

CHAIR/S:	Monique Doolittle-Romas	NOTE TAKER:	Reem
ATTENDEES:	Chris Cobus, Karim Khan, Chantal Jolicoeur, Pono Traore, Matthew Ottaviani, Dawn Rodger, Kelly Dumas, Valerie Bishop De Young, Jennifer Lalonde, Anne Leduc, Denis Boileau, Tanya Mac Donald,	REGRETS:	

ITEM#		ITEM DESCRIPTION	ITEM NOTES / ACTION / OUTCOME
1.0	WELCOME		
2.0	Purpose: Prepare coordinated advocacy response to anticipated lack of funding increase in the upcoming Ontario Provincial Budget and address CSS workforce sustainability.		<p>Important Documents & Resources:</p> <p>Document - CSS Advocacy Social Media Tips.pdf Letter - CSS Advocacy Constituent Letter DRAFT 2025-2026 Eng.pdf Letter - CSS Advocacy Constituent Letter DRAFT 2025-2026 Fr.pdf Letter - CSS Advocacy Stakeholder Letter DRAFT 2025-2026 Eng.pdf Letter - CSS Advocacy Stakeholder Letter DRAFT 2025-2026 Fr.pdf</p>
	2.1	Situation Overview	<p>The session opened with a review of the current funding environment for Community Support Services (CSS). Participants confirmed there is currently no indication of a funding increase for CSS agencies in 2026–27 from Ontario Health, Ministry of Health, OCSA, or sector contacts. Last year’s increase was only 0.6%, which did not meet operating demands. If funding does not change, agencies anticipate service reductions, longer waitlists, workforce instability, client safety concerns, and increased pressure on hospitals and ALC.</p>

2.2	<p>Core Advocacy Position</p>	<p>The working group affirmed support for OCSA's advocacy position requesting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5% permanent base funding increase. • Additional 5% investment to address CSS waitlists. • CCSN is not recommending the publication of specific defined service cuts at this time. <p>Key messaging direction emphasized the role of CSS in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting seniors and vulnerable residents to remain safely at home. • Preventing avoidable hospital and long-term care pressures. • Protecting the stability of the CSS workforce and service system sustainability.
2.3	<p>Advocacy Strategy – What the Sector Will Do?</p> <p>Members agreed the primary short-term focus is influencing the Ontario Budget process before legislative return in March. Efforts will remain aligned with OCSA to ensure sector consistency and credibility.</p>	<p>A-Provincial Pre-Budget Push (Immediate Priority)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus now is exclusively budget advocacy until the March budget. • CSS groups coordinating closely with OCSA to stay aligned and credible. • Multiple representatives will speak at provincial budget hearings including: (Jennifer Lalonde, Tanya MacDonald, Steve Perry) • Additional actions: • Agencies encouraged to submit written budget input. • OCSA shared supports and templates to simplify the submission process.

- Importance stressed unified narrative rather than fragmented asks.

B. Postcard Campaign

A sector-wide postcard campaign targeted MPPs. The campaign is designed to humanize CSS impact and demonstrate constituent voices.

Details confirmed:

- Clients are encouraged to hand-write messages.
- Postcards available in English and French
- Cost of postcards to be covered by CCSN
- Providers are responsible for distribution to clients including postage in sent by mail as well as prepaid return postage for client to mail directly to MMPs. Providers can save on postage and increase participation by distributing through existing service channels such as on-site programming and delivering completed postcards to local constituency offices.
- Timeframe for postcard distribution: between now and mid-February.
- **Confirm the total # of French and English postcard for your organization before January 19th by emailing Karim Khan: Kkhan@accesscss.ca**

		<p>C. Client & Community Letters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample letter templates will be shared for: Clients, Board Chairs, Community partners. • Agencies are to customize <p>D. Political Contact & Engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A centralized political contact resource is being compiled to support agencies in communicating with appropriate elected officials. • 5 a 7 with MPPs: To be hosted in Renfrew Counties, Ottawa and Eastern Counties dates and locations to be determined • 5 a 7 to be hosted twice a year going forward to establish ongoing relationships with political decision makers (MPP's, Municipal leaders, others?) inviting CSS colleagues to attend from across the region for a meet & greet.
	2.4	<p>Next Steps / Action Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute postcard packages to agencies • Begin recruiting clients to complete postcards • Agencies share messaging with Boards and teams • Prepare budget hearing speakers • Agencies submit written budget feedback • Maintain contact coordination and updates • Keep workforce topic flagged for ongoing work after budget push.

