



Embracing inclusion

A message from Minister Jaczek about sheltered workshops



With the holiday season upon us, a time when people unite and communities become more closely knit, I would like to update you on our new direction to help people with

developmental disabilities become more included in their communities.

Independence, inclusion and choice are principles at the core of our developmental services transformation. They guide every decision we make.

With these principles in mind, I am committed to shifting Ontario away from sheltered workshops and towards more inclusive options such as employment and meaningful community participation. And, as a first step, agencies are being directed to not fill any vacancies that occur in sheltered workshops from now on.

I recognize that it is vital for the shift to be gradual and person-centred so that there is a smooth transition for the individuals participating in these settings.

This is not about taking away supports, and no program will be phased out without appropriate alternatives in place. Instead, agencies will work closely with individuals and families to offer inclusive supports that best meet their needs and preferences.

My ministry staff will be engaging with the sector, partner ministries and other key stakeholders in the coming months to carefully plan this transition.

Although this is a complex issue with strong views on multiple sides, we are determined to get it right so that people with developmental disabilities have every opportunity for greater choice and inclusion.

That said, we know we can shift to more inclusive options. Throughout the province, many agencies have already moved away from the sheltered workshop model. This is consistent with the direction that other jurisdictions across North America and elsewhere have successfully adopted.

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Through the [Employment and Modernization Fund \(EMF\)](#), which is part of Ontario's three year \$810 million investment strategy for developmental services, we are funding 23 projects across the province to help developmental services agencies enhance their employment support programs.

The shift away from sheltered workshops is not only about employment – it is ultimately about greater community inclusion. Jobs are only one of the options an individual can choose to pursue.

[Community Living Algoma](#), for example, completed the transition away from its sheltered workshop in September with funding from the EMF. Everyone who was in the sheltered workshop is now participating in the community in new ways. About two dozen individuals have now secured local employment that pays minimum wage or better. Others are volunteering, joining clubs and organizations, and exploring their community daily.

We are also funding the [Ontario Disability Employment Network \(ODEN\)](#) Centre for Excellence on Employment Services which is helping agencies across the province transition away from sheltered workshops towards providing better employment support programs.

The shift away from sheltered workshops is not only about employment – it is ultimately about greater community inclusion. Jobs are only one of the options an individual can choose to pursue. A person may prefer to focus on community participation, such as volunteering or recreational opportunities.

A complete shift away from sheltered workshops will take several years, based on what other jurisdictions have experienced. So while our journey is long, our destination is clear: to build a more inclusive Ontario where people with developmental disabilities can live as independently as possible, fully included in their communities. I am confident we are on the right path.

I wish you all a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year.

Dr. Helena Jaczek
Minister

We want to hear your stories

Did your agency transition away from a sheltered workshop? Did you or a family member leave a sheltered workshop for a job, volunteer position or some other activity in the community? If so, share your story with us at: DStransformation.css@ontario.ca

Housing Task Force wants your ideas for creative housing solutions

For the second time this year, the Developmental Services Housing Task Force is issuing a call for proposals for creative, inclusive and cost-effective housing solutions.

Last August, the province approved 12 creative housing initiatives recommended by the Housing Task Force for a total investment of \$3.47 million over two years.

The best ideas – ones that can be shared and replicated in communities across the province – from this second round will be funded as research and demonstration projects through the provincial government's three year \$810 million investment strategy for developmental services.

Ron Pruessen, chair of the task force, says “the Housing Task Force is looking forward to receiving some very creative proposals that foster more choice and that can be replicated in other communities across the province.”

Submissions should:

- Develop partnerships between individuals, families, community agencies, multiple levels of government and the private sector.
- Expand the range of housing options available to adults with developmental disabilities and include options that are different than what is currently funded through the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

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Funding for housing project in Durham, Leeds and Grenville

Minister Jaczek recently announced at the Durham Association for Family Respite Services that Ontario is investing up to \$266,387 over the next two years in a unique housing demonstration project the agency is leading for adults with developmental disabilities.

The project, which is one of the first 12 housing initiatives recommended by the Housing Task Force, will help individuals with developmental disabilities and their families navigate community resources such as banks and realtors, as well as help them build networks of support to find and secure housing. Local partners include the Brockville Association for Community Involvement, Community Involvement Legacy Homes and Intentionally Built Community.



Pictured from left to right at the announcement: Beth French (Executive Director, The Brockville and District Association for Community Involvement), Janet Klees (Executive Director, Durham Association for Family Respite Services), Minister Jaczek, Granville Anderson (MPP for Durham).

- Strengthen the community's ability to enhance the quality of life for individuals with a developmental disability.
- Demonstrate ways to improve the existing developmental services system, including ways to reduce wait lists for housing and residential supports in a timely manner.
- Promote individualized approaches through inclusive, community-based supports.

Certain costs are not eligible for funding including major capital, legal fees, and building or development fees.

The task force and external experts will review all submissions and recommend the best projects to the ministry. **The submission deadline is March 15, 2016.**

To learn more, visit the task force's [Facebook page](#) and see the [application guidelines and forms](#).

Facts about ODSP and working

Did you know you can work if you get support from the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)?

In fact, you will always have more money while working than you would from ODSP income support alone, and you can keep your health benefits if you start working.

How can I end up with more money by working?

