

## ***A Message from the Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario – April 2014***

**Hello IFCO Members & Friends**



### ***NEW FUNDING COMMITTED***

We are sending you this message so that you are informed about today's announcement by the Ministry of Community and Social Services about NEW funding being committed to people living with a developmental disability and their families. **The current government is making a commitment of \$810 Million over the next four years with a plan to focus on five key areas.**

One of those areas is to eliminate waiting lists for Passport and SSAH in that time and have funds to support new applicants for Passport. Other themes include: support for people experiencing important life changes, better residential supports, promoting innovation and community partnerships and support for front-line workers.

### ***Congratulations!***

To People First members and other self-advocates, families, friends and everyone who has worked tirelessly for all but especially for the children, teens and adults living with disabilities who either have very little funding to pay for their support workers or NO funding at all - Congratulations! For the all those who have spoken to the Ombudsman and the Select Committee about what is important, what is needed and also being willing to share your stories and struggles - Congratulations! For those who made presentations and submissions to the Finance Minister, other Ministers and your MPPs - Congratulations! For just simply hanging in - Congratulations!

To go from zero dollars yesterday to a commitment of \$810 Million today is something to celebrate! With this kind of announcement we can have great hope that all of the children with disabilities, adults with developmental disabilities and their families and friends doing it primarily on their own - living life in their own homes, neighbourhoods and communities who need direct funding will have adequate funding and/or supports like independent facilitation if they want.

### ***Details to come later***

The announcement does not outline all of the details that are ahead. These will become more apparent late spring. However, this will give IFCO leaders and others the opportunity to be in conversation with the Ministry over the next while to get clarification and talk about some of the priorities IFCO has been sharing over time and how we can assist in any new developments. Some of the questions we may be asking include:

- Are there plans to support people who need additional individualized or direct funding on top of their Passport funding to live a full life? For example: those who need larger amounts of direct or individualized funding - something like the Individualized Residential Funding Model that was put on hold 6 years ago?
- Will any of the money committed for residential be used as individualized funding for those who need that?
- Will any of the funds being committed for front-line workers also be used to enhance the pay of SSAH and Passport Workers - especially for people and families who have had old SSAH/Passport contracts that have never seen increases in pay to their workers? **OR** Will there be a process within the Direct Funding announcement to enhance the pay for the SSAH and Passport Workers as well? (This is important so that everything is fair and equitable around honouring all support workers in Ontario.)
- How will MCSS be investing in independent facilitation for it to be a viable and sustainable planning option for people who would choose this or need this? (NOTE: IFCO has always requested that independent facilitation and planning be seeded with base funding so it is on an equitable playing field with other types of planning that currently benefit from the infrastructures that are already in place within the direct service agency model in Ontario.)
- Will an investment in independent facilitation come from the new commitment that is being made to *support people in important life transitions* OR from the funding for *promoting innovative partnerships*?
- Will it take the full four years to eliminate the Passport waiting list?
- Will children with developmental disabilities who turn 18, who are confirmed eligible for developmental services as an adult, be able to keep their direct funding/SSAH funding into adulthood?

For today we can celebrate the announcement! Next it will be about conversations and assisting in any new development opportunities that will support various choices for people - some old, some new, some that will need structure and shoring up . . .

Pat yourselves on the back; enjoy this weekend having heard some good news today and take care. . . .

*Michelle, Yona and team (Judith, Selena and Marlyn)*