



Meeting the information needs of Consumer/Survivors in the Toronto Area

BULLETIN

523 January 1st – 15th, 2015

Consumer/Survivor Information Resource Centre of Toronto, 1001 Queen St. West, Toronto M6J 1H4
Phone Hours: M-F from 9-5 / Drop-in Hours: M-F from 9-4
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Arlene is Retiring

After over 8 years of being a dedicated member of the Consumer/Survivor Information Resource Centre of Toronto team, Arlene Kearn is retiring. Arlene's main job here has been to faithfully fold your Bulletin and stuff the envelopes for all the subscribers who receive The Bulletin by mail. Right now, that's 374 of you. (An additional 1,700 get The B by email). She also distributes The Bulletin to the floors at the College Street site of CAMH. Some of you who've attended our workshops know that Arlene has also helped at those events, as well as our AGMs. Arlene has always performed her duties with the utmost grace and good humour. She is beloved by the guys in the mail room and the print shop as well as by us here, of course. We will miss her incredibly for her reliability and her strong work ethic and of course, her great smile.

Arlene, we wish you all the best and the best of health to you. Thank you for all of your years of dedication and friendship.

Helen, Cassandra and
The Board of C/S Info

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP®) Program Winter 2015

WRAP® is a non-medical, values-based approach rooted in the knowledge that people can and do recover. Using WRAP can help you reclaim your power, find and connect with community, create your own recovery journey, and move towards living in wellness. Mood Disorders Association of Ontario (MDAO) will be running a WRAP group on **Tuesday evenings (6:00 pm to 8:30 pm)** starting on January 13th. To ensure your place in this 9 week (2.5 hours/week) program, please contact us by **January 9th**:

Contact: Eric Jonasson
Email: ericj@mooddisorders.ca
Phone: 416 486-8046, ext. 224
Place: MDAO Toronto, 36 Eglinton Avenue West, Suite 602

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Community Announcements

ODSP Employment Benefits

Information on changes coming in 2015

A Message from The Income Security Advocacy Centre (ISAC)

Right now, people on the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) who are preparing to work or who are working have access to three employment benefits.

Starting in April 2015, these three benefits will be replaced by one new benefit, called the “Employment-Related Benefit”. This change was announced in the 2014 Ontario budget.

There are some important differences in the way the current benefits work and the way the new benefit will work.

And a very important part of this change is the elimination of the Work-Related Benefit. This benefit gives \$100 / month to people on ODSP who have income from a job, training, or self-employment to help pay for ongoing employment-related costs. ISAC is opposed to the elimination of this benefit.

We've created some resources to help you understand:

- what the current benefits are and how they work
- what we have been told by the Ministry of Community and Social Services about the new benefit and how it will work
- the implications of these changes for people on ODSP.

1) Webinar

ISAC co-hosted a webinar on the changes to employment benefits with the ODSP Action Coalition and Your Legal Rights on December 11 - we taped the webinar so you can watch it any time.

- Click here to watch the webinar: <http://yourlegalrights.on.ca/webinar/odsp-employment-benefits>

2) ISAC's Issue Backgrounder

Our Issue Backgrounder explains the changes and discusses some of the implications.

- Read the backgrounder in Word:
<http://incomesecurity.org/documents/ChangestoODSPEmploymentBenefits-December2014.docx>
- Read the backgrounder in PDF: <http://incomesecurity.org/documents/ChangestoODSPEmploymentBenefits-December2014.pdf>

The ODSP Action Coalition (see their website here: <http://www.odspaction.ca/page/about-odsp-action-coalition>) is also opposed to the elimination of the Work-Related Benefit and has prepared a position paper to explain their position.

They are asking people on ODSP who get the Work-Related Benefit to answer a questionnaire to help demonstrate what's wrong with eliminating this benefit.

1) ODSP Action Coalition Position Paper

The Coalition's Position Paper talks specifically about the elimination of the Work-Related Benefit and provides information about the Coalition's position on this change.

