



To: Ontario New Democratic Party

Re: Election commitments for Attendant Outreach services

Date: 14 May 2014



Dear Ontario New Democratic Party:



On behalf of the Provincial Attendant Services Advisory Committee and our member organizations, I am writing you regarding Attendant Outreach Services.



In response to the Ontario Spinal Cord Injury Solutions Alliance question posed in the 2011 general election, the Ontario NDP committed to “eliminate the waitlist for home care services” while stating that “the waitlist for the attendant services program is unacceptably long”. [I am attaching that letter for your review.](#)



In this election, we are asking all Parties the following:

**“If elected, what will your party do to address waitlists and expand Attendant Outreach Services to those who need them, regardless of age?”**



Please reply to me, Peter Athanasopoulos, by **Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup> (inclusive)**; my contact information is below.



Attendant Outreach services differ from Personal Support Worker services contracted by Community Care Access Centres in two crucial ways: 1) they are administered by not-for-profit agencies, and 2) are rooted in the Independent Living philosophy, which holds that consumers should self-direct the services they receive to ensure they are best customized to their needs.



According to a study by the University Health Network, there are approximately 5,000 Ontarians waiting for appropriate, community-based services across the province.<sup>1</sup> By **not** receiving the services they need and deserve, these Ontarians are at risk for costly, inappropriate placement in Long-Term Care facilities and in hospitals as Alternative Level of Care patients, further restricting their access to crucial healthcare services available to their fellow Ontarians.



In recent years, additional funds have been allocated for attendant services rooted in the Independent Living philosophy; these funds are separate from the additional resources provided to CCACs in the 2013 provincial budget.:



- \$1.7 million for the Direct Funding program (2012)
- \$1.4 million for Attendant Outreach Services in the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network, with some other LHINs increasing investments in Attendant Outreach Services
- \$5 million for the self-administered Direct Funding Program (2014)



<sup>1</sup> Extrapolated from Jaglal, S., B. Murphy, and A. Hemraj. (2012). *Home and Community Support Services for Persons with a Physical Disabilities in Ontario: Wait Lists and Wait Times Description: Final report to the Provincial Liaison Committee for Persons with a Physical Disability in Ontario (PLCPPD) and the Research Unit, Planning, Research and Analysis Branch, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC)*. Toronto: Toronto Rehabilitation Institute – University Health Network.

**These investments are welcome but more needs to be done.**

During the August 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 by-elections, MPP Percy Hatfield of Windsor-Tecumseh and MPP Peggy Sattler of London West gave the following in response (in part) to an all-party survey on attendant services:<sup>2</sup>

*"Ensuring adequate community-based attendant services for all Ontarians in need is not only the right thing to do but it also means that those living with disabilities can stay in their own communities, saving the government from unnecessary long-term care placements. We are aware that today there are significant waitlists for service and we are committed to addressing this issue."*

During the February 13<sup>th</sup> 2014 by-election for Niagara Falls, MPP Wayne Gates gave the following in response (in part) to the same survey:<sup>3</sup>

*"New Democrats agree that we must work to expand community-based attendant services to all that are in need. We understand that the waitlist for the attendant services program is unacceptably long. We are committed to addressing this issue and will work with Spinal Cord Injury Ontario to improve access to attendant care."*

More information regarding the value of Attendant Outreach services may be found in the Ontario Provincial Attendant Services Advisory Committee's 2014 Pre-Budget Consultation submission, *Accessibility in the Community* (linked below):

<http://alliance.sciontario.org/sites/alliance.sciontario.org/files/attachments/Accessibility%20in%20the%20Community.pdf>

We look forward to sharing the responses of all three major Parties with our members and supporters online.

Please provide your responses as soon as you have had time to consider them. We will post the replies as they become available.

Should you have any questions or require more information, please contact me.

Sincerely,



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<sup>2</sup> URL: <http://alliance.sciontario.org/node/117>

<sup>3</sup> URL: <http://alliance.sciontario.org/node/156>