



January 26, 2012

The Provincial Network recently undertook to develop a government communication initiative called “One Message, Many Voices” aimed at finding a common message that all member groups of the Network could deliver to government. You will find attached the initial strategy document that the Network has produced, a handout sheet containing key message that you can use in talking to government and a set of questions and answers related to the key messages. The main objective of this initiative is to provide key messages, strategies and resources that will allow members to better align their organization’s government advocacy initiatives with Network partners in order to ensure that the government hears a loud and consistent message from the developmental services sector. The Network member groups have all endorsed these strategies and the key messages and have committed to work cooperatively to implement and promote the initiative. While phase one of the strategy includes a request for local organizations to promote our key messages with their MPPs, the Provincial Network as a body will also be working to communicate with senior politicians and bureaucrats to seek the implementation of our key messages.

This coordinated effort will aim to:

- Bring awareness to critical issues facing the developmental services sector and the people supported within it;
- Avoid further cuts to the DS budget, and develop a comprehensive plan with government to revitalize and stabilize the sector, ensuring people get the appropriate supports they need in their communities;
- Secure immediate funding to address the most critical needs of people waiting for support;
- Over the longer term, build public support and awareness.

The material contained in the attached kit is only the first step of an overall strategy being coordinated by members of the Provincial Network, it is not anticipated that the steps contained in this kit will, alone, achieve the outcomes we are seeking. The campaign will unfold in the coming weeks and months and will include a number of steps and stages that will provide member groups with:

- Resources for getting our issues before government including:
 - Key messages and strategies for delivering messages to government (included in the attached document)
 - Updating the Network website to make messages and materials available to members and to the public
 - Gather and circulate stories to reinforce the key messages

- Resources to assist in responding to the Provincial pre-budget processes
- Information to assist in responding to the Drummond report on government spending expected out shortly including:
 - Analysis of the report
 - Strategies and resources for communication with government
 - Strategies and resources for communication with the media
- Strategies and resources for sustaining communications with government and public over time
- Updates on the progress of the One Message strategy and its achievements

Please review the materials that are attached and integrate the key messages and strategies provided into the advocacy efforts you undertake with your members.

The members of the work group that are coordinating this initiative with the Provincial Network include the following people:

Karen Bell – Community Living Toronto
Ann Bilodeau – KW Habilitation, Kitchener
Murray Hamilton – London
Gordon Kyle - Community Living Ontario
Michelle Marshall – Participation House (Durham Region), OASIS
Keith Powell - Community Living Ontario
Eugene Versteeg – Christian Horizons
Don Walker – New Visions Toronto, Provincial Network

If you have questions about this initiative, please feel free to contact any of the people on the work group.

Please provide the Provincial Networks with updates on your efforts related to this initiative including any information or commitments that you receive from members of government. These updates can be directed to the chair of the working group Gordon Kyle by email: gordon@communitylivingontario.ca or phone: 416-447-4348.

It is critical that we work together to have our issues heard. In the coming months, the demands for government attention to the endless number of issues that exist across the province will only intensify; we must take action to be heard above the din. I encourage you to take immediate steps act on the materials provided here.

Yours Truly,

Michelle Palmer,
Chair