

# Together We Can Do The Right Thing

Improving the Lives of Ontarians with a Developmental Disability

## Our message:

People who have a developmental disability, their families and those that support them are saddened to see the huge numbers of people who are not receiving the support they need to live in the community. Without such support, people are being placed at great risk. We know that the government is considering cuts to funding for all but health care and education. We know that the people of Ontario value the support they provide to its most vulnerable citizens. Developmental Services cannot sustain further reductions without causing harm to people by further eroding their

support. Reductions to Developmental Services would result in a significant increase in health care related spending as people would be forced into inappropriate health services such as hospitals and long-term care facilities to get the support they need. It is time for bold new action to address the huge unmet need for services and supports for people who have a developmental disability. We call on government to work with us to develop a comprehensive plan, with clear timelines and targets that will ensure that people receive the support they need.

## We urge the government to ensure the following:

That \$64 million be invested this year in supports and services, to alleviate added stress on health and long-term care systems, including supports to:

- People being inappropriately admitted to facilities such as long-term care, hospitals, psychiatric wards, etc. because appropriate community supports are not available.
- People living with senior parents who require assistance in providing support.
- Caregivers accessing healthcare due to stress and illness.
- Staff experiencing workplace injury due to service and staff hour reductions to meet operating expenses.
- People seeking modest amounts of individual support funding who may otherwise end up in more expensive health services.

That government commits to ensuring that by April 1st of 2020, and thereafter, every person who has a developmental disability and their family has access to the support they need to live in the community, free from poverty and in a manner of their choosing.

That community support organizations receive the help they need to meet legislative obligations and ensure a stable, professional and responsive system of supports for the future.

That the government work with people who have a developmental disability, their families and community organizations to establish the plan needed to meet these goals.

### \$64 million investment to include:

\$20 million to support 250 people living with senior families or at risk of inappropriate admission to a health facility;

\$18 million to support half of the 3,000 people waiting for passport funding;

\$10 million to Children and Youth Services to support half of the 6,657 families waiting for Special Services at Home;

\$16 million (1% of current sector funding) to stabilize and strengthen existing sector in order to ensure future capacity to provide excellent supports and services and to meet legislative obligations

# Facts

## Facts about Individuals and Families Needing Support:

- The government has announced that in the current year it will provide some new funding for the Passport and Special Services at Home programs, yet the combined wait lists for both programs, even after this new funding is available, will remain at close to 10,000 individuals, including 6,657 families of young children.
- Waiting lists for residential supports have risen to 12,000 people in a sector that currently provides residential support to 16,000 people.
- Families continue to wait for appropriate supports for their son(s) and daughter(s) and in Toronto alone, there are 100 people who have been on a waiting list for appropriate support for more than 20 years.
- In 2008, the government passed a new Social Inclusion Act aimed at providing people who have a developmental disability enhanced support to live in the community. Without appropriate investment, greater social inclusion will not be achieved, but rather, further isolation and segregation will result.
- According to a recent study by the Institute on Disability and Human Development, chronic health conditions, including arthritis, high blood pressure, obesity, and activity limitations are on average 10% higher for older caregivers of adults with developmental disabilities than in the general population.

## Facts about Pressures on Support Agencies:

- In 2010, the government canceled a commitment made 3 years earlier, to provide a 2% increase in funding to the sector leaving service providers scrambling to find resources to pay for commitments made based on the promised funds.
- Support agencies continue to have legislated obligations such as Pay Equity adjustments which are required to be given to employees. Without new government funding, meeting these obligations can only result in a reduction of existing supports and services.
- Numerous labour negotiations are currently underway within the developmental service sector at a time when the government is providing no funding, has frozen non-union wages but has not restricted the unions ability to seek an increase in wages.
- In 2009, the developmental services sector completed the task of closing the government operated institutions in Ontario, with community support organizations assuming responsibility for providing supports and services to 1,000 individuals with some of the most challenging support needs.
- Increased government imposed accountability measures being implemented at a time of severe fiscal constraint has significantly increased liability to community support organizations resulting in challenges to the attracting and retention of volunteer board members.

## Did you know?

The level of unmet need for community supports and service for people who have a developmental disability and their families has never been as high as it is today.

People who have a developmental disability are often inappropriately placed in long-term-care facilities and hospitals because appropriate community supports are not available.

Older parents who have supported their son or daughter with a disability at home are now facing critical issues related to adequacy of support as they and their children age.

Making matters worse, the organizations that provide supports to these individuals and families are under tremendous stress as they attempt to meet legislative obligations and respond to changing policies and regulations, while addressing ever increasing demands for support.

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