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2004

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JOHN BEDELL

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MINISTRY ANNOUNCES FUNDING

On July 18th, Minister Elliott announced that \$31 million in new funding will be provided this year to help families through increased respite, day programs, Special Services at Home, specialized supports and new places to live.

In addition, \$25 million in new funds will be provided this year for agency revitalization so service providers can continue to attract and retain quality staff.

The funds are part of the MCFCS long term multi-year plan to invest \$196 million in supports and services.

The announcement on August 27th of \$10.4 million for increased respite, day programs and new places to live and \$8 million for Special Services at Home is a portion of the funds announced on July 18th for community supports.

OASIS sought clarification with respect to this announcement from the Ministry as follows: the funding announced on August 27th is not part of previous announcements for autism services or Foundations.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In the life of Associations, fall becomes the beginning of a new year. This fall presents us with unusual challenges. We now have the Pay Equity issue being addressed by the Ministry and the announcement of the next round of revitalization dollars. Even though we've written the Ministry and asked for input in assisting to resolve outstanding issues related to these two initiatives, at this point, our voice hasn't been heard.

(continued on page 2)



**PAUL WILSON, PRESIDENT,
OASIS**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (continued from page 1)

Further, we are faced with the uncertainty of elections and the impact this has on planning and decisions being made at the higher levels of government.

The next six months are going to be a real challenge to the whole sector and we are going to need all of your support to make an impact.

Packages have been sent out to each member agency to assist you in making contact with all candidates running in your ridings. Where there are a couple of agencies in the same riding, it is important to decide who is going to make contact and how all the local and provincial issues are going to be addressed.

Also this fall is the municipal elections and if you have issues, like zoning, day care support, leisure time inclusion of the individuals we support, para transit etc., then it is important for you to reach all the municipal candidates in the same organized way that you have addressed the provincial election.

Some communities like Brant are working on a scorecard to be filled in by all candidates, in this case, especially around designated youth, issues i.e. homelessness, drop-in centres, latch key children, day care and para transit issues.

Unfortunately the issues are different in each community and must be tailored to your specific concerns.

This is going to be a very busy fall and, as President of OASIS, I am going to have to call on many of you to assume extra roles to cover all the issues before us.

I know I can count on your support. Please feel free to contact me at pwilson254@rogers.com or (519) 752-1246.

Paul Wilson, President, OASIS

Upcoming
Board
meetings

November
20 -21, 2003
Peterborough

January
22 - 23, 2004
Newmarket

March
25 - 26, 2004
London

2003/2004 OASIS BOARD

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|---|
| PRESIDENT | Paul Wilson | Brantford and District ACL |
| PAST-PRESIDENT | Sue Dolan | Woodstock & District Developmental Serv. |
| VICE-PRESIDENT | George Braithwaite | OACAPDD |
| TREASURER | John Bedell | Community Living North Halton |
| SECRETARY | Sherry Kerr | Aldaview Services |
| MEMBER AT LARGE | Vic McClenaghan | North Bay & District ACL |
| Director | Doug Anderson | Ottawa Carleton Lifeskills Inc. |
| Director | Mike Coxon | Community Living Kawartha Lakes |
| Director | Molly Croke | Community Living Toronto |
| Director | Brian Dunne | Participation House Support Services London & Area |
| Director | Helen Havlik | Lambton County Developmental Services |
| Director | Mike Humes | Brockville & Area Community Living Assoc. |
| Director | Denis McClelland | Elgin Association for Community Living |
| Director | Dick Todd | Middlesex Community Living |

OASIS AGM 2004

Okay, so David Ferguson did a good job in Ottawa! How could he miss. He had the capital city on his side! What it means in the end is we in Nipissing have to work harder to make our AGM the best there ever was. We are determined to do just that!

Our philosophy is this: A Conference and AGM is an opportunity to network, relax, have fun and, oh yes, learn a thing or two along the way. We promise to emphasize all of the above. You have worked hard all year and deserve a great way to start the warm season. The next AGM will give you a lift and leave you with a smile that should last you until Andy Rotsma takes over for 2005 in Oakville.



