

Inside CONTACT

A message from the Executive Director

It's time to update your Contact file.

We hope that this newsletter will provide you with a briefing on some key developments at Contact Hamilton, some background on our day-to-day activities and some information that will be of interest and significance to the community we serve.

This issue features an account of the important role that Contact Hamilton is now beginning to play in helping to plan for future services in the community. We also present some statistics about waiting lists for accommodation supports that will be of concern to all involved in developmental services. Another story describes the results of a provincial survey measuring consumers' response to our access service. We have also included all the news we could fit about other programs and initiatives, comings and goings on our board, as well as some information about what Contact does and how it operates.

We would love to hear from you – to get your feedback about our services, this newsletter and any of the issues we address. The Contact Points on the back page indicate how to find us in person, by mail, by phone or through our web site.

I would like to thank you for your interest and support.

Best wishes from all of us
at Contact Hamilton.

Oksana Fisher

Planning for the Future: Contact Hamilton begins to develop Community Service Plan

In addition to Contact's responsibility for coordinated information, access, RPAC and the resolution process, the agency has also been assigned responsibility by the Ministry of Community and Social Services Regional Office to develop annual community service plans. These plans will be specific to MCSS-funded children's and developmental services and will assist the community and the Regional Office in future service system planning.

Contact Hamilton is working closely with the other Contact agencies in Brant, Niagara and Haldimand-Norfolk on this initiative.

The first step is to develop a framework and methodology for the community service plan. This is being done in consultation with service providers, related service sectors and consumers. In April, we hosted focus groups where we asked participants to provide their opinion about the content and approach for the community process. It is important to note that the focus at this point is on the approach to the community service plan, not on the plan itself. This phase is expected to be complete by the end of June.

The development of community service plans is a significant step for our community. The planning process should provide key opportunities for cross-agency and cross-sectoral discussions of mutual and related interest. We would like to thank everyone who has participated to date in this important initiative. •

Contact Confirms Developmental Services Need Waiting List for Accommodation Supports Now at 283

Community-wide waiting list statistics compiled by Contact Hamilton provide a clear indication of the serious pressures confronting the developmental services system.

At the request of the Ministry of Community and Social Services, Contact Hamilton recently compiled information on the number of people with developmental disabilities who have identified a need for accommodation (residential) support offered through one of the developmental services agencies in Hamilton.

The statistics show that there are currently 283 people identified as needing accommodation. There are 14 people on the short-term waiting list, 29 people on the medium-term waiting list and 240 people on the long-term waiting list.

Many of the people on the short-term and medium-term list are in very uncertain situations. Some of them are supported in their home by parents who are aging. Many of these parents are worried about who will care for their son or daughter, if they are no longer able to. In other cases, current living environments are no longer suitable to support the needs of individuals who require more specialized and ongoing support.

These numbers are very concerning, as they indicate, not only the current pressures on the system, but also a continuing demand for services that will stress the community resources in the future.

Without additional funding, it will be very difficult even to respond to the needs of those on the short-term list. To accommodate all the future demand, the current capacity in the developmental services community almost needs to double.

Continued on page 3

Contact Hamilton Scores Well on Provincial Survey

Contact Hamilton's access process has been well received by consumers, according to the initial results of a provincial survey.

The performance measurement survey, a province-wide tool designed to receive and record feedback from consumers on new access mechanisms, was put in place at Contact Hamilton in April 2001. The results, tabulated from that time until March 31, show that families have been very satisfied with their experience with Contact Hamilton. The positive results demonstrated in the survey contrast sharply with frustration that consumers experienced when trying to access the system in the past. This frustration was one of the key factors behind the Making Services Work for People policy and the creation of Contact Hamilton.

Previously, families complained that:

- They didn't know where to turn for help
- They didn't know what services were available
- They had to repeat their stories to many different agencies
- They had to contact many different agencies to receive services

The feedback about people's experience with Contact Hamilton, on the other hand, indicates that Contact Hamilton plays an important role for the people and families it serves. Families clearly value the role of the Resource Coordinator as a provider of information, assistance with planning and referrals to agencies. Support for a central agency that offers these services has been a consistent theme.

The survey evaluated the areas of:

- Timely Response
- Ease of Access
- Responsiveness

A statistical analysis of the results showed that respondents rated Contact Hamilton highly on each of these issues. The comments that many people wrote on their survey forms provided some eloquent testimony about the key role Contact can play in helping people through a potentially frustrating process.

