

Individualized Support and Funding
&
Allocation of New Money for People with Disabilities

**A Statement from Ontario
Disability Organizations**

June 2000

The government of Ontario recently announced that it will invest \$50 million to help people with developmental disabilities. In making the announcement, the Minister of Community and Social Services indicated that this new money includes \$30 million in new services and supports for over 2,800 individuals and families. \$24 million is allocated for adults.

The provincial and local organizations named here are very pleased that this new money has been made available. It is timely and appropriate, given the significant issues and needs facing many people with disabilities and their families in Ontario. However, *we strongly urge the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) to allocate the new money in ways that fully support the individualization of supports and funding. Specifically, we are asking that 25% of the new money for adult services and supports go directly to individual adults, not places.*

In recent years, MCSS has supported individualized approaches in many of its initiatives. Pilot and demonstration projects in Windsor, Thunder Bay, Durham, and Toronto have shown that individualized support and funding are cost effective, highly accountable, and produce very positive

outcomes for people. Our proposal builds on these lessons and supports the Ministry's move toward more individualized approaches, with the option of direct and portable funding for those who want such an option. The process and power of direct funding is outlined in the Ontario Round Table Report on Individualized Funding, which we fully endorse.

By allocating at least \$6 million (of \$24 million) for individualized supports and funding for adults, the MCSS will also be demonstrating its commitment to In Unison, the agreement signed in 1998 between the federal and provincial governments. This agreement emphasizes that disability policy should enhance more consumer control, flexibility, and responsiveness in the provision of disability supports. The groups that are supporting this statement are willing to assist MCSS in fulfilling its commitment to In Unison.

To further this direction, we urge that the following strategies frame the allocation of this money:

1. *The recently published report of the Ontario Round Table on Individualized Funding should guide provincial and regional planning and implementation. This document, entitled Linking Individualized Supports and Funding: Making Money Work for People, provides an excellent set of principles, a policy framework, and implementation directions for local, regional, and provincial activity required for enhancing individualized supports and funding. As the Round Table Report emphasizes, each area of the province will require infrastructure supports for individuals and families that are separate from the service system, and will also need a separate allocation process that honours the individualization of the money.*

2. *Each region should develop its own infrastructure supports and allocation process in ways that are consistent with the principles of the Round Table Report.* Several regions of the province have already established some of these mechanisms, thus making the implementation of these ideas relatively easy in those areas. In areas of the provinces that are new to developing these mechanisms, it will be important that participatory planning processes, involving families, people with disabilities, and service groups working together to establish the appropriate mechanisms.

3. *The Ministry should collaborate with resource people from the Individualized Funding Coalition as a way of providing assistance and consultation to those regions who require it.* Several individual members and groups of the Coalition have extensive experience setting up individualized disability support systems.

Research is showing that individualized supports and funding lead to very positive outcomes for people with disabilities. Allocating 25% of the new MCSS monies for adults, to individualized budgets and direct funding, will make a significant contribution toward the evolution of services in Ontario. We look forward to working with the Ministry to make this direction a reality.

For further information, contact Yona Frishman or John Lord
at the Individualized Funding Coalition.

Groups supporting this statement are listed on the next page.

Groups supporting the statement on
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- ***Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario***
Toronto, Ontario
- ***Ontario Association for Community Living***
240 Duncan Mill Road Suite 403
Toronto, ON M3B 1Z4
- ***People First of Ontario***
75 The Donway West, Suite 1408
North York, ON M3C 2E9
- ***Ontario Family Alliance***
Kinsmen Bldg. York University
4700 Keele Street, North York, ON M3J 1P3
- ***Ontario Federation for Cerebral Palsy***
1630 Lawrence Ave. W. Suite 104
Toronto, ON M6L 1C5
- ***Ontario Prader-Willi Syndrome Association***
1920 Yonge St, C 104
Toronto, ON M4S 3E2
- ***Ontario Adult Autism Research and Support Network***
Guelph, David DeVidi
- ***Ontario Adult Autism Research and Support Network***
Toronto, ON