Please mark your calendar -
May 5, 6, 7, 2004

Plan to be there,
you won't regret it.

Picture is of Lake
Nipissing
(courtesy of City of
North Bay website)

Suggestions, comments or ideas are welcomed. Please email Ray Thorn (rthorn@nbdacl.org) who promises to read each and every one, especially if the idea involves fun, networking and relaxation. Those of you who have never been up this way, why not make it a family affair and stay a while. Our area was used for years by voyageurs heading west and could be used by you and your family for the start of one heck of a vacation. Think about it!

Nipissing Planning Committee Members for
OASIS CONFERENCE/AGM 2004

GETTING TO KNOW BOARD
MEMBER JOHN BEDELL

**JOHN BEDELL, BOARD MEMBER,
OASIS AS JOHN WESLEY**

Photo by Hugh Wesley, United Church Observer

John's skills as a chartered accountant are being put to terrific use as the OASIS treasurer. But OASIS is much more than numbers to John. "OASIS fills a much needed role in supporting agencies. As a group of agencies, we can not only assist each other but also seek to assist the Ministry with its responsibilities and to move the sector as a whole in a positive direction."

Outside of his responsibilities as the ED of Community Living North Halton, OASIS treasurer, husband of Vilma, father of five and grandfather of three, John is also the lay minister of Elcho United Church. In addition, he takes on the role of John Wesley in speaking to congregations across Ontario. John is as passionate about the history and relevance of John Wesley as he is about the importance of OASIS.

Mark
your calendars
now ---
May 5,6,7,
2004.
See
you
in Nipissing
in 2004!
If you have
suggestions,
comments or
ideas for the
2004
conference and
AGM
contact
Ray Thorn.

WORKPLACE INFORMATION DIRECTORATE



Céline Laporte
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hrdc-drhc.gc.ca

Did you know that there has been a decline in the last ten years in the number of labour agreements with extended health coverage.

Wage adjustments in 2002 in small public organizations were an average of 3.5% while in large public organizations the wage adjustment was 2.8%.

The Workplace Information Directorate provides a full range of industrial relations facts and figures, including information on collective bargaining and current labour relations developments in Canada to assist the parties in participating in the negotiation process and to promote effective and informed discussion and research on industrial relations matters. Housing of the most comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional collective agreements library in Canada (approximately 6,000 agreements) and regular monitoring of major contract talks (covering 200 or more employees in the federal jurisdiction, 500 or more under provincial jurisdiction and a stratified sample of bargaining units of 100 to 499 employees) enables the Directorate to provide a vast array of information pertaining to negotiated wage adjustments, benefits, working conditions and innovative workplace practices. The Directorate also compiles and disseminates information on work stoppages and on unions and other labour organizations in Canada.

A team of consultants are available to respond with a tailored information package. Access to products and services is via a toll free number (1-800-567-6866), <http://labour.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca> and by fax (819) 953-9582.

KEY PUBLICATIONS AND DATABASES:

The Workplace Information Directorate also produces the following publications, covering various industrial relations issues:

- ***Wage Settlements Bulletin***: a monthly publication providing the most up-to-date statistical and analytical information on major wage developments in Canada ;
- ***Collective Bargaining Bulletin***: a monthly publication containing timely information on changes to wages and benefits from recently signed major collective agreements in Canada;
- ***Workplace Gazette***: a quarterly publication providing data on wage adjustments, work stoppages, innovative workplace practices and featuring articles and case studies on pertinent industrial relations matters;

and maintains a database of collective agreements and settlement summaries, the ***Negotech***, accessible via the Internet and featuring customized searches on the full text of collective agreements in Canada.

BEING PREPARED FOR THE OPERATIONAL REVIEW PROCESS

Agencies may request a review or have one imposed.

The review process starts with a notice letter. A reviewer or review team will either be appointed or in some cases, the agency may have some input to the selection.

In addition to documentation and observations, individual interviews and focus groups will be scheduled. Meetings may be audited.

