



Multiple
Sclerosis
Society of
Canada

Société
canadienne
de la sclérose
en plaques



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VIA E-Mail and Chapter Mail

Distribution:

Chapter/ Unit Chairs & Executive Directors
Social Action Directors, Chapters/ Units
Ontario Government Relations and Community Social Action Committee (OSAC)
Ontario Executive Committee & Board
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Government Relations and Social Action E-Alert

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AODA – Second Anniversary/ Transportation Standards Open for Review

In mid June, Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Community and Social Services, commemorated the second anniversary of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. In advance of this anniversary, the government of Ontario launched a public awareness campaign called AccessON: Breaking Barriers Together with the goal of challenging public attitudes about disability. A website provides more information and resources. While many praised the creation of the campaign and website, it was also pointed out that the website itself was hard to use for some people with disabilities. See for yourself at: www.AccessON.ca

Work is moving ahead slowly on the development of province-wide standards in customer service, transportation, information and communication, physical environment, and employment.

- Standards developed by the Accessible Transportation Standards Development Committee are available for review and feedback until August 31, 2007. For detailed

information about the standards and how to respond, go to:
<http://www.cfcs.gov.on.ca/mcss/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario/accesson/business/transportation/standard/index.htm>

- The Accessible Customer Service Standards Development Committee has developed proposed customer service standards which have been submitted to Minister Meilleur for review and possible recommendation for the development of legislation.
- Members of the Accessible Information and Communications Standards Development Committee have been chosen.
- The membership of the AODA standards committees on the built environment and employment should be announced within the next few weeks. Hopefully, members will include people affiliated with the MS Society.

Executive Officer of Ontario Public Drug Programs Announced

Helen Stevenson has been appointed the Assistant Deputy Minister and Executive Officer of Ontario Drug Public Drug Programs. Since May 2005, she was Executive Lead of the Drug System Secretariat and was responsible for leading the recent major change to the provincial drug system. The MS Society has worked extensively with Ms. Stevenson and her staff in providing input into the new drug programs and how they should operate to benefit people with MS and others.

An announcement is expected shortly about the two patient members of the Committee to Evaluate Drugs. For the first time, the committee which is responsible for reviewing and recommending which drugs the Ontario government should reimburse will include individuals who have experience as patients/ consumers and are not health care professionals.

Tysabri Issue in Ontario

The MS Society has met with officials of the Ontario Public Drug Programs to urge Ontario to include Tysabri, a new disease-modifying therapy, to the list of drugs which will be reimbursed. Just this week, the arguments in favour of including Tysabri among Ontario's disease modifying therapies was bolstered by a recommendation from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence in England. It recommended that Tysabri be reimbursed for rapidly evolving severe relapsing-remitting MS. The MS Society is following up with Ontario Public Drug Programs officials with this new information.

Ontario Election – Preparation for October 10

The MS Society questionnaire for use in the upcoming provincial election will be distributed to chapters and units and posted on the MS Society website in August. The Conservative Party has released its platform, available at <http://www.ontariopc.com/planforthefuture.asp> Yet to come are the Liberal and NDP platforms.

Abilities – Summer 2007 Issue

Attached to the mailed copy of this E-Alert is the Summer 2007 issue of *Abilities*. It includes interesting and useful articles including an interview with Finance Minister Jim Flaherty about the new disability savings plan and an MS Society article in the Forum section about managing invisible MS symptoms (page 46). *Abilities* is also available online at:

www.abilities.ca

Government Relations and Social Action E-Alerts Online

The Government Relations and Social Action Alert newsletter is available online. Just go to www.mssociety.ca/ontario and select Government Relations & Social Action/Social Action Alert.

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