Contact Hamilton is very grateful to all those who took the time to respond and provide the agency with such helpful feedback. As a new organization, Contact is continuously refining its processes to improve service. Feedback from families plays a crucial role in helping us measure how we are doing and where we can continue to improve. An area identified for improvement is the continuing need for the community to be more aware of Contact Hamilton and the services provided. •

Summary of Results (April 2001-March 31, 2002)

(*a full report will be published in a future edition)

Indicator	Maximum Possible Score	Children's Services	Developmental Services
# of Respondents		96	21
# of Surveys Distributed		484	51
Average # of days from 1st contact to the end of process		11	27
Timely Response	5	4.4	4.2
Ease of Access	10	9.0	8.9
Responsiveness	22	19.5	19.8

Comments from families ...

What was most helpful?

"You people actually listened and treated my family like we were special, even though we know some of the services we need sometime in the future may be difficult to access."

"The first phone call. I was overwhelmed with the readiness of information given to me. I appreciate the great willingness to help. Thanks for your support and concern."

"How quickly Contact responded to my call. The opportunity to have our needs met in one agency."

"The information I received was very helpful."

"Not having to constantly relate my situation over and over again."

"I was introduced to services in the community that I was not aware of."

"I hope this service continues in helping people when they need it. Thanks for your help so far, it has been helpful."

What could have been done to help you better?

"Nothing. I feel that everything was handled appropriately. I feel that the service provided by Contact Hamilton was excellent, but I also feel that not enough people are aware of the services that Contact Hamilton are providing."

"Contact was an unknown service to me. I was informed the Contact was available via CAS. I feel Contact ought to publicize itself in greater detail."

"The service provided was excellent. Knowledge of your services should be more visible."

"It would have been nice to receive some reading literature. Wonderful agency-there should be more out there."

New Funding for Developmental Services

In May 2001, the Community and Social Services Minister John Baird announced a multi-year plan for developmental services. It involved \$55 million in funding in 2001/2, growing to \$197 million annually. Minister Baird also announced the government would be providing \$67 million over five years to create more places for people with developmental disabilities to live. •

Local Planning

As part of this funding, the MCSS Regional Office was initially allocated \$420,800 for the Hamilton, Brant, Niagara and Haldimand-Norfolk communities. Priorities for these funds included: people who were living with aging parents, young adults transitioning from school and individuals whose needs were changing.

Last fall, the Regional Office asked the Contact organizations to take the lead in facilitating planning around these dollars.

Contact Hamilton, in partnership with the developmental services agencies submitted a proposal to the Regional Office for the allocation of new developmental services funding for Hamilton.

The proposal put forth recommendations to support individuals in urgent need of accommodation support, day supports and respite. The Hamilton community received annualized funding of \$91,300 for accommodation supports and \$75,400 for day supports.

The Hamilton community looks forward to receiving additional funding over the next several years to address the ongoing and significant pressures in the developmental services system. •

New Program for Children and Families

Children (aged 0-6) with mental health problems and their families will soon be able to benefit from a new intensive intervention and treatment program, thanks to a new initiative under Ontario's Early Years Plan.

Contact Hamilton facilitated a community planning process in December and January to lay the groundwork for the program, under which the Hamilton community will receive \$400,000 to operate intensive, mental health intervention/treatment services in children's homes, child care settings, schools and community settings.

The planning group recommended to the Regional Office that Chedoke Child and Family Centre be the lead agency for this service. Chedoke will work closely with other community agencies and services in responding to the needs of these children and their families.

Copies of the proposal are available on our web site: www.contacthamilton.ca •

Centralized Access for Respite Services

Effective June 1, 2002 access to respite services offered by the children's and developmental services agencies will be co-ordinated through Contact Hamilton. This will involve respite services offered by Christian Horizons, Hamilton Association for Community Living, Rygiel Supports for Community Living and the Alternate Care Programs offered through the Catholic Children's Aid Society and the Children's Aid Society. Families who are currently receiving respite through these agencies will not be affected by this change. •

Centralized Access for Chedoke Child and Family Centre

Contact Hamilton and the Chedoke Child and Family Centre are in the process of planning the transfer of intake functions to Contact Hamilton. The first phase of this transfer will include the intake for Chedoke's behavioural/emotional programs and services. The transfer is expected to occur later this year. •

Continued from page 1

The statistics are particularly important for all those involved in planning and delivering developmental services because it is the first time that community-wide statistics on waiting lists have been available through a single source. Through Contact Hamilton, information about waiting lists and demands for services are now centralized, providing a picture of community-wide needs.

Now that the information is available, it will help the Ministry of Community and Social Services better understand the needs within Hamilton. This information will also help the Hamilton community plan services to respond to the demands. The statistics will also provide families with some valuable insight into the pressures in the system. •

Meeting the challenges

Contact Agencies and Ministry Discuss Developmental Services

The accomplishments of Contact agencies and the pressures on community developmental services were key themes of a meeting with a senior Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services representative last December.

