



# VIOLENCE AT WORK: IT'S **NOT** PART OF THE JOB!

## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 13, 2008

### Epidemic of Violence against social/community workers must be stopped

LONDON – Imagine knowing you had a 50 per cent chance of being assaulted at work over the next 12 months. Imagine facing threats and verbal abuse daily in the workplace.

That's what many community and social service workers deal with daily, according to a recent poll, commissioned by the Ontario Public Service Employees Union.

Community services workers suffer an epidemic of threats, violence and abuse at work. Workers from across the southwest met in London today (June 13) to discuss what can be done about this crisis of violence in the workplace.

“Workers in these sectors don't know if they are going to be protected from serious assaults or threats when they go to work,” OPSEU President Warren (Smokey) Thomas said.

“For our members, assaults and threats are too often considered ‘part of the job’,” said Deb Gordon, of Sarnia, chair of OPSEU's 11,500 member community services council.

“Quality of care and the health and safety of our clients is being compromised due to underfunding, which leads to increased pressures to do more with less,” she said.

OPSEU is looking for legislative changes to address the epidemic of violence in the social and community work sectors.

OPSEU community services divisional council members work in developmental services, children's aid societies, child and family services, child care, community agencies, corrections, and child treatment centres.

-30-

For more information, contact:

David Cox 416-788-9197 or 1-800-268-7376 x 8314