Finally a report is provided and a follow up review of the implementation strategy.

From time to time, transfer payment agencies may be subject to external reviews or audits. As part of the external review or audit process, substantial documentation is required. The more written information an agency is able to provide the better.

In an effort to assist OASIS members to be prepared for an operational review or audit, OASIS has put together a sample of some of the detailed documentation that may be requested:

Board and Finance

- Job descriptions of roles and responsibilities
- Board orientation process and manual including a definition of accountability to funding bodies
- Annual self-evaluation process and Board development plan
- Monitoring of attendance
- Adherence to Nominating bylaws including analysis of Board composition, skills and qualities of new members, names of individuals nominated, oath of confidentiality.
- Board approval of MCFCS (funder's) documents
- Review of annual audited financial statement and monthly financial statements including variance reporting
- Central control of sales invoices and sales orders
- Authorization of General Journal adjustments
- Approval of the monthly bank reconciliation by the ED

A more comprehensive documentation check list is available from OASIS.

OASIS PLANS OPERATIONAL SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS

In June 2002, a task force on Operation Support was established by the Board of Directors of OASIS. The essence of the approved model is that OASIS agencies will be asked to provide expertise to other members that require assistance to resolve operational issues that are beyond current capacity, expertise or experience. Financial management has been chosen as the area of most immediate interest to member agencies. As experience with operational support evolves, human resources, governance, business management and information technology, are additional areas where the resources and expertise of member agencies may be shared.

Under the leadership of Board Member George Braithwaite, the task group has set about to establish profiles of individuals who could act as regional advisors. The regional advisor would be available in each region across the province and is someone who is trustworthy, competent (especially in the financial area) and maintains confidentiality. Task force members will be recruiting in your region this fall and the success of this venture will be determined by the willingness of members to share expertise and whether or not there is a demonstrated need for this service. A website presentation is being developed for members for information on Operational Support.

Did you know that in a recent gallop poll, little has changed in teen career picks in the last 26 years.

Students generally do not have a good understanding of qualifications required and little knowledge of the adult workplace. They need to be informed.

Greater uncertainty about future economic conditions cause graduates to pick the 'sure' thing.

Personality plays a big role in career choice.

Communicate the flexibility, the excitement and challenge of the job not just the qualifications.

NORFOLK ACL HOSTS OASIS RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PROJECT FUNDED BY HRDC



Judy Vellinga, Executive Director of Norfolk ACL and Sheila Schefski, HRDC, celebrate the signing of the HRDC Funding Agreement for the project.

For many years OASIS has been concerned about the challenges faced by its members in recruiting and retaining staff. In 2000, a provincial survey was completed concerning the challenges faced by members in recruitment and retention. The results of the survey clearly indicated that member organizations were facing difficulties in recruitment and retention of staff. As a result, OASIS highlighted this issue in their workplan. One OASIS strategy in responding to this issue has been to develop a project proposal for HRDC funding.

Beginning in June 2003, the HRDC funded one year project will explore the labour market issues with the intent to improve the capacity of OASIS member agencies to deal with their emerging human resource issues. As part of the project, the project facilitators, Jane Neath and Andy Newbury will resource information, tools and techniques utilized and best practices used by member organizations.

DEVELOP YOUR IMAGE TO IMPROVE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Monica Belcourt and Simon Taggar recently highlighted the recruitment and retention issue in their article "Damaging Illusions" (HR Professional June/July 2003). They note that external economic conditions, organizational image, pay, leadership and job design influence recruitment and retention.

Of particular interest to the HRDC project is their finding that the image of organizations in the public sector is underserved. The authors note that there are many benefits to working in the public sector including job security and the opportunity to have a positive impact on another human being. However, we need to build an image that recognizes that our organizations are a good place to work.

In developing image, the authors recommend to "encourage employees, especially middle and upper management, to get involved in community service." Something to think about!

EFFECTIVE PREPARATION FOR ARBITRATION

adapted from a paper by Charles (Chuck) V. Hofley and Stephen J. Goodwin, Hicks Morley Hamilton Stewart Storie LLP, Barristers and Solicitors. The authors also presented material on this topic at the 2003 OASIS conference.

