

Ministry of Children and Youth Services

Assistant Deputy Minister
Strategic Policy and Planning
Division

56 Wellesley Street West, 14th Floor
Toronto, ON M5S 2S3
Telephone: (416) 327-9481
Facsimile: (416) 314-1862

Ministry of Community and Social Services

Assistant Deputy Minister
Community and Developmental Services
Division

80 Grosvenor Street, 6th Floor, Hepburn
Block, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1E9
Telephone: (416) 325-3592
Facsimile: (416) 325-9408

Ministry of Children and Youth Services

Assistant Deputy Minister
Policy Development and Program
Design Division

56 Wellesley Street West, 14th Floor
Toronto ON M5S 2S3
Telephone: (416) 212-1961
Facsimile: (416) 314-1862

Ministry of Education

Assistant Deputy Minister
Learning and Curriculum Division

900 Bay St, 22nd Floor
Mowat Block, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2
Telephone: (416) 314-5788
Facsimile: (416) 327-1182



Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Assistant Deputy Minister
Health System Accountability
and Performance Division

80 Grosvenor Street, 5th Floor, Hepburn
Block, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1R3
Telephone: (416) 212-1134
Facsimile: (416) 212-1859

MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education, District School Boards
Secretary-Treasurers of School Authorities
Executive Directors of Preschool Speech and Language Programs
Chief Executive Officers of Community Care Access Centres
Executive Directors of Children's Treatment Centres
Chief Executive Officers of Local Health Integration Networks

DATE: March 9, 2017

FROM: Darryl Sturtevant, ADM, Strategic Policy and Planning Division, MCYS

Jennifer Morris, ADM (A), Policy Development and Program Design
Division, MCYS

Martyn Beckett, ADM, Learning and Curriculum Division, EDU

Tim Hadwen, ADM, Health System Accountability and Performance
Division, MOHLTC

Karen D. Chan, ADM, Community and Developmental Services
Division, MCSS

RE: **Next Steps for Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services**

As you are aware, the ministries of Children and Youth Services (MCYS), Community and Social Services (MCSS), Education (EDU) and Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) have been working with children's service providers and District School Boards to implement Ontario's Special Needs Strategy (SNS) to improve services for children and youth with special needs.

This memo provides an update on the Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services (speech-language pathology, occupational therapy and physiotherapy), a key component of the SNS, and outlines the expectations of the ministries for service provider agencies and District School Boards regarding next steps for implementation, including engagement with local partners in order to finalize service delivery proposals.

Proposal Development and Program Guidelines:

In 2015, planning tables in 34 service delivery areas developed initial proposals for integrating the delivery of rehabilitation services. These initial proposals recommended new models of service delivery where, in most cases, preschool speech and language therapy would be provided by MCYS funded agencies, school age speech and language therapy would be provided by District School Boards, and the provision of physiotherapy and occupational therapy would be delivered by District School Boards, Community Care Access Centres and/or MCYS funded agencies depending upon the community. The ministries reviewed proposals and provided individualized feedback to tables regarding the strengths of their proposals and areas requiring modification or clarification to meet ministries' expectations. In June 2016, the ministries released *Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services Program Guidelines* to provide direction and guidelines related to core service requirements.

As we move forward with the next stages of implementation, it is critical that there be no reduction in service levels and that families experience service continuity during this next phase of implementation.

Funding Transfers:

As part of integrated rehabilitation service implementation, the following funding will be transferred from MOHLTC to MCYS on April 1, 2017:

- Funding for hospital-based preschool speech and language services in hospital budgets; and
- Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) funding for the provision of physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech-language pathology in publicly funded schools through the School Health Professional Services program.

For preschool speech and language services in hospital budgets, MCYS will assume the accountability relationship with the designated hospitals for these services on April 1, 2017.

For School Health Professional Services, MOHLTC will continue to flow funding to, and maintain accountability with Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs)/CCACs for these services for the first six months (April 2017 – September 2017). Thereafter, MCYS will assume the accountability relationship with LHINs (as a result of implementation of the *Patients First Act, 2016*). From October 2017 until Fall 2018, service provider contracts will not change during the planning phase, to maintain stability. Additional information will follow about the funding transfer.

Funding for the full costs of delivering the in-scope services, including both direct and indirect reported costs, is being transferred. Direct costs include expenses related to direct service delivery for client care, while indirect costs include expenses related to administration.

Development of Final Proposals and Local Implementation Plans:

Over the next several months, the ministries will work closely with newly formed local Steering Committees composed of decision-makers from Children's Treatment Centres, Preschool Speech and Language Lead Agencies, District School Boards and CCACs/LHINs in each service delivery area as they undertake the work required to develop final proposals and implementation plans for the transition to new service delivery models, including planning for changes to local service delivery structures, and composition of providers for school-aged children, to enable the integrated delivery of rehabilitation services.

