



Community-centred primary health care

AOHC
ACSO

970 Lawrence Avenue West, Suite 500, Toronto, ON M6A 3B6 Tel: 416-236-2539 Fax: 416 236-0431 Email: mail@aohc.org www.aohc.org



OCSA

Ontario Community
Support Association

United in our commitment to care



Ontario Federation of Community
Mental Health and Addiction Programs

Sharing Resources, Exploring Common Issues

To Members of Parliament, Ontario Caucus

March 9, 2009

Community Health & Social Services Infrastructure Fund Needed to Bring Services Closer to Ontarians

We three associations, the Association of Ontario Health Centres (AOHC), the Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA) and the Ontario Federation of Community Mental Health and Addiction Programs (OFCMHAP) recently corresponded with you about the need to establish a **Community Health & Social Services Infrastructure Fund (CHSSIF)** in response to the economic challenges facing Ontario. This critical initiative presents an unprecedented and historic opportunity to bolster Ontario's future community health and social services' infrastructure at a time of growing demand, while at the same time creating jobs for workers in small and mid-sized construction and related companies, stimulating the economy in rural and urban communities throughout Ontario.

Attached to this letter is a proposal for the Community Health & Social Services Infrastructure Fund which provides details of the fund and examples of projects that would benefit from this infrastructure funding.

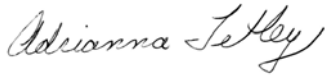
To make this happen we need your help if these funds are to be available to the communities in your constituency. At this point, it would appear that **federal infrastructure funding criteria currently exclude health-care related projects. This would constitute a significant stumbling block to projects designed to create multi-service hubs that include health services. We need your help to make sure that these funds are available for small neighbourhood community health projects.**

Under the sponsorship of a Community Health Centre, Community Support Service Agency or a Community Mental Health and Addiction Programs provider, we envision under one roof: community health centres, supportive housing, community support services for seniors and persons with disabilities, community mental health and addiction services, wellness centres, refugee and immigrant services, Aboriginal Health Access Centres, co-located with government agencies. Not only will this provide the best use of economic stimulus dollars, it will better meet the needs of many Ontarians, especially those facing barriers to accessing service, advancing the development of community partnerships and reducing overhead costs for local service providers.

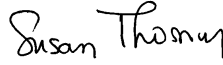
The 2009 Federal Budget offers a timely opportunity for the federal transfer of funds to Ontario to launch such a Community Health & Social Services Infrastructure Fund and get Ontarians back to work now. But it can only do that if community health projects are equally eligible for the infrastructure funds.

We ask for your support for this initiative. We also ask that you talk about this initiative with your parliamentary colleagues and, with Minister Baird and Minister Flaherty, focusing on the barrier currently part of infrastructure spending criteria.

Sincerely,



Adrianna Tetley
Executive Director
Association of Ontario
Health Centres
416-236-0431 Ext 226



Susan Thorning
Chief Executive Officer
Ontario Community
Support Association
416-256-3010 Ext 231



David Kelly
Executive Director
Ontario Federation of
Community Mental Health
& Addiction Programs
416-490-8900 Ext 22