

PUBLIC POLICY ROUNDUP

Spring 2011

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

On February 1, 2011 the Accessibility Directorate released a revised version of the [Proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#). As outlined in the Fall 2010 Public Policy Roundup, on September 1, 2010 the Minister of Community & Social Services had released for public consultation a **Proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation** that combined standards for Information & Communication, Employment and Transportation. That proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation not only harmonized the timelines, but substantially changed some of the requirements of the three standards which were included. LDAO joined many other organizations, including the AODA Alliance and the Ontario Human Rights Commission in sending submissions to the Accessibility Directorate expressing concerns about the proposed regulation ([LDAO's Response to the Proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation](#)).

The February 2011 version of the **Proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation** contains some small improvements over the September 2010 version, but many of the concerns that LDAO and other organizations had expressed have not been resolved. For example, the issue of timeliness of student access to materials in electronic formats has not been adequately addressed. LDAO will be making another submission to underline our concerns.

Partnership Project

The Partnership Project was an eight-month consultation process about the relationship between the Ontario government and the not-for-profit (NFP) sector. The project was launched on April 22 and culminated in a report submitted to the Premier in December, 2010. Project co-chairs, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Dr. Eric Hoskins and Helen Burstyn, Chair of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, solicited input from organizations in the not-for-profit sector through an online survey and nine regional roundtables. LDAO was represented at one of the roundtables and completed the online survey. Not-for-profit organizations expressed many of the same concerns, especially about funding processes and difficulties navigating government bureaucracies.

The report of the Partnership Project was released on March 3, 2011. Recommendations included:

- appointing a Minister to be responsible for and accountable to the not-for-profit sector.
- creating a coordinating body within government to act as a central point of contact for the not-for-profit sector and coordinate inter-ministerial collaboration, with an advisory group drawn from the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

- establishing an online portal to act as a one-stop-shop for information on new laws, new programs, available sources of funding, consultation opportunities and sector-related resources and information.
- creating a province-wide database to streamline applications for funding, amalgamate and disseminate information on not-for-profit organizations, and better coordinate ministries and agencies.

As a first step the Government is establishing the Office of the Partnership Project, and a Partnership Advisory Group.

Working Together for Kids' Mental Health

The Ministries of Education, Children & Youth Services and Health & Long Term Care have been collaborating on a demonstration project in four pilot communities to review the use of common assessment tools as screens for children and youth with mental health and addictions issues. Since young people with learning disabilities or ADHD may have co-existing mental health and/or addictions issues, the results of the **Working Together for Kids' Mental Health** project will have implications for the children and youth LDAO represents.