



MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

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2017-18 Published Plan

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Ministry Overview

Mandate

The priorities of the [Ministry of Community and Social Services](#) (MCSS) focus on improving opportunities for a diverse population including:

- people with physical and developmental disabilities and mental health conditions;
- survivors of human trafficking and domestic violence;
- people who are under or unemployed;
- families supported through the Family Responsibility Office; and
- Indigenous peoples.

The ministry works to remove obstacles that impede opportunity and participation in community life by meeting the unique needs of people with timely, responsive and high quality services, through a highly decentralized delivery system.

Our social assistance programs provide financial and employment assistance to those in need, and help people to live more independently in their communities. Supports for adults with developmental disabilities provide places to live and help them work and participate in a range of community activities. Our community services support women and children who have experienced violence, victims and survivors of human trafficking, Indigenous peoples and communities, and people who are deaf, deafened, hard of hearing, or deafblind. Through our Family Responsibility Office, we collect and distribute child and spousal support to help improve the financial security of families. And the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy promotes access to culturally relevant health and community services for Indigenous people.

Our ministry is guided by a vision of an Ontario where all communities are resilient, inclusive and sustained by the economic and civic contributions of all their citizens. As such, we partner with other ministries,

municipalities, the federal government, Indigenous and community leaders and agencies to promote opportunities that support people in achieving their potential.

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Ministry Contribution to Priorities and Results

Our ministry's key priorities are to:

- drive long-term reform of the income security system, including social assistance;
- continue to transform developmental services with a focus on choice, flexibility and inclusion;
- modernize service delivery and leverage opportunities for service integration;
- strengthen community services to help meet the needs of diverse populations; and
- improve child and spousal support collection so that families have greater financial security.

Our goal is to help people achieve their potential through independence and inclusion in their communities, and to improve their quality of life through a strong sense of belonging, wellbeing, engagement and expression.

All of our work contributes to the government's commitment to create jobs, grow the economy and reduce poverty.

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Ministry Programs

Developmental Services

The ministry funds [services and supports for people with developmental disabilities](#) and their families. People with developmental disabilities want to be active participants in their communities. To do that, many rely on a range of services and supports that promote social inclusion and involvement, including:

- help with daily-living activities;
- community participation and employment supports;
- caregiver respite;
- professional and specialized services;
- person-directed planning; and
- residential supports.

The ministry also provides direct funding to people and families to give them choice in their support arrangements and allow them to select the services and supports they feel best meet their individualized needs.

In 2017-18, the ministry is building on the 2014 multi-year investment to provide greater access and more appropriate supports and services.

These investments will continue the government's commitment to help people live as independently as possible in inclusive communities as well as help address situations of crisis involving people with urgent and complex care needs. In 2017-18, this investment of approximately \$130 million to the base budget will:

- Provide over 375 additional residential developmental services placements for individuals with urgent needs and youth transitioning from the child welfare system;
- Support 1,000 additional approvals through the Passport Program for adults with developmental disabilities to participate in their communities;
- Provide operational funding for a new specialized residential support home for individuals with complex needs who are moving from justice facilities;
- Expand specialized clinical responses for individuals with complex special needs; and
- Improve access to local community services by making system navigation easier.

The ministry will also invest \$5 million in 2017-18 in capital funding to support:

- repairs, renovations and improved spaces for more people at residential properties that serve adults with developmental disabilities; and
- a new specialized residential support home for individuals with complex needs who are moving from justice facilities.

An additional \$1.5 million will support the rebuilding of a residence for adults with developmental disabilities in the Cambridge area. Christian Horizons in Branchton, which once provided housing for four adults with special needs, was destroyed by a fire in January 2015. The new facility will replace the four-bed, 2,500 square foot home with a modern and accessible six-bed, 4,800 square foot residence. It will better serve residents and provide space for two additional people. Construction is expected to be complete by spring 2018.

Over the next two years the government will work with families and community partners to transition more than 400 young adults with complex special needs currently being funded through the children's system to be funded through the adult developmental services system.

The ministry continues to work with the ministries of [Children and Youth Services](#), [Education](#), [Health and Long-term Care](#), [Community Safety and Correctional Services](#) and [Advanced Education and Skills Development](#), to support smooth life transitions for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Social Assistance

Ontario's social assistance programs provide income and employment support for those in need.

[Ontario Works](#) provides income assistance for individuals and families in financial need, and the [Ontario Disability Support Program](#) provides longer term income support for people with disabilities and their families. Both programs provide employment assistance to help people develop skills, remove barriers to finding and keeping jobs, and become more independent through work.

Income security reform is a key part of the government's [Poverty Reduction Strategy](#) including our social assistance programs which help more than 900,000 adults and children every day.

The Income Security Reform Working Group has been developing a roadmap to a fully-costed, multi-year implementation plan for transformation focused on a broader income security approach where social assistance reform is an integrated component. This roadmap will lead to a better system that balances simplicity, adequacy, fairness and employment opportunities. The ultimate goal is to make programs as effective as possible for the people who need them.

The ministry will continue its focus on simplifying the social assistance system, reducing administrative tasks and integrating services and supports to improve the person experience and allow for greater focus on high impact interactions. For example, we will leverage more technology, introduce more self-serve options and simplify service through initiatives such as a reloadable payment card and other paperless business practices.

We will also complete the upload of Ontario Works financial and employment costs from municipalities in January 2018. This is anticipated to save municipalities \$425 million overall.

Community Services

Working with community partners, the ministry funds several [community services](#) programs, including:

- support for women experiencing violence and their children;
- supports for survivors of human trafficking;
- interpreter services for adults who are deaf, deafened, hard-of-hearing or who are deafblind;
- intervenor services for adults who are deafblind; and
- health, healing and wellness programs and services for Indigenous peoples.

The ministry also provides access to [adoption information disclosure services](#) via the Custodian of Adoption Information Unit.

In addition, we provide funding and administrative support to the [Soldier's Aid Commission](#) which provides support to Ontario veterans. We are also responsible for maintaining the legislative and regulatory framework for the Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998.

The ministry's community services programs include a range of [Violence Against Women](#) (VAW) investments including:

- emergency shelter services;
- counselling;
- transitional and housing support program;
- child witness programs;
- provincial and regional Crisis Line Counselling; and
- Domestic Violence Community Coordinating Committees.

In response to recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, the ministry worked with the VAW sector to establish new standards for shelters, to support the provision of consistent, high-quality services. The ministry released the shelter standards in September 2016 and is targeting full implementation by early 2017-18.

On February 23, 2016, the Ontario government released Walking Together: Ontario's Long-Term Strategy to End Violence Against Indigenous Women, which outlines actions to prevent violence against Indigenous women and reduce its impact on youth, families and communities.

Ontario committed over \$100 million over three years to support the implementation of the strategy, which builds on the existing work of Indigenous partners, community organizations and government to raise awareness of and prevent violence; provide more effective programs and community services that reflect the priorities of Indigenous leaders and communities; and improve socio-economic conditions that support healing within Indigenous communities.

Under the strategy, the ministry will continue to work with Indigenous and community partners to improve access to community services that play an important role in reducing violence against Indigenous women and their families through culturally relevant programming that is Indigenous-designed and delivered.

