

Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy update

Spring is in the air and with it comes a flurry of activity related to the DS Human Resource Strategy.

You may recall the new sub-committees announced in our [December 2011](#) issue. Here's what they are up to:

The Core Competencies Provincial Implementation Committee is offering a second round of training (as part of phase 2 of implementation) to more agencies between June and September 2012. The training covers the competencies (skills) necessary for direct support professionals.

At the end of this round of training, more than 100 agencies will have participated. This includes two of the largest agencies in the province – Christian Horizons and Community Living Toronto.

Ultimately, implementing the core competencies will lead to a higher quality of service for people with developmental disabilities. When you improve the quality of your staff you improve the quality of your programs, which means more enriching experiences for people with developmental disabilities.

What are core competencies?

Core competencies define the skills, abilities and attitudes necessary for developmental services employees. They give people a clear understanding about what they need to do to improve and succeed in their jobs.

These competencies apply to direct support professionals:

- Advocating for others
- Collaboration
- Creative problem solving and decision making
- Fostering independence in others
- Initiative
- Interpersonal relations and respect
- Resilience.



The Communication and Marketing Committee launched a [DS HR Strategy Facebook](#) page in April. The Facebook page is another way to reach out to people who are considering post-secondary education or a career in the field of developmental services.

The page complements the [DS HR Strategy website](#). If you are looking for information about the Strategy, a career or training requirements for the sector or marketing tools, be sure to check out the site.

There are banners and bookmarks that agencies can use to promote themselves at college and university career and job fairs.

These events are great opportunities to discuss career possibilities with students and recruit students and graduates. Fairs were held in March at Fanshawe and Brescia colleges. Representatives from the sector were on hand to give job-seekers the inside scoop on what they need to do now to successfully land a position in the future.

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New respite home opens in Guelph

Minister of Community and Social Services John Milloy joined Guelph MPP Liz Sandals for the official opening of a new respite home for adults with developmental disabilities.

The new six-bed home, called Ooster House, is expected to help 50 families annually in Guelph and Wellington County. It will give them a much-needed break from the challenges of caring for loved-ones full-time.

The ministry provided \$150,000 in one-time funding for the new respite home and will be providing \$300,000 in annualized operational funding in 2012-13.

The home was named in honour of John and Johanna Oosterhuis for their extraordinary commitment to serving people with developmental disabilities.

Ooster House is the result of a collaboration between Hopewell Children's Homes and Community Living Guelph Wellington.





A reason to smile

Enhanced dental care for people with disabilities

[Ontario Disability Support Program](#) (ODSP) recipients may benefit from enhanced dental care.

ODSP covers basic dental services, including examinations, X-rays, fillings and extractions.

Under the program's Dental Special Care Plan, ODSP recipients and their eligible family members may be able to take advantage of more services.

The Dental Special Care Plan covers:

- Recall examinations
- Polishing
- Scaling/root planing (deep cleaning)
- Fluoride treatments, and
- Bruxism appliances (dental guards that protect your teeth from grinding).

To be eligible for the enhanced coverage, an ODSP recipient's disability, prescribed medications or treatments must affect their oral health. This includes some people with a developmental disability.

To access the enhanced services, a person's dentist must submit a pre-approval form to the ODSP dental plan administrator (AccertaClaim Servcorp Inc.).

Once approved, Dental Special Care treatment plans are valid for five years. If the person's needs change during this time, the dentist must fill out a new pre-approval form.

In emergency situations, the plan may also cover services retroactively.

The Dental Special Care Plan also is available to children whose parents receive Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities.

If you or someone you know could benefit from the Dental Special Care Plan, talk to a dentist for more information.

Riding Up Front

Vita's New Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle

In February, Vita Community Living Services picked up the keys to an MV-1.

The MV-1 is a mobility vehicle. It is designed for the needs of wheelchair users. It has wide doors, a low step and a ramp that slides out at the touch of a button.

For Vita's members, many of whom have developmental and physical disabilities, the MV-1 means they can participate in their local community.

And because the MV-1 has room for wheelchairs in the front of the van as well as in the back, they also get to experience riding up front.

"The MV-1 is a hit with our members," says interim executive director Dunja Monaghan.

"It's a safe way for them to get around, go to appointments and maintain connections in the community. Plus, they get to sit next to the driver and ride shotgun for the first time."

Vita Community Living Services serves communities in Toronto and York Region, providing residential services, day programs and job training and support for people with developmental disabilities.

The Honourable David Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, was on hand when Vita Community Living Services unveiled its MV-1.





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MTCU updates standard for DSW programs

And an important note about the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU). MTCU has updated its program standard for Developmental Services Worker programs delivered by Ontario colleges based on earlier recommendations from the ministry and the Strategy, as well as from colleges and developmental services agencies.

The standard now reflects new ministry legislation and the core competencies for developmental services staff. This helps align the developmental services and education sectors. It also gives students a better foundation and enables them to provide the best quality care to people with developmental disabilities in the workforce.

You asked...

We received a question about how the changes to the Special Services at Home (SSAH) program will impact young adults with a developmental disability. Here's what you need to know:

Q: What is the impact on young adults who will turn 18 between April 1, 2012, and March 31, 2013?

A: For youth with a developmental disability who are receiving SSAH funding and will turn 18 between April 1, 2012, and March 31, 2013:

- They will continue to receive the same amount of funding until March 31, 2013.
- Until they turn 18, they will receive the funding through SSAH. After that, they will receive it through the Passport Program.
- They do not need to complete an application this year; they'll get the funding automatically.
- They can use the funding to purchase the same supports as in the past (such as respite and personal development and growth).
- Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) regional offices will provide them with more information about next steps.

Special Services at Home and Passport have changed

As of April 1, 2012:

- Direct funding for adults with a developmental disability is available through Passport.
- SSAH no longer serves adults with a developmental disability. It is now a program for children only, but MCSS continues to deliver the program.

What does this mean for adults with a developmental disability who received funding through the Special Services at Home program in 2011-2012?

[Find out more.](#)

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