



OCSA

Ontario Community
Support Association

United in our commitment to care

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For Immediate Release

Ontario Community Support Association To Probe HR Issues in the Community Support Sector

Project will enlighten health care planners and funders

April 22, 2009 – A comprehensive survey funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) is being launched by the Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA) (www.ocsa.on.ca) to analyze health human resources in the community support service sector in Ontario. The results will ultimately benefit seniors and persons with disabilities or chronic health issues who every day receive critically important services like attendant services, home help, personal support, transportation to medical appointments, Alzheimer day programs and assisted living in supportive housing.

For the first time, this comprehensive survey will provide an in-depth analysis of the health human resources situation in the community support sector. It will also present insight into key issues and trends to better manage the community's precious human resources and inform policy development and program design in the Health Human Resources Strategy Division of the MOHLTC. It is essential that we know as much about the health human resources in this sector to ensure that Ontarians have access to the right number and mix of qualified health care providers now and in the future, especially as our population ages.

"There is currently very little consolidated data on both managers and the front-line workforce of Community Support providers", says Susan Thorning, CEO of OCSA. "In addition, there is no reliable data about the amount and nature of volunteer services provided through the agencies within this sector".

Upon completion in March 2010, the Health Human Resource project will provide community support service providers and their stakeholders with:

- a better understanding of the backgrounds of the paid staff and volunteers which will inform decisions to develop leadership and skills training;
- the ability of service providers to enhance their Human Resources and strategic plans;
- the ability to develop benchmarks for community support service providers;
- key data for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and Local Health Integration Networks (LHINS) about both the gaps in and strengths of the community support sector; and
- the opportunity for further policy discussions on the importance of data collection, storage and retrieval of human resource information across all health sectors in Ontario.

"The transformation of our health care system depends to a great degree on the maintenance and development of services like community supports to help individuals age in their own homes and prevent ER visits and hospital admissions", said Dr. Joshua Tepper, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Health Human Resources

Strategy Division, MOHLTC. "In order to plan and implement change, it's critical that decision makers at all levels have a comprehensive understanding of the Human Resources situation in the community. That's why the Ministry, through the HealthForceOntario strategy, is pleased to sponsor this Research Project being conducted by the Ontario Community Support Association."

About OCSA

The Ontario Community Support Association represents the providers of government funded community support services that assist seniors, people with disabilities, and individuals who cannot function independently because of an illness, or other limitations due to aging, mental health, or addictions. These agencies have an estimated workforce of 25,000 staff and 100,000 volunteers delivering community support services.

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