In the March 2016 Federal Budget, the federal government established the Social Infrastructure Fund (SIF) in order to improve the quality and increase the supply of affordable housing and to support economic growth. As part of this announcement, nearly \$90 million over two years for the construction and renovation of shelters and transitional housing for survivors of domestic violence was identified. Ontario's portion of the funding was \$18.6 million in 2016-17 and \$9.3 million in 2017-18:

The objectives of the SIF program are to:

- ensure VAW sites are safe, secure, accessible and suitable to delivery services for clients;
- improve spaces and increase overall VAW service delivery; and
- extend the useful life and long term physical sustainability of VAW shelter sites.

The ministry distributed SIF funding across three categories:

- Safety, Security and Accessibility
 - Projects to improve site safety and accessibility (e.g. existing sites may require an elevator to make a second floor accessible).
- Program Optimization
- Modifying existing space to optimize for service delivery (e.g. increasing privacy between dwelling and group spaces or administrative spaces in shelters, re-configuring space to make it more accessible).
- Major Capital
- New construction, site acquisition, major retrofits, and projects that will increase program capacity with no need for additional operating funding.

In October 2016, Hoshizaki House in Dryden was the first project to be announced under the SIF program. Hoshizaki House will receive up to \$3.1 million to replace an aging building with a bigger and better shelter where women and their children can begin to rebuild their lives.

In March 2017, Nelson House and North York Women's Shelter (NYWS) were approved to receive funding from the Social Infrastructure Fund.

- Nelson House will receive up to \$5.3 million under the SIF program to replace the existing shelter with a new 10,000 square foot, 20-bed shelter that is accessible, provides private space for clients, and allows the agency to have other service partners on site when required.
- NYWS will receive up to \$5.8 million in SIF funding (plus an additional \$3 million in provincial funding for a total of \$8.8 million) to replace the existing shelter with a new 24,000 square foot, 30-bed accessible shelter and administrative area, with space for the on-site delivery of services by community partners.

Additionally 55 VAW agencies were approved to receive approximately \$4.1 million for over 140 minor capital projects at 58 shelters under the SIF program to support safety, security and accessibility, and program optimization.

The ministry is currently developing an investment plan for the available SIF funding in 2017-18.

The ministry also supports [interpreter services](#) for adults who are deaf, deafened, hard of hearing, or deafblind, and [intervenor services](#) for adults who are deafblind. Both services help people communicate and participate more fully in their communities.

The ministry is continuing its multi-year renewal strategy for the Intervenor Services program to support a fair, transparent and financially sustainable program. This includes a comprehensive, sector-led human resource initiative to increase the recruitment, talent and skill among intervenors and management.

In 2017-18, the ministry will finalize a funding framework for intervenor services in consultation with stakeholders. The framework includes clear eligibility criteria, an individualized funding model and the implementation of a common needs-based assessment tool. A Single Point of Access is being developed as the portal for all individuals applying for intervenor services in the province.

The [Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy](#) delivers a wide range of health, healing and wellness programs and services that are Indigenous-designed, delivered and managed.

The Strategy is funded through five ministries, led by Community and Social Services and including [Health and Long-Term Care](#), [Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation](#), [Children and Youth Services](#) and the [Status of Women](#). Funded organizations include First Nations, Métis, Political/Territorial Organizations, Indigenous provincial organizations and service providers.

The ministry and Indigenous partners have a shared commitment to reduce family violence and violence against Indigenous women and children, and improve Indigenous health, healing and wellness through culturally appropriate programming and ongoing collaboration. Community-based programs are available to Indigenous peoples living on-reserve and in urban and rural communities.

In 2017-18, government ministries will continue to work closely with Indigenous leaders and organizations to ensure future Strategy success.

This includes working with funded organizations to increase access to services such as crisis intervention, counselling, supports for women, children and families at risk, and health and family violence awareness and education.

The Family Responsibility Office

The [Family Responsibility Office](#) (FRO) collects and distributes child and spousal support payments to improve the financial security of families. Every year, FRO is involved in more than 180,000 cases involving more than 380,000 support recipients, payors and third parties.

In 2017-18, FRO will continue to build on its investments in technology to improve both the effectiveness of enforcement efforts and responsiveness to clients:

- Clients will experience increased flexibility, easier access to services, stability, continuity and excellence in service delivery.
- Targeted collection and enforcement efforts will result in a demonstrable increase in the number of payments received on time, and improved progress on arrears.

Infrastructure

The ministry's 2017-18 infrastructure plan is focused on making strategic investments in infrastructure to support achievement of ministry program outcomes.

Investments will help Indigenous healing and wellness centres, VAW community agencies, interpreter and intervenor service providers, and developmental services providers to maintain, improve and provide safer and more accessible facilities for individuals, children and families.

The ministry will continue to develop an asset management plan that will enable better outcomes and transformation, sustain and enhance service delivery capacity, and demonstrate effective stewardship of public assets.

Poverty Reduction Strategy Office

The [Poverty Reduction Strategy](#), overseen by the Minister of Housing, has been established to support Ontario's multi-year priority outcome of reducing poverty, inequality and exclusion. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Office (PRSO) supports initiatives to continue lifting people out of poverty including design of a Basic Income Pilot and developing a food security strategy.

The PRSO also leads policy development and implementation of a \$50 million Local Poverty Reduction Fund grant program including program delivery infrastructure with the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The Fund supports local, community-driven solutions and drives progress on the ground. The Fund is currently supporting 71 projects across Ontario, including seven Indigenous-led projects.

Human Services Integration Office

In coordination with other ministries that work closely with our municipal partners, the ministry's recently established Human Services Integration Office will work to explore strategies that:

- Enhance accessibility and success for clients;
- Reduce barriers between programs;
- Shift focus to program outcomes; and
- Increase flexibility for municipal service managers to innovate and deliver in ways that best meet local needs.

The ministry is working to develop recommendations for better integration of human service programs provided in partnership with municipalities: municipally delivered social assistance (e.g. Ontario Works), and affordable housing, homelessness prevention, early years and childcare programs.

The goal of this work is to simplify access to programs and services for clients, streamline service delivery and improve service system management.

Provincial Anti-Human Trafficking Coordination Office

On June 30, 2016, Ontario announced the Strategy to End Human Trafficking which will invest up to \$72 million aimed at increasing awareness and coordination, enhancing justice-sector initiatives and improving survivors' access to services.

As part of the Strategy, the Provincial Anti-Human Trafficking Office (PATCO) was established to help improve coordination and integration across the law enforcement, social, health, education and child welfare sectors as well as provide leadership at the provincial level for the implementation of the strategy.

The ministry, through the PATCO, will fund agencies and frontline workers, including those serving Indigenous communities, to help victims access the full spectrum of services and supports needed to exit human trafficking, and recover and heal from the trauma of victimization.

