



**Ontario Association on
Developmental Disabilities**

Strategic Plan 2023-2026



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INTRODUCTION

The Ontario Association on Developmental Disabilities (OADD) Strategic Plan was commissioned by the Board of Directors and facilitated and developed by People Minded Business (PMB) over the from the summer of 2022 through the spring of 2023. Initial strategic priorities were discussed by the Board of Directors during a September 2022 one-day planning session, after which the Board wanted to hear more from members about “Who is OADD?” and “What is our value?”. At the Spring 2023 OADD Conference, PMB collected input from 41 people including:

- 9 Executive Directors
- 16 Managers
- 10 Direct Support Staff
- 1 Registered Nurse
- 1 College Professor

- 2 Presenters
- 1 Sponsor
- 1 MCCSS Director

PMB gathered another 41 ideas after a presentation on Journey To Belonging which asked participants “How might the OADD best support organizations and the people they support given sector trends and the principles of Journey to Belonging?”

PMB analyzed and themed the answers, incorporating the very clear and focused feedback from members about what the organizations’ purpose and priorities should be. The resulting strategic plan is driven by reaffirmed organizational values and will continue to guide OADD’s work over the coming years.

SYNOPSIS OF SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Each organization has a unique ability to act on the future, build on the resources, assets, and strengths (e.g., research capabilities, information dissemination, people & culture, etc.), respond to the challenges it is currently facing and be proactive with the opportunities it is being presented with. We began this inclusive process by reviewing internal documents selected by OADD's Strategic Planning Committee and conducting an Environmental Scan, looking at similar organizations and how OADD uniquely contributes to the overall knowledge generation and dissemination within the disability sector.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

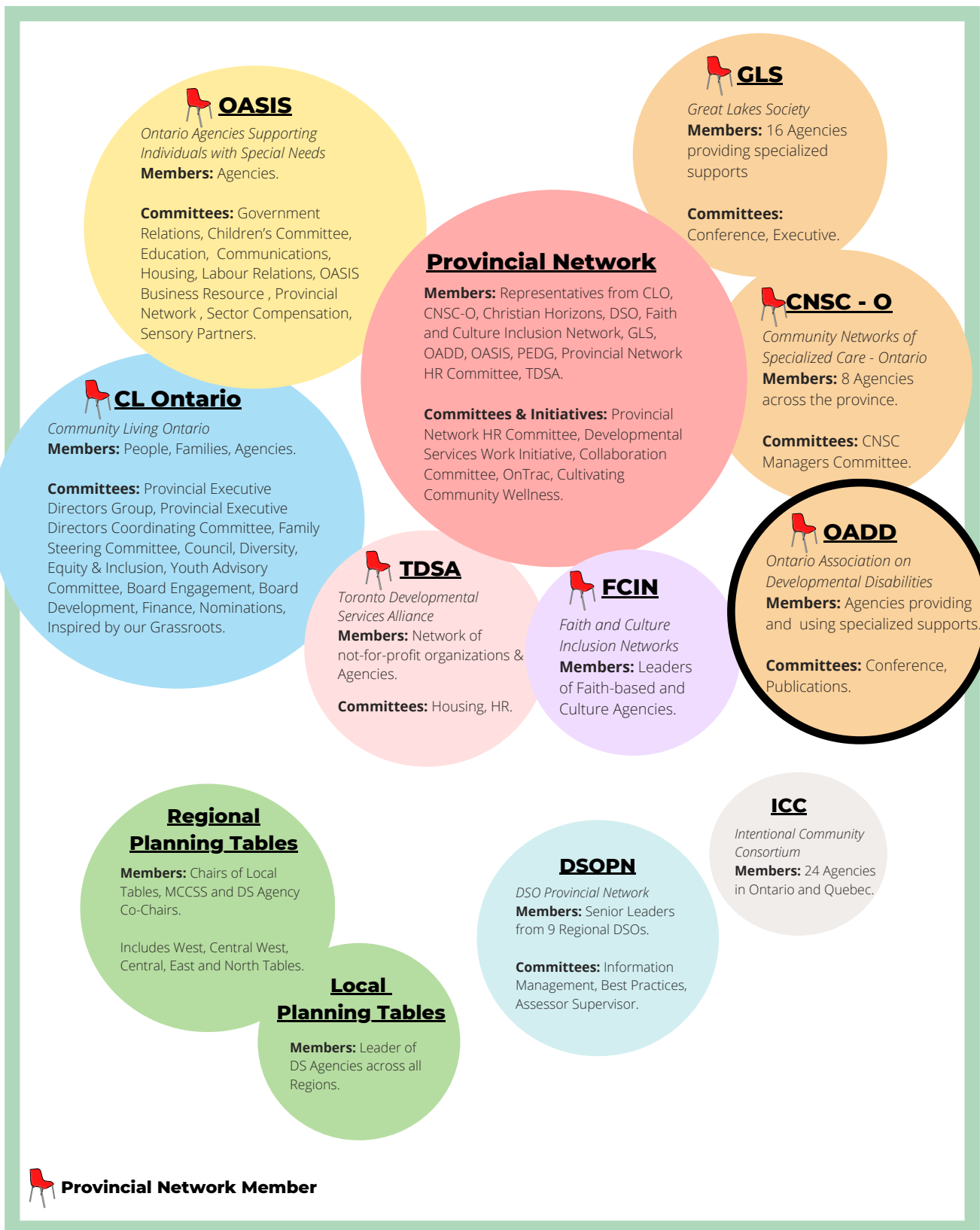
How is OADD unique?

