

OPADD LETTER

June/July 2005

TRANSITION PLANNING GUIDE READY FOR DISTRIBUTION

OPADD's Transition Task Group has developed a Transition Planning Guide for paid and unpaid caregivers. A draft of the guide has been distributed to a number of OPADD members and service providers for testing.

Feedback is being collected during the early part of June and will shape the development of this important resource. The guide will be available for general distribution this summer.

The Transition Guide includes information and checklists to help caregivers

think about the aging of people with developmental disabilities and to plan for anticipated support needs. The guide covers topics such as the Definition and Principles of Transition Planning, the Role of the Individual in the Planning



Process, Aging with a Developmental Disability, Lifestyle Considerations, the

Role of the Family, Support Options, Moving to a Long Term Care Home and more.

The Guide was developed based on research work of the Task Group as well as the work of the Huron Trillium Partnership.

The Guide will be a living document that will undergo an annual review and updating to keep it fresh and current to the needs of caregivers.

Watch for the Guide on the OPADD website this summer, where it can be downloaded and printed without charge.

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REGIONAL CROSS SECTOR PLANNING PROCESSES UNDERWAY

Eight regional groups are pursuing the realization of a sustained cross sector planning process on aging and developmental disabilities.

Over the coming months, these groups will organize and host cross sector workshops that will not only inform caregivers and decision-makers but facilitate

ongoing regional planning processes.

Regional planning processes are key to addressing the many challenges ahead. The partnerships that will form at the regional and local levels will support effective transition planning into older adulthood for people with a developmental disability.

Where these partnerships have already been formed innovative strategies have been put in place to respond to the needs of older adults with developmental disabilities.

Watch for exciting news about the regions over the coming months.

The Newsletter of the
Ontario Partnership
on Aging and
Developmental
Disabilities

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

MUSIC FOR THE CAREGIVER

ADAPTED FROM AN ARTICLE BY BY JAMES SCHALLER C.M.P.—FROM THE CAREGIVER NEWSLETTER WITH PERMISSION

Research tells us that music can affect how plants grow. Songs tell stories of music that soothes the soul. More recently the therapeutic benefits of music for caregivers has been described in an article in the Caregiver Newsletter by James Schaller. Here are a few excerpts from that article.

Benefits

Research consistently demonstrates benefits of music such support of pain management, stress reduction, lowering of blood pressure, deep relaxation, the release of endorphins and elevation of the immune system.

Who Can Benefit from Music?

Music can benefit the caregiver directly when used as a source of relaxation and distraction from the stresses of care-giving. People preparing for surgery or other situations where there may be some apprehension can benefit from music's relaxing quality.

People with dementia can benefit from music to reduce anxiety or alleviate the restlessness of sundowner's syndrome.

Therapeutic Music

Music designed to be therapeutic or that has therapeutic features achieves the best results. Here are some descriptors to choosing music with beneficial effects:

- Tempos that are moderate to slow and approach the heart rate when engaged in light activity (80 to 90 beats per minute) and move to slower rates of 50 to 65 beats per minute.
- People can listen to ecoustic instruments for longer periods of time than electronic so ecoustic instruments or a combination of ecoustic accompanied by electronic instruments are preferable.
- A favourite performer, song or piece of music.

- Simple melodies and even dynamics rather than sharp or loud sounds.
- A sequence of music selections that moves gradually to slower tempos over the length of the recording.



For more information:

Canadian Association for Music Therapy
<http://www.musictherapy.ca>

Music Therapy and Older Adults
<http://www.musictherapy.org/factsheets/olderadults.html>

FESTIVAL OF CONFERENCES—TORONTO 2007



The Ontario Partnership on Aging and Developmental Disabilities has joined the International Festival of Conferences planning process. The International Festival of Conferences on Aging, Disabilities and Technology will bring hundreds of professionals, educators, practitioners, researchers, policy makers, caregivers, consumers and families to Toronto from around the world.

There are four concurrent conferences being hosted from June 16 to 19 2007:

1. Growing Older with a Disability
2. Technology and Aging
3. Caregivers, Essential Partners in Care
4. Advances in Neuro-rehabilitation.

One of the important questions driving the planning for the Conference on Growing Older with a Disability is, "How do those who are already disabled cope with increased impairment as they grow older? Professionals in the health and rehabilitation sectors are noting significantly increased demand on their resources, creating caregiver issues and strained resources that require new solutions to maintain independent living in the community living and access to needed services.

Consumers will be invited to speak of their experience and practitioners will be invited to present their data and best practices. The conference will seek new models of service, new policies and solutions from the field. The focus will not be on a population with problems, but on our creative spirit of

cooperation, societal support and consumer-directed empowerment.

Conference objectives are now being finalized and will include ideas such as:

- Examining evidence-based models of care coordination that facilitate successful aging for people with lifelong disabilities.
- Considering unique physical and mental health issues and successful interventions for older persons with lifelong disabilities.
- Exploring promising policy and practice issues with reference to supporting people from all cultural groups.
- including older persons with lifelong disabilities in the design and evaluation of services.

Find out more about this and the other three conferences at the web site:
<http://www.ficdat.ca/index.php>

or follow the links from the home page of the opadd web site: www.opadd.on.