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Ministry Planned Expenditures 2017-18*

	Ministry Planned Expenditures 2017-18 (\$M)
Operating	12,365.3
Capital	72.6
BPS Consolidation	(18.9)

Ministry Planned Expenditures by Program Name 2017-18*

- Ministry of Community and Social Services
 - Operating \$12,365.3 million
 - Capital \$72.6 million
- Ministry Administration Services
 - Operating \$38.5 million
- Adults' Services
 - Operating \$12,260.4 million
 - Capital \$72.6 million
- Poverty Reduction Strategy
 - Operating \$66.4 million

*Includes Statutory Appropriations for Minister's salary, Bad Debt, and Capital Expense (amortization).
 Broader Public Sector Consolidation is reported by ministry total and not by program

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Highlights Of 2016-17 Achievements

Developmental Services

In 2014 the government announced \$810 million over three years to improve community and developmental services, with the total base funding for developmental services increasing to more than \$2 billion. This represents the largest funding increase ever to this sector.

Because of this investment

- 21,000 new individuals and families now have direct funding:
 - New direct funding to 13,000 adults through Passport: When the Passport program was first launched in 2006 it served 1,700 people - through the \$810 million multi-year investment Passport will support approximately 25,000 total recipients; and
 - New funding to 8,000 children and their families through the Special Services at Home program.

- We were able to transition more than 1,200 adults with developmental disabilities in urgent need (includes youth entering from the child welfare system) by the end of the 2016-17 fiscal year.
- We were able to provide \$200 million over the last three years to support front-line workers in community and developmental services.
- We approved 56 innovative and local housing, employment and service modernization projects that promote greater inclusion and independence for people with developmental disabilities.
- A Housing Task Force was created to encourage creative, inclusive and cost-effective housing solutions for adults with developmental disabilities to help address the growing need for a broader range of housing solutions that offer individuals more choice and flexibility.
- Working on a number of initiatives aimed at improving the safety and security of vulnerable adults, we have:
 - Strengthened our oversight for residential services and other programs delivered by agencies by introducing a new inspection framework;
 - Launched ReportON to agencies in March 2016, a direct reporting line (including TTY) and email address (available 24/7) to promote safety for adults with a developmental disability – ReportON was expanded in November 2016; and
 - Established new requirements to enhance the oversight of agencies providing the Host Family program to adults with developmental disabilities.
- Families receiving Special Services at Home (SSAH) funding for children under 18 will also no longer need to re-apply every year for funding.
- The ministry has continued to reach out and facilitate engagement between agency staff to support their role in the community and discuss how they can continue to transform person-centred practices. For example, in Fall 2016, over 400 agency leaders attended engagement sessions in each of our five regions across the province (London, Orangeville, Toronto, Kingston, Ottawa and Thunder Bay). Executive Directors shared their experiences on building community relationships to support transformation to person-centred approaches.
- In addition to the agency engagement sessions, evening sessions for families and caregivers were also held with over 230 family members and caregivers in attendance. The Executive Directors from the afternoon session shared their personal experiences in making the transition to person-centred planning and the profound impact these changes have made in the lives of the people they serve.

Social Assistance

- In 2016, \$137 million was invested to increase social assistance rates by:
 - \$25 per month (more than 3 per cent) for Ontario Works singles without children;
 - 1.5 per cent for Ontario Works families;
 - 1.5 per cent for individuals with disabilities receiving Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP);
 - 1.5 per cent in Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD); and
 - 1.5 per cent to various other rate and benefit elements.
- This means that single adults with no children on Ontario Works have received an increase of up to \$960 per year.

- With these increases the government has raised rates in 12 of the last 13 years.
- The kilometer rates for medical and business travel were updated under the ODSP and Ontario Works.

The rates are now:

- 41 cents per kilometer if you live in the North and Northeast Regions of Ontario; and
 - 40 cents per kilometer if you live anywhere else in the province.
- First Nations delivery partners that were providing a per kilometer rate which was higher than these amounts continue to provide their own per kilometer rate.
 - So that families who receive child support can benefit more from this income, child support payments to families on social assistance became fully exempt, resulting in almost 19,000 families receiving an average of \$282 more per month (or \$3,380 per year) to support their children and combat child poverty.
 - Almost 260,000 children in families who receive social assistance are benefiting from the full amount of their Canada Child Benefit as this benefit is exempt as income.
 - We introduced a streamlined application process for adults eligible for ministry funded developmental services and supports. Effective September 1, 2016, persons determined to be eligible for services, support and funding under the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008, are eligible as a prescribed class under ODSP. This means, they do not need to go through the disability determination process to be eligible for ODSP. People will still have to apply and meet other ODSP requirements, including financial eligibility.
 - We developed and implemented a simpler medical review form with the help of a working group including members of the medical, legal and advocacy communities. This is part of a broader initiative to create a more person-friendly, fair, accountable and efficient adjudication process. The new medical review process will reduce burden on people, healthcare professionals, stakeholders and staff. This new process was implemented in April 2017. Work is underway to develop and update the initial ODSP application and the Self Report form.
 - A reloadable payment card for Social Assistance benefits was introduced to provide ODSP clients who didn't have a bank account with a safer, easier way to access their benefits without having to use expensive cheque-cashing services.
 - In Fall 2016, social assistance recipients are able to use their Ontario health card instead of the monthly paper drug card to verify they are eligible for prescription drug benefits.
 - Work is underway on the development of a multi-year roadmap for an income security system that is based on equity, adequacy, sustainability and simplicity. Together with the Income Security Reform Working Group, and separate working groups with First Nations and urban Indigenous partners, the ministry is working to reduce poverty, and support people in their efforts to participate in the economy and their communities.
 - \$8 million has been invested to help low income Ontarians access financial empowerment services. In the past two years, nearly 16,000 people in Ontario have benefitted from the services offered through the Financial Empowerment and Problem Solving (FEPS) program.

- In addition to FEPS, the first annual \$1 million of a five-year, \$5 million investment plan towards the Financial Empowerment Champions (FECS) initiative will help train selected community service providers across Ontario to provide a range of financial empowerment tools and services and supports to low income Ontarians. Financial empowerment and advocacy are the cornerstones of enhanced financial independence, a key objective of Ontario's social assistance programs. Services include: free tax filing services, financial literacy education, and financial coaching and problem-solving such as opening bank accounts and using direct deposit.

Violence Against Women (VAW)

- Approximately 10,700 women and 6,900 children were served at VAW shelters in 2015-16.
- In 2016-17, the ministry invested \$2 million to help build a new women's shelter to serve Elgin County. The shelter, opened in September 2016, replacing the previous Women's House Emergency Shelter to better meet the needs of local women and children who have experienced violence in their homes.
- More than \$1 million was invested in 16 projects to support agencies and shelters in rural, remote and northern communities across the province through the Rural Realities Fund.
- \$110,000 was given to the Ontario Association of Interval and Transitional Houses to deliver training to the sector across the province.
- In Leeds and Grenville, \$121,000 was invested in creating a mobile hub of services for women and their children.
- Family Services Ontario (FSO) received \$172,800 in project funding over two years to proceed with a pilot project to provide joint counselling programs for couples experiencing situational couple violence.
- A Crisis Response Framework that will help agencies develop co-ordinated plans to respond to tragedies or crises involving violence against women in their communities has been developed with assistance from the VAW Stakeholder Advisory Group, VAW agencies, and with other government ministries.
- More than \$1.5M was committed in base funding for eligible organizations in the VAW sector to improve coordination capacity, overall local service system integration, and fiscal projects that support public education, knowledge transfer, sector training and survivor engagement.
- The ministry developed and implemented provincial standards for emergency VAW shelters in Ontario. The shelter standards are intended to ensure consistent, high quality services for women and children fleeing violence and focus on the programs and services delivered in shelters. We also worked with the Aboriginal Shelters of Ontario (ASOO) to support the development of Indigenous guidelines in partnership with the ministry and the federal government through Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).

