

# OPADD LETTER

October/November 2005

## HAMILTON, PEEL, BRANT, HALTON AND NIAGARA HOSTS WORKSHOP

BY DEANNE FINCH-SMITH

On September 21, 2005 the Hamilton, Peel, Brant, Halton and Niagara OPADD regional committee hosted a network and planning workshop focusing on individuals who are aging and have a developmental disability.

The goal of the day was to determine development strategies to sustain community planning for service delivery to support this population. The day was very well

attended with over 80 participants from both the developmental and long term care sectors.

Ron Coristine started the morning presentations by delivering a thorough overview of the OPADD initiative since its formation.

The morning continued with information sharing on the development of new models of service from Reena's program by Sandy Stemp, and then

Patrick Murrin presented  
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*Rose Johnston of YMCA and Brian Shields, Executive Director of Community Living Hamilton discussing cross sector planning at the Hamilton Workshop.*

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## A SUCCESS STORY: "DIANE'S TRANSITION TO LONG TERM CARE

BY LAURIE BERTIN-KELLER

"Diane" is a 53 year-old women with Down Syndrome. Prior to moving to Reena in 1993, she had spent her life from the age of 9 in two different institutions. Before the onset of her cognitive and physical decline in 1999, she was a spirited, fun loving women, who enjoyed

music (any kind that she could dance to) as well as having her hair and nails done (a twice daily routine). She also had some challenging behaviours that were managed with behaviour therapy programs.

We knew in 1999, Diane was entering the early stages of Alzheimer's, but

this could not be made official, due to her limited cognitive and communication capabilities. We coped and adapted, but it was difficult to watch her decline so rapidly—both mentally and physically. In August of 2002, a c-scan confirmed that she had

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The Newsletter of the Ontario Partnership on Aging and Developmental Disabilities

Submissions to the newsletter are invited from regions, local projects and partnering organizations

## A SUCCESS STORY: “DIANE’S TRANSITION TO LONG TERM CARE

Progressive Dementia and by February of 2003 we had determined that as a community-based agency, we could no longer provide her with the services and care she required. A decision was made to apply for Long Term Care.

This was a daunting predicament due to Diane’s behaviours. Pro-active planning was imperative, lest Diane end up as a crisis placement in a facility that could not manage her behaviours appropriately. Through the services and consultation provided by NYCCAC and the regional psycho-geriatric team, we determined that Cummer Lodge—Toronto Homes for the Aged, would be the best choice (geographically as well, for

proximity to our group home and family).

A partnership was formed between our agency and Cummer Lodge. Diane’s family has limited involvement with her life and we knew that she would need the continuing support of our staff on a regular basis, for an anticipated, lengthy transition. The staff and management at Cummer Lodge were welcoming and positive about Diane coming to stay at their facility. In December 2004, she moved there.

By this time, Diane had entered the “end-stage” of Alzheimer’s, but needed our extra support nevertheless. The staff from Diane’s group home have continued to offer 3 hours of

support daily. We help with her supper and nighttime routine. The staff at Cummer Lodge, as well as Diane herself, have come to depend on us.

Our agency benefits as well, no one had to say good-bye to Diane almost a year ago.

We are still active in her life, and it is comforting to know that there is still a role to play after one of our own has had to move on. The ties are not cut, just extended.



## COMMUNICATION AND AGING

Older Adults may experience a change in ability to communicate. People with a developmental disabilities who are aging, their caregivers and friends need to understand the prevalence of these communication changes. Understanding is the first step. Then it is possible to address the communication difficulty with a specific assessment and intervention. The outcome can be a sustained quality of life.

Speech and language problems can be caused by stroke, head injury, neurological diseases, tumours, respiratory diseases, the side effects of medications, dementia and psychiatric disorders.

Hearing related problems among seniors may be the result of the aging process, noise exposure, an inherited predisposition, middle ear dysfunction, medications, head



injury or tumour.

For more information on Speech, Language and Hearing Disorders and their treatment visit the web site of the Canadian Association of speech-language pathologists and audiologists (CASLPA). The site contains articles, fact sheets, on-line presentations and information on finding a speech/language professional in your area

<http://www.caslpa.ca/english/resources/seniors.asp>

### Prevalence of Communication Challenges Among Older Adults:

1 in 10 Canadians have a speech, language or hearing problem.

Hearing loss is the third most prevalent chronic disability among older adults.

20% of adults over 65, 40% over 75 and 80% of nursing home residents have a significant hearing problem.