Disagreements may arise even in the best workplaces. The arbitration process is the mechanism whereby parties to a collective agreement may refer disputes arising out of that collective agreement to arbitration for resolution. Managers play a key role in the arbitration process.

Manager's Role

Upon learning of a complaint or issue which has the potential to become full blown, a manager should take an active role in ensuring that the matter is dealt with expediently.

The manager should: 1. Get the facts. (source the story); 2. Document the facts (support the story); 3. Check the facts (corroborate the story); 4. Put the facts to the employee (confront the story); and, 5. Take action (choices).

It is imperative that upon learning of a complaint, a manager begin a thorough investigation and that all individuals involved in the complaint are consulted. If a situation is going to be monitored (as in progressive discipline), it is critical that all those immediately involved create the necessary "paper trail" upon which the case may ultimately be won or lost. Statements should be taken and signed by all those involved.

This will assist in the recollection of the events. All the documents that may become relevant if the issue proceeds to arbitration should be gathered and retained for safekeeping so as not to be subsequently destroyed or lost.



Pictured above are Stephen J. Goodwin and Charles Hofley .

A manager is also responsible for making the employer's goals clear. He or she must support labour relations with time and commitment of resources.

A manager should be aware that he or she, too, is an asset and is required to bring solutions to the table. This is often difficult but if successful, it can lead to outstanding results.

Once all the facts are gathered, a manager may be required to sit down with the appropriate individuals and assess the pros/cons and possible solutions to the issue at hand. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, arbitration may and likely will result. In some situations, the only management requirement is creativity in fashioning an acceptable remedy to the grievor or union.

Negotiating a solution may be challenging but it is part of the manager's role.

A manager in a nonunion environment may also be able to follow the guidelines to respond to disputes or grievances in the workplace.

Solutions in the nonunion environment need to be based on organizational policy while ensuring that solutions are found within the parameters of applicable legislation.

PUTTING YOUR ISSUES ON THE TABLE IN AN ELECTION

*adapted from an article by Charity Lobbying
in the Public Interest, Washington, DC*

The election season is an excellent time to educate voters and candidates about your cause and important public policy issues that affect your mission. More than any other time of the year, people are thinking and talking about public policy issues and the priorities of our province and municipality. Voter and candidate education activities can compliment other public policy activities by helping to frame and present issues before the public and future elected officials who will be making and shaping public policy.

10 Reasons To Influence the Public and Future Elected Officials

1. You Can Make A Difference

It takes one person to initiate change. Each of us can influence public policy.

2. People Working Together Can Make a Difference

If each OASIS member organization participates by asking the challenging questions, calling future elected officials, attending debates or writing letters, together we can make changes in public policy.

3. People Can Change Laws

Many of us think that ordinary individuals can't make a difference. But we can. Its easy to be busy with day to day activities. If we do not try to make changes for our future, where will we be in the future?

4. Influencing Elected Officials is a Democratic Tradition

The act of telling our policymakers how to write and change our laws is at the very heart of our democratic system.

5. It's a Way to Find Solutions
Services provided directly to people are essential. But as we know, they are not enough. Future elected officials need to hear about our solutions.

6. It's Easy

We can learn how to influence others – whom to call, when, what to say.

7. Policymakers Need Your Expertise

We see what works and what does not work. Others can learn from our stories, but we have to tell the stories to make future changes.

8. We Can Help Other People

Everything that goes into influencing future elected officials – the research, the strategy planning, the phone calls and visits – will help fulfill our organization's mission.

9. Views of OASIS Members are Important

Our actions can have a concrete impact on our organizations and the people we support.

10. We Can Build Public Trust

Building public trust is essential but building relationships with future elected officials is also important.

Can we count on you?

OASIS has circulated an Election Toolkit that will guide you in your activities. The toolkit is valuable for both the Provincial and Municipal elections.

Check Us Out

OASIS website
www.oasisonline.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 winter of 2004.