- Click this link to go to the ODSP Action Coalition's website for their position paper:
<http://www.odspaction.ca/resource/odsp-recipients-who-work-lose-100-month>

2) ODSP Action Coalition Questionnaire

If you are on ODSP and get the Work-Related Benefit, the Coalition would like you to fill out a questionnaire about your experience with working, with the benefit, and what you think you will do when it's eliminated.

- **Complete the questionnaire online** - just click this link and it will take you to the questionnaire, which you can fill out right on your computer: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/WPTQXHH>
- If you need to download a paper version and fill it out by hand, you can return it by email, fax, or mail. Download the paper version of the questionnaire here:
http://www.odspaction.ca/sites/odspaction.ca/files/resource/work-related_benefit_cut_impact_questionnaire_-_dec_2014.doc

If you are a staff person of an agency that works with people on ODSP, please consider helping your clients who are working and receiving the Work-Related Benefit to fill out this questionnaire.

ODSP Medical Reviews: Increase in reviews coming in 2015 A Notice From the Income Security Advocacy Centre

If you get benefits from the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), you may get a notice that your disability status is being reviewed.

Disability status reviews – often called “medical reviews” – have always been part of the ODSP system. This is because ODSP is a program that provides support to people with disabilities even if their disability is not permanent.

People who have a medical condition that could improve over time are given a “medical review date” when they first get on ODSP. That is the date when their disability status is supposed to be reviewed to decide if they are still eligible for ODSP. Usually that date is somewhere between two and five years after they first got on ODSP.

For many years, the Ministry of Community and Social Services did not do medical reviews on a regular basis because of a lack of resources. This means many people are on ODSP who should have had a medical review, but that review was never done. The Ministry has been criticized by the Auditor General for not doing medical reviews.

The Ministry started doing regular medical reviews again in January 2013. The number of people being reviewed each month is going up. The Ministry says that as of April 2015, they want to do start doing 1,900 medical reviews each month to get through the backlog of 60,000 people whose reviews have not been done.

The Ministry says they are selecting people for medical reviews randomly. Some people who get selected will have medical review dates that are quite old, and some will have medical review dates that are current.

People who were never given a medical review date and people who were transferred from the old Family Benefits program will not have to have a medical review.

If you are selected for a medical review, you must respond. If you don't respond, you risk having your ODSP benefits cut off.

What is the process for the review?

People who are selected for a review will receive a notice in the mail with another Disability Determination Package (DDP) that they have to fill out, including parts that a doctor has to complete.

This means people having a medical review will have to go through the same application and disability assessment process as when they first applied for ODSP.

What should I do now?

If you get a notice saying it's time for your medical review:

► **Contact your local Community Legal Clinic for advice right away.**

To find your local clinic, go to www.legalaid.on.ca/en/locate/default.asp or call 1-800-668-8258 or 416-979-1446 during regular business hours.

► **Start getting your Disability Determination Package (DDP) completed.**

ODSP gives you 90 days to complete the DDP but getting an extension is possible.

- You will have three months to get the forms and any associated letters completed and submitted, including the sections that have to be filled in by your doctor.
- If you can't get everything done in three months – for example, you are waiting for a doctor's appointment or it's taking a long time getting medical reports – ask for an extension.
- The Ministry says that they will give people extensions in virtually all cases, as long as you're making an effort to get the forms filled out.

If you are reviewed and they decide you are no longer eligible for ODSP:

► Get advice from your local legal clinic on whether or not to appeal the decision.

- You should be able to stay on ODSP benefits until your appeal is heard. But if you lose the appeal, you may be required to pay back all or part of the benefits you got while you were waiting for your appeal to be heard.
- If you would have been eligible for OW while you were waiting for your appeal, you might be able to get the amount you owe reduced to the difference between what you got on ODSP and what you would have got on OW.

If you do not appeal or your appeal is denied, you will be allowed to stay on ODSP benefits for three months in order to "aid transition" off ODSP. You may be able to go on Ontario Works, but because OW has different asset and other eligibility rules, you may not qualify.

