



Developmentally Speaking

A NEWSLETTER
FOR OPSEU'S DEVELOPMENTAL
SERVICE WORKERS - SECTOR 2

Message from the Chair

Sue Walker, Chair, Developmental Service Executive

Here we go again.

After fighting to get decent wages in the sector we now have to deal with Bill 77, the new Developmental Service Act. Since this legislation was adopted the Ministry of Community and Social Services has announced a new initiative, called Increased Community Capacity. In short it means increased services without additional funding. The time frame for Employer to develop a plan is short as Increased Community Capacity is scheduled to be implemented in 2009.

The sector executive would like to say 'Thanks! Good bye! and Good Luck! to Helen Riehl – our longest-serving executive member. Helen has been on the sector executive since 1990. A clock was presented to Helen to thank her for her years of hard work on behalf of the sector.

At the same time we wish to welcome Fran Kelly who will be stepping into the bargaining representative position.

Let's talk bargaining

Beth Collier, Vice Chair 2C,
Developmental Services Sector Executive

Bargaining is best understood when certain key terms become a part of our common vocabulary.

Coordinated Bargaining: bargaining units in the same sector at different tables at the same time

Pattern Bargaining: a strong unit agrees to a contract then other units use it as a template for their collective agreement.

Central Bargaining: a central table bargains for the sector

In our sector we are moving toward a strong coordinated bargaining effort in 2010 with a long term goal of central bargaining. However, not all agencies will be able to get to the table in 2010. Some of the larger agencies have contracts expiring in 2009 and it will be difficult for them to sign a one-year agreement to catch the group.

Employers are on to us and our sector plan; some want to join in and some Employers want to keep "their" agencies far away.

It can be difficult for some of us to get our members on board for coordinated or centralized bargaining in Developmental Services. Why is this?

1. They have superior wages and benefits, such as an established pension plan, and do not see the personal benefits
2. Funding comes from more than one ministry
3. Labour relations are positive and members do not want to see any disruptions
4. Some agencies are run very differently; those with group homes vs. those with day programs or a combination of the two

What are these "out of sync" agencies doing to assist those that are moving toward coordinated bargaining?

1. Pushing for stronger language that others can use or build on
2. Lobbying MPPs
3. Supporting with time and money when needed
4. Sharing information

Lawnmower and snow blowers: health and safety concerns

**Violet Stranger, Health and Safety Representative,
Developmental Services Sector Executive**

If your employer expects you to mow lawns or operate snow blowers at your workplace there are many precautions you must be aware of. Your employer must take all the precautions listed below or they are not abiding by the Occupational Health & Safety Act. You have the right to refuse to use a power mower or snow blower, or any other equipment if your employer has not followed and documented in writing all of the steps listed below.

Your employer must ensure that:

- You have read, understand, and follow the manufacturer's operating manual.
- Your supervisor has fully trained you on how to operate the mower. Your supervisor should demonstrate how to use the mower, and observe you working with it until satisfied that you can operate it safely.
- You should be trained on how to mow slopes, hills, uneven ground etc.
- As with any equipment your employer must maintain it in good working order. The employer must keep a record of maintenance and get the mowers checked by an electrician or other qualified person. They should have a maintenance schedule developed for each piece of equipment.
- You know the controls and how to stop the machine quickly.
- You know what to do if the machine malfunctions or has other damage or defects.
- The employer must supply you with Personal Protective Equipment, in this case you will need, non-slip safety footwear, hearing and eye protection.
- The employer is also responsible to ensure that the mower is inspected prior to each use. This information has to

Memo to DSS Locals: 2009 dues are due

Thank you to all the locals that have paid their dues for 2009. However, dues for several locals are still outstanding. This is a friendly reminder to please submit your 2009 payment at your earliest convenience.

Calculating local dues:

For locals that have less than 50 members, your dues remain unchanged at \$50.00 for 2009. Dues for locals that have 100 or more members pay \$100.00 – the same as 2008.

If paying these dues causes your local undue hardship, please let the executive know so your local may be considered for an exemption.

Please make your cheques payable to the Developmental Services Sector and mail to:

Scott Collins
407 Roy Street, Sturgeon Falls, Ontario, P2B 3E6

Your attention to your 2009 dues payment is greatly appreciated!

be documented in writing and kept in a file. The pre-use inspection checklist is similar to the checklist that we complete before using the vehicles.

Things to check for should include:

- Check for any damage prior to use
- Inspect cords for defects: check the power cord for cracking, fraying, and other signs of wear or faults in the cord insulation.
- Check for damaged switches and ones with faulty trigger locks.
- Inspect the plug for cracks and for missing, loose or faulty prongs.
- Is the blade sharp? Are the stopping controls working properly?
- Are shields and other guards, such as the rear drag shield and the discharge deflector, in place and working properly?
- Has the yard been checked for obstacles?
- Are all people safely away from the area?
- Do you know how to properly re-fuel the machine?
- Have you been trained?
- If using an electric mower do you have the proper size extension cord
- proper (grounded) plug and receptacle

**Developmental Services,
Sector 2 Executive**

Sector Email: opseu.sector2ex@gmail.com

Chair

Sue Walker

Local 249, Central West Specialized
Developmental Services, Oakville
905-574-7445 / 289-260-5915 (cell)

