services Sector has been providing quality support for people who have an intellectual disability for over five decades. Over the next four years the sector will support another 1,000 people who have lived in institutions and hundreds of people moving into new community homes from their family's homes. This will be achieved because our member agencies are committed to ensuring each person develops to their fullest potential.

### Background

Compensation for staff working for community agencies providing support to individuals with an intellectual disability are paid 25% - 30% less than staff in other comparable sectors. With the wage gap, agencies are facing issues including:

- Difficulty in attracting and retaining staff
- Costs, financial and other, associated with high turnover
- Staff holding multiple jobs, leading to higher sick time usage and turnover
- Lack of parity across the sector
- Diminishing pool of candidates
- Large, growing Pay Equity obligations and liabilities
- Growing labour unrest

### Proposed Solution

The Provincial Network is proposing that agencies be funded at a level where they are able to compensate staff competitively. They recommend the establishment of a competitive common wage for the qualified support worker position and that agencies' funding specific to compensation be increased proportionately by the percentage gap between the proposed rate versus their current rate.

The Provincial Network are also recommending an appropriate allocation for employees' benefits, based on benefit packages in comparable sectors.

### Benefits of this Solution

This solution achieves significant benefit for all stakeholders, including:

#### *Benefits for Government*

- Pay Equity
- Facility closures
- Standardized cost structure
- Vital communities
- Decreased likelihood of a province wide strike

#### *Benefits for People who have an intellectual disability and families:*

- High quality supports through skilled and qualified staff
- Stable support networks resulting from consistent staffing

#### *Benefits for Staff:*

- Career of Choice
- Community opportunities for facilities' staff:

#### *Benefits for Community Agencies and Boards:*

- Stable workforce
- Pay Equity liabilities and associated problems will be reduced
- Resources directed to Services
- Reduced labour unrest
- Increased pool of candidates

#### *Benefits to Communities:*

- Flow of resources into local economies

Working together, the Provincial Network has made a business case to support their goal of achieving this by April 1, 2009.

## Building a Future Where Aging is Okay

OPADD believes that older adults with a developmental disability have the same rights to support and services as all older adults.

Local solutions are at the heart of the local partnerships.

One example of an innovative partnership occurred in Peel region.

Following funding of long term care beds in 1998, representatives of the two sectors met to explore cross sector collaboration in response to emerging needs in the developmental sector.

**T**ransition to older adulthood for people with developmental disabilities is a new phenomenon. An Ontario Partnership of the long term care and developmental service sectors was formed to address the issues that arise for older adults with developmental disabilities.



Based on the final report of the task group, some of the findings include:

- the developmental services sector is facing immediate pressures to support people as they age and to plan for a doubling of these numbers within 10 years;
- aging among some people with developmental disabilities is accompanied by earlier onset and a more complex presentation of co-morbidities;
- access to services for senior citizens is unequal across the province;
- families are important to the process of transition planning;
- 45% of long term care programs reported that transition planning was in place while a much smaller proportion of developmental service organizations are engaged in transition planning;
- willingness of agencies to work together, family involvement, funding, staff training, availability of appropriate services for older adults, guidance from funding Ministries and access to assessment tools;
- a gap between transition support provided by DS agencies and the level of support Long Term Care providers need.

In addition to highlighting the findings, several recommendations were made for consideration and action.

The partnership has also created a Transition Guide. The guide can be found on the OPADD website at [www.opadd.on.ca](http://www.opadd.on.ca). The guide not only discusses key issues for consideration but also provides checklists on aging, lifestyle, health, dementia,

role of family, support options and support circles.

In the 2005 summer issue of Focus, the work of the Peel partnership on aging and developmental disabilities was highlighted. Recently, an additional regional training workshop was hosted in the Hamilton area of the province by the Hamilton, Peel, Brant, Halton and Niagara OPADD regional committee. During the workshop, respective regions explored strategies and planning of next steps in their regions across sectors. In each area an individual was identified to take the lead. A commitment to continue to communicate was also made.

Based on the learning to date from the partnerships, collaboration is a key tool in implementing a local partnership.

Further training workshops are planned for 2006. Up to 8 workshops will be held as a follow-up to previous workshops.

*References: Ontario Partnership on Aging and Developmental Disabilities website.*

## Preparing For A Crisis

“Adversity has the effect of eliciting talents which in prosperous circumstances would have lain dormant.”

Gain agreement on an approach to handling a crisis openly, frequently and early. Ensure you have 24/7 key contact information for key staff and employees.

HR can play a meaningful role in assessing the temperature of the organization and identifying information gaps.

