



COMMUNITY LIVING SOUTH MUSKOKA

Ontario General Election 2014

The Developmental Services Sector is at a crisis point and action must be taken to address the issues facing the sector. What does this mean for Community Living South Muskoka? Community Living South Muskoka has already endured four years of funding freezes, while incurring increasing 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 \$500,000 worth of pay equity expenses leaving Community Living South Muskoka 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 Community Living South Muskoka will be the loss of approximately 60,000 service hours every year. This is not acceptable.

According to statistics provided to the Select Committee established last year by the Government, the following waitlists exist in the province: 9,000 for Passport, 8,000 for Special Services at Home, 7,000 for Community Participation Supports, 2,300 for Respite services, and 7,300 for Residential Services. Currently in Muskoka there are 118 adults waiting for service (not including passport), 86 are awaiting Community Participation Supports and 103 are waiting for some type of residential support.

During the election campaign process we encourage you to ask all party representatives the following questions:



Ask:

If your party is elected, will you commit to ending the wait for funding and supports to people with a developmental disability and their families and stabilizing services by committing to the \$810 million over three years promised in the proposed 2014 provincial budget?

The proposed 2014 provincial budget promised the developmental services sector \$810 million in funding to:

- End the wait for daily living supports for youth and adults which is almost 20,000 people long
- Begin to address the wait list of over 7,000 people who are waiting for support to live in a home of their own
- Deliver stability to agencies who provide direct supports
- Develop new community-based services that support community inclusion

Individuals with a developmental disability and their families are in crisis. The developmental services system requires immediate investment and planning and community support agencies are struggling to respond to this crisis.

#EndTheWait for people with a developmental disability.

We encourage staff and supporters to take the **Brighter Future Pledge**. The list of individuals and organizations who take this Pledge will be shared with Ontario legislators and their staff, as well as other sector partners and supporters. To take the Pledge, click the banner on the right.

Spring 2014

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Brighter Future Pledge

I took the pledge
to actively consider
the needs of people
with developmental
disabilities.

The next two pages outline some of the key issues facing the developmental services sector, along with proposed solutions from OASIS on how they can be resolved.

ISSUE

ESTABLISH STABILITY: INCREASE BASE FUNDING WITH CAPITAL AND ANNUALIZED FUNDING TO RELIEVE PRESSURE

Critical investments are needed to ensure that short term needs in our sector are met. The province must commit to a capital funding investment to arrest the mounting crisis situation created by consecutive years of no additional funding to sustain existing services or even annual cost of living increases. However, one-time or ad hoc funding based on crisis alone will ensure that waiting lists continue to grow, that we all fall further behind, and the burden to taxpayers continues to skyrocket. Therefore, capital investment should complement sustained, annualized funding.

SOLUTION

✓ **ASK**

That the allocation of \$810million for developmental services over the next three years coincides with annualized investment of an additional 2% on current base budgets to Transfer Payment agencies for 2014-15.

✓ **ASK**

That the Minister of Finance upholds the proposed application of the \$810million investment to address growing wait-lists for services is disbursed in a manner that is most impactful for Ontario's most vulnerable.

ISSUE


ADDRESS SYSTEMIC ISSUES: LEVEL PLAYING FIELD & PREDICTABILITY

Many agencies have had legislated Pay Equity (PE) commitments imposed upon them. In a frozen funding environment, services must necessarily be reduced in order to meet these legal obligations. Some organizations have deferred pay equity commitments as funding has been frozen. Others have reduced staffing levels and services. All agencies that had internal comparators met their PE obligation years ago. Agencies that were mandated to compare with salaries in the health sector have years remaining before their obligation is met. This comparison to the health sector is the issue, but the legal obligation remains:

SOLUTION

✓ **ASK**

The province must mitigate this pressure. Make changes to the Proxy Pay Equity legislation, or amend Proxy Regulation 396/93, to allow for in-sector comparators, placing a moratorium on Proxy Pay Equity liabilities until changes are put in place, and commit to funding pay equity adjustments to completion once the changes are in place. This will prevent the loss of 3,600 full-time positions and mitigate service impacts for people with developmental disabilities and their families.



Many agencies deliver transfer payments on an ad hoc annual basis. An inability to plan beyond the current year means that agencies cannot ensure cost-effective service delivery with long-term stability and planning. To provide greater flexibility in planning and the use of resources and to ensure that local agencies can stretch the value of each dollar of funding they receive, at no additional cost to the government:

✓ **ASK**

The budget process must allow for the creation of reserves. Transfer payment agencies should have four year rolling budgets for the purpose of establishing reserves to fund capital items and major repairs, and to develop innovative, cost-effective programs in a planned manner.

ISSUE

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS: THE BRIGHTER PROSPECTS DIVESTITURE DIVIDEND

In 2011, the government sold the Rideau Regional Centre site. The Huronia Regional Centre in Orillia, and other decommissioned properties, should be divested and the proceeds reinvested as capital dollars in support of sustained annualized investments.

SOLUTION

✓ **ASK**

The government must agree to undertake a comprehensive survey and appraisal process, and sell unused properties and assets in the sector. Treated as capital dollars, the revenue generated from these divestitures must go directly into funding reserves, to be allocated as needed, such as maintaining existing properties and relieving pressure on wait-lists.

