

INDIVIDUALIZED FUNDING COALITION FOR ONTARIO

ACCORD

The Individualized Funding Coalition supports the self-determination of persons with disabilities.

We believe that all people should have control over decisions concerning where they live, with whom they live, with whom they associate, and how they spend their lives.

In order to achieve this we recognize that Ontario must develop a system of funding whereby the person requiring assistance, supported as appropriate by family and/or significant others, has access to and control over the funds allocated for his/her supports.

March 21, 2013

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
C/o Kevin Flynn, MPP, Chair
Room 1405, Whitney Block
Queen's Park, Toronto, ON
M7A 1A2

Re: Submission for the Pre-Budget Consultations

Dear Mr. Flynn,

The Individualized Funding Coalition of Ontario is a coalition made up of families, individuals with disabilities, friends, facilitators, and agencies who believe in people with disabilities directing their own lives with support from family and/or friends. This would mean directing their funding and supports, being able to choose who they live with, who supports them and what they do with their lives.

As such, we support the request being made by family leaders in this province for an additional allocation of 300 million dollars for Direct Funding programs - phased in over two years.

An investment of 300 million dollars would support 15,000 individuals with disabilities who are living at home and wanting direct funding in the way of new allocations. It would close out the SSAH and Passport waiting lists on record from March 31, 2012. Additionally, it would provide for many others who are in need of additional funding because of: increased and changing needs, aging parents or a readiness to move on as an adult. It would also provide seed funding to begin independent facilitation and planning - a proven support to those waiting for direct funds and/or wanting some assistance in meeting their vision and goals.

Specifically this investment of new funds could accomplish the following:

- The reinstatement of SSAH funding to teens turning 18 now and into the future.
- Allocations of direct funding to support every child (and their family) on the SSAH waiting lists as first time applicants (approx. 9,000 children).
- Provision of SSAH funding to children and their families for approvals due to increased needs - with a process for families to identify those needs.
- Provision of direct funding to the adults with developmental disabilities who have experienced increased needs. This would include those who were approved for SSAH increases but lost out with the recent changes to SSAH and those who still need an opportunity to identify changing needs.
- Allocations of direct funding to support adults out of school who were on the Passport waiting list for 'community participation/day time supports' as first time applicants of March 31, 2012. (approx. 4,000 adults)

- Allocations of direct funding to support adults out of school who have been identified through the Developmental Service Ontario application/assessment process since April 1, 2012.
- Allocations of direct or individualized funding for individuals who want innovative, individualized residential home options. This being the most expensive and one that requires good facilitation and planning could be mainly funded in year two. (Estimates based on research would put these numbers at 2,000)*
- Base funding to begin seeding the option of independent facilitation and planning for adults with developmental disabilities and their support networks who want direct funding. Independent facilitation is a key component in a direct funding model and has not yet been based funded in each region. (Approximately \$20 Million needed to start something in each region.)

Our Rationale for this Budget Request

The Developmental Services budget is 1.7 billion dollars. Direct funding in the form of SSAH and Passport is 148 million dollars. This represents 9% of the total budget and it supports more than 30,000 individuals (children and adults) at home.

A small percentage of the 575 million dollar increases to the Developmental Services budget over the last eight years have gone to direct funding to enable individuals to pay a support worker to assist them at home and in the community. We understand that the investments made in Developmental Services were important ones and great gains occurred - especially for those who moved from the institutions to live in their communities. We believe that it is now time to support those living at home and ensure that their family care-givers can continue the great job they are doing.

Large numbers of children and adults who are living at home have been without support and/or without adequate support – with numbers increasing every day. There are many pressures facing this government. We believe that a solid investment in individuals at home and their family caregivers who are getting tired would ensure a higher quality of life at this point in time. Also, it would take some of the pressures off this government by providing for those with autism who need support and aging parent care-givers. In addition, while senior parents who are choosing group living arrangements are on waiting lists – direct funding would be of great assistance as well as some facilitation support in the meantime.

In summary, adequate direct funding would enable children with disabilities and adults with developmental disabilities living at home to:

- fully participate and contribute in their community,
- have some support with personal needs
- provide a break for their families and them from each other
- live in their own homes

We believe that all of this makes good sense - resulting in an ordinary life within a province looking to be accessible and inclusive. We believe the timing for this is now. We thank you for the opportunity to submit.

Sincerely,



Michelle Friesen, co-chair

Cc: Yona Frishman, co-chair

**Note: Calculations and background sources regarding stats and budget request can be provided if needed.*