

A few words from our new minister, the Honourable Dr. Helena Jaczek

I was honoured when Premier Wynne asked me to serve as the Minister of Community and Social Services. I'm grateful for the many kind words of welcome and support I have received from you since assuming the role.

When the Premier talks about government being a force for good, it has always been the work done by the Ministry of Community and Social Services that I think of first. In particular, I think about the work to support adults with a developmental disability and their families. I look forward, with your help and guidance, to being a part of that work through our continued transformation of developmental services.

To that end, I am happy to tell you that our 2014 Ontario Budget, introduced on Monday, July 14, reaffirms our government's commitment to the largest-ever funding increase for developmental services in Ontario. The Budget, if passed, will allow Ontario to invest [\\$810 million](#) over the next three years in services and supports for people with developmental disabilities.

This investment will:

- expand direct funding to serve 21,000 more individuals and families, and help eliminate the existing waitlists for Special Services at Home (SSAH) in two years and Passport in four years
- provide support for urgent residential needs for approximately 1,400 people



The Honourable Dr. Helena Jaczek
Minister of Community and Social Services

[Learn more about our new minister.](#)

- support young adults as they navigate key life transitions such as going to school or getting a job
- promote community living partnerships through expanded Host Family and Supported Independent Living programs
- support agencies and front-line workers in the community services sector, and
- promote innovation and cost-efficiency so that savings can be re-invested into improving services.

To learn more about the 2014 Budget, visit ontario.ca/budget.

I know that many of you are eager for more details about this investment, and I can tell you that Ministry staff are finalizing those details now. In the coming months, we will share the specifics with you here in the pages of Spotlight.

Over the coming few months I will be meeting and speaking with individuals, families and community partners across the developmental services sector.

I've learned already – and hope to hear more – about your desire to build an inclusive Ontario, where people with developmental disabilities are full and valued members of our communities. It is my goal, too, and I will work hard with you to achieve it.

I wish you all a wonderful summer.

– Dr. Helena Jaczek
Minister

More information about the 2014 Budget investment

Q. When will this money get to the people who need it?

- A.** Funds will start to reach individuals with developmental disabilities and their families beginning in the fall. For example, this will mean that in the current year:
- 4,000 families will receive Special Services at Home funding;
 - 3,200 adults will receive direct funding through Passport.

We encourage all of our community partners to start preparing to play a part in delivering this important investment to individuals with a developmental disability across Ontario.

Q. If I am on the waiting list already, am I guaranteed to get the Passport and Special Services at Home funding and how soon?

- A.** The proposed plan would provide enough funding to help everyone on the Passport list over the next four years. In the case of SSAH, half of the applicants would get funding this year and the remainder the following year.

Q. If I already applied for other services such as day programs or job training, do I have to reapply now that more funding may be coming?

- A.** You would not have to reapply. Your current application would be evaluated and prioritized. Individuals will be connected to available services by Developmental Services Ontario if the investment plan is approved.

New Passport guidelines on the way

This September we'll be releasing new guidelines for the [Passport program](#). The ministry has consulted with the developmental services sector and the message we got was everyone would welcome clearer Passport guidelines. The new guidelines will make it clearer which supports you can get with your Passport funding, and which supports are ineligible for Passport. The new guidelines will be in effect October 1, 2014.

Through Passport, you can choose to either receive money directly so you can purchase your own services and supports, and/or get services and supports through community-based agencies. You can use your Passport funding to support your personal development and involvement in your community.

We'll let you know more about the new guidelines in the coming months, here in the pages of Spotlight.

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