Andrea Maurice, the ministry's Assistant Deputy Minister, Community and Developmental Services Division, visited Contact Hamilton on December 10, 2001 to meet with executive directors of the four Contact agencies (Hamilton, Brant, Niagara and Haldimand-Norfolk) and senior representatives of the MCSS regional office.

Ms. Maurice acknowledged the significant accomplishments that the Contact organizations have achieved, in a very short period of time, in the areas of coordinated information, single point of access, and case resolution.

The meeting provided an opportunity for a discussion of current and future trends in the developmental services sector, as well as the pressures that system is experiencing. Issues such as significant wait lists, the need for capital investments, the needs of aging adults with developmental disabilities and problems faced by aging caregivers were explored during the course of a very positive meeting.

Leila Ryan

Founding leader steps down

After more than two years of astute leadership and tireless effort, Dr. Leila Ryan stepped down last September from her position as chair of Contact Hamilton's board of directors.

As the founding chair of the agency, Leila demonstrated a very strong commitment to Contact Hamilton's mission and provided exceptional leadership to the Board. Ever since Terry McCarthy, the Regional Director, first approached her to chair the interim board, her vision, her experience and her skills have all played a key role in establishing the organization and making rapid progress towards achieving its initial goals.

Last September's annual meeting provided the board with an opportunity to thank her for the enormous contribution she has made. The board expressed the hope that she would look back with pride on what Contact Hamilton accomplished under her leadership.

Board members and others involved with the agency are delighted that Dr. Ryan is going to remain involved and continue to contribute in the role of past chair.

Patrick Fernando

Experienced new chair takes over

Contact Hamilton is looking forward to a further period of dynamic leadership, with Patrick Fernando as the new chair of the board of directors. Patrick brings a wide range of skills and experience to his position.

Patrick, who has been a director of the agency since March 1999, is retired from McMaster University where he was the International Students Advisor, Human Rights Consultant and Student Exchange Officer. He holds a Masters degree in Social Welfare Policy.

His previous board experience includes vice-chair, Canada World Youth and board member of the Canadian Federation for International Education. He also volunteers his time with other boards in the community, and is currently serving on the board of Settlement Integration Services Organization (SISO).



Contact Points

Membership Opportunities

Members of the community who wish to become more involved with Contact Hamilton may apply for membership. There are two categories of membership with Contact Hamilton, annual (voting) and associate (non-voting).

If you would like to receive information about membership in Contact Hamilton, please contact us at 905-570-8888 or email us at info@contacthamilton.ca. We will be pleased to send you information and an application form. Please note that you do not have to be a member in order to receive services through Contact Hamilton.

Web Site

The Contact Hamilton website is a source of information, not only about our organization, but also about the children's and developmental services systems in Hamilton. It also provides links with other systems and agencies.

Please check it out at www.contacthamilton.ca

If there is information that you would like to see included in our web-site, please contact us.

Keep us Up-to-date

Please contact us if there has been a change in your address, contact information or if you would like to be removed from our mailing list. Please contact Dayna Setzkorn at 905-522-3304 ext. 229, Executive Assistant with any changes.

Contact Hamilton Staff

Oksana Plawiuk Fisher	Executive Director
Lea Odoardi Pollard	Manager, Client Services
Deb Alexander	Intake Coordinator
Trina Tingley	Intake Coordinator
Cheryl Bosse	Resource Coordinator
Lynne Foote	Resource Coordinator
Heather Fowler	Resource Coordinator
Mary Ann Greenway	Resource Coordinator
Martha Harvie	Resource Coordinator
Sharon Warcholak	Resource Coordinator
Gary Winship	Resource Coordinator

Jay Chauhan	Receptionist
Livy Della Luna	Administrative Assistant
Dayna Setzkorn	Executive Assistant

How to Reach Us

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pour les services à l'enfance et à l'adaptation

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Who We Are and What We Do:

- Coordinated Information
- Single Point of Access
- Resolution Mechanism
- Residential Placement Advisory Committee
- Community Service Plan

Frequently Asked Questions

Contact Hamilton is a new agency that has undergone significant development over the past two years. We are providing this update to respond to some of the questions that are frequently asked about us and our services. In this issue, we focus on our role in [Coordinated Information](#) and [Centralized Access](#). For more information about Contact Hamilton, you may request our agency brochures or check our web site at www.contacthamilton.ca

What is CONTACT Hamilton for Children's and Developmental Services?

Contact Hamilton is an agency funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS). CONTACT provides coordinated information and serves as a single point of access for families and individuals who use MCSS funded children's and developmental services. Contact Hamilton is also responsible for the Residential Placement Advisory Committee process, the Resolution Mechanism and the development of an annual community service plan.

