**St. Christopher House Submission to the Social Assistance Review Commission**

**Summarized by Oladayo Odutayo, McMaster University, for the McMaster Community Poverty Initiative**

*In August, St. Christopher House wrote a letter to the Commission Review of Social Assistance to bring to attention their recommendations that have not been met by the government.*

St. Christopher House is an interactive environment for people in diverse communities to go to for support. They educate people with information that can be used as a tool to reach their full potential. They try to understand what the cause of poverty is so that they can truly make a difference.

SCH partnered with The Toronto City Summit Alliance to create a team that sets out guidelines in order to reduce poverty. SCH is always networking with other groups within the community to continue to make a difference.

They wrote this letter addressing the Commission about the changes they would like to see in the new social assistance system

* Dental, prescription and vision care for low income families
* Raise allowed amount of assets to $5,500 for single people and $9000 for families
* Match Ontario Disability Support Program with the amount Seniors get who have no income
* Create a diverse commission to annually recommend minimum wage rates to the provincial government
* Monitor the Employment Standards Act to make sure it is followed.

The letter goes on to describe the ethics behind social assistance and how it needs to remain neutral and unbiased. They approach this part using a holistic approach referring to not only the sociological impacts of poverty on people but also the psychological and economic.

<http://www.socialassistancereview.ca/uploads/File/St-Christopher-House.pdf>