

Across the Province OBIA Advisory Council (OAC) Review of 2009

On November 13, OAC held its final meeting of 2009. Representatives from across the province spent some time reviewing the role and purpose of OAC and talked about how they can strengthen the communication and flow of information from you, the members of our associations, with the leadership of their local association, with the OAC and with Ontario Brain Injury Association. Looking ahead to 2010, we will be introducing some new standards for how we work in an effort to offer better service to you. We will be introducing a Code of Ethics for staff, volunteers and consultants, and ensuring that all associations have policies about confidentiality that will better protect your privacy.

Over the past year, OAC reps have increased their knowledge through workshops on;

- Fund development
- Legal aid services
- Income maintenance programs (i.e. ODSP, CPP, Long Term Disability, Ontario Works)

Participation in these workshops helps increase the knowledge of community resources so that your association is better able to share information with you.

In 2009, we worked together on the Provincial Conference, Peer Support and the Dual Membership program. We had greater collaboration than ever before. Seventeen associations participated in the provincial conference hosted by the Brain Injury Association of Niagara (BIAN) and OBIA. Local associations contributed volunteers and door prizes and their presence was felt by those in attendance. Our collective efforts to promote the conference resulted in a sell-out crowd of 566 delegates.

In Peer Mentoring, we were happy to add the Brain Injury Association of Thunder Bay to the participating associations. There are now fifteen associations offering Peer Mentoring. In 2009, we hosted Mentor training sessions in Peterborough, London, Belleville, Mississauga, and we will finish the year with a Mentor training session in Toronto. With our collective efforts, we have been able to train 134 Mentors and support 132 Partners through this program. In 2010, we plan to increase our marketing efforts and extend our reach.

On behalf of OAC, we wish you a happy and peaceful holiday season and look forward to even greater successes in 2010!