**W**ith all the media attention on a possible flu pandemic, it is an important reminder to prepare for a crisis in advance. If you have not already done so, consider lessons learned from Brookfield Properties as a result of their efforts following the September 11th crisis in New York.

1. We are all only a phone call away from a crisis. If you do not have a crisis communication plan, at least raise the issue with your senior staff team.
  2. Early and frequent communication. Consider media interviews, a special section on website, hotlines, trauma counseling and a daily update newsletter.
  3. Call in the crisis management consultants early. Anticipate what might be considered controversial and prepare key messages accordingly. Get an extra set of hands. Establish key contacts with key media.
  4. Ensure that HR has a seat at the communication table. Employees may form positive and negative impressions. Bring employees into the loop as close as possible to a public release of information to gain support, allay fears and ensure consistent messaging.
  5. All employees are not created equal. Front line employees are conduits to consumers and families.
  6. Prepare a comprehensive Q & A as the basis for all communications, tailored to specific audiences. Make available on website.
  7. Know when silence is golden. In certain situations need to balance openness with “less is more”. Don’t volunteer information unless it is in line with agreed upon messaging and public disclosure. Direct employees to channel all media enquiries through a designated spokesperson for consistency and accuracy.
  8. Employ the medical triage model to handle a flood of information requests. Prioritize requests for information as best you can.
  9. Make full use of technology, using multiple vehicles. Use a centralized ‘one stop shop’ for updating information, including a special section on your website that can be updated easily. Consider using employee chat stuffers for key messages.
  10. Expect to be consumed for weeks and months. A high degree of interest on Day 1 is only the beginning. Pace yourself and expect the unexpected.
  11. Closely monitor the evolving news and emerging issues. HR can play a significant role in providing a heads-up to management, and through the ED, to the Board on what issues need to be addressed in subsequent, proactive communications.
- Out of crisis can come unexpected opportunities and benefits! Remember, “adversity has the effect of eliciting talents which in prosperous circumstances would have lain dormant.”

*Adapted from HRPAO workshop on crisis preparation by Brookfield Properties.*

## One Director, Two Boards

### Check Us Out

OASIS website  
www.oasionline.ca  
OASIS email  
oasis@oasionline.ca

### OASIS mission:

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.

FOCUS is published quarterly by Ontario Agencies Supporting Individuals with Special Needs

Ideas and articles are welcomed for FOCUS. Contact the Editorial Committee.

Look for the next issue of FOCUS in the spring of 2006.



Hugh M. Kelly, Q.C.  
Miller Thomson

**F**or a director of a corporation, a conflict of interest arises when the duty of loyalty to the best interest of the corporation compels the director in a direction that is or could be inconsistent with some other interest of the director. The more usual circumstance in which this issue arises pits the interest of the corporation against the personal interest of the director.

It is not uncommon for an operating charity to join an umbrella charitable organization. The benefits of sharing experiences, and of presenting a common face to the public or the government are in fact one of the principal driving forces for continued participation in the umbrella organization. And equally, it is not uncommon for such operating charities to designate a person (often one of its own directors) to serve as a director of the umbrella organization.

The cardinal principle that should guide the director of two (or more) organizations where their separate interests may diverge is the obligation of neutrality, so as to avoid completely both the fact, and the appearance, of granting priority to either. The application of this principle imposes three rules, namely awareness, disclosure and disinterested review.

This principle of neutrality applies to what takes place at the board and committees of both organizations. Perhaps less understood is that this principle of neutrality applies everywhere else.

Thus, a director who has such an interest conflicting between the two organizations of which the person is a director, will not

be immune from personal liability by maintaining silence only in the board or committee room, while at the same time speaking out in some other setting, such as a meeting, a social occasion, or a media event. Equally, such principle of neutrality applies before, during and after each board (and any relevant committee) meeting, regardless of whether the director is present when the matter is or was on the agenda.



Robert R. Berry  
Miller Thomson

A related issue arises from what might be described as the "duty of loyalty" owed to a board; this duty requires a director to accept decisions validly made by a board. While such a director is expected to vigorously promote the views that have been espoused by the first board, all directors must accept the decision of the majority of the directors of the second board once the vote has been taken, regardless of whether the result does or does not support the stance taken by the first board and the views promoted by the director common to both.

Directors who serve on the boards of two not-for-profit organizations should deliberately make themselves more conscious of the potential exposure they face when the two organizations have an interest in the same matter, and act accordingly.

*Adapted from "Conflict of Interest: One Director, Two Boards - The Difficulty of Serving Two Masters, October 2005, by Hugh M. Kelly, Q.C. and Robert R. Berry, Miller Thomson Charities and Non-Profit Newsletter.*