





Backgrounders


[Home](#) / [News Room](#) / [Backgrounders](#)

Related Information

-  [News Release](#)
-  [Speeches](#)

News Room

-  [News Room](#)
-  [News Releases](#)
-  [Backgrounders](#)
-  [Fact Sheets](#)
-  [Speeches](#)
-  [Contact Us](#)

May 18, 2005

Reshaping Community-Based Specialized Services In Ontario

Ontario continues to change the way services are delivered for people with a developmental disability and their families.

As part of its commitment to transform the developmental services system in Ontario, the government is moving forward with a plan to fundamentally improve access to services for adults with a developmental disability by strengthening community-based services for individuals who require specialized care. The plan includes strengthening clinical services, recruiting and retaining more professionals, and creating new places where individuals with very high care needs can live and get the intensive support they need.

The plan is based on recommendations the government received from individuals with a developmental disability and their families, agencies serving people with a developmental disability, and health and clinical professionals in the field.

Who Needs Specialized Resources?

Many individuals who have a developmental disability also have to deal with mental health issues and challenging behaviours that may seriously affect their quality of life. They often need extra support to cope with eating disorders, psychiatric illness or behaviour that leads them to hurt themselves or others.

Community Networks Of Specialized Care

Beginning September 2005, four regionally-based networks will improve the way specialized care is delivered across the province. The networks will provide service, training and teaching throughout the following regions:

- Northern Ontario
- Central Ontario from Waterloo in the west to Peterborough in the east, including Simcoe County and the Greater Toronto Area
- Eastern Ontario from Hastings County east to the Quebec border and north to Renfrew County
- Southern Ontario including the Hamilton, Niagara Region and southwestern Ontario.

Each network will start with a multidisciplinary team of professionals including, for example, behaviour therapists, social workers, nurses and psychologists, who will pool their clinical expertise to diagnose and treat adults with a developmental disability.

The teams will then work closely with partner organizations — community agencies, hospitals, police and mental health units throughout their region — to provide a full range of community-based specialized services such as assessments, consultations and behaviour therapy that will connect across the province.

Research and education are also important to the teams. They will lead research studies and share their findings with families and partner organizations so the entire sector has access to the latest knowledge on how to care for individuals with high needs. Families will provide feedback to the researchers and recommend new areas for further study.

Thousands of individuals with a developmental disability and mental health issues or challenging behaviours, their families, as well as support workers and community professionals who support them will benefit from improved access to a wide range of clinical and academic professionals. This includes people who are living in the community as well as the individuals who will be leaving the three provincially-run institutions in Smiths Falls, Orillia and Chatham over the next four years.

Doctors, nurses and other team members will share their knowledge, experience and skills with one another as well as community partners.

Community Development Process

The networks will be established through a collaborative community development process which will involve three phases:

- Phase 1 — identifying what specialized resources are currently available in communities across the province
- Phase 2 — developing an action plan around communities sharing resources to fill the gaps identified in Phase 1
- Phase 3 — forging the networks and carrying out plans based on regional solutions.

Recruitment And Retention Of Specialized Professionals

The government of Ontario is enhancing opportunities for students to develop the clinical and research skills they need to be professionals in the field of developmental services in Ontario with a \$300,000 investment over three years.

This initiative will begin in 2005/06 with a \$100,000 commitment that will support up to 20 students in a variety of health fields in the placement component of their degree/diploma. Placements in designated specialized developmental services community agencies would span the province. Programs may include behaviour therapy, social work, speech language pathology and occupational therapy.

This investment in young talent demonstrates an important part of the government's commitment to build a better developmental services system for the next generation of adults with a developmental disability.

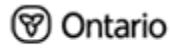
See also:

[News Release dated May 18, 2005](#)

[Backgrounder - New Homes For Adults With A Developmental Disability](#)

- 30 -

| [central site](#) | [feedback](#) | [search](#) | [site map](#) | [français](#) |
| [MCSS Home](#) | [What's New](#) | [Programs](#) | [Publications](#) | [Forms](#) | [News Room](#) |



This site is maintained by the Government of Ontario, Canada.

[External Links Disclaimer/Privacy](#)

Ministry of Community and Social Services
Copyright information: © [Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2003](#)
Last Modified: 5/19/2005 1:46:10 PM