Can anything be done to improve the process?

ISAC and others in the community legal clinic system have several concerns about the process for medical reviews.

Making people go through the whole ODSP application process all over again is the wrong way to do medical reviews. It will mean a lot of unnecessary stress and hardship for a lot of people on ODSP. It will also mean a lot of resources will be needlessly spent by government, doctors, the legal clinic system, and the appeals tribunal. We are currently talking with our partners and advocating with the Ministry to suggest a different process. For now, the process has not changed. We will continue our advocacy on this issue and will share information as it becomes available.

Walking for Health and Well-Being

Join the Self-Help Resource Centre for a walking group!



Studies show that walking support groups help improve immune function, lower blood pressure, and slow down the aging process. They also improve mental health by decreasing anxiety and depression, increasing hope and self-efficacy, and boosting memory.

WHEN: Every Thursday Starting November 13th at 1:30 pm

HOW LONG: Approximately 60 minutes

WHERE: Deer Park Library, 40 St. Clair Avenue East (Near Yonge and St. Clair)

WHAT TO BRING: A good pair of shoes & a water bottle

All are welcome to join!

We are also offering free training for people interested in becoming peer-led walking group leaders in the community. We will train peer leaders and provide ongoing monthly support groups/events. If you have any questions or if you have accessibility or health needs you would like to discuss in advance, feel free to email Melissa at: melissacorcoran@selfhelp.on.ca or call 416 487-4355 ext. 27.

Another Life Lesson from Helen

You know me. I sometimes lecture. I do it with the best of intentions, but I lecture. I spout off. I get on a soapbox. This time, it's about finances and passwords and preparing for bad times. We were recently called to the bedside of a very ill relative and had a lot of financial straightening out to do that was made a lot more complicated by the fact that he hadn't given anyone his banking passwords, and was way too sick to remember them clearly. On top of this, when he became more coherent over time, he stated that his passwords were all on his computer desktop on an icon labelled 'passwords', and he kept his apartment door unlocked in case anyone in his building wanted anything in his fridge. Here comes the lecture, I'm sure you can hear it now...

Please, please, write down all of your bank account numbers and branches and their passwords and PIN numbers and give them to someone you trust. Or tell that person where to find them. Someone has to pay your bills and look after stuff for you. For those of you with a WRAP, give it to your supporter. On the other hand, don't just leave them where anyone can find them. That's an invitation for trouble to find you. Please.

Sorry. I warned you I was going to lecture.

Helen

Employment Matters

Seeking Consumer/Survivors for Snow Removal Services

Fresh Start is currently seeking Consumer/ Survivors for snow removal services which consists of hand shoveling snow, spreading de-icer and as necessary, chipping ice; from date of hire until April 30th, 2015. Must be available 7 days a week plus holidays for On-call work (no during the night call outs) and easily reachable by phone.

If interested, please contact Karen Schwartz at: 416 504-4262, ext. 227 or email: karen@freshstartclean.com.

*Please note, only qualified applicants will be interviewed.

Join the Sound Times Board of Directors!

ABOUT SOUND TIMES

Sound Times is a consumer operated community mental health organization funded by the Toronto Central LHIN to provide a range of services for mental health consumers and psychiatric survivors, including individual supports for people involved in the criminal justice system, individuals with substance use problems and other co-occurring disabilities. We provide service at two locations; Dundas and Parliament and Dundas and Bloor.