ISSUE

HOPE: LONG TERM PLANNING FOR FAMILIES

The Government of Ontario must consider how the developmental services sector can be included within an integrated strategy to address poverty and the need for accessible and affordable housing. A majority of families with disabled children incur significant out-of-pocket expenses and as primary caregivers forego employment opportunities. Non-medical costs, such as added transportation to and from appointments or therapy, are also pervasive. These costs are magnified for parents of adults once they can no longer access the public school system.

A commitment to invest in the developmental services sector would ensure that by April 1st, 2020, every person who has a developmental disability - and their family - has access to the support they need to live free from poverty, in the community. To this end, we support the service improvement recommendations outlined in the 2012 report commissioned by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, *Brighter Prospects*, which reviewed social assistance in Ontario.

THE ASK

✓ **ASK**

That the government immediately begins implementation of the changes recommended in *Brighter Prospects*.

Inclusion and Employment Opportunities Partnership Fund

Muskoka is a tourist based economy with no major traditional industry. Employment opportunities are mostly seasonal or part-time and many of the individuals supported by Community Living South Muskoka are deemed unemployable by traditional employment supports such as ODESP or other local employment supports. The events taking place at Morrison Meadows provide a perfect training ground for people to learn skills and gather experience that will lead to future employment in the larger community. Research has shown that



customizing employment training to match the skills and preferences of individual's with developmental disabilities is one of the greatest predictors of long term success.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services have funded Community Living South Muskoka for a one year employment and inclusion project through the Developmental Services Inclusion and Employment Opportunities

Partnership Fund. This grant will provide employment opportunities for fifteen (15) developmentally disabled individuals in our community. Priority for service will be to support young adults who have recently left school and are waiting for service through the DSO.



A large number of the people supported by our agency show a basic skill level and interest in food service, outdoor work, recreation, and working with children. The activities that occur at Morrison Meadows provide employment/training opportunities for individuals with a developmental disability. These include customer service, food preparation, retail sales, parking attendants, trail and property maintenance, farming, outdoor education, handling and care of animals. Morrison Meadows will provide a diverse range of opportunity to build skill, leading to employment and eventually community employment in all these areas.

CLSM uses an employability profile and assessment tool that has been adapted from and endorsed by the Conference Board of Canada for individuals with a developmental disability. It measures the skills learned in 12 areas of development with 4 to 5 criteria for each area of development and levels of independence achieved on each task. The skills they develop while being employed through this project are transferable to other employment opportunities in the community. Individuals will receive competitive wages for the work they perform.





Community Partnership

CLSM was approached by the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic School Board to partner on the construction of a greenhouse at Morrison Meadows. The Simcoe Muskoka Catholic School Board has purchased the greenhouse and will provide the crew to construct the greenhouse on site. The team will be supervised by a teacher at St. Dominic's High School who is also a licensed contractor. Materials are being donated by Fowlers and Simcoe Concrete and Block for the footings. St. Dominic's is also interested in providing students to assist in the growing of the plants, with the excess food being given to the local food bank. They are also interested in a long term relationship with their co-op program for this venture. The school is also willing to allow us to grow the pumpkin seedlings for use by Morrison Meadows in the greenhouse.

There will also be a media campaign related to this donation and partnership during the construction and a ribbon cutting that will include invitations to local, provincial and federal representatives.

Community Gardens

Once again this year Community Living South Muskoka has prepared community gardens at Morrison Meadows for use to the public by donation. Ten raised planting beds are available on a first come first served basis. Call now to reserve yours before they're all gone! Contact Jeff at 705.205.4156.



Pumpkin Planting at Morrison Meadows

The annual pumpkin planting took place at Morrison Meadows on Monday, May 26th. Thanks to everyone who came out to help – in spite of the black flies!



Pancake Breakfast

To celebrate Community Living Month a Pancake Breakfast was held at Community Skills Development in Gravenhurst on Tuesday, May 13th. Members from the community were invited to enjoy a free pancake breakfast and learn more about Community Living South Muskoka. The Mayor of Gravenhurst, Paisley Donaldson, attended the breakfast and brought greetings from the Town.

Did You Know...?

Sheila Stratton and The Cookie Jar have had a booth at the Bala Farmer's Market for the last four years! They will be at the Market again this year from the last Monday in June until Labour Day and will be selling their world famous butter tarts as well as denim quilts, pet beds, dishcloths, fish hats, clothing protectors, monster hats (new this year) and knitted blankets. The Bala Market is open from 9am until 2pm.

They are also planning to be at the new Farmer's Market in Gravenhurst near the Opera House on Wednesdays. It will run from the first of July to the end of August.



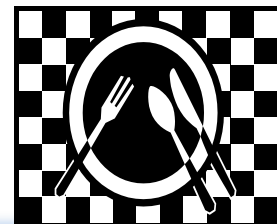
Check Out Our New Website
<http://www.clsm.on.ca/>



The Community Living South Muskoka website has been newly renovated to meet new accessibility guidelines. We welcome your feedback or suggestions.

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

Community Living South Muskoka will be hosting our annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on June 19th from 5:30 to 6:30 at 205 Industrial Drive in Gravenhurst. Please RSVP to Pat Kerr at 705-687-1611 or Monica Kenney at 705-645-5494, ext. 243 by June 16th if you are able to attend.



Have questions? Need more information? Contact us at:
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