



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
Government Relations & Social Action E-Network
Ontario Client and Chapter Services Staff
Ontario Interdepartmental Staff Group
Ontario Fundraising Managers
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(Please forward to other interested members)

Government Relations and Social Action E-Alert

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MS Society Input to AODA Transportation Standard

Overall, the proposed AODA Transportation Standard is disappointing. The MS Society provided that conclusion along with a detailed analysis of how the standard should be improved in its response. The proposed standard was released for comment in late June and is open for input until the extended deadline of September 28.

The MS Society response, which was developed by the Government Relations and Community Social Action Committee (OSAC), urged the timelines to be cut in half for the various parts of the standard to come into effect. It also recommended stronger measures for retrofitting existing public transit and a proactive approach to integrating accessible transit among communities. For more details, see the attached letter to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario.

If members wish to respond to the proposed transportation standard as individuals, you have until September 28. Just go to the Accessibility Directorate website and follow the links: www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario

Ontario Election 2007

Ontario will be going to the polls on October 10, 2007. An MS Society election questionnaire was distributed to all chapters/ units in August for use locally during the provincial election campaign. It is designed to educate candidates about MS Society identified priority issues and at the same time to find out where the candidates stand on these important issues.

Some exciting news – the MS Society will be using a new advocacy tool to extend our reach during the election. E-Alert recipients will receive information in a few weeks about how to use Advocacy Online to reach candidates to advance MS issues. In the meantime, please use the questionnaire and other information posted at www.mssociety.ca/ontario under *Election Day is October 10*. Just click the link to reach the special election page.

One reminder – the MS Society is a non-partisan health charity and, as such, we can't support specific parties or candidates. Individuals, of course, can undertake partisan activities, but they should not identify themselves as being associated with the MS Society in those endeavours.

And remember to **vote on October 10!**

Joan Gallagher-Bell Appointed to AODA Committee

Joan Gallagher-Bell, co-chair, Halton Regional Chapter Social Action Committee, has been appointed a member of the AODA Built Environment Standard Development Committee. It is one of the committees under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) drafting standards that will make Ontario more accessible. The Built Environment Committee will focus on access to, from and within buildings as well as outdoor street spaces such as pedestrian access routes and signalling systems. Joan has been involved with the Halton Regional Chapter for many years and is a long-time community activist. Congratulations to Joan!

The Accessible Customer Service Standard was approved by the provincial government in August following development by a committee and public input. The standard will come into force January 1, 2008 but compliance is being phased in. Provincial ministries and other public sector organizations have to be compliant by January 1, 2010 and other organizations (e.g., private business, non-profit organizations) must be compliant by January 1, 2012. For more information, go to:

www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcsc/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario

Bonnie Maas Appointed to Ministry of Health Committee

Bonnie Maas, member of London Middlesex Chapter and a community activist, was appointed one of two patient members of the Ministry of Health Committee to Evaluate Drugs (CED). In addition, Andrea Butcher-Milne, member of OSAC and of Simcoe County Chapter, also underwent the CED training and is in the "pool" for further appointments. Congratulations to both Bonnie and Andrea.

The CED was formerly known as the Drug Quality and Therapeutics Committee. Its role is to provide advice to the executive officer of the Ontario Public Drug Programs about which drugs should be added to the provincial drug formulary for reimbursement. The CED has 16

members plus a chair. For the first time, two members must be lay persons (patients) with voting rights equal to the other members who are physicians, pharmacists and health economists. The change to this committee was part of a broad package of recent reforms to Ontario's drug programs.

ARCH Report on Assistive Devices

ARCH Disability Law Centre has released a report on *Assistive Devices in Canada: Ensuring Inclusion and Independence*. This ambitious report provides both details about existing assistive devices programs and recommendations for needed changes. The MS Society is gathering input about the report to assist ARCH in continuing the development of this project. Please forward any comments to: Deanna.groetzinger@mssociety.ca

The report can be found on the ARCH website. Click on the following link and scroll down to the report: www.archdisabilitylaw.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 click on Government Relations & Social Action/ Social Action Alert.

Deanna Groetzinger
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& Policy

Enc: Transportation Standard Response Letter

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