Anti-Human Trafficking

- In June 2016, Ontario announced the Strategy to End Human Trafficking, investing up to \$72 million in strengthening provincial leadership and coordination, prevention and community supports, enhancing justice-sector initiatives and providing culturally-relevant services and supports for Indigenous survivors of human trafficking.

- Housed in the ministry, the Provincial Anti-Human Trafficking Coordination Office (the Office) has been established to oversee and coordinate the implementation of Ontario's Strategy to End Human Trafficking across government.
- Since its establishment, the Office has made progress on building and delivering coordinated cross-government results for Ontario's Strategy to End Human Trafficking, including:
 - Engagement with 12 anti-human trafficking coalitions, representing close to 160 organizations and community groups, as well as survivors of human trafficking and community members, on the design and development of the Community Supports Fund . the fund will expand and improve community services for survivors of human trafficking through an open and competitive call for proposals, which was launched in April 2017;
 - An Indigenous-Led Initiatives Fund that was developed in consultation with Indigenous organizations and communities launched in April 2017; the fund will support Indigenous communities and organizations in strengthening capacity to address human trafficking in their own communities and design culturally-relevant services and supports delivered by and for Indigenous people;
 - Selection of the Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) to deliver Ontario's Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking Liaisons program to help support Indigenous women and people, both on and off reserve, in Toronto, the Golden Horseshoe Area, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Northern Ontario (including Northwestern and remote Northern communities) and Southwestern Ontario; and
 - Essential tools and structures to track and monitor progress across multiple ministries and to evaluate the impact of the Strategy.

Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy

- Over \$47 million was invested in the [Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy](#) (AHWS), which has created 600 jobs and 460 community-based health and healing projects across the province.
- We invested \$750,000 towards the new Dan Pine healing lodge to serve communities in the Sudbury to Sault Ste. Marie corridor.
- New investment. are being implemented through AHWS to improve access to culturally appropriate Indigenous-led initiatives in response to the government's priorities on reconciliation with Indigenous peoples: "*Walking Together*", *Ontario's Long-Term Strategy to End Violence Against Indigenous Women* released in February 2016; and "*The Journey Together*", *Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples* released in May 2016; and
- With these new investments, the ministry is working with Indigenous partners to enhance the crisis coordination response in Nishnawbe Aski Nation communities and establish/expand healing and treatment centres through a partnership with MOHLTC.
- In 2017-18, the ministry will be working with Indigenous partners and service agencies to increase access to AHWS and Indigenous shelters through training, capacity-building and province-wide expansion of a helpline for Indigenous women.
- Starting in 2017-18, the ministry will support the province-wide expansion of a culturally competent counselling helpline for Indigenous women. The helpline design and delivery will be informed by

consultations and implementation strategies from the pilot phase of Talk4Healing, the helpline for Indigenous women in northern Ontario.

- Ontario also continues to review and respond to the recommendations within timelines of the Chief Coroner, and to work collaboratively with Indigenous partners, the federal government and other parties to address the needs of Indigenous students attending high school in urban centers.

Basic Income Pilot

- The 2016 Budget outlined the government's commitment to piloting a basic income in Ontario to determine whether it could be a better way of delivering income support, and improve health, employment, and housing outcomes for Ontarians.
- In September 2016, this commitment was reinforced through the updated mandate letters to the Minister of Community and Social Services and the Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy.
- The province is looking to create a pilot that would test how a basic income might benefit people living in a variety of low income situations, including those who are currently working.
- In June 2016, the province appointed the Honourable Hugh Segal as the Special Advisor who submitted a discussion paper outlining key pilot design considerations in September 2016.
- The ministry initiated consultations across Ontario, including people with lived experience, municipalities, experts and academics, and is working with Indigenous partners to engage with First Nations, urban Indigenous, Métis and Inuit communities in a culturally competent way.
- Between November 3, 2016 and January 31, 2017, about 1,200 participants attended 14 public consultations held in communities across Ontario. Over 34,000 people completed the online survey. Written submissions were received from more than 80 community organizations and groups with expertise and experience in fighting poverty.
- The feedback provided was used to finalize the Pilot design. The government prepared a final report on what was heard, and announced a Pilot plan in April 2017 with Hamilton (including Brantford and Brant County), Thunder Bay and surrounding area and Lindsay chosen as the test sites.

Infrastructure

- In 2016-17, the ministry continued to implement its multi-year asset management plan for the ministry's funded transfer payment agency sites (approximately 3400 sites) and directly operated sites (53 sites). These sites are used to deliver a variety of ministry programs and services.
- Under the Partner Facility Renewal program, over \$16 million has been invested in more than 180 community service agencies for over 900 projects across Ontario. This investment will help agencies across Ontario maintain their facilities in good working order so they can provide better services for people with developmental disabilities, families struggling with domestic abuse and the Indigenous communities.
- The ministry provided \$6.5 million to improve the fire safety of community service agency facilities where some of Ontario's most vulnerable people receive services. Across Ontario, more than 150 facilities from over 50 agencies received funding for projects such as:
 - Fire alarm system upgrades;

- Installation of fire doors and separations; and
- Sprinkler system installations.
- The ministry invested \$4 million to build the new Valoris multi-service building in the Prescott-Russell area - this community hub will provide counselling for women and children who have experienced violence, services for adults and youth with developmental disabilities, and child welfare and children's mental health services.

Poverty Reduction

The 2014-2019 [Poverty Reduction Strategy, Realizing Our Potential](#), aims to create a province where every person has the opportunity to achieve his or her full potential and contribute to a prosperous and healthy Ontario. Highlights of the progress made in achieving that goal include:

- Reducing the number of children living in poverty by over 20 per cent, which is a major step forward in the province's goal of reducing child poverty by 25 per cent in five years;
- Supporting 30 community partner-led projects through the Local Poverty Reduction Fund with an investment of over \$16 million; these projects focus on local community partnerships - including Indigenous-led initiatives - to help find new solutions to poverty and end homelessness;
- Helping approximately 39,600 individuals and families obtain housing and approximately 115,600 households at risk of homelessness remain in their homes through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative; and
- Breaking the cycle of chronic homelessness for up to 6,000 individuals and families by providing new supportive housing spaces as well as funding for housing assistance and support services.
- In 2016-17, through the Local Poverty Reduction Fund the ministry committed \$16.2 million to 30 projects in 15 communities across Ontario. Of this we invested approximately \$6 million in 10 projects designed to prevent or reduce homelessness and \$4.6 million in 7 projects led by Indigenous communities and organizations. This builds on our 2015-16 investment of \$12.6 million for 41 projects under the Local Poverty Reduction Fund in 20 communities across Ontario.
- On March 20, 2017 we tabled the [Poverty Reduction Strategy Annual Report](#) in the Legislature, in accord with the Poverty Reduction Act, 2009. The report details activities and achievements under the Poverty Reduction Strategy over the 2016 calendar year, and reports measurable progress on the targets, goals and indicators under the PRS.

