



Multiple
Sclerosis
Society of
Canada

Société
canadienne
de la sclérose
en plaques



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VIA E-Mail and Chapter Mail

Distribution:

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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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Post-Election Activities – Creating Momentum

Following the provincial election, letters of congratulations were sent to key ministers, parliamentary assistants, and advisors several ministries, including Health and Long-Term Care, Transportation, Research and Innovation, Child and Youth Services, Finance, Community and Social Services, and Citizenship and Immigration (regarding the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act file).

These letters focused on issues related to recipients' respective portfolios, providing information on topics such as age-appropriate housing, accessible transportation, and access to medications, home care, and neurological services. Representatives from the MS Society will arrange follow-up meetings with select officials in the New Year to discuss these issues further. For background information on our priority issues, please visit www.mssociety.ca/ontario/socact.htm.

Speech from the Throne and Economic Outlook

The McGuinty Government laid out its priorities in the Speech from the Throne and the Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review. While there was great emphasis on the economy, there appears to be continuing commitments on improving transportation, accessibility, long-term care, and home care, and additional funds were announced for research and innovation.

Pre-Budget Consultations

Hot-on-the-heels of the Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review, Finance Minister Dwight Duncan kicked off the 2008 pre-budget consultations in Thunder Bay. The consultations provide opportunities for Ontarians to identify their priorities for the 2008 Budget. Consultations will take place across the province well-into January.

The MS Society is preparing a formal submission and has requested to present to the Standing Policy Committee on Economic and Fiscal Affairs in the New Year. There may also be other opportunities for participation in the consultations in the weeks to come.

Working with Government – Your Involvement Invited

In November's Government Relations and Social Action E-Alert, the MS Society asked you to identify any connections you may have with Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs), to help us move our collective issues forward. Thank you to those of you who contacted Kim Steele, a member of our government relations team, about your connections. Going forward, we will build on these connections to help educate MPPs on our priority issues.

We are continuing to hold an open call for those of you who have personal and/or MS Society-related connections with MPPs of all parties. We'd also like to hear from those of you who would like to establish connections with MPPs and to work with us on our advancing our governmental relations priorities. If you'd like to help with our government relations efforts, please send Kim an email to let her know what your connections are, and how you'd like to help. Kim can be reached at kim.steele@mssociety.ca.

Focus on Local Health Integration Networks

Are you involved with your Local Health Integration Network (LHIN)? Would you like to get involved with your LHIN, but don't know how to? Do you want to know what the heck a LHIN is, and why they are important to the delivery of health services in your region? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, we'd like to hear from you.

LHINs work with work with local health providers and community members to determine the health service priorities of their respective regions, and they integrate and fund local health services, including hospitals, Community Care Access Centres, community support services, long-term care, mental health and addictions services, and Community Health Centres.

If you would like to improve the availability and delivery of these services in your region, or if you would simply like to share your stories of success in working with your LHIN to make improvements, please contact Kim Steele at kim.steele@mssociety.ca.

Happy Holidays from Deanna Groetzing Vice-President, Government Relations & Policy
and Kim Steele, Senior Coordinator, Government Relations!

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