Figure 1 (page 5) illustrates the major Developmental Service Umbrella Organizations in Ontario. Each provides a service or fulfills a role within the sector. OADD is uniquely positioned as a knowledge generator and disseminator. The previous strategic plan identified OADD's focus to be research and knowledge sharing and the feedback from members reaffirmed this focus.

The OADD Journal (est. 1993) is unique in that it facilitates the generation and dissemination of academic, peer-reviewed research into the field of Developmental Disabilities. Furthermore, OADD's annual conference (the Conference) provides a platform to share new and relevant research and findings within the

sector. Issues such as complex supports – from a clinical, academic, and practical lens are discussed, and current best practices are developed and shared between organizations supporting each other. In addition, the Conference provides access to helpful training. Initially OADD focused on direct support staff and providing training to those individuals. To accommodate Ministry-guided changes and reduced resources for conference attendance, OADD shifted its focus to educating supervisors and managers. Managers began to attend the Conference to bring the training and knowledge back to their respective organizations. This niche that OADD occupies helps to encourage research into sector-specific areas. Furthermore, OADD helps bridge the gap between theory and practice. OADD's passion around knowledge generation and sharing will continue to serve the Developmental Service (DS) sector now and into the future.

DS PROVINCIAL UMBRELLA ORGANIZATIONS



Trends - Assets - Considerations - Opportunities

Once all the information from OADD's previous and interim strategic plans were reviewed, and the environmental scan completed, PMB synthesized the data using its proprietary TACO method. TACO is an 'appreciative inquiry' style alternative to the traditional SWOT process; using a strengths-based approach, PMB and OADD identified opportunities to seize, along with challenges to overcome with a focus on creating positive change. TACO focuses on current and emerging Trends and Themes that surfaced from DS sector and external research, OADD's unique Assets (which will be the basis for successfully pursuing the strategic priorities), key Considerations uncovered, and a list of possible Opportunities (for OADD to choose and customize into the strategic priorities for the coming years).

TRENDS & THEMES

JOURNEY TO BELONGING: CHOICE AND INCLUSION

After extensive research and direct consultation with umbrella organizations, agencies, people with a developmental disability, and their families, Ontario's Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS), released its Journey to Belonging (J2B) framework.

