

Synopsis of Provincial Network meetings April 27th, April 29th & May 1st

The Provincial Network met three times last week. We continue to look at the overarching issues of the sector and provide a coordinated approach to providing information, resources and collaboration between our networks and government.

Our Key Priorities remain:

- Maintaining staff and morale:
 - Need essential worker status and to be treated like health and LTC staff, including access to childcare;
 - Critical to have access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Funding to meet the needs due to the pandemic;
- Look several weeks out for potential trends and impacts on people, families and supports;
- Resources for people and families;
- Create and sustain clear channels of communication with MCCSS and the government's Emergency Operations Committee (EOC).

Here is some key information and outcomes from these meetings:

With regular ministry participation on our calls, they continue to hear, ask questions and bring forth our concerns to the Minister, and he in turn, to cabinet.

From Government/MCCSS:

- Working with government and unions regarding details and clarification of the \$4/hr. wage top-up:
 - We acknowledge and thank the government for this announcement and for announcing it at the same time and on par with health care workers;
 - A letter from the PN, OASIS and Community Living Ontario was sent on April 30th, to the minister, communicating the points above;
 - **In the meantime, as we at the PN are also uncertain as to next steps, each organization should direct their questions to their Regional offices.**
- We're still waiting for the updated guidance document for our sector.

Other Issues & Outcomes:

- ARCH Disability Law is hearing about people who are being disproportionately impacted by visitation bans in group home settings due to exceptional support needs. They requested consideration of an essential visitor status to be developed (like in LTC);
- There's a need for reliable stats on how COVID-19 is affecting people living in group home/congregate settings and the staff supporting them. In the absence of reliable government data, we need to consider how we might collect those numbers ourselves;
- Work is being done in collaboration with KPMG re. Workforce Development and a more integrated approach to care and support with DS and Health. This work will be helpful in determining lessons learned and proactive approaches which will come into play for future pandemics;
- The lack of a province-wide essential visitor policy from MOH (for hospitals) is still urgently needed. We are raising this issue with the Emergency Operations Committee;
- We will need to start considering how best to plan for a relaxing of restrictions and develop a road map of best practices.

Stay strong, Stay Healthy, Stay connected.

The Provincial Network.