As part of this work, Steering Committees will be expected to engage in consultations with local partners, District School Boards, Preschool Speech and Language providers, Children's Treatment Centres, CCACs/LHINs, including existing service providers and those currently sub-contracted through CCACs, as well as federations/unions and other stakeholders, as they develop final proposals and implementation plans for review and approval by the ministries. Steering Committees will ensure the final proposal meets the needs of French-Language District School Boards and Indigenous partners.

The purpose of this consultation is to allow for meaningful collaboration and decision-making with partners and stakeholders, to explore opportunities and interest for involvement, and leverage all existing service capacity within the service delivery area in the new delivery model.

The ministries are aware that some planning tables had proposed that CCACs would continue to be involved in the delivery of in-scope rehabilitation services delivered through School Health Professional Services in publicly funded schools. These Steering Committees will be asked to review their proposed models and, where Steering Committees deem it appropriate, they may propose a model for approval by the ministries that includes LHINs and their service providers. The ministries will work closely with these Steering Committees to revise these models in alignment with core service requirements outlined in the *Program Guidelines for the Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services*, and direction in *Patients First Act, 2016*.

Development of final proposals and implementation plans for the transition to new service delivery models will continue to be a locally driven process, allowing Steering Committees to reach consensus on implementation activities, including the composition of service providers best suited to enable new integrated, family-centred service delivery models that meets all provincial policy direction and the requirements outlined in the *Program Guidelines*. The ministries understand that final proposals and implementation plans may look different from the initial proposals and will review them to ensure all provincial expectations have been met and local impacts have been addressed prior to approval.

Once final proposals and implementation plans for new service delivery models are approved by the ministries and service delivery areas are ready to implement their new model, funding will flow to existing MCYS transfer payment agencies and/or District School Boards, who will be responsible for service delivery, either directly or through sub-contracted relationships. Additional information will follow about the funding transfer.

Ministry of Education Policy and Program Memoranda (PPMs):

To support service integration, the Ministry of Education is moving forward with changes to address barriers to implementation that some service delivery areas identified in *Policy Program Memorandum (PPM) 81: Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings*. The ministries will collaborate with the intention to revise PPM 81 to unify the delivery of speech and language services.

PPM 149: *Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies for Provision of Services by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Service Professionals and Paraprofessionals* will remain in place and newly-formed Steering Committees may need to refine their proposed models to reflect this.

Implementation:

In recognition of the extent of transformation that may be required in some service delivery areas and the need to maintain stability in the service system, planning will take place through 2017-18. Any future changes to the composition of service providers for school-aged children will coincide with the school-year cycle to prevent any gaps in service for families. Steering Committees will develop final proposals and implementation plans for approval by the ministries by December 2017. Implementation of new service delivery models is expected to begin as early as Fall 2018.

Over the next few months, the ministries will consult with local Steering Committees on the need for a single integrated technology platform to support implementation of the new delivery models.

The ministries will provide Steering Committees with details regarding expectations and timelines on specific next steps for the development of final proposals and implementation planning for their communities over the next few weeks.

Communication to Families:

This is a transformative strategy focused on family-centred service. As Steering Committees work towards the development of final proposals and implementation plans to transition to new service delivery models, it is the ministries' expectation that there will be no disruption or reduction in services experienced by families and that existing service levels and capacity for children and youth with special needs and their families be maintained.

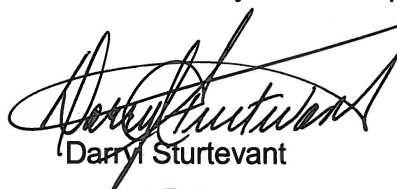
To support consistent communication with families, please see the attached template letter to families (Attachment 1) providing an update about the integrated delivery of rehabilitation services. Questions and Answers to support service providers in responding to questions from families are also attached (Attachment 2).

The ministries expect all service provider agencies to distribute this template letter to their families currently receiving services or waiting for services by April 30, 2017. District School Boards/School Authorities may choose to make this information available to families through distribution in school newsletters and websites.

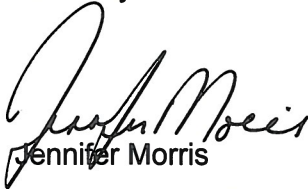
Further Information:

For more information on the Special Needs Strategy, including frequently asked questions and answers, please visit <http://www.specialneedsstrategy.children.gov.on.ca>. The website also includes the Program Guidelines, other supports for service providers and contact information for local Steering Committees. If you have questions about the Special Needs Strategy please email: specialneedsstrategy@ontario.ca.

Thank you for your support in implementing this important initiative for Ontario's children and youth. We look forward to continuing to work with you as we make our province's vision for children and youth with special needs a reality.



Darryl Sturtevant



Jennifer Morris



Martyn Beckett



Tim Hadwen



Karen D. Chan

Attachment 1: Service Provider Agency Letter Template to Families

Attachment 2: Key Messages/Questions and Answers for Service Provider Agencies to Respond to Families

- c. Special Needs Strategy Reference Group
- Special Needs Strategy Provider Table
- IR Program Guidelines Advisory Committee
- IR Steering Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs