



**Ontario Division**

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**November 8, 2007**

**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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Ontario Client and Chapter Services Staff  
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*(Please forward to other interested members)*

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**Introducing Kim Steele**

Kim Steele has joined the MS Society as senior coordinator, Government Relations. Kim will provide policy advice and leadership to the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, Ontario Division, chapters and units on government relations and social action issues. She will work closely with Deanna Groetzinger, vice-president, Government Relations and Policy, and with the Government Relations and Community Social Action Committee (OSAC). Kim comes to us from the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation where she was the manager, Social Action. Kim can be reached by e-mail: [kim.steele@mssociety.ca](mailto:kim.steele@mssociety.ca) or by phone: 416-922-6065, ext. 2243 or 1-800-268-7582, ext. 2243.

**Working with the New Cabinet – Your Involvement Invited**

With the return of the Liberals to Queen's Park and the appointment of the new Cabinet, the MS Society is contacting ministers and parliamentary assistants who are responsible for MS priority issues to educate them in more detail about these issues, and to offer our assistance in moving the issues forward. This process starts now but will continue in the coming months using a variety of methods to ensure our message gets across.

**You can help** by letting government relations staff know about your connections to your local MPP. Just send Kim Steele an e-mail and let her know if you have a personal connection with your MPP (no matter what party affiliation – all contacts are important), if he or she is already involved with the MS Society locally and if you would be willing to meet with your MPP to talk about key issues. We, of course, would provide you with the necessary information for a successful meeting. Kim's e-mail address is: [kim.steele@mssociety.ca](mailto:kim.steele@mssociety.ca)

## **Ontario Election 2007 – Excellent Results with Advocacy Online**

For the first time, during the election the MS Society used a new advocacy tool to extend our reach. Advocacy Online enabled those who used it to provide local candidates with information about three MS issues and to ask for their support. **More than six percent** of individuals on the MS Society advocacy e-mail list used Advocacy Online to e-mail their candidates. According to Advocacy Online representatives, the usual response is between three and five percent, with five percent considered to be excellent.

A big thank you to everyone who used Advocacy Online during the election campaign! We'll be looking for more opportunities to use this new advocacy tool in the near future.

## **Human Rights Commissioner Asks Transit Services to Remove Barriers**

In late October, Human Rights Commissioner Barbara Hall wrote to transit services across Ontario asking them to remove barriers faced by many people with disabilities and to start announcing all transit stops. Her request follows a decision in July by the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (Lepofsky v. Toronto Transit Commission [TTC]) that the TTC must immediately begin announcing transit stops on all its bus and streetcar routes, as well as on subway trains. The TTC has since complied. For more information on the request from the Human Rights Commissioner, go to: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/news/transitletter>

We at the MS Society can do our part by following up with local transit systems in our communities to find out how and when they plan to comply with the request. The MS Society's input in August on the proposed AODA transportation standard requested that transit stop announcements begin as soon as possible as part of an immediate commitment to a more accessible Ontario. To read the MS Society submission, go to: [www.mssociety.ca/ontario](http://www.mssociety.ca/ontario) click Government Relations & Social Action and then to Documents and Letters.

## **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](http://www.mssociety.ca/ontario) and click on Government Relations & Social Action/ Social Action Alert to see past E-Alerts.

Deanna Groetzinger  
Vice-President, Government Relations  
& Policy

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