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Organization Chart

This is a text version of an organizational chart for the Ministry of Community and Social Services as of April 2016. The chart shows the following hierarchical structure with the top level assigned to the Minister of Community and Social Services.

1. Minister of Community and Social Services - [Helena Jaczek](#)
 1. Parliamentary Assistant - [Ann Hoggarth](#)
 2. **(Appointed by Order-in-Council)**
 - Chairman, Soldiers' Aid Commission - Colin Rowe (A)

3. Reporting to the Deputy Minister - Janet Menard
 - 3.1. Executive Assistant to the Deputy Minister - Saba Ferdinands
 - 3.2. Director, Legal Services Branch - Diane Zimnica **(also reports to Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Legal Services, Ministry of the Attorney General)**
 - 3.3. Director, Communications and Marketing Branch - Garth Cramer **(also reports to the Deputy Minister Communications, Cabinet)**
 - 3.4. Executive Lead, human Services Integration - Jill Vienneau
 - 3.5. ADM, Poverty Reduction Strategy Office - Karen Glass
 - 3.5.1. Director - Rupert Gordon (A)
 - 3.5.2. Director - Basic Income Pilot Project - Kevin Pal
 - 3.6. ADM, Social Policy Development - Erin Hannah
 - 3.6.1. Director, Ontario Works - Anna Cain
 - 3.6.2. Director, Community Supports Policy Branch - Barbara Simmons
 - 3.6.3. Director, Ontario Disability Support Program - Gloria Lee
 - 3.6.4. Director, Policy Research and Analysis - Aki Tefera
 - 3.6.5. Director, Planning and Strategic Policy - Laura Summers
 - 3.7. ADM, Family Responsibility Office - Susan Erwin
 - 3.7.1. Director, Client Services Branch - Mena Zaffino
 - 3.7.2. Director, Finance and Administration - Bani Bawa (A)
 - 3.7.3. Director, Strategic and Operational Effectiveness - Trevor Sparrow
 - 3.7.4. Director, Support Services Branch - Erin O'Connor (A)
 - 3.7.5. Director, FRO Legal Services - Shannon Chace
 - 3.8. ADM, Business Planning and Corporate Services - Nadia Cornacchia

This division reports jointly to Deputy Ministers of the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

 - 3.8.1. Executive Director, Organizational Renewal Directorate - Madeleine Davidson
 - 3.8.2. Director, Financial Planning and Business Management - Lisa Zanetti
 - 3.8.3. Director, Strategic Business Unit - Patricia Kwasnik **(Reports jointly to Assistant Deputy Minister, Human Resources Service Delivery, HROntario, Ministry of Government Services and Assistant Deputy Minister, Business Planning and Corporate Services)**
 - 3.8.4. Director, Community Services Audit Services - Jeff Bird (A) **(Joint reporting relationship to the Deputy Ministers of MCSS and MCYS and the Chief Internal Auditor, Ministry of Finance and reports administratively to the Assistant Deputy Minister, Business Planning and Corporate Services)**
 - 3.8.5. Director, Capital Planning and Delivery Branch - Tony Lazzaro
 - 3.8.6. Director, Corporate Services - Maxine Daley (A)
 - 3.9. ADM, Community and Developmental Services - Karen Chan
 - 3.9.1. Director, Service Delivery and Supports - Sal Marrello
 - 3.9.2. Director, Controllership and Accountability - Lourdes Valenton
 - 3.9.3. Director, Program Policy Implementation - Christine Kuepfer
 - 3.9.4. Director, Provincial Anti-Human Trafficking Coordination Office - Jennifer Richardson
 - 3.10. Regional Directors (report jointly to Assistant Deputy Ministers in MCSS and MCYS)
 - 3.10.1. Karen Eisler - Central Region
 - 3.10.2. Nicole True - North Region
 - 3.10.3. Paul Wheeler (A) - Toronto Region
 - 3.10.4. Anne Stark (A) - West Region
 - 3.10.5. David Remington - East Region

- 3.11. ADM, Social Assistance Operations - Richard Steele
 - 3.11.1. Director, Social Assistance and Municipal Operations - Jeff Bowen
 - 3.11.2. Director, Social Assistance Central Services Branch- Bob Davidson
 - 3.11.3. Director, Social Assistance Service Delivery Branch - Patti Redmond
 - 3.11.4. Director, SAMS Transition Program Management - Nelson Louriero
- 3.12. Chief Information Officer - Children, Youth and Social Services I&IT Cluster - Dafna Carr
 - Reports to Corporate Chief Information Officer and to Deputy Ministers of MCSS and MCYS
 - 3.12.1. Head, Solutions Development and Maintenance - Katherine Kulson (A)
 - 3.12.2. Head, Business Relationship Management - Kim Davison (A)
 - 3.12.3. Head, Information Management and Architecture - Bruno Bevilacqua
 - 3.12.4. Director, Business Services - Tony Panaccia
 - 3.12.5. Head, Operations - Paul de Gray (A)
 - 3.12.6. Head, Cluster Transformation Office - Mike Morley (A)

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Cost Sharing with the Federal Government

MCSS shares costs for social assistance and other specified social services programs with the federal government, municipalities, First Nations, and other public sector organizations.

Federal Reimbursements

Independent of block funding received by the province under the [Canada Social Transfer](#) (CST), the ministry receives federal funding under the 1965 Indian Welfare Services Agreement (IWS), the Social Housing Agreement, the Supporting Families Initiative Fund, the Social Infrastructure Fund, and the Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities (LMAPD) for selected programs. Estimated federal reimbursement for the 2017-18 fiscal year under these agreements is:

Cost Sharing with the Federal Government

	Revenue
1965 Indian Welfare Services Agreement	
Ontario Works	122,943,400
Social Housing Agreement	
Supportive Housing	2,307,000
Supporting Families Initiative Fund	
Family Responsibility Office	1,028,900
Social Infrastructure Fund	
Social Infrastructure Fund	9,284,700
Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities	

Employment Services and Supports	51,513,310
Developmental Services	11,012,915
Subtotal	62,526,225
Total	\$198,090,200

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Statutes Administered by the Ministry

- [***Child and Family Services Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. C.11***](#)
Sections 162 - 165 inclusive.
- [***Deaf-Blind Awareness Month Act, 2000, S.O. 2000, c.34***](#)
- [***District Social Services Administration Boards Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. D.15***](#)
- [***Family Responsibility and Support Arrears Enforcement Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, c. 31***](#)
- [***Indian Welfare Services Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. I.4***](#)
- [***Ministry of Community and Social Services Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.20***](#)

In so far as it relates to activities and programs respecting community and social services and except for sections 11.1 and 12 in so far as those sections relate to Long-Term Care Programs and Services which are the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Responsibility for the Act is also shared with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services and the Ministry of Education, in so far as it relates to activities and programs respecting children and youth services and child care services and programs.