Sound Times is seeking passionate, qualified, and dedicated board members who identify as mental health consumer/survivors to help govern our growing organization. The board welcomes all applications.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Commitment to the work of the organization
- Knowledge and skills in one or more areas of Board governance: policy, finance, programs, and/or personnel
- Willingness to serve on at least one committee and actively participate
- Attendance at monthly Board meetings
- A time commitment of five hours per month, (includes Board preparation, meeting and committee meeting time)
- Attendance at Annual General Meeting
- Be informed of the services provided by Sound Times and publicly support them
- Prepare for and participate in the discussions and the deliberations of the Board
- Be aware and abstain from any conflict of interest

We are particularly interested in candidates who have knowledge, skills, and experience in the following areas:

- LHIN funding and strategic priorities
- Performance management and measurement
- Marketing and communications
- Board governance and development

Directors are elected for a two year term. Note that all current board vacancies are required to be filled by directors who identify as consumer/survivors. Please send all applications to: sidsuwande@soundtimes.com

People and Pets – A Call For Volunteers



Are you a lover of pets? People and Pets require volunteers to either go into people's homes and feed their pets while they are in hospital, or take care of their pets in your home. Pet food is supplied. Please contact Linda Chamberlain at: 416 824-3435 or Linda.chamber@bell.net. For more info visit the website: www.peopleandpets.ca.

Things To Do...

Free and Low-Cost Events for January 1st – 15th, 2015

For TTC information call 416 393-4636 (INFO) or visit the TTC website

As changes to events happen from time to time, please call ahead to confirm the time, place and date of the event you wish to attend Thank you!



Adult Skating

Tuesday, January 6th from 9:00 am - 11:30 am (this event repeats). **Pleasure Skating.** Adults are invited to come out every Tuesday morning for pleasure skating. Must have your own skates. There will be music. Meet new friends and get some exercise. For more info phone: 416 241-0502. Weston Recreation Arena, 2125 Lawrence Avenue West.

Adults. **Free**

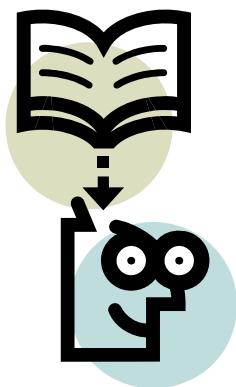


Book Club

Thursday, January 8th from 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm or 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm. **Victoria Village Adult Book Clubs.** Join us for a lively discussion on the novel, "Russian Winter," by Daphne Kalotay from 2:00 - 3:00 pm and/or 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm. For more info contact Despina Kyraleos by email: dkyraleos@torontopubliclibrary.ca or by phone: 416 395-5950. Victoria Village Library, 184 Sloane Avenue. Adults. **Free**

Diabetes Education

Wednesday, January 7th from 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm. **Diabetes Prevention** (4 sessions) Jan 7th: What is Diabetes? Who are at risk? What are the complications? Jan 14th: What does healthy eating mean to you? What does Canada Food Guide recommend? What are the benefits of eating healthy? Jan 21st: What are the benefits of regular physical activity? What are effective ways of increasing your activity level? What are some safety measures when doing exercise? Jan 28th: What are simple ways of making healthy food choices? How to prepare cheap yet healthy meals? To register or for more info please call Elsa Uy: 416 493-3333 or email: elsa@splc.ca. St. Paul's L'Amoreaux Centre, 3333 Finch Avenue East. Adults. **Free**



Thursdays, January 8th to January 29th from 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm. **From theory to the kitchen cooking class.** An educational cooking class aimed at teaching how to put healthy meals together. Each week we will demonstrate meals, what food groups and in what portions should be present. Week 1: Heart Breakfast Week 2: Creative Lunches Week 3: Fast Dinners Week 4: Healthy Snacking. Taste sampling is provided. To attend you must have prediabetes or type 2 diabetes. The class will be led by a registered dietitian. Must be able to speak and write English. Dates are: January 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th from 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm. Please call: 647 436-0385 ext. 519 to register. Please note that there are limited spots so a class may be full. If you cannot make it to these dates or the class is full, it will be offered again in March and May 2015. For more info contact Azin by email: azin.zurbuchen@unisonhcs.org or phone: 647 436-0385. Unison Health & Community Service Bathurst Finch Hub, 540 Finch Avenue West. Adults. **Free**



Gardening Meeting

Thursday, January 8th from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm. **Lakeshore Environmental Gardening Society Meeting.** Come out to the L.E.G.S. monthly meeting. Meet fellow gardeners, share tips, and exchange seeds and plants. 3500 Lakeshore Boulevard West. All Ages. **Free**

