



To: Ontario Liberal Party

Re: Election commitments for Attendant Outreach Services

Date: 14 May 2014



Dear Ontario Liberal Party:



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



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 29th (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 where possible to ensure they are best customized to their individual needs.



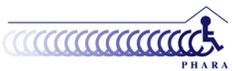
According to a study by the University Health Network, there are approximately 5,000 Ontarians waiting for appropriate, community-based services across the province.¹ By **not** receiving the services they need and deserve, these Ontarians are at risk for costly, inappropriate placement in Long-Term 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)



These investments are welcome but more still needs to done.



¹ 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.

During the August 1st 2013 by-election, MPP John Fraser of Ottawa South gave the following in response (in part) to an all-party survey on attendant services:²

"People in our community deserve to have the services and support they need and I know our government is committed to providing the local agencies with resources in order to support those who need it. We are also examining what flexibility we can put into the system that might allow innovative or alternative approaches for support for those who require it."

During the August 1st by-election in Scarborough-Guildwood, MPP Mitzie Hunter gave the following response (in part):

"We believe it is in everyone's best interest to have the services and support they need. The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care is committed to providing the local agencies with resources in order to support those who need it. We are also examining what flexibility we can put into the system that might allow innovative or alternative approaches for support for those who require it."³

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,



Peter Athanasopoulos
Co-Chair, Provincial Attendant Services Advisory Committee
Spinal Cord Injury Ontario
petera@sciontario.org
O: 1.877.422.1112 Ext. 260
C: 416.996.6663

² URL: <http://alliance.sciontario.org/node/107>

³ URL: <http://alliance.sciontario.org/node/114>