- [***Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c. 25, Schedule B***](#)
- ***Ontario Down Syndrome Day Act, 2016, S.O. 2016, c. 16***
- [***Ontario Works Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c. 25, Schedule A***](#)

Except in respect of Part IV which is the responsibility of the Ministry of the Attorney General.

- [***Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008, S.O. 2008, c.14***](#)

This Act is being proclaimed in stages. Sections relating to the operation of funding entities and direct funding are not yet proclaimed.

- [***Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998, S.O. 1998, c. 31***](#)
- ***Soldiers' Aid Commission Act, R.S.O. 1960, c. 377 (as amended by *The Soldiers' Aid Commission Act, 1970, S.O. 1970, c.83*)***

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Agencies, Boards and Commissions

	2017-18 Estimates \$	2016-17 Interim Actuals \$	2015-16 Actuals \$
Soldiers' Aid Commission	253,200	157,182	170,464

The Soldiers' Aid Commission (SAC) provides financial assistance to veterans, their spouses or dependents who are in need when all other resources have been exhausted. An eligible veteran is a person in financial need who resides in Ontario, enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces and served overseas or served with the armed forces in Canada during the First or Second World Wars or the Korean War. Support is provided to assist with the payment of home or health related expenses that veterans, their spouses or dependents may have difficulty affording.

MCSS provides the SAC with accommodations for meetings and administrative support, as well as annual funding of \$253,200 for payments to applicants approved for financial assistance. This includes \$100,000 for grants for applicants with non-overseas service. The relationship between SAC and the ministry is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Commission and the Minister. The MOU was last renewed in 2007 and is in effect until 2017.

The applicant must have insufficient income and assets to pay for the service or the support he/she is requesting. The SAC employs a screening tool to assess financial need.

Financial assistance is provided to meet a specific health or home related need when all other resources have been exhausted. Funding is provided on an individual basis and is not provided for long-term, ongoing assistance.

The SAC Chair and Commissioners are appointed by Order-In-Council. By law, Commissioners serve without pay but may claim out-of-pocket expenses.

The Commission celebrated its 100th anniversary in November 2015. A Treasury Board required agency mandate review is currently ongoing.

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Mandate

The Ministry of Community and Social Services promotes resilient and inclusive communities through delivering and funding programs that help people achieve their potential, build independence and improve their quality of life.

Overall Summary (Operating and Capital)

Description	2017-18 Estimates \$	Change from 2016- 17 Estimates \$	Change from 2016-17 Estimates %	2016-17 Estimates ¹ \$	2016-17 Interim Actuals ¹ \$	2015-16 Actuals ¹ \$
OPERATING EXPENSE						
Ministry Administration	38,464,900	1,285,800	3.5	37,179,100	37,961,704	34,173,657
Adults' Services	12,232,302,500	890,102,400	7.8	11,342,200,100	11,574,613,990	11,174,480,849
Poverty Reduction Strategy	66,426,300	53,292,000	405.7	13,134,300	10,296,810	4,496,467
	12,337,193,700	944,680,200	8.3	11,392,513,500	11,622,872,504	11,213,150,973

Total Operating Expense to be Voted						
Statutory Appropriations	28,095,914	(11,516,000)	(29.1)	39,611,914	29,126,014	39,598,368
Ministry Total Operating Expense	12,365,289,614	933,164,200	8.2	11,432,125,414	11,651,998,518	11,252,749,341
Consolidation	(18,934,800)	(654,000)	3.6	(18,280,800)	(19,661,349)	(19,259,071)
Ministry Total Operating Expense Including Consolidation	12,346,354,814	932,510,200	8.2	11,413,844,614	11,632,337,169	11,233,490,270
OPERATING ASSETS						
Adults' Services	32,636,000	(12,668,000)	(28.0)	45,304,000	32,636,007	26,276,021
Less: Special Warrants	0	0	-	0	0	0
Total Operating Assets to be Voted	32,636,000	(12,668,000)	(28.0)	45,304,000	32,636,007	26,276,021
Special Warrants	0	0	-	0	0	0
Ministry Total Operating Assets	32,636,000	(12,668,000)	(28.0)	45,304,000	32,636,007	26,276,021
CAPITAL EXPENSE						
Adults' Services	46,124,900	6,917,900	17.6	39,207,000	61,571,700	37,958,712
Less: Special Warrants	0	0	-	0	0	0
Total Capital Expense to be Voted	46,124,900	6,917,900	17.6	39,207,000	61,571,700	37,958,712
Special Warrants	0	0	-	0	0	0
Statutory Appropriations	26,446,000	(1,868,700)	(6.6)	28,314,700	26,104,700	26,112,215

Ministry Total Capital Expense	72,570,900	5,049,200	7.5	67,521,700	87,676,400	64,070,927
CAPITAL ASSETS						
Adults' Services	3,310,000	1,359,500	69.7	1,950,500	1,100,500	2,628,162
Less: Special Warrants	0	0	-	0	0	0
Total Capital Assets to be Voted	3,310,000	1,359,500	69.7	1,950,500	1,100,500	2,628,162
Special Warrants	0	0	-	0	0	0
Ministry Total Capital Assets	3,310,000	1,359,500	69.7	1,950,500	1,100,500	2,628,162
Ministry Total Operating and Capital Including Consolidation (not including Assets)	12,418,925,714	937,559,400	8.2	11,481,366,314	11,720,013,569	11,297,561,197

1 - Historical data has been restated for transfers to other ministries.

Note: Numbers maynot add due to rounding

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Appendix: 2017-18 Annual Report

Improving the lives of a Diverse Group of Citizens

This past year has been an important year for the Ministry of Community and Social Services. We are building a culture which changes the way we view the people we support.

About 10 per cent of Ontario's population accesses our ministry's services. These include people who are unemployed or under employed; those with physical and developmental disabilities, many of whom have mental health issues; (58,000); survivors of sexual and domestic violence, and human trafficking; women and children supported through the Family Responsibility Office; and Indigenous and First Nations communities. In addition, 960,000 people receive income support.

This is a large and vulnerable population with increasingly complex issues, requiring ministry staff and its delivery partners to understand what supports are needed, when they are needed and how these supports can be assessed.

We have begun to think and work differently; promoting inclusion and diversity, so that we empower people to live the lives they want by offering them more choice, with greater ease, when they need it.

Through our staff and service delivery partners, ranging from transfer payment agencies, community organizations, municipalities, and Indigenous leaders and their communities, we provide support through services that include:

- [Community Services](#)
- [Developmental Services](#)
- [Income and Employment Supports](#)
- [Safety and Security Supports](#)
- [Child and Spousal Supports](#)

The people we serve are challenged by incredible obstacles, but are rich in potential and unique in their abilities. When we celebrate their individuality, we help to make their lives richer, and the communities in which they live stronger.

Here are their stories...

Ashley's Story (Host Family Program): Ashley's Host Mother: "Ashley had a difficult past. She couldn't find maybe the right family situation that she was looking for - someone to fully support her and care for her the way that she wanted to be. Ashley just likes to be a part of a family and she feels wanted and just a valued part of our family."