SENIORS CENTRE CELEBRATES HISTORY OF INCLUSION

BY LAWRIE BLOOM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OLDER ADULT CENTRES'S ASSOC. OF ONTARIO

My story begins in the Fall of 1975 when I became the Supervisor of Youth, Seniors and Special Groups for the City of Brampton. This position required working with children and adults as well as several organizations providing services for populations with special needs: the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (ACLD), the local Association for the Mentally Retarded (AMR) and the Peel Association for Handicapped Adults (PAHA). These groups shared space in the Civic Centre.

In Nov. 1979 the Brampton Program welcomed the Knightsbridge Seniors Centre into the facility. The presence of the Knightsbridge Seniors added a new dimension. This single location served people who were aging and people with developmental disabilities.

The original seniors group was quite small as the program's previous location had not been fully accessible. The seniors group had been relegated to

the second floor creating problems for people in wheelchairs. Moving into Knightsbridge was a wonderful experience for the seniors group as the facility had many advantages: a single story, convenient transportation and wheelchair accessible bathrooms. These features contributed to a doubling of the seniors' membership within a very short time.

Seniors became involved as volunteers with participants from the other groups. Wonderful friendships and bonds were formed. When tragedy hit, such as a member of the group passing away, people would band together and support each other.

As these various groups intermingled and supported one another, I noticed how people with various disabilities rarely complained, adapted to the challenges of living and maintained a positive outlook and zest for life. I truly believe, the fact that these programs

shared a common building not only contributed to much good work being accomplished but fostered understanding and acceptance among individual participants. The seniors group welcomed older adults with developmental disabilities as full members who enjoyed all privileges.

This experience was life changing for me. My eyes were opened to the countless challenges that people with developmental disabilities face as a matter of course and the positive ways in which they handle them. I recall the many ways in which the seniors of Knightsbridge Centre provided caring assistance and support to alleviate the challenges facing older adults with developmental disabilities.

The issues surrounding aging with a developmental disability will continue to be routine for program participants at the Brampton Civic Centre.

CENTRAL EAST HOSTS TRANSITION WORKSHOP

The workshop helped to alleviate the fear that often gets in the way of initial cross sector dialogue.

Central East Region hosted an innovative workshop that brought seventy one developmental service and long term care providers together for a day of dialogue and planning. Participants were given opportunity to do some self-assessment and to reflect on the mandate of their respective organizations. The next step was to have participants share who they were and what they did with those from the other sector. The workshop helped to alleviate the fear that often gets in the way of initial cross sector dialogue. Participants found that the process helped them to listen and to understand one another.

The exercise in introspection followed by dialogue, was also applied to understanding the client experience. Models of support that put the client at the centre of planning were presented to help participants see how their divergent



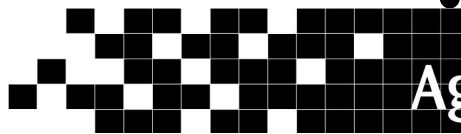
services actually had a lot in common. However deepening understanding among caregivers did not stop there. Attention was also paid to walking a day in the shoes of a client, to better appreciate what it is like to be on the receiving end of a service provider's support.

The workshop was designed to look closely at the particular needs of older adults with developmental disabilities who need to plan for transition to a long term care home. While transition planning pertains to the entire spectrum of aging the Central East Region wanted to examine the specifics of moving to a long

term care residence. This focus was designed to help care givers who are no longer able to adapt a living situation to the emerging needs of an older adult.

Workshop participants were asked to take a copy of the Draft Transition Guide recently completed by OPADD's Transition Task Group and test it in their respective organizations. The feedback will help to shape the guide before it is prepared for general distribution across Ontario. The Guide provides a wealth of information on aging with a developmental disability. It is designed to support transition planning to older adulthood as a means to preserve quality of life.

The Central East Training Committee which was responsible for the highly successful workshop is now in the process of expanding their membership and mandate to become the Central East Committee on Aging and Developmental Disabilities. The new group will provide an ongoing cross sector planning capacity for the Central East Region.



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

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.

TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS SUPPORTING OLDER ADULTS WITH A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY

Adapted from an article by Sheri Fiegehen in
the Comfort Life 2005 Directory

Educate yourself

Talk to your loved one's, doctors and other professionals; get information from appropriate health-care organizations; read books; check out the Internet and talk to others who have caregiving experience.

Find help

Community Care Access Centres are a good starting point for information about how to access services to seniors. You can also obtain help from knowledgeable professionals working in developmental services or long term care.

Determine what you can and cannot do

What you can do will depend not only on you but who else is available to lend a hand; an important factor is the degree of help required by the person you are supporting and how their needs may change from day to day.

Learn proper care techniques

Get training on care-giving tasks with which you are not familiar. If you must help someone with tasks such as bathing, learn how to do it safely and properly.

Take time out

Caregiving can be overwhelming and regular breaks are a necessity. Make use of respite services, including adult day care programs at local seniors' centres and caregiver relief programs. You can also ask family, friends or neighbours to take over for a few hours.

Join a support group for caregivers

Talk to others who are in the same situation; share stories, moral support and practical advice.

Don't be a superhero

Understand that you can't do everything. Many caregivers take on too much. Put your pride aside and ask for help and when people offer assistance, accept it.

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.

For more information visit www.opadd.on.ca and click on the tab, "caregiver support."