6-12% of seniors experience speech, language or voice difficulties.

# OSTEOPOROSIS THE HIDDEN AILMENT OF AGING

Osteoporosis is a disease that shows up as low bone mass and deterioration of bone tissue. The resultant increase of bone fragility adds to the risk of fracture, particularly of the hip, spine and wrist. Osteoporosis is referred to as the hidden ailment because bone loss occurs without symptoms.

A few facts about osteoporosis:

- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 8 men over the age of 50 have it.
- Osteoporosis can strike at any age.
- 70% of hip fractures are osteoporosis related.
- Health care treatments in Canada for osteoporosis and associated fractures is estimated to be \$1.3 billion each year.
- Hip fractures result in death in up to 20% of cases and disability in 50% of those who survive.
- Osteoporosis can reduce quality of life through disfigurement, lowered self esteem, reduction or loss of mobility, and decreased independence.
- Osteoporosis can be prevented with exercise and diet.

Learn more about osteoporosis and what you can do to prevent it at

[Http://www.osteoporosis.ca/english/home/default.asp?s=1](http://www.osteoporosis.ca/english/home/default.asp?s=1)



## HAMILTON, PEEL, BRANT, HALTON AND NIAGARA HOSTS WORKSHOP CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

a unique partnership that has evolved in Peel region between the respective partners.

The afternoon hosted small facilitated workshops broken down into the respective regions (areas within Hamilton, Peel, Brant, Halton, Niagara) with both of the sectors exploring strategies and planning next steps to respond to a case study that was provided to all groups. This exercise led to significant dialogue in all of the groups on the imperative need for us to continue to work on cross-sector planning to provide the best support to the individuals in our care.

Each region identified an agency to take the lead for their respective community; they will continue to keep all participants up to date on the next steps.

Immediately following the workshop these lead agencies met to plan next steps and a follow-up teleconference.

A full report on the workshop and identified outcomes will be available through OPADD by the end of the year.



Ron Coristine speaking to the morning plenary session



Working groups map out strategies for cross sector planning



# Ontario Partnership on Aging & Developmental Disabilities

Building Bridges Between the Long Term Care and Developmental Services Sectors

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Your gateway to information on aging and  
developmental disabilities  
[www.opadd.on.ca](http://www.opadd.on.ca)

OPADD's Aging and Developmental Disabilities Project  
is funded by:



## Our Vision

That older adults with a developmental disability have the same rights to support and services as all older adults.

## Our Principles

CHOICE  
ACCESS  
CREATIVE OPTIONS  
INDIVIDUALIZED PLANNING

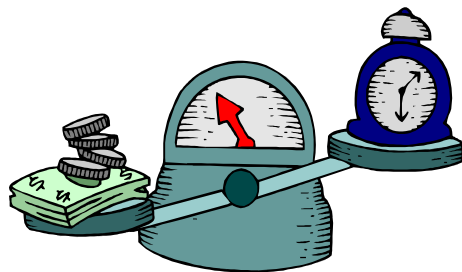
## Local Solutions

OPADD believes that local community groups are key to producing tangible results by linking both sectors at the level of the local agency with participation from local planning bodies. Each organization retains its autonomy and enriches its capacity to support people with a developmental disability as they age.

## COMPENSATING THE IMPORTANT WORK OF FAMILY CAREGIVERS

The hidden costs and invisible contributions of family caregivers is examined in the final report. "Consultation on Financial Compensation Initiatives for Family Caregivers of Dependent Adults." The paper grew out of discussions between researchers and stakeholders about how to make research more relevant to the policy community.

Financial compensation is described in the report as part of a menu of options that is broader than tax relief and also target labour policy to include employees with caregiving responsibilities. Both immediate compensation such as paid leave and longer term support such as pension credits are part of the



consideration. The paper provides an overview of policies in Germany, Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom that have particular relevance to developing policy in the Canadian context.

The Executive Summary and complete report are available at <http://www.msvu.ca/mdcaging/policyprofiles.asp#report>

For more information visit [www.opadd.on.ca](http://www.opadd.on.ca) and click on the tab, "caregiver support."

## THE OPADD LETTER INVITES YOUR SUBMISSIONS

The OPADD Letter provides a vehicle for the partners to learn from one another. If you are part of an interesting project in the area of aging and developmental disabilities let us hear from you. Prepare your article in Microsoft Word and send it to us via E-mail. If you prefer send it in hard copy by fax or post. The OPADD Letter is published four times a year.



Your story in print can bring inspiration to others.