



# FUND & FIX IT!



## TRACKING THE CPIN BLUES

In 2015, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) launched the *Child Protection Information Network* (CPIN). CPIN is a mega-program designed by Curam/IBM – the same company that designed the Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) for the Ontario government. SAMS was brought in to administer *Ontario Works* and the *Ontario Disability Support Program*, and was a disaster for social assistance recipients and staff from day one. CPIN uses the same program, but it has been customized for the *Children's Aid Societies* (CAS) sector. It is designed to standardize administrative processes across the entire sector, and will replace all other information systems. It is intended to simplify communication and information-sharing

across agencies, and to help agencies keep better track of clients. The government plans to have CPIN implemented across the entire sector by 2020, at an estimated cost of \$200 million.

Currently, 14 CASs have started implementing CPIN. Six of them are OPSEU units:

- Local 148, *Chatham-Kent Children's Services*
- Local 168, *Sarnia-Lambton CAS*
- Local 334, *Kawartha-Haliburton CAS*
- Local 454, *Children's Aid Society of Ottawa*
- Local 458, *CAS of United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry*
- Local 459, *Family and Children's Services Renfrew*

## CPIN: UNDER-RESOURCED, UNDERFUNDED, AND BEHIND SCHEDULE

CPIN's rollout has exposed a severely underfunded program, as well as inadequate staffing levels to meet the workload burden in child protection work. The 2015 Auditor General's report highlighted the following problems with CPIN's implementation:

- In a 2015 survey of five agencies that implemented CPIN, the Auditor General found that CASs spent an additional \$5.4 million to hire additional frontline staff and IT support to manage added workload pressures. These pressures may have reduced funding to protection services, the Auditor General noted. Agencies were already under financial pressure after adopting a new MCYS-mandated funding formula that cut funding in 2013/14.
- Limited consultation with frontline staff in the early stages of the CPIN project resulted in unrealistic implementation timelines. No consultation took place with the unions representing the workforce.
- Only five of the 14 CASs received data migration services over a 30-month period. The total cost was more than \$9.5 million – over three times the original contract amount.
- Although MCYS provided 14 early-adopter CASs with about \$2.8 million in additional funding to help support CPIN implementation, the costs were significantly higher, totaling about \$18.7 million. CASs had to dig into their own operating funds to cover the costs.

- Key functions of CPIN are not performing as expected. In one agency, four out of every five reports (tracking caseloads and service volumes) were not accurate. Some produced no results; others pulled incorrect information; and there were cases of duplicate records. One in every five reports could not be run at all.

## OPSEU'S ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING ON CPIN

The OPSEU CAS sector leadership is on a task force with employers and ministry representatives, investigating issues arising from CPIN's implementation. Unfortunately, this forum has limited ability to provide critical feedback to the ministry, as employers are reluctant to acknowledge the severity of problems workers encounter with CPIN.

OPSEU leadership has met with the investigative unit of the Provincial Child Advocate (PCA) for Children and Youth several times to discuss how CPIN's implementation is impacting workload and service. The PCA office is interested in pursuing this issue.

In 2017, the OPSEU CAS sector plans to roll out a member survey on CPIN, directed to the six OPSEU units currently implementing CPIN. The results will be used to lobby the minister on making changes to CPIN implementation.

- CASs indicated that caseworkers continue to lose critical information in contact logs and other documents in CPIN. As a workaround, workers have been asked to initially document their contacts and other activities using Microsoft Word before transferring the information into CPIN.

## TRACKING THE CPIN BLUES

**Are you experiencing sudden perspiration, difficulty breathing, and negative thoughts when interfacing with CPIN? Take comfort. You are not alone. Join the ranks of hundreds of child protection workers who have contracted the CPIN blues.**

Don't blame yourself. This is a system-wide issue. Let's raise our collective voice to track the impacts of CPIN on our work and health. Together we can kick the blues away!



Send us your CPIN stories at [lquarta@opseu.org](mailto:lquarta@opseu.org)

## MARCH 2017 - UNION CPIN WELLNESS MONTH

Join other OPSEU units in organizing a union CPIN-themed wellness day at your office over the lunch hour. Consider the possibilities:

- Treat members to refreshments/circulate stickers
- Draw prizes for the best top ten list: "Collective ways to cope with CPIN"
- Get member testimonials: "My CPIN nightmare"
- Organize a union CPIN whiteboard: "What's gone wrong today?"
- Share collective strategies to deal with individual pressures



Authorized for distribution

Warren (Smokey) Thomas  
OPSEU President



Children's Aid Societies OPSEU SEFPO