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VIA E-Mail and Chapter Mail

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**Distribution:**

Chapter/ Unit Chairs & Executive Directors  
Social Action Directors, Chapters/ Units  
Ontario Government and Community Social Action Committee  
Ontario Executive Committee & Board  
Social Action E-Network  
Ontario Client Services and Chapter Operations Staff  
*(Please forward to other interested members)*

**Government Relations and Social Action E-Alert**

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**Age Appropriate Housing and Long-Term Care**

The MS Society, Ontario Division, and the Ontario Government and Community Social Action Committee (OSAC) have engaged a writer/researcher to develop a position paper on age appropriate housing and long term care for younger people with MS. The MS Society view is that younger adults who need long-term care should be able to have that care and housing in settings that accommodate their age and care needs. All too often younger people with MS who need long-term care have to live in facilities with people who are sometimes twice their age. An important part of the position paper will be the voice of people with MS. A short survey was sent in late September to chapters/ units and interested individuals to learn about local needs and to find concrete examples to make the final paper as compelling as possible. Once finished, the paper will be made available to chapters and members for use in educating MPPs and government officials about this important issue.

**Reminder:** You have until **November 11** to return the survey to the Ontario Division office; attention: Deanna Groetzinger. If you would like to respond but did not receive the survey, please e-mail Deanna at [Deanna.groetzinger@mssociety.ca](mailto:Deanna.groetzinger@mssociety.ca) or call 1 800 268-7582, ext. 3007.

## **New Accessibility Alliance Monitoring AODA**

Bill 118, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act, 2005* (AODA), is now law in Ontario. The entire act is now in effect, although the act itself is structured to have various stages apply over a 20-year period.

Volunteers in the disability community are developing a new coalition called the AODA Alliance that will monitor the progress of the AODA and have input into various aspects of the legislation as it comes into force. Ian Greaves, chair of the Niagara Peninsula Chapter of Hope, and Deanna Groetzinger, vice-president, Communications, are participating as MS Society representatives on the transition team for the Alliance. The AODA Alliance is replacing the ODA Committee which wrapped up its activities at the end of August following the successful passage of the AODA.

## **Recruitment for First Two AODA Standards Committees Announced**

Recruitment for the first two standards committee under the AODA was announced October 17. Minister of Community and Social Services Sandra Pupatello said the first two standards committee to be formed will be those dealing with transportation and customer service (e.g., accessible building entrances, lower counter heights, large print menus). The various standards committees – transportation, customer service, employment, information and communication – will develop the accessibility standards for both the public and private sectors to ensure people with the full range of disabilities will be able to participate in ordinary community life. The standards committees will also be responsible for setting timelines for implementation.

The **deadline to apply** to become a member of either the customer service or transportation standards committee is **November 10, 2005**. Application forms and committee terms of reference are available on the Accessibility Ontario website at: <http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/accessibility/index.html> Application packages are also available by calling 1 888 520-5828.

It would be great to learn about anyone with the MS Society who is chosen for any of the AODA councils and committees. Please forward that information to: Deanna Groetzinger by e-mail at [Deanna.groetzinger@mssociety.ca](mailto:Deanna.groetzinger@mssociety.ca) or by fax: 416 922-7538.

## **Survey on Access to Home Care Position Paper**

The Health Charities Coalition of Canada (HCCC) has developed an excellent paper on access to home care that is posted on its website. The organization is inviting comment on the paper through an online survey. The MS Society of Canada is a member of HCCC, which is a coalition of national health charities that advocates for positive change in public policy to improve the health of Canadians and strengthen Canada's health system.

To view the paper, go to [www.healthcharities.ca](http://www.healthcharities.ca) and click on Position Statement on Access to Home Care. The link to respond to the position paper can be reached by scrolling further down the HCCC home page.

## **New Website on Medical Wait Times**

The Ontario government has set up a website that shows wait times for various critical medical procedures across Ontario. Of particular interest to people with MS and people who are waiting for a diagnosis is the section dealing with access to MRI scans. For example, the median wait time for an MRI scan in Toronto is 20 days but in North Simcoe Muskoka it is 83 days and in Mississauga and Halton Region it is 90 days. The information on the new website should be useful not only for people needing certain procedures and their doctors, but for organizations such as the MS Society in identifying areas of the province where more services are needed. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care website is located at [www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca). Once on the website, click on the section called Wait Times in Ontario.

## **Government Relations and Social Action E-Alerts Online**

The Government Relations and Social Action Alert newsletter is available online. This issue and previous ones are posted to the MS Society website. Just go to [www.mssociety.ca/ontario](http://www.mssociety.ca/ontario) and click on Social Action/ Social Action Alert.

Deanna Groetzinger  
Vice-President, Communications

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