



OASIS shocked by government plans to cut disability support services with no consultation

Government hires million-dollar consultants to find half a billion in cuts from social services sector

TORONTO, Nov. 12, 2019 /CNW/ - OASIS has learned that the Government of Ontario is spending \$1 million on consultants to help them make cuts to the developmental disability sector, and to do so without consulting with the individuals, families, parents, or service providers who would be directly impacted. The 2019 Ontario Budget outlined that the government would be seeking \$510 million in efficiencies from the social services sector – how much of that target would come from disability support services was not clear.

"You can't cut millions of dollars from services for adults with developmental disabilities and their families without hurting the most vulnerable people in the province," said Darren Connolly, President of Ontario Agencies Supporting Individuals with Special Needs (OASIS), which represents agencies supporting 65,000 Ontarians, and employing 25,000 full- and part-time staff.

"It's particularly concerning that the government explicitly directed their consultants not to involve the families and care providers. This is unacceptable. No one understands the challenges faced by our sector better than those who receive and provide supports. We hope that the government has learned something from the chaos they caused in the autism sector by pressing pause on this expensive and inward-looking exercise, and taking care to listen to the most vulnerable people in our communities."

OASIS believes sectoral reform must be driven by better outcomes, not budget demands. OASIS has worked with governments of all political stripes to find solutions on a wide variety of issues, and has repeatedly offered to work with this government to modernize the sector to better meet the needs of the vulnerable people.

Notwithstanding today's news, OASIS is prepared to begin today to work with government to find the most effective and efficient ways to better serve the developmental services community.

"OASIS is calling on Premier Ford and Minister Smith to save a million dollars by cancelling this consulting contract, and to instead engage with individuals and service providers in a meaningful and constructive way to modernize the sector," said Connolly.