Devon's Story (Ontario Works): Devon's case worker: "He was employed, then out of work and ran out of funds. We assisted him with the Hammer Heads program. I think Devon had a bit of success going in his life then kind of fell on a difficult time, and we kind of gave him the opportunity to grow into the potential of who he wanted to be, he just needed a little push."

Vivian's Story (Violence Against Women Services): Gaetane Pharand, Founder and Executive Director, Le Centre Victoria pour femmes: "Vivian lost her mother as a young child and was raised by her father. She was sexually assaulted, physically and psychologically abused in her childhood. She was referred to Centre Victoria pour femmes and has been receiving services for the past 12 months."

Indigenous Healthcare Story (Anishnawbe Mushkiki, An Indigenous Health Access Centre in Thunder Bay): Bernice Dubec, Executive Director: "Indigenous people have not enjoyed a good relationship with mainstream healthcare. Statistics show that [Indigenous](#) people who have high rates of terminal illnesses or other chronic diseases are being diagnosed at a later stage. In the past, they have not been able to participate in screening, prevention or have access to a physician to get an early diagnosis."

Vulnerable People Living Improved Quality of Life

When the people we serve are successful, when they are thriving, not just surviving, we know that our system of partner services has helped create conditions that have empowered their lives. Our partners are critical to delivering those services. They are primarily front-line workers, connecting people who are vulnerable to a vast range of community supports and programs, assisting them every day to move closer to more choice and independence.

Here are outcomes from our partners' community programs:

Ashley's Story: Ashley: "I like to hang out with my mom and dad. She's helped me learn how to take care of myself to work at Cineplex. I now know what having a mom and dad is like and I know what it's like to be a part of a family and be loved and wanted - it's awesome. They've taught me so much and they've even taught me how to love."

Devon's Story: Devon: "I'm pushing myself every day. I'm doing what I love and what I want to do."

Vivian's Story. Vivian: "I came to the Victoria Centre for Women because my aunt referred me. The services I received at the centre included counselling. I took a self-defence course. I also did the Impact Therapy to help me cope with mourning my mother. I developed new objectives for my life, my career. My goal is to get my Masters and Doctorate. I am more confident about how my past has affected my life. I feel comfortable with who I am."

Indigenous Story. Bernice: "Anishnawbe has made incredible strides among Thunder Bay District Aboriginals. Worrying statistics are steadily improving. We provide screening for diabetes, heart disease and cancer to ensure that Aboriginal people get an early diagnosis and access to treatment earlier. We take a proactive approach, empowering Aboriginal people to take active responsibility for their healthcare. It's with this holistic approach to health that we envision our communities and our people will be a lot healthier and live to their full expectations."

With our partners, we have engaged in transforming a human services system that has addressed key directions in the Premier's mandate letter: more person-centered services, easier to access services, services which help people achieve their strengths and those which empower women and children in safe environments.

Striving for Independence, Helping People Achieve their Strengths

In the ministry, we aspire to maximize people's strengths and help them be the most that they can be. Often, this is by providing income support to them while they are out of work or looking for work: or it can be by providing help to partners whose spouses are forfeiting their support payments.

In Ontario's 2016 February Budget, \$137 million was committed to social assistance rates. Those receiving [Ontario Works](#) and [Ontario Disability Support Program \(ODSP\)](#) payments received a little bit more money, making their day-to-day lives a little easier. For instance, since 2014, single adults with no children receiving Ontario Works have received an increase of \$960 per year.

The deduction of child support payments from social assistance [was ended](#) so that families who receive child support can benefit more from this income. As a result, almost 19,000 families began receiving an average of \$282 more per month or \$3,380 per year.

And for spouses who came to the [Family Responsibility Office](#) for help, a total of \$713 million in payments was collected for families and children in one year.

We have also focused on making services easier to access. For instance, young people with developmental disabilities have been more empowered with a [simplified application process](#) for ODSP and the Special Services at Home funding. We also partnered with The Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) to provide a [reloadable payment card](#) for accessing ODSP payments.

Approximately 41 per cent of those receiving ODSP face mental health issues. Many are homeless. For people receiving ODSP who do not have bank accounts, the reloadable card provides safer, more convenient access to funds, creates independence and saves them from potential stigma.

The ministry is exploring new ways to help people in poverty reach their full potential, including a pilot that would test how a basic income might benefit people living in a variety of low income situations, including those who are currently working. Basic income is a payment to eligible families or individuals that ensure a minimum income level that could help them meet their basic needs while improving health, employment

and housing outcomes. This approach is anchored in trust of and respect for the individuals who need support.

We are the lead ministry to implement and monitor our progress and those of partner ministries on the Poverty Reduction Strategy. Aligning with the work of this Strategy is the multi-year roadmap for income security reform. With the help of the Income Security Reform Working Group and parallel working groups with First Nations and urban Indigenous partners, work is well underway in developing a multi-year roadmap for an income security system that is based on equity, adequacy, sustainability and simplicity.

More Person-Centered Services

Over the past year, more people were able to build their independence, live within communities and maximize their unique capabilities by fulfilling their dreams.

This is particularly evident in the first stages of transforming our supports for people with developmental disabilities. In 2016-17 we eliminated the 2014 wait list for the [Passport program](#), giving 13,000 adults with developmental disabilities more power to choose the services they need, when they need them. Through Passport, these individuals now have the opportunity to take up life skills in their communities, hire a support worker and obtain temporary respite care for their families and caregivers. In total, this means that through the \$810 million multi-year investment about 25,000 families will have more support in their communities.

People with developmental disabilities often have complex issues, including mental health or other health-related challenges. In the past, they have experienced multiple medical assessments where they have had to repeat their stories several times over. These individuals now have a much-improved streamlined customer service experience when it comes to primary care. Once a person is deemed eligible for ministry-funded developmental services, they automatically become part of a prescribed group under the ODSP. This decreases their wait times for care and support, reduces stigma, and lessens time and effort filling out documents and seeing various health care practitioners.

We can only have more inclusive communities if adults with disabilities feel safer. With our new [ReportON](#) service, any Ontario citizen can now report suspected, alleged or witnessed abuse of adults with a developmental disability to a 24/7 toll-free telephone (including TTY) and email service. This not only gives people with disabilities more security, it encourages them to be out in the community more.

Our [LifeShare-Host Family Program](#)- is another example of how adults with disabilities can feel a greater part of their communities and get the love and security they long for. Adults with disabilities are matched with families who are able to provide a loving home and support. As with Ashley's example earlier, people can learn new skills, be a part of their community and experience the emotional benefits of being part of a family.

In order to support host families and those agencies providing residential services, we strengthened our inspection framework; this included setting out new requirements for agencies that provide the Host Family Program, which will allow them to enhance their oversight activities regarding host families.

For most adults, gaining independence from family by moving away from home is an innate desire and a hallmark of true independence. So, providing funding to agencies for residential opportunities that are safe and innovative is essential to helping people gain that independence. Lorne Coleman, President of the Parents' Auxiliary at Southwestern Regional Centre (SRC) in Blenheim and whose son Craig lived at SRC for 35 years, said, "The good thing that happened is the fact that the families or loved ones of the residents had the opportunity to choose what type of home their loved one was to go to. I have not heard one complaint from the parents or loved ones of residents that have been placed in the community."

