

The Issue

Developmental Services Sector Sustainability

Key Messages

- Recruitment and retention has been a long-standing issue in the sector.
- In 2007, labour unrest in southwestern Ontario had a profound effect on people supported by these organizations; similar action was repeated in the east in 2009 resulting in two human rights complaints.
- In 2011, another 50 collective agreements need to be achieved with 0% increase to salaries, as legislated in Bill 16.
- Many people with complex needs require 24-hour support; staff must be highly trained to work with a wide range of support needs.
- A 2007 report by the Ministry of Community and Social Services Expert Panel on Training cited low recruitment rates, inadequate qualifications, poor retention of employees, low wages, low morale and the inability of colleges to meet the increasing need for trained staff.
- Employees who receive competitive wages and benefits are more likely to enter and remain in the sector. With the stability of a valued workforce, strikes and disruption to services would be less likely.

The Solution

- A 2% base increase to agencies will help ensure quality services and supports in Ontario. In addition, a multi-year commitment will stabilize the sector through funding that addresses current system capacity, will meet future demands and will bring developmental services worker wages to a level that is comparable with other human services sectors.