**Vice-Chair, Associations for Community Living
(Sector 2a)**

Kelly Petman

Local 366, C. L. Huntsville, Huntsville
kpelman@hotmail.com

**Vice-Chair, Other Related Community Services
(Sector 2b)**

Silvana Cacciatore-Roy

Local 738, Avenue II Community Program
Services, Thunder Bay
silvanatbcf@hotmail.com

Vice-Chair, Former Schedule 2 (Sector 2c)

Beth Collier

Local 511, Surrey Place Centre, Toronto
collierbeth@aim.com

Secretary/Treasurer

Scott Collins

Local 667, North Bay Association for Community
Living, North Bay
sscottsnest@sympatico.ca

Communications Representative

Cassie Moeller

Local 702, Kenora Association for Community
Living, Kenora
cmlocal702@gmail.com

Bargaining Representative

Fran Kelly

Local 676, Community Living Greater Sudbury,
Sudbury
fdownie@sympatico.ca

Health and Safety Representative

Ianthe (Violet) Stringer

Local 448, Pathways to Independence, Belleville
ianthe_s@sympatico.ca

Wanted: Participants for HR and labour relations study

**Silvana Cacciatore-Roy, Vice chair 2B,
Developmental Services Sector Executive**

You are invited to participate in a research study about changes in Ontario's developmental services sector. Robert Hickey, an assistant professor in the School of Policy Studies at Queen's University, is conducting the project. Specifically, this research examines the impacts of restructuring on human resource management practices and labour relations.

The objective of this research project is to improve the quality of developmental services in Ontario and ultimately, to improve the quality of life of individuals accessing those services. The core focus of the research study is on the role of unions and human resource managers in the sector and the impact of labour-management relations on the provision and quality of developmental services.

Your sector executive has met with Prof. Hickey and believes that his study is an excellent opportunity to participate in a broad and objective research-based study. The more people he studies, the more he will be able to improve the understanding of human resource practices and labour relations in the developmental services sector.

Your participation is anonymous and the information you provide will be treated confidentially. If you would like to meet with Robert, or to collect more information about his study, please contact him at the e-mail or number below.

*Prof. Robert Hickey,
School of Policy Studies, Queen's University
hickeyr@queensu.ca / 613-533-6485*

Glad to be back!

**Fran Kelly, Bargaining Representative, Developmental Service
Sector Executive**

My name is Fran Kelly and I have been an activist in my local since we organized in 1999. Previous to that I was a steward in the retail sector. I am proud to say that I have been involved in

the trade union movement for 28 years.

I was member of the Developmental Service Sector Executive from 2001 to 2003 as the vice chair for Association for Community Living. I have been president of Local 676 Community Living Greater Sudbury for most of the last nine years. I have also enjoyed the roles of chief steward, health and safety representative, Employee Relations Committee chair and bargaining committee chair for two rounds of bargaining.

I have had considerable experience over the years in the areas of negotiating, settling grievances, mobilizing, organizing, educating and representing my members. In 2007 I had the wonderful experience of mobilizing on our campaign for Region 6.

This sector has demonstrated that we can and will continue to mobilize our members in the fight for decent wages, a pension plan, benefits, part-time work and a working environment that is free of violence.

Our work is important and our co-ordinated bargaining efforts are important. I am looking forward to the challenges that are ahead and remain confident that this sector can move our agenda forward and create careers in developmental services, not just jobs.

I look ahead with a positive vision for bargaining in 2009. Fourteen of our locals will be going to the table along with many CUPE locals. I encourage all of our members to support their bargaining efforts in any way you can.

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: Communication is a priority in our :
: sector. If you have changed your contact :
: information or are a new member, please :
: let our communication representative :
: Cassiey Moeller at: cmlocal702@gmail.com :
: or opseu.sector2ex@gmail.com. :
: :
: The more members we have contact :
: information from, including email :
: addresses, the more our sector will grow :
: for the benefit of all. :
: :
:

Bill 77: A cause for concern

Beth Collier, Vice Chair 2C, and Cassiey Moeller, Communications Representative, Developmental Services Sector Executive

On October 8, 2008, Bill 77 – *An Act to Provide Services to People with Developmental Disabilities* – received Royal Assent and became law. Instead of celebrating, the adoption of Bill 77 causes us grave concern.

Under Bill 77 government has set out a system of individualized funding, with no guaranteed funding for existing community based infrastructure. People will be assessed and assigned a dollar figure for the cost of their service needs, which creates another level of bureaucracy before someone receives services. Once a dollar figure has been assigned the person must find a service provider. The families and people with developmental disabilities will then have to choose how and where they receive their services. The choices would be between the current agency services or a broker system, which has yet to be defined. Where will the accountability be for these brokers and workers?

Developmental service agencies have demonstrated they provide quality services. With already-long waiting lists for agency services, and recruitment and retention issues, how does Bill 77 address these long standing issues? Around the province the concern is that families and people with developmental disabilities will be forced to choose the broker system over the people they know and trust, because of the cost. The brokers will take a fee right off the top before providing any service and will find the lowest bidder to provide care. With overhead costs such as pens, paper and even employee benefits the Broker service appears cheaper. This creates a system whereby the service provider who is cheapest will win service contracts rather than those who can provide the best service, and best workers.

The Act has other problems. For example, more services are to be provided to more people but at the same level of funding. Wherever we work in the public sector we know we need more funding for services not less. The overriding concern is that everyone who needs service may not receive it. As developmental service workers we put our heart in our work everyday. We must stay strong and continue to voice our concerns. We must remain active and outspoken on behalf of the people we support to ensure that their service remains intact.