

# BRIGHT LIGHTS AWARDS

2023

**Nomination: 1. Using a population-based approach to provide care to the community**

**Dufferin Area Family Health Team and North Peel & Dufferin Community Legal Services**  
**"The ODSP Clinic" - A Health-Justice Collaboration in Support of**  
**Dufferin-Caledon Patients Experiencing Financial Need Due to**  
**Disability**



How an ODSP application is completed by physicians, NPs, and other health care providers has tremendous impact on the approval of ODSP benefits for an individual. However, determining what is essential for a “well done” application is not always easy. Since May 2019, North Peel & Dufferin Community Legal Services (NPDCLS) and the Dufferin Area FHT (DAFHT) social workers have collaborated through a twice monthly ODSP Clinic to assist referred patients with ‘appropriate and complete’ applications. Together, we have developed a patient-centered, effective approach in supporting individuals navigating the ODSP application or appeal process. This initiative has essentially created a ‘bridge between’ two systems – health and legal/justice – both of which may be experienced as intimidating to navigate for many individuals. Through this collaboration, we have instead sought to ease the experience for patients through sharing of information, aiding and assisting in locating or organizing supporting documents, addressing queries, and providing practical guidance for patients and their physicians. In particular, we commend the expertise and knowledge provided by the NP&DCLS legal team as invaluable for patients, physicians, and our social work team in together achieving increased success with patient ODSP applications. Over the past 4 years, our medical-legal partnership through this 'ODSP Clinic' has supported over 100 patients within their application and/or appeal process.

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