What is our role with regard to Coordinated Information?

We serve as a **central point for information** about the programs and services offered by the MCSS funded children's and developmental services agencies.

What is our role as a Single Point of Access?

We are the **central access (intake) point** for most of the programs and services offered by the children's and developmental services agencies.

- We complete an intake process with the person/ family and then identify the most appropriate services and supports, available within the community.
- Where indicated, we refer the person/ family to the appropriate children's or developmental services agencies. With consent, the intake information is forwarded to the agency.
- Day supports (vocational, life skills, recreational)
- Accommodation supports (group living, supported independent living, family homes)
- Respite
- Consultation Services

What does "Children's and Developmental Services" Include?

MCSS funded **children's services** agencies provide support to children, youth and their families who are experiencing behavioural, emotional or developmental concerns. These agencies provide a range of services such as:

- Assessment
- Individual Therapy
- Family Therapy
- Residential Treatment
- Respite

Developmental services agencies provide supports to people who have a developmental disability (intellectual disability). The services offered by the agencies may include:

Who can make a referral?

Anyone can contact us to receive information about services or a general consultation. This includes the person, family member, school personnel, physician or community agency.

- If the caller is requesting services or a referral to an agency, it is often preferable that the person or family member contacts us directly.
- If another professional or agency initiates the referral on behalf of the person/family, we will confirm that the caller has obtained consent from the person or guardian to initiate the referral to Contact. This consent can be verbal.

Who We Are and What We Do:

Frequently Asked Questions

What number do I call to make a referral to CONTACT Hamilton?

Call **905-570-8888** and ask to speak with the Intake Coordinator.

- You may be connected immediately to our Intake Coordinator or you may need to leave your name and telephone number with the receptionist.

What happens after I make a referral to CONTACT Hamilton?

First, you will speak with the Intake Coordinator. The Intake Coordinator will do the following, depending on the nature of your call:

- Provide you with **information** about MCSS funded services and/or
- Redirect you to the most appropriate service sector if the services are not provided through the MCSS agencies.
- Provide you with a **consultation**.

If you are requesting MCSS funded services, the Intake Coordinator will:

- Confirm you have the consent of the person/legal guardian.
- Collect specific demographic information (e.g. name, address, date of birth, guardian's name, telephone etc.).
- Collect general information about the reason for the referral.
- Assign the person/family to one of our Resource Coordinators for completion of the intake process.

The Resource Coordinator will:

- Connect with the person/family to complete the **intake information**. This can be done in a variety of ways including over the telephone, office visit and or home visit (where required).

- Make recommendations to the person/family regarding community resources.
- Make **referrals** to appropriate MCSS funded services.
- Provide families with contact information about other community services that may be appropriate.
- Become re-involved with the person/family should their needs change, or new needs emerge.

Does Contact have the authority to obtain or purchase services?

Contact's role is to complete the intake, to recommend the most appropriate services and where appropriate, make a referral to one of the MCSS agencies. The service provider agency determines if they are able to provide service or support. Contact does not have the authority to direct an agency to provide service, nor can Contact "purchase" or "pay for services".

Do Resource Coordinators assume the role of the case manager/ service coordinator?

This has been an area of considerable confusion. A number of Resource Coordinator roles are similar to what is often understood to be "case management". There are also some key differences.

The Resource Coordinator works closely with person/ family and case manager (if one exists) to identify the most appropriate services. Once a referral is made to an agency and the person/family are receiving services, the Resource Coordinator's role will end. If new services are required in the future, the person/ family or their case manager will contact the Resource Coordinator to discuss other services.

The Resource Coordinator does not:

- Provide interim support or counselling while the person/family is on a waiting list.
- Meet on a ongoing or long-term basis with the person/family to monitor progress.
- Coordinate regular meetings with service providers to review the person's treatment progress. These meetings, often referred to "case conferences" or "treatment planning" are generally the responsibility of the service provider agencies.

What support does Contact provide while the person is on a waiting list for service?

The Resource Coordinator's primary function is to provide centralized intake and to make appropriate referrals. Unfortunately many of the agencies have waiting lists. The Resource Coordinator will help the person identify interim supports (where available) that may assist them during the waiting period. If the person's needs change while waiting for service, they are encouraged to call their Resource Coordinator to review if new referrals are required.

Can Contact provide information about all community services?

Contact's primary mandate is to provide information about the MCSS funded children's and developmental services.

We can provide general information about other community services, however it is recommended that the person call **Inform Hamilton 905-528-0104** or the other services directly to get more specific information.