Ontario invested \$2 million in repairs and upgrades at residential properties to create additional residential capacity for approximately 50 people with developmental disabilities. In addition, \$119,500 was provided to ten developmental service agencies to develop an inclusive, community based housing strategy. The ministry has also invested \$6 million over three years in 18 creative housing projects recommended by the Housing Task Force to address the need for a broader range of housing solutions that give individuals more choice and flexibility.

And in the future, we hope to see the outcomes of a [Developmental Services Housing Forum](#) we hosted where people shared ideas on removing barriers and improving opportunities for innovative and inclusive housing for adults with developmental disabilities.

Empowering Women and Children in Safe Environments

A grim statistic is that women experience violent incidences an average of 35 times before they decide to leave the violent situation and seek shelter. Violence against women affects us all - their children, their families and their communities. It fragments their lives and has a long-term impact that resonates through the family.

In 2015-16, more than 10,000 women and about 6,900 of their children were served by an emergency Violence Against Women (VAW) shelter in Ontario. More than 40,000 women and 4,000 children received counselling from VAW counsellors.

These shelters are not only safe havens for women and their children, they are places to regain hope, access housing and legal services, and find the support they need to rebuild their lives and those of their families.

To that end, to better meet the needs of survivors of domestic violence and their children, we worked to find funding for the construction of new shelters in Elgin County and Dryden to replace old facilities. We also funded over 800 projects in more than 170 community service agencies with \$16 million dollars for repairs and upgrades. And our [Rural Realities Fun.](#) invested more than \$1 million in 16 projects that support Violence Against Women agencies and shelters in rural, remote and northern communities. This funding provided better service coordination and helped minimize delivery challenges in the North.

Sadly, human trafficking is also a reality in our province. Available data and anecdotal evidence shows that Ontario accounts for 65 per cent of police-reported human trafficking cases in Canada and 70 per cent of this is for purposes of sexual exploitation. As a result of these horrific statistics, Ontario has established the [Provincial Anti-Human Trafficking Coordination Office](#) (the Office) to oversee and coordinate the implementation of its Strategy to End Human Trafficking. The government is investing up to \$72 million in strengthening provincial leadership and coordination, awareness and community supports, enhancing justice-sector initiatives and providing culturally-relevant services and supports for Indigenous survivors of human trafficking. Our ministry houses the Office. In 2016, the Office started work to develop measurement tools to monitor progress and evaluate the impact of the Strategy; engaged stakeholders on the Community Supports Fund and Indigenous-led Initiatives fund; and coordinated the development and delivery of multi-sector initiatives with key ministry partners.

Healing Indigenous Communities

We have a long way to go to help our Indigenous communities recover from the legacy of residential schools and the resulting challenges facing communities and individuals. Through programs and actions focused on reconciliation, we are working with Indigenous partners to address the legacy of residential schools, close gaps and remove barriers, support Indigenous culture and reconcile relationships with these communities.

Six hundred (600) jobs and 460 community-based health and healing projects have been created through the investment in the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy, including \$47 million this year. As a result of the government's investment of \$750,000, communities in the Sudbury to Sault Ste. Marie corridor can now go to the new Dan Pine Healing Lodge for programs. And women on and off-reserve can have greater access to a counseling helpline and get better service because of improvements to Indigenous shelters and counselling agencies.

A Culture of Engagement with Our Partners and Those We Serve

We didn't achieve these results alone. Our greatest assets are the partnerships we've forged with those who share our vision of providing greater choice and flexibility for our individuals and their families.

Over this past year, we have been actively engaging with the people we serve, the agencies that deliver services, and government at all levels. This past fall, the ministry engaged 400 agency leaders to discuss how they can continue to transform to person-centered practices. And in February we met in Toronto with all Federal, Provincial and Territorial ministers with responsibility for social services.

Evening sessions for families and caregivers were also held with over 230 family members. They heard from the executive directors and had the opportunity to meet with other families.

As we continue to look for solutions that will help us do a better job in providing services to people who need them, we have engaged with advocates, people with lived experience, delivery partners and others through the Income Security Reform Working Group. Specific Indigenous forums were also created, to ensure Indigenous voices are heard within policy and decision-making-the First Nations Income Security Reform Working Group and the Urban Indigenous Table on Income Security Reform.

Together, these groups are looking at reform of the income security system, including changes to social assistance, with conversations focused on relevant issues such as social inclusion, health, income and housing. The advice we receive will be critical to informing the development of a cohesive, multi-year plan for change.

Through forums like our Housing Forum and moving forward with the [Basic Income pilot](#), group discussions, informal surveys and ongoing feedback and input, we have brainstormed creative ideas, designed new programs, and streamlined our processes. Together we have provided more value-add with more choices, reduced barriers and more effective work processes. This partnership has resulted in empowering people, making them more independent and helping them to live their lives more fully.

We have engaged those with lived experience, and we thank them for having the courage to participate in our initiatives. Because of them, we will be testing new concepts like Basic Income.

We take our responsibility to work across government very seriously. We have collaborated with the Ministries of Housing, Health and Long-Term Care, Children and Youth Services, Community Safety and Correctional Services, Education and the Attorney General. And we have worked up and down all levels of government. Our municipal partners have been key in our human services integration process by helping to mitigate barriers and deliver services more effectively. Our federal partners are also engaged on issues of human trafficking, status of women, income support through child benefits, Indigenous reconciliation programs, and violence against Indigenous women.

Shaping the Future - Moving Towards Thriving Communities

There is still much to be done.

We will focus on outcomes, not on outputs. We will continue to engage our partner organizations, staff and those with lived experience. And we will act on recommendations from third parties; and leverage the results of the pilots and specific engagements we have conducted or started in 2016 - such as the [Basic Income Pilot consultations](#), the Housing Forum, and Indigenous initiatives on reconciliation and violence against Indigenous women.

With our partners and input from those we serve, we will continue to drive change through the Developmental Disabilities Sector and to improve people's lives with income security.

We will continue to move forward with addressing how the income security system can better meet the needs of people facing poverty, and the role social assistance should play, as we develop a multi-year roadmap for an income security system that is based on equity, adequacy, sustainability and simplicity.

We will continue to lead the work on Ontario's Strategy to End Human Trafficking and the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

As we move through the next year, we will be investigating more self-serve options and choices so people can participate more in their communities and be more independent. Our efforts will continue to focus on simplifying processes and applications by leveraging research outcomes, technology and data collection. The ministry will be flexible and we will explore best practices and IT solutions that lead to becoming more efficient and productive.

We are passionate about helping the people we serve live fuller, happier lives. And with these very individuals, our partners, and our dedicated staff, we will continue to build a human services delivery system which removes barriers, applauds diversity and maximizes potential in people, processes and activities.

Ministry Interim Expenditures 2016-17

	Ministry Interim Expenditures 2016-17 (\$M)
Operating	11,652.0
Capital	87.7
BPS Consolidation	(19.7)
Staff Strength (as of March 31, 2017)	3,610.10 Full-time equivalents

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