People who work while they are on ODSP are always better off financially than people who don't. Here's how it works:

- You—and each adult in your family—can earn up to \$200 each month without it changing your ODSP income support.
- Every dollar over \$200 only reduces your ODSP income support by 50 cents.

You can keep even more of your income support if you need disability-related items like specialized equipment to do your job.

[Check out our May 2015 issue](#) for more **facts about ODSP and working**.





Tentative Settlement Reached in Class Action Lawsuit that Includes 12 Former Residential Facilities

Ontario and counsel for the plaintiff in a class action lawsuit that includes 12 former residential facilities for people with developmental disabilities have reached a tentative agreement. Read the [news release](#) from November 12, 2015.

If approved by the court, the nearly \$36 million settlement would be used to provide compensation to former residents who suffered harm while living at the following facilities during the specific time periods set out below:

- Adult Occupational Centre (Edgar), between January 1, 1966 and March 31, 1999
- Bluewater Centre (Goderich), between April 1, 1976 and December 20, 1983
- D'Arcy Place (Cobourg), between September 1, 1963 and December 31, 1996
- Durham Centre for the Developmentally Handicapped (Whitby), between April 1, 1974 and September 28, 1986
- L.S. Penrose Centre (Kingston), between April 1, 1974 and March 31, 1977
- Midwestern Regional Centre (Palmerston), between September 1, 1963 and March 31, 1998
- Muskoka Centre (Gravenhurst), between August 28, 1973 and June 30, 1993
- Northwestern Regional Centre (Thunder Bay), between April 1, 1974 and March 31, 1994
- Oxford Mental Health Centre (Woodstock), between January 1, 1969 and March 31, 1974
- Oxford Regional Centre (Woodstock), between April 1, 1974 and March 31, 1996
- Pine Ridge Centre (Aurora), between September 1, 1963 and August 31, 1984
- Prince Edward Heights (Picton), between January 1, 1971 and December 31, 1999
- St. Lawrence Regional Centre (Brockville), between April 1, 1975 and June 30, 1983.

The settlement must now be approved by the court after notice of the class proceeding has been provided to eligible former residents. The notices are expected to be completed by the end of January 2016.

[Visit the ministry's website](#) for more information.



Six research projects receive grants

The ministry has selected six projects from academic and community-based organizations for funding from the Developmental Services Research Grant Fund.

Following a call for research proposals earlier this year, the ministry received 18 submissions. The call asked for research on three priority areas:

1. funding approaches and practices
2. service models for complex needs clients
3. employment

A ministry research review committee scored the submissions based on several criteria, including relevance to policy, scientific merit, strength of the research team, budget appropriateness and project schedule.

In total, the successful projects will receive \$622,580 in funding from October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2017. The successful principal researchers and their projects are:

Nazilla Khanlou, York University

Impact of gender and migration status on accessing direct/flexible/self-directed social funding for developmental services in Ontario

Barry Isaacs, Surrey Place

Individually Funded Services and Supports in Ontario: What's Available and How is it Working?

Lynn Martin, Lakehead University

Enhancing, understanding and identifying best practices in system access and navigation: working together to support frail adults with developmental disabilities as they age in the community

Robert Balogh, University of Ontario Institute of Technology

The evolving health and social needs of adults with developmental disabilities and complex mental health problems: A needs assessment project

Jonathan Weiss, York University

Changing support needs and service delivery in adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Ontario: Follow-up of two cohorts

David Nicholas, University of Calgary

Building Employer Capacity in Advancing Employment Opportunity for Persons with Developmental Disabilities

For more information about the projects and the Developmental Services Research Grant Fund, contact ministry research advisor Rhea Adhopia at Rhea.Adhopia@ontario.ca or 416-327-6526.

About the Developmental Services Research Grant Fund

The ministry established the Developmental Services Research Grant Fund in 2012 to improve knowledge across the developmental services sector by enabling researchers to advance their work. The fund has supported 12 projects to date, including the six projects receiving grants this year.

Addressing Guy Mitchell inquest jury recommendations

Working groups hold first meeting

Three working groups met in Toronto last month for the first time to address the jury recommendations from the recent coroner's inquest into the death of Guy Mitchell, a Hamilton-area man with a developmental disability.

The working groups will use their expertise to provide advice and recommendations to the ministry on increasing safety for adults with developmental disabilities. They're aiming to complete their work by spring 2016.

Here are the groups and what they'll be focusing on:



The new **Overarching Issues Working Group** will examine broader policy issues that may be shared with other sectors (such as seniors and children) and other ministries. This group will provide advice on the most effective ways to enhance protection for vulnerable adults. There are representatives from several Ontario ministries as well as Community Living Ontario, the Ontario Provincial Police, the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health and Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

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Representatives from the existing **Family Home Program Provincial Coordinators Association**, with some additional members, will provide technical expertise, advice and suggest best practices for standardizing processes, protocols and training materials. This group

includes representatives from the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. Other members include: Ontario Agencies Supporting Individuals with Special Needs (OASIS), Ontario Association of Children Aids' Societies and People First Ontario.



The existing **Quality Assurance Measures Reference Group** (a subgroup of the Provincial Network on Developmental Services), with some additional members, will consult on Quality Assurance Measures' training materials for agencies. Aside from representatives from MCSS, group members include: OASIS, Community Living Ontario and People First Ontario.

Ministry of Community and Social Services
Community Supports Policy Branch

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