

January 6, 2020

CLARIFICATION OF MESSAGE

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

On December 17, the Ontario government announced it is adopting the Ontario Autism Panel's key recommendations for a needs-based autism program. Aligning with recommendations of the advisory panel, Minister Smith presented key elements of the new program, including a broad range of services that will offer families more supports for their child's specific needs. Families will have access to the following service pathways in the new program:

- Core services that include Applied Behaviour Analysis, speech language pathology, occupational therapy and mental health services;
- Foundational family services for all families in the program, to build their capacity to support their child's learning and development;
- Early intervention and school readiness services to help young children access critical services when they will benefit most, and to prepare them to enter school;
- Urgent and complex needs services to support children and youth who are in service, or are waiting for service, and have significant and immediate needs.

Before the end of March 2020, all families on the waitlist, who have not yet received a Childhood Budget will receive an invitation for interim one-time funding of either \$5,000 or \$20,000, depending on the age of their child, so they can begin purchasing services for their child. The Service Coordinators at Bethesda can meet with you to answer your questions, discuss service options and help you complete the application process.

Please contact Bethesda at (905) 684-6918, ext.170 to confirm your mailing address.

For more information about the changes and implementation of the needs-based autism program, visit <https://news.ontario.ca/mcys/en/2019/12/ontario-to-implement-needs-based-autism-program-in-line-with-advisory-panels-advice.html>.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us directly at 905.684.6918 ext. 170.

Sincerely,



Brian Davies
Chief Executive Officer