This document lays out MCCSS's long-term vision for developmental services in Ontario: "People with developmental disabilities are supported by their communities, support networks, and government to belong and live inclusive lives. People are empowered to make choices and live as independently as possible through supports that are person directed, equitable, and sustainable." This is a fundamental transformation of the way developmental services are delivered in Ontario.

INDIVIDUALIZED FUNDING

Individualized Funding (IF) is "an umbrella term for disability supports funded on an individual basis that aims to facilitate self-direction, empowerment, independence and self-determination." [1] "Available in a significant number of jurisdictions in the developed world including the UK, New Zealand, Australia, 42 US states and all provinces west of Ontario, in some cases for decades. Research indicates IF " [2] ...enhanced self-determination and autonomy, satisfaction, well-being, enhanced quality of life, and more positive service outcomes when compared to more traditional funding mechanisms.

[1] Fleming et al., (2019). Individualized funding interventions to improve health and social care outcomes for people with a disability: A mixed-methods systematic review.

[2] Stainton, T. (2005). Empowerment and the architecture of rights based social policy. *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities: JOID*, 9(4), 289-298.

INFLATION

This inflation was born out of the COVID crisis and caused by many other issues, continues to be strong. The March 2023 year on year inflation rate was 4.1%, overall down from a peak of 8.1% in June 2022, which was the highest inflation since March 1983. The main impact as these prices ripple through to BRANTWOOD will be in the form of higher wage expectations/demands in an already constrained sector as staff watch their real wages decrease.

FUNDING AND POVERTY

Across Canada in 2014, 23% of persons with a disability had a low income (compared with 9% of those without a disability). That jumps to 27% for people with a mental-cognitive disability, and 35% of those who have both a physical and cognitive disability. If that person doesn't have a job, that number jumps to 48%. In the last 12 months the provincial government has increased Passport funding by 10% and ODSP payments by 5%, with annual cost of living increases on the latter. There is also optimism as the federal government looks to receive Senate approval for the Canadian Disability Benefit.

FUNDING AND POVERTY

There are currently over 20,000 people on the DSO (Developmental Service Ontario) waiting list for housing, ranging from complex care and congregate settings to supported independent living. Most of these

people will likely never get placed in a residential setting due to lack of availability. 18% of people experiencing homelessness have an intellectual or developmental disability (IDD), but Ontario requires another 2M units of affordable housing to meet the projected provincial need by 2030.

HUMAN RESOURCES CRISIS

While the DS sector had some challenges with staffing prior to 2020, the 'Great Resignation' began with a fear of catching COVID, a desire to have the freedom to work remotely, and the increase in pay and enticements offered by competitive sectors during an unexpected growth in sales early in the pandemic. For DS sector organizations, which tend to be smaller with fewer career paths this may be challenging to remedy, requiring creativity, and working together to open up possibilities. The Ontario DS sector is also challenged by generally lower compensation than other health and human service sectors. Options like the 4-day workweek and partial shifts may also appeal to staff wanting more flexibility and down time.

At the same time COVID accelerated the retirement of the Baby Boomers. In September 2022, Statistics Canada noted that 307,000 people retired in the previous 12 months, a new record high and 50% higher than the previous year.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The emergence of the #MeToo and #BlackLivesMatter movements in the latter half of the second decade of this century, and the #EveryChildMatters movement with the discovery of the mass graves of Indigenous Children from Residential Schools cemented a long-standing need to improve the response to our changing communities. Immigration is projected to be 86% of the population growth (roughly 4.6M people) in Ontario over the next 25 years, creating a significant influx of different cultural backgrounds into communities across the province.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES & POPULATION GROWTH

Prior to COVID, Ontario's population growth was accelerating, and its population increased by 248,000 (1.7%) from 2018 to 2019.[1] While the growth is expected to slow to about 1% by 2046 (about 190,000 annually) Ontario's population should have increased to ~20M by then. At current rates this represents an increase of ~55,000 people with an IDD. The GTA's population is growing, but at a lower rate than the rest of the province. According to the 2021 census, there were 6.2 million people living in the census metropolitan area of Toronto, an increase of 4.6% from the 2016 census. Immigrants make up 46.6% of the GTA's population, as compared to only 30% for the province. Immigrants living in the GTA are most likely to be from India, China, or the Philippines.

