



Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders O.A.F.C.C.D. NEWSLETTER November 2017

933 Alice Street, Woodstock, ON N4S 2J9 Phone: 519-290-1763 Website: www.oafccd.com

OAFCCD Needs Your Help!

OAFCCD is in dire need of your financial support. Revenues from membership fees and donation have been very low this year and the Provincial Coordinator position is in jeopardy.

You can help by paying your 2017 membership if you haven't already done so, or by making a donation to OAFCCD. Giving to OAFCCD is easy! You can send a cheque with your membership fee using the attached Membership Renewal Form or you can make an immediate donation on-line through CanadaHelps.

Giving Tuesday

Everyone loves a bargain and many of you will be out shopping on Black Friday or Cyber Monday. How about giving back to the community by making a donation on Giving Tuesday? Many charities, including OAFCCD, would appreciate a helping hand. Please consider making a donation to OAFCCD through CanadaHelps:

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/10833> Donation tax receipts are issued by CanadaHelps and the funds are directed to OAFCCD.



United Way and OAFCCD

Did you know that you can designate your United Way contribution to OAFCCD. Michelle Ryan, a longtime supporter and SEAC Member, has designated half of her annual United Way contribution to OAFCCD. You can too!! Designating your contribution to OAFCCD helps OAFCCD to continue to work on public awareness and advocacy.

Special Needs Strategy

On September 1st, 2017 a Memo was sent to all partners in the planning for integration of rehabilitation services directing local planning tables to cease their activities. This was a major disappointment to OAFCCD as it seemed that after 3 years of hard work at the community level improvements to speech and language services were very close.

The memo identified the next steps that would occur in the planning for integrated rehabilitation services and some key dates. The first is that the Ministries will establish a Provincial Panel of Experts, including clinical experts, sector partners and education stakeholders to look at key issues including:

- Rehabilitation components of *Policy Program Memorandum (PPM) 81: Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings*,
- Implementation of rehabilitation services across education and community-based sectors in a tiered service delivery model,
- Use of technology for information sharing and reporting, funding and accountability measures.

The second step is a planned move of the school Health Support Services (SHSS) Program rehabilitation services (Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Speech-Language Pathology) from the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) to Children's Treatment Centres on April 1, 2018. This step builds on the changes earlier this year when the funding for the SHSS rehabilitation services was moved from Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

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The Memo indicated that there would be no impact on families as rehabilitation services are unchanged. The LHINs, who now manage all CCAC programs and services following the dissolution of the CCACs, will continue to provide these services through contracted providers until the transition on April 1st, 2018. LHINs currently manage referral and Case Management and the OT, PT and SLP services are provided through contracted providers.

On April 1, 2018 the management of the School Health Support Services rehabilitation services will move to the 21 CTCs and all service contracts will remain unchanged to support workforce stabilization. The contracts will be extended until at least April 1, 2019 and possibly to the end of the school year on June 30th, 2019.

Decisions are still to be made on the following items:

- Whether a contracted service provider can end their contract, if for example, pediatric caseload is small and they prefer to focus on adult services.
- When intake will transfer from LHIN to CTC
- Whether referral to the School Health Support Services rehabilitation services will still be through the school Principal, as at present, or if a parent can make a referral
- Whether service delivery through contracted service providers can change from a managed care delivery model to a tiered intervention model
- Whether services currently out of scope can be included in the proposed changes to service delivery (home school, private schools, acute care services or schools on reservations). At present these services and related contracts will remain with the LHINs after April 1, 2018
- When speech services and language services will be unified to reduce gaps and prevent duplication.

In response to the Memo, OAFCCD sent a letter to the Minister requesting a meeting and expressing concerns about further delays to service improvements. In addition, OAFCCD requested that families be included on the Provincial Expert Panel

and that OAFCCD would like to be a member representing families. To date there has been no response to the letter.

President's Choice Children's Charity Changes Direction

On September 21st, 2017 the Loblaw's Corporation made an announcement about a change in strategic direction for the charitable arm, President's Choice Children's Charity. They announced \$150 million dollars in support of children's nutrition over the next 10 years. The program will have two areas of focus:

- **Feed Kids Good Food** through school and community programs, and partnership with organizations that address childhood hunger;
- **Feed Kids Food Knowledge** by supporting food based education programs to empower children to make healthy, responsible and better informed food choices.

As a result, of this change in direction, President's Choice Children's Charity will no longer accept applications to help children with special needs after October 31st, 2017. In their own words:

*"Since 1989, we have helped thousands of families by providing wheelchair accessible vehicles, home accessibility, equipment, and various therapies such as ABA/IBI, occupational, speech and physiotherapy and we know how greatly appreciated those efforts were."**

Over the years, President's Choice Children's Charity has:

- Granted \$146 million dollars to nutrition and special needs over the past 28 years
- In 2016 a total of \$6,190,000 was granted to food and nutrition programs for children and \$9,202,000 was granted to support children with special needs (Physical or Developmental Disability)
- Grants supported 26,300 hours of therapy

This will be a major loss for many families of children with speech and language impairments linked to physical or developmental disability as they will no longer be able to receive funding for speech-language pathology therapy services.