Lecture

Thursday, January 8th from 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm. **Lawrence Ostola @ Lambton House Annual Howland Lecture on the future of Toronto's museums and heritage sites.** With Dr. Ostola, Director, Museum & Heritage Services, City of Toronto. For more info contact: Lambton House by email: admin@lambtonhouse.org or phone: 416 767-5472. Lambton House, 4066 Old Dundas Street West at Lundy Avenue. Adults. **Free**

Music

Friday, January 2nd at 1:10 pm. **Gordon Murray Presents: Piano Potpourri.** Classics, opera, operetta, musicals, ragtime, pop, international and other genres. Gordon Murray, piano. For more info call: 416 631-4300. Trinity-St. Paul's United Church, 427 Bloor Street West. Lunch and snack friendly. **PWYC.**

Tuesday, January 6th at 12:00 pm. **Canadian Opera Company's Dance Series: Brazil, The Land of Tears and Soul.** Newton Moraes' choreography celebrates his Brazilian culture and connects it with today's world in an evocative series of vignettes. Newton Moraes Dance Theatre: Marco Placencio, Michelle Zimmerman, Patrizia Gianforcaro, Nichesha Garrick, Falciony Pacino Cruz and others. For more info call: 416 363-8231. Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen Street West. **Free**

Tuesday, January 6th at 12:10 pm. **University of Toronto Faculty of Music Performance Class for Singers.** Concert by the first year undergraduate students. For more info call: 416 408-0208. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park. Open to the public. **Free**

Wednesday, January 7th at 5:30 pm. **Canadian Opera Company. Jazz Series: Easy to Love:** The Cole Porter Songbook. Porter: Just One of Those Things; Night and Day; I've Got You Under My Skin; Easy to Love; All of You; Ev'ry Time We Say Good-bye. Amy McConnell, vocals; William Sperandei, trumpet; Mark Kieswetter, piano; Ross MacIntyre, bass. For more info call: 416 363-8231. Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen Street West. **Free**

Thursday, Jan 8th at 12:00 pm. **Canadian Opera Company. Dance Series: Sirocco.** Dancer/choreographer Anjelica Scannura moves beyond geographical and stylistic boundaries in search of the Arabic roots of flamenco. Ritmo Flamenco Dance and Music Ensemble. For more info call: 416 363-8231. Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen Street West. **Free**

Thursday, January 8th at 12:10 pm. **University of Toronto Faculty of Music.** Thursdays at Noon. Works by Stravinsky, Bartók and Tansman. Fraser Jackson, bassoon; Jamie Parker, and Monique de Margerie, pianos; Beverley Johnston, and Ed Reifel, percussion. For more info call: 416 408-0208. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park. **Free**

Tuesday, January 13th at 12:00 pm. **Canadian Opera Company. Chamber Music Series: The Golden Violin.** Virtuoso masterworks for violin and piano. Victor Fournelle-Blain, violin; Philip Chiu, piano. For more info call: 416 363-8231. Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen Street West. **Free**

Tuesday January 13th at 12:10 pm. **University of Toronto, Faculty of Music. Orastoryo!** Performance class for singers. Darryl Edwards, voice; Mia Bach, piano. For more info call: 416 408-0208. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park. Open to the public. **Free**

Thursday, January 15th at 12:00 pm. **Canadian Opera Company. Jazz Series: All or Nothing at All.** Jazz standards and original compositions. Rémi Bolduc, saxophone; McGill Honours Jazz Combo. For more info call: 416 363-8231. Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen Street West. **Free**

Thursday, January 15th at 12:10 pm. **University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Thursdays at Noon: Composing Comedy.** Works by the students of Eric Robertson. For more info call: 416 408-0208. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park. **Free**



