



Ontario provides significant additional support to Developmental Services

The COVID-19 pandemic is having a particular impact on people with intellectual disabilities, their families, and the not-for-profit agencies that support them. The Government of Ontario released its Economic Update today, showing how the province plans to further combat the COVID-19 outbreak and its ripple effects across the province.

Today's economic update recognizes the impact of COVID-19 and provides significant additional financial support for immediate relief and throughout the crisis. An additional \$20M, in addition to the \$20M previously announced as part of the State of Emergency Funding on 17th March, brings the total investment to \$40M. This demonstrates that the Government understands our specific requirements and will have our backs as the situation develops. On behalf of the people we support and their families, we thank Minister Todd Smith, his staff and the Ford government for their support during this unprecedented crisis.

"Protecting the health and well-being of all Ontarians, including the staff and individuals in our developmental services sector, is our government's number one priority," said Todd Smith, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services. "Today, our government introduced Ontario's Action Plan 2020: Responding to COVID-19. This update is the first phase in our government's plan to respond to and address the COVID-19 outbreak, and included an additional \$20-million investment in developmental services residential facilities, gender-based services and protective care for children and youth. This investment will ensure resources are in place to protect the health and well-being of our communities."

We are pleased to see the following key investments to support people directly in response to the COVID-19 outbreak such as:

- An additional 4,700 children to be supported through the Special Services at Home program in 2020–21;
- supporting additional staffing;
- respite for caregivers impacted by school closures;
- personal protective equipment and supplies;
- transportation costs to minimize client exposure;
- Covering outbreak-related costs, including additional cleaning costs, food and shelter; and
- Expanding access to temporary emergency assistance for people in financial need with no access to financial support and simplifying the application process to help people quickly;

We look forward to working with agencies in the sector across the province to identify specific priorities in response to this crisis.

We understand that this is an initial investment. The Government has consistently made it clear that they understand the many challenges, including financial challenges, still facing those with developmental disabilities, their families and the agencies that support them during this crisis. We know they are committed to continuing to work with us to address them. We in developmental services recognise that this is the challenge of a generation. We will continue to all do our part to get through this together.

Michelle Brooks
Chair, Provincial Network

Chris Beesley
CEO, Community Living Ontario

Darren Connolly
President, OASIS