

Synopsis of Provincial Network meetings June 3rd and 5th

The Provincial Network met twice 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.

Questions for MCCSS:

- Surveillance Testing – To check with colleagues from LTC etc. around how they managed issues such as 'staff refusals';
- KPMG – Workforce Committee: pivot discussions to look at how to we can assist in creating solutions to assist the sector with challenges related to opening up business and the those associated with a precarious workforce ;
- Make inquiries to Health on Data they are collecting and how we can use this info to expand our understanding of the broader DS experience that includes people living at home with their families and beyond the DS Residential Settings .

Other Issues & Outcomes:

- Both OASIS and CLO will be engaging with their member organizations regarding lessons learned and opportunities going forward for positive systemic reform. Questions will also be developed by the PN which can be shared with OASIS/CLO for dissemination/conversation and feedback;
- As a sector, there are many lessons being learned from the pandemic. There has been a lot of collaboration, both within our sector, with MCCSS and at the Emergency Operations Committee. However, there are things that could have been done faster, smoother, and more effectively. Moving forward, we must coordinate skills, perspectives and experiences from across the province and leverage them in order to form a better pandemic response the next time this happens. In order to have access to accurate information in a timely manner, we must be seen by both MCCSS and MOH as a credible and reliable sector with whom they can work proactively to respond effectively and efficiently, leaving no one behind.

To support these goals, we will create a standing agenda item called:
Emerging Structures and Resources for DS.

EOC Update:

- Update on Congregate Guidelines: Active conversations on testing and clearance pertaining to the documents of May 28th and returning someone back to work. Historically looking to both 14 days and 2 negative tests. As research continues, 2 tests will not be successful. Others are looking at when is surveillance testing best. There will be a conversation with the Ministry upcoming.

Pandemic Pay:

- Hoping for information letters and funding by mid-June, followed by a reconciliation process;
- This issue and the lack of wage enhancements to support workers being paid by families through IF/Passport/SSAH has highlighted the need for a deeper discussion into the inequity of wages in the DS sector.

OBRC Wage Collection Project:

- To date, 60 agencies have registered, however some have not submitted information. Agencies have been reaching out and asking questions. PN group will assist and follow-up to these agencies. A communication will be prepared to be put out to the sector and to try to get more people on board.

Recent resources posted to Real X-Change:

- [Guidance for congregate Living;](#)
- [COVID-19- Preparedness-Prevention-Congregate-Living;](#)
- [Essential Visitors to Group Homes- Considerations & Action Plans .](#)

Stay strong, Stay Healthy, Stay connected.

The Provincial Network.