Neuroscience

Tuesday, January 6th from 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm. **The Neuroscience of Willpower.** Are you striving for a change in your life, but unsure of how to bring it about? Are you frustrated about the lack of progress in your life? Do you want to kick a bad habit, or acquire a new healthy one? Would you like to increase the chance of sticking to your New Year's resolutions? This presentation explains the underlying neuroscience driving our behaviours and offers eight simple, yet highly effective research-based "Change Interventions" that will help you meet your goals and become the best version of yourself. North York Central Library Auditorium, 5120 Yonge Street. Adults. **Free**

Scrabble

Tuesday, January 6th at 11:00 am. **50+ Scrabble Party Drop-in.** Have fun with good companions and exercise your brain. This program is offered in an all-inclusive, accepting atmosphere, where players of all levels are welcome. Tuesdays from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm in the 2nd Floor Movie Room. Must be aged 50+. Call for more info such as changes to the schedule: 416 392-0511 or contact Sherri Bulmer by email: olderadults@centraleglinton.com or visit the website: <http://www.centraleglinton.com>. Central Eglinton Community Centre, 160 Eglinton Ave East. Seniors 50+. **Free**

Sing

Thursday, January 8th from 10:00 am - 11:00 am. **Drop Everything and Sing.** Popular sing-alongs with familiar tunes and piano accompaniment. No long-term commitment necessary, just register before your first visit. To register or for more info contact Judith Butler by email: highparksingalong@gmail.com or by phone: 647 343-8412. 193 High Park Avenue, second floor, corner of Humberside Avenue. Adults. **\$2.00**

Social Media in Your Job Search

Friday, January 9th from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm. **Facebook and Social Media in your Job Search.** Neighbourhood Link Support Services presents a workshop on using social media and Facebook to stand out in your job search. Learn the top tips on staying connected: networking, status updates, Facebook Marketplace, join and get active in groups. Registration is required! For more info and to register, visit in person or call: 416 396-8890. Albert Campbell District Library, 496 Birchmount Road. Adults. **Free**

What's Inside: Beauty Products

Tuesday, January 13th from 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm. **Ingredients: understanding what's in your beauty products (Part 1).** There are millions of skin care and cosmetic products on the market, many of which claim to do wonderful things. However, in recent years, environmental groups have been claiming that many common cosmetic ingredients are toxic. How is a consumer to know which products will work as claimed and which might be harmful? This program is going to cover the basic scientific concepts behind beauty products. Armed with this knowledge, attendees will learn the basics of how to interpret product claims and ingredient lists for various beauty products. Part 1 on January 13th will cover basic concepts and terminology in chemistry and biology as they relate to cosmetics and toiletries. It is strongly recommended that those without a science background attend Part 1 to ensure that they will understand the concepts and terminology used in Parts 2 and 3. To register, please call the Science & Technology Department: 416 395-5649. North York Central Library, Room 1, 5120 Yonge Street. Adults. **Free**

Thursday, January 15th from 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm. **Ingredients: understanding what's in your beauty products (Part 2).** This program is going to cover the basic scientific concepts behind beauty products. Part 2 on January 15th covers how to interpret cosmetic labels and ingredient lists, and provides basic rules to help consumers select products for specific purposes. Please note that it is strongly recommended that those without a science background attend Part 1 on January 13th to ensure that they will understand the concepts and terminology used in part 2. To register, please call the Science & Tech Dept. at: 416 395-5649. North York Central Library Room 2/3, 5120 Yonge Street. Adults. **Free**

To subscribe to The Bulletin call the Consumer/Survivor Information Resource Centre of Toronto at: 416 595-2882 or email us at: csinfo@camh.ca.

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Disclaimer: The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Toronto Central LHIN or the Government of Ontario, C/S Info Staff, Volunteers or Board Members. Mailing Address: C/S Info Centre, c/o CAMH, The Mall, 1001 Queen Street West, Toronto, ON M6J 1H4. www.csinfo.ca



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Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network

Thanks for subscribing! From the C/S Info Bulletin Team: Helen, Cassandra and Arlene for the last time ;(

Happy New Year! We wish you all the best in 2015!!
From: The C/S Info Centre Staff