

## A message from our Administrator

Welcome to the first issue of the Southwestern Regional Times.

With this newsletter, we will make every effort to provide our families, staff and community with timely information about planning activities as we prepare to help our residents move to the community in the coming months and years. We'll also share information with you about activities and events going on in southwestern Ontario and beyond as community partners prepare to welcome and support our residents in their new homes.

For our staff, we'll keep you updated on events and new projects designed to support you with your career plans and goals, as well as news from and about your colleagues around the province.

I am very interested in receiving your feedback on what information is important to you, so please feel free to share your thoughts about Southwestern Regional Times with me.

Terry Monk  
Administrator

## Transition Planning Progress

Our new Planning Co-ordinator Assistants (PCAs) — Carmen Yurke, Colleen McGaffey and Donna Everitt — have joined Jim Deneau, Social Worker, on Carol McCloskey, Facility Planning Coordinator's team as the main contact between our families, residents, facility staff and the Regional Placement Facilitator in developing individual personal plans for our residents.

All families have now been contacted about the sequence of the residence closure plan and each family's wishes on placement location has been discussed. We're very pleased that so many families are interested in participating in the planning process.

Individual profiles have been completed for all our residents, regardless of when they are scheduled to move. The profile will serve as an initial source of information for our planning facilitators as they develop individual personal plans for each resident. This information will also be helpful as regional staff assist community agencies to plan for the transition to the community.

We know that some families have said they want to move forward quickly. Planning for eight individuals whose families wish them to move sooner than their projected residential area closure date has begun.

The four new Regional Placement Facilitators — Sue Joiner, Doug Toland, Jean-Paul Caza and Judy McFarlen — have been working with Carol McCloskey and her team, to coordinate the initial planning meetings with families and staff to begin the development of the individual personal plans. These four individuals report to our Regional Project Manager, Brenda Ross in the ministry's South West Regional Office.

All our residents on Lambton 2 South and Lambton 2 North, the first two residential areas scheduled for closure, have been assigned to the Social Worker/Facility Planning Co-ordinators and the Regional Placement Facilitators. Family members have received, or can expect a call from a Planning Co-ordinator Assistant to set up an initial meeting.

Several families have already had initial planning meetings with the facilitator who will craft their family member's personal plan. The planning process includes an extensive review procedure to ensure that all significant people in our residents' lives, including the resident, can participate in developing their personal plan.

## Connecting with Our Community

This past month, ministry staff have been busy meeting with community agencies who support individuals with developmental disabilities. The agencies have been brought up to date on our planning activities and discussed ways the agencies can continue to be involved in planning as our residents gradually move to their homes in the community.

In early April, community orientation sessions on the transformation of the developmental services sector were held across south west Ontario for a broad group of community partners including the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Community Care Access Centres, Canadian Mental Health Association, United Way, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and public health officials.

Please keep the following information available, in case you need to reach one of the staff who can help respond to your questions:

#### Contact Information

##### **SRC's Transition Team:**

Nancy Jackson, Project Manager	(519) 676-6036
Carol McCloskey, Planning Coordinator	(519) 676-6037
Jim Deneau, Social Worker	(519) 676-6044
Donna Everitt, Planning Assistant	(519) 676-6041
Colleen McGaffey, Planning Assistant	(519) 676-6042
Carmen, Yurke, Planning Assistant	(519) 676-6043

##### **Regional Project Team:**

Brenda Ross, Project Manager	(519) 438-5111 X 3110
Sue Joiner, Placement Facilitator	(519) 676-5431 X 2576
Judy McFarlen, Placement Facilitator	(519) 676-5431 X 2577
Doug Toland, Placement Facilitator	(519) 676-5431 X 2579
Jean-Paul Caza, Placement Facilitator	(519) 676-5431 X 2578

## Southwestern Regional Centre Staff News

One Residential Supervisor and one Residential Counsellor were the successful candidates for permanent positions at the Child and Parent Resource Institute with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) in London. In addition, Jean Caron is currently on a temporary assignment with youth probation with MCYS. Jane McCharles has just returned from a temporary assignment in our ministry's Chatham office with the Ontario Disability Support Program. We also congratulate Jean Paul Caza, one of our Residential Counsellors for being selected to be one of our Regional Placement Facilitators.

## Career Centre

There has been a lot of activity at the facility's Career Centre, since it opened its doors on March 24th to assist staff with career planning. Malu Comboye, our new Acting Career Centre Co-ordinator, is busy organizing workshops to provide staff with tools and techniques to sharpen their career transition skills. A grand opening is planned for late April where staff will have a first-hand opportunity to see the types of available resources. Stay tuned for some of the exciting offerings available to staff, including door prizes!

More than 100 staff have been trained in basic computer skills through our ministry's Windsor office. Future sessions will include training on specific types of software. Our ministry's regional offices have been very helpful in introducing staff to the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and the types of jobs available in the program. Staff attended eight information sessions to learn about employment opportunities with the ODSP and turnout was tremendous.

A big thank you to all the staff who participated in our Career Centre Survey. The results are now being tabulated and will be shared with staff in the future. Malu will be reviewing these results against our work plan so that we can better meet the needs of our staff as they begin career transitioning plans.

Resume writing workshops also began in late March. The interest was overwhelming and Malu accommodated as many employees in these sessions as possible. Keep on the lookout for more resume writing and interview skills workshops this spring.

Many of you may be interested to know that Nancy Jackson and Malu Comboye have met with representatives from St. Clair College to discuss potential educational options and professional upgrades for staff. More information will be communicated directly to staff in the near future.

## Ministry News

While staff at the Huronia, Southwestern and Rideau Regional Centres are busy working on plans to help residents move to community-based life, the Ministry of Community and Social Services is busy working on an important review of developmental services in Ontario. This work directly links to having the right community supports in place for residents as they move into community settings.

The ministry has co-sponsored six expert policy forums focussing on specialized resources, residential options, citizenship and advocacy, quality assurance, funding approaches and supporting families. The forums were organized with help from a number of provincial organizations representing community agencies, self-advocates, family representatives and professionals with expertise in the field of developmental services.

Later this year, the ministry will be seeking public input on a long-term transformation plan for developmental services. Your advice and suggestions on steps that need to be taken to make the system work better will be welcomed. We will provide more information on how you can participate in the coming months.