

Celebrating a Year of Member Support

As the end of the 2016-17 fiscal year approaches, we'd like to take a moment to reflect back on the past year and celebrate our achievements in representing and supporting the home and community support sector. Some of the highlights are below, categorized via the four priorities that make up our [strategic plan](#).

Strategic Directions

Achieve system and policy change to improve Ontarians' health and wellness in the community and at home.

Strengthen linkages with sectors within and outside of health care to improve quality of care, client and family experience and population health.

Engage and strengthen OCSA's membership.

Optimize OCSA's capacity as the voice for the home and community support services sector.

Strategic Direction #1: Achieve system and policy change to improve Ontarian's health and wellness in the community and at home.

During a transformative year, OCSA continued to influence government policy through active participation on key policy tables and committees related to the government's *Roadmap to Strengthen Home and Community Care*, and *Patients First Act*. We kept members informed about policy and legislative developments that impacted our sector, and collected feedback from members in a number of ways: via surveys, webinars, and an in-person session also attended by Ministry staff. We also worked with legal experts and allied system partners to develop recommendations that champion the critical values of health promotion, disease prevention and re-enablement.

We were pleased to welcome Patrick Boily to the OCSA team as our new Manager of Policy and Stakeholder relations – he joined us in October and jumped right in! Patrick led the development of new advocacy templates and toolkits supporting members' efforts to reach out to local officials – your active participation was crucial to our mutual success!

Together, we're pleased to have achieved many important successes, including:

- Ministry acknowledgement that CSS is an integral part of the Levels of Care framework;
- Pressuring the government to release PSW Training Fund approvals significantly earlier than last year;

- Securing a commitment to the development of guidelines regarding a LHIN's ability to appoint a supervisor to a service provider under the *Patients First Act*;
- Closing a serious loophole that would have opened the door to the provision of publically-funded community support services by for-profit agencies.

Provincial funding for the home and community support sector continues to increase each year, allowing us to serve more clients and their caregivers. Knowing that base funding continues to be a major challenge for membership, Patrick worked with your feedback to develop OCSA's pre-budget submission to government and provided members with a template to use for their own presentations. OCSA is committed to keeping up the pressure for increased investment in the sector at every opportunity, including at the local LHIN level, and during future discussions around the new federal-provincial health accord, which includes funding targeted for home and community care. This year, we advocated our position with representatives of all three political parties. We will continue to do so as the provincial election approaches.

We continue to pursue initiatives which will amplify the voice of our sector and prepare our members for health system transformation – one upcoming example is [Leading Change: A Patients First Forum for Boards and Senior Leaders](#), which takes place May 12 in Mississauga.

We have also recently established OCSA's new Policy Committee, made up of diverse members from across service types and geographic areas. They will provide strategic insight and advice to make our policy work even stronger going forward.

Strategic Direction #2: Strengthen linkages with other sectors within and outside of health care to improve the quality of care, client and family experience and population health.

Collaboration was an essential part of our work this year. By aligning with our Community Health Ontario partners (Association of Ontario Health Centres, Addictions and Mental Health Ontario, and the Canadian Mental Health Association Ontario) we have been able to represent the needs of community health providers with a unified voice on a number of issues, from rural health hubs to the *Patients First Act*.

We also collaborated with our Community Health Ontario partners recently to submit a proposal to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to secure funding to implement a leadership development initiative specifically tailored to the community health and primary care sectors. If accepted, OCSA would manage the project through Capacity Builders and work collaboratively with our CHO partners.

On the research front, we're pleased to be participating in a Knowledge Mobilization internship in partnership with York University. PhD student Jamie Robertson is in the midst of a study to

gain insight into what makes living at home important to the clients of home and community support, with particular focus on independence and autonomy.

Finally, we continue our partnership with Home Care Ontario and have worked closely with HCO and government in providing input on the Personal Support Rate Harmonization process. As well, HCO and OCSA have worked closely for many years in our work under the Nursing Practice Council which has nursing organization representation from both associations. This group has been instrumental in providing necessary feedback on clinical practice issues of importance to home care nursing.