[1] www.ontario.ca/document/ontarios-long-term-report-economy/chapter-1-demographic-trends-and-projections

AGING AND DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

The key stakeholders in Developmental Services – employees (as discussed above), families, and people supported – are aging in line with the general population. As the last Baby Boomers turn 65 in 2029, the people that were de-institutionalized two to three decades ago are now in or close to their senior years. People with IDD's are living longer – there's been a 5% increase in 50-to-64-year old's representing 11,000 adults with an IDD in Ontario.

TECHNOLOGY, HYBRID SERVICES AND DIGITAL INCLUSION

The 'Hybrid Model' of remote and in-person supports and services has outlasted the pandemic. In its work with people supported and families, PMB hears a strong desire to keep some form of digital supports. Digital engagement during COVID-19 provided emotional wellbeing among other benefits. At the same time general awareness of digital poverty and digital exclusion of people with an intellectual disability was exacerbated during the pandemic for a variety of reasons. What has become clear during the pandemic is for digital inclusion to be part of authentic community inclusion, people must have access to the tools, training, and support necessary to make this happen.

COMPLEX CARE

While the overall rate of people with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability remains steady at 1%, the composition of this group continues to change. The percentage of people

with Down Syndrome has decreased but has been replaced with more complex conditions. Mental health, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder, people experiencing homelessness, other non-genetic disorders, and diseases of the aged (e.g., frailty and dementia) are now a significant component of the 1% and require more training, more resources, and more financial supports. Most organizations are not currently able to support these conditions and the DS sector is evolving fast, putting stress on teams and budgets.

Waitlists

The 2020 Ontario Auditor General's Report highlighted that the number of people waiting for Passport funding had grown by 32%, from over 14,800 in 2015/16 to almost 19,500 in 2019/20 (funding for this program increased from \$184.6 million in 2015/16 to \$434.1 million in 2019/20). The same report showed the number of people waiting for agency supportive services after receiving a needs assessment grew by 80%, from almost 19,000 in 2015/16 to almost 34,200 in 2019/20.



ASSETS

The organization's assets and strengths are central to the ongoing advancement and sustainability of OADD. Several core strengths surfaced during the review of previous strategic plans and Board discussions - the most frequently cited are noted below:

- OADD and Research Special Interest Group (RSIG) partnership.
- Solid relationship with MCCSS and other umbrella organizations – e.g., 2 seats at the Provincial Network table.
- Well-rounded representation of both academic and practical learning.
- Well respected peer-reviewed journal.
 - Through OADD connections people on ground can influence where the research happens.
- Advocacy through research.
 - Researching WITH people with lived experience and their caregivers/families, not just researching their disabilities.
- Focus on research topics that impact Direct Service Providers.
- Well attended and respected conference.
 - Providing practical on-the-ground training and resources (e.g., toolkits) by the people in the field, for the people in the field.
- Respectful reputation that provides a strong foundation to build on.
- Helping to professionalize the DS sector.
 - OADD led development of Standards of Practice (2011 & 2016) outlining sector-wide ethical standards.
 - Working towards a professional association.
- Bridging and connecting different players in the DS sector – e.g. clinicians, direct support groups, research groups, etc.
- Strong Board with broad sector and academic representation.

CONSIDERATIONS

These issues identified during the information gathering process have the potential to impact OADD's work, including challenging the ability to execute on strategic directions, both now and in the future. Each requires attention and potentially developing mitigating plans when OADD formalizes strategic priorities and goals. They include:

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION.

