

Local Action

Information for OPSEU members at Regional Centres in the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services

Centres of Excellence: A plan to keep the Centres open

Local presidents from the three Regional Centres, along with MERC chair and OPSEU staff submitted their Centres of Excellence report to Minister Papatello in a meeting on March 9th.

The report, developed in conjunction with the developmental service sector, spells out a plan to keep the Regional Centres open and improve services for all people with developmental disabilities.

"I'm extremely proud of the work that went into this report," said OPSEU President Leah Casselman. "It provides tangible solutions to problems across the developmental services sector, and builds on the expertise of our members in the Regional Centres."

Highlights of the report include:

- Building on Regional Centres' expertise to provide specialized long-term care to meet the increasing need as the number of seniors with developmental disabilities grows.
- Providing easy access to

respite care that families caring for developmentally disabled loved ones at home desperately need.

- Cutting waiting list by opening community access to the high quality services provided in the Regional Centres by experts who specialize in working with the developmentally disabled.
- Transforming the Centres into regional hubs for intake, needs assessment and access to all developmental services.
- Creating a central tracking

network through the regional hubs to ensure clients are getting quality services and ensuring no one falls through the cracks.

- Improving training and research by expanding current college and university placement programs and developing a professional development program for those already working in the field.

For the complete Centres of Excellence report go to www.stoptheclosure.ca and click "download report."

Launching website to Boost Campaign

OPSEU is launching a new website dedicated to the campaign to stop the closure of the Regional Centres on Mar. 24th.

Keeping up public pressure can save our jobs and the care of the Regional Centre residents.

You'll be able to visit www.stoptheclosure.ca to:

- Learn more about the campaign and why it's so important.
- Click a button to send a message to Minister Papatello to let her know you want to stop the closures. (The more she gets the more she'll listen—so keep them coming!)
- Download the Centres of Excellence report.
- Link to the local campaigns of other Regional Centres.

Meeting in Chatham to Launch Campaign Directed at Pat Hoy

Local president Rose Clark is organizing a town hall meeting at the CAW hall in Chatham Thur. Mar. 24th at 6 pm.

The meeting will update staff, residents' families and the community about the Centres of Excellence report and launch the next stage of the campaign to stop the closure of Southwestern.

We cannot let up now. Too much is at stake:

- Quality care for the high-needs clients that we serve.

- 500 local jobs.
- More than \$21million in payroll and purchasing spent every year in the local economy.

The closure of Southwestern will effect everyone in our community. We cannot afford to sit back and let it happen.

MPP Pat Hoy was elected to represent the needs of our community. He is a member of the government. We need to send him a loud reminder that he needs to use his influence around the

caucus table to keep Southwestern open.

Thursday's meeting will launch a lawn sign and lobby campaign.

Soon signs will be popping up on lawns across our community: "Stop the Closure—Call Pat Hoy"

The meeting will also launch a website that makes it easy for everyone to send Mr. Hoy a message.

Make sure you get as many people out to the meeting as possible. It's our jobs at stake.

Keeping the campaign going in Orillia and Smiths Falls

Thanks to the great work of our members, staff and residents' families, the media has continued to cover the story of the Regional Centre closures and the negative impacts closure will have.

The more this issue remains in the public eye the more political pressure there is on Minister Papatello and the Liberal government to reconsider their decision.

Keep those letters to the editor coming! Contact your local newspapers and radio stations and let them know why you think it is important to keep the Centres open.

The more people are talking about it the better our chance to keep providing quality care, keep our jobs and save our local economy.

Not sure what to say? Visit www.stoptheclosure.ca for help.

Find out more about your local campaign and how you can help.

Contact your local president:

Huronian Regional Centre:

Liz Daubney (705) 326-7361 x2402

Rideau Regional Centre:

Dave Lundy (613) 284-8374

Southwestern Regional Centre:

Rose Clark (519) 351-6713

Did you know?

Timmins-James Bay MPP Gilles Bisson recently added his voice to the growing list of people demanding Minister Papatello keep the Regional Centres open.

Why?

Because Huronia is home to his cousin Lenny and he knows the level of care his cousin receives.