Strategic Direction #3: Engage and strengthen OCSA's membership

This year, OCSA continued to lead numerous projects aimed at supporting our members, including:

- **A wage and benefit survey of the sector.** In the first survey of its kind since 2010, we polled providers across the province to gather valuable labour market data for our sector. Submissions were received from 156 organizations with employee data for the 21 most common positions in CSS. Results will be available to participants next month.
- **[Capacity Builders](#):** Our training division has had one of its busiest years on record. To date, nearly 250 workshops have been delivered this year, and more are rolling in every day. Sessions have been delivered all across Ontario – from Cornwall to Newbury, Toronto to Dryden and dozens of locations in between! In the past several months, CB has hired and oriented 17 new PSW trainers across the province. They are expert facilitators in the following highly-requested areas: dementia care, palliative care, crisis aversion training, elder abuse, mental health, mobility (lifts and transfers), nutrition, diabetes, foot care and person-centred support. New workshops will be added to our roster this spring.
- **PSNO Conference:** Speaking of PSW training, this past year the [PSNO Training Conference](#) for PSWs & PSW supervisors celebrated its 10th anniversary with a brand new format to facilitate deeper learning on topics directly related to client care. Delegates had the opportunity to attend two sessions, each three hours in length, allowing them to receive more in-depth training. Based on the phenomenal feedback we received, this format will be used once again this coming year.
- **OCSA Conference:** One of the highlights of our year continues to be our [annual conference](#), which this year will celebrate OCSA's 25th anniversary. Our registration numbers are increasing each year, and we're very pleased that so many OCSA members are taking the opportunity to share best practices, learn about new models of care, technologies, and policy developments, and network with one another in-person.
- **Support for CSS Networks:** Last summer, OCSA hosted its first Network2Network event, which brought together representatives from 11 CSS Networks and two LHINs that don't

currently have a Network. The objectives of the day were to learn more about how the CSS Networks operate, to provide an opportunity for networking and to share innovative practices and service models. OCSA is planning to continue to support and collaborate with the Networks in the next year.

- **Quality Advantage Project:** This year, we wrapped up the second stage of our [Quality Advantage](#) project, in partnership with the Waterloo-Wellington and Champlain CSS Networks. Key project activities included the design and delivery of two CSS learning collaboratives, supporting multiple QI peer learning circles, and the delivery of several Experience-Based Co-Design workshops. Numerous [tools and resources](#) reside on our website. Financial support for this project was provided by Health Quality Ontario.

Strategic Direction #4: Optimize OCSA's capacity as the voice for the home and community support services sector

We were pleased to welcome the following new full members to OCSA this year:

- Circle of Care
- Mnaamodzawin Health Services Inc.
- Dundas County Hospice
- Alzheimer Society of Durham Region
- Indus Community Services
- Participation House Markham

We were also joined by the following new corporate members:

- Bedford Medical Alert
- AlayaCare
- CARF Canada
- Move Mobility
- Healthcare Accounting

This year, Kim Prince joined the OCSA team as our Manager of Business Development and Marketing. She has developed a strategy to grow our membership even further. Kim is also strengthening our relationships with our partners who offer benefits and perks to OCSA members:

- [OASSIS Employee Benefit Plans](#), providing affordable, comprehensive employee benefit plans for not-for-profit organizations of all sizes, full time, part time, and contract employees.
- Competitively priced group commercial liability, property and Directors and Officers insurance, from our partner [JLT](#).

- Specialized rates on auto, home and travel insurance for member staff and volunteers, through our partnership with [Johnson](#).
- Exclusive discounts on various products and services from [Perkopolis](#).

Part of our role is educating decision-makers about the value of home and community support services. This year, we refreshed our public website and developed a new [brochure](#) to help us better tell that story. And we continued our annual Community Support Month and March for Meal campaigns, providing toolkits that help us speak as a united sector during a dedicated time period. Many thanks to those who participated!

We also found new or improved ways to keep members connected to sector news and to one another, including:

- The [OCSA Bulletin](#), our monthly, public e-newsletter;
- In-person network events including the Network2Network day for CSS Networks, and the Meals On Wheels Strategic forum;
- Hosting webinars with experts, from lawyers to government officials;
- A new media monitoring summary providing members with recent news items related to the sector, from publications across the province.

Of course our listservs and Service Advisory Committees remain active to help you connect with and crowdsource knowledge from other member organizations.

Thank you for everything you have done to support and participate in our work this year!

We are a [small team](#), so it is thanks to your help sharing expertise and information, reaching out to your MPPs and local officials, and enthusiastically participating in OCSA's projects that we have had such a successful year. Keep up the good work!