Staff shortage and recruitment

- Long-term challenge that requires longer-term solutions.
- Competition for people's time and focus has increased since the Pandemic.
- Remote working has removed travel time and down time between conferences and training events (back-to-back virtually).

FINANCIAL.

Reduced Ministry funding streams

- Have seen this impact conference attendance in the past, as the financial resources to send groups to conferences / training are declining.
- Furthering this, is time compression. More organizations are reporting a reduction in time available to attend conferences and in addition, implement training learned at conferences.

OADD revenue stream

- OADD must charge for the conference, as the Journal is free of charge, and the conference is the organization's main source of revenue.

Cost associated with professionalizing the sector:

- Have to ensure organizations and staff have the financial resources to afford to do so.

ECONOMY.

- Equitable wages.
- Appropriate, affordable, and accessible housing for both people supported and workers.

COMPETING PRIORITIES.

- The pandemic is endemic, what does this mean for the sector?
- With sector-wide transformational changes taking place due to J2B and the Pandemic, resources are stretched and priorities are quickly evolving / changing.

DUAL-DIAGNOSIS.

- Next steps: the concept is now well known but now what?
- Lack of experience in the sector.
- There is a need for equipping Service Providers with the knowledge, resources, and how to's for working with clients that are dually diagnosed.

AGENCY INCLUSIVITY WITHIN THE DS SECTOR.

- There is a gap where smaller DS agencies are excluded from conferences, not provided seats at provincial tables and as such, are left out of the larger conversation occurring in the sector.
- These organizations are fundamental to waitlist reduction times and as such, they need a voice and a seat at the table.

OPPORTUNITIES & STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Board reviewed the key elements of the previous and interim strategic plans, along with the environmental scan and stakeholder consultation, the current and emerging trends and themes identified in external research, OADD's unique assets that will be the basis of successfully pursuing the strategic priorities, key considerations that were uncovered and shared during the process and discussed possible opportunities for OADD to choose for strategic priorities for the coming years.

The strategic plan consists of three strategic priorities as discussed. By addressing these areas over the next three years, OADD will continue to provide valuable knowledge generation and dissemination through solution-orientated collaboration that tackles the emerging needs of the DS Sector. By doing so, OADD will continue to be the lead contributors for an expert, professional and valued workforce in the DS sector.

PURPOSE

OADD keeps support professionals current on the best practices to support people by:

1. Translating clinical, evidence-based research into applied interdisciplinary best practices shared through learning opportunities for staff at all levels.
2. Encouraging member networking & collaboration.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Board identified the following three priorities:

1) Education: Provide interdisciplinary learning opportunities based on translating clinical, evidence-informed research and practice for staff at all levels. *edited May 2024 by OADD Board*

- Evolve virtual and in-person information sharing and learning opportunities.
 - Focus on dissemination of evidence-informed knowledge relevant to the sector
- edited May 2024 by OADD Board*

2) Influence: Support to existing and new DS Workforce through networking, collaboration and access to evidence informed information

edited May 2024 by OADD Board

The Board will choose Objectives and assign responsibility for achieving the Objectives (once solidified) to a member or sub-committee, agree on timelines for achieving them and have regular reporting on progress made.



MISSION / VISION / VALUES

edited May 2024 by the OADD Board

Purpose

OADD exists to inform and support developmental services professionals at all levels by:

1. Encouraging member networking, collaboration and shared learning opportunities
2. Providing a forum for translating clinical, evidence-informed practices and research into applied interdisciplinary best practices

Mission

OADD promotes and supports research dissemination and evidence informed practice through collaborative networking and knowledge exchange in the field of developmental disabilities

Vision

People with IDD are supported by knowledgeable professionals who provide innovative and evidence-informed services

Values

We value research and practice that is:

- Collaborative
- Inclusive
- Innovative and
- Evidence-informed