

Questions and Answers
Ontario's Developmental Services Transformation
&
Developmental Services Ontario Organizations

Q1: What is changing in Ontario's adult community-based developmental services system this year?

A: As of July 1, 2011, nine new regional Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) organizations became the primary contact for information about adult developmental services and supports, and the single point of access to apply for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports, under the new *Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008*.

One DSO organization has become the single access point in each of the Ministry's nine geographic regions throughout Ontario, and each regional DSO organization can be accessed by people throughout the entire region, regardless of where they live.

These new regional DSO organizations are responsible for supporting adults with developmental disabilities through a new application process for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports, under the new Act.

Each regional Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) organization is responsible for:

- providing information about available services and supports;
- confirming eligibility for those applying for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports for the first time;
- completing the new Application Package to assess each individual's service and support needs; and
- linking eligible and prioritized people to available services and supports.

The nine organizations that have become the regional DSO organizations are listed on the Ministry's website: www.ontario.ca/community

Q2: Why are these changes happening in Ontario's community-based adult developmental services system?

A: Persons with developmental disabilities and their families have told us that the current developmental services system is confusing and difficult to navigate. They have also told us that decisions about who receives services and support

and how much is received are inconsistent across the province, and applying for service at multiple places is frustrating.

The new application process, and the new regional DSO organizations will help to make Ontario's community-based adult developmental services system easier to access, fairer and more consistent, by:

- acting as the single window in each region to avoid confusion about where people should go or how to apply for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports;
- using clear, and consistent eligibility criteria to confirm eligibility;
- ensuring that everyone's service and support needs are assessed in the same way, across the province; and
- making sure that people do not have to repeat their stories or provide their information over and over again, if they move to a new community.

Q3: When are these changes happening?

A: The new regional DSO organizations opened on July 4, 2011. From this point onwards, persons with developmental disabilities will be using the new application process to apply for adult developmental services and supports. This is an important part of Ontario's plan to transform the community-based developmental services system, and will improve fairness and consistency across the province.

There are additional parts of Ontario's plan to transform the community-based developmental services system, in accordance with the new *Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008*, that **will not** be implemented in July 2011, but will come into effect at a later date. These future parts include the implementation of:

- funding entity(ies);
- a new provincial prioritization process, to determine who gets services and supports first (part of the funding entity(ies));
- a new provincial funding allocation model, to determine how much available funding each eligible adult will receive for services and supports (part of the funding entity(ies)); and
- new options for direct funding, which will be administered through the regional Developmental Services Ontario organization.

The timeframe for implementing these additional parts of the plan to transform Ontario's adult developmental services system has not yet been determined.

Q4: How will these changes affect community organizations that currently provide access functions for Ministry-funded adult developmental services?

A: Under the new Act, and as of July 1, 2011, Developmental Services Ontario became the single point of access for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports in each of the Ministry's nine Ontario regions.

Our Ministry would like to acknowledge the important role of community organizations in providing access functions. While the involvement of community organizations in specific aspects of the application process has changed as of July 1, 2011, the continued support and commitment of these organizations is critical as we transition responsibilities to Developmental Services Ontario and while we implement the new provincial application process.

At present, organizations/agencies that provide access functions for Ministry of Children and Youth Services funded children's services and Ministry of Community and Social Services funded children's developmental services will continue according to the processes that are currently in place.

The key role of service agencies in supporting adults with developmental disabilities in the community remains one of the fundamental strengths of Ontario's developmental services system. These agencies help adults with developmental disabilities participate as active members of their communities and help them to live as independently as possible.

Q5: How will these changes affect community organizations that currently provide children's developmental services access functions?

A: The DSOs have become the primary contact for information about adult developmental services, and the single point of access for adults aged 18 and over with developmental disabilities to apply for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports.

At present, there are no changes to access processes for children's services. Organizations/agencies that provide access functions for Ministry of Children and Youth Services funded children's services and Ministry of Community and Social Services funded children's developmental services will continue according to the processes that are currently in place.

The organizations that will operate Developmental Services Ontario may already provide other types of services, such as access to the children's system, and may continue to do so, separately and apart from their specific role as a DSO.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services will continue to work closely with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to support the transition process for young adults who are transitioning from children's services to the adult developmental services system.

Q6: How will these changes affect adults who need services and supports, or are receiving services and supports?

A: The opening of the DSO organizations is an important step in transforming Ontario's developmental services system, to make it fairer, more consistent, and financially sustainable for the future.

Adults with developmental disabilities who are currently receiving services and supports, or who are waiting for services and supports, funded under the new Act:

- **will not** experience any significant changes as a result of the new application process and regional Developmental Services Ontario organizations being introduced;
- **will not** need to reapply, or reconfirm their eligibility. These individuals will be "grandparented" into the new system. This means that **they will continue to be eligible for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports**, and if they are currently waiting for services and supports, **they will continue to be considered through the community prioritization process** for any appropriate services and supports that may become available;
- **will not** need to do anything to maintain their current status with respect to receiving or waiting for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports in July, 2011, as a result of the opening of Developmental Services Ontario; and
- **will** have the benefit of completing ongoing assessments of their service and support needs in a provincially-consistent manner through the use of the new Application Package. It is estimated that everyone will complete the Application Package within five years, and will be reassessed every five years after that.

Adults with developmental disabilities who are applying for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports for the first time will:

- contact Developmental Services Ontario in their region to have their eligibility confirmed according to the new eligibility criteria; and

- if they are eligible for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports, have their service and support needs assessed by completing the Application Package and be linked to the appropriate services and supports, as they become available.

Q7: Will the process for applying for the Passport program change as a result of the DSO organizations opening in July, 2011?

A: Effective July 1, 2011, all adults who are applying for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports under the new Act, for the first time, must contact their regional DSO organization to confirm their eligibility, and to complete the Application Package to assess their service and support needs. This process includes all adults applying for services and supports available through the Passport program.

Once the regional DSO organization has confirmed an adult's eligibility, and assessed their service and support needs by completing the Application Package, they may then be referred to their local designated Passport agency, which will continue to administer the Passport program.

What WILL change in July, 2011?

<p>Applying and eligibility for services and supports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults with a developmental disability and their families will go to Developmental Services Ontario to get information and apply for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports. • Service agencies <u>will not</u> confirm an adult's eligibility for services and supports, or complete the Application Package to assess an individual's needs. • Developmental Services Ontario will confirm eligibility and assess the service and support needs for adults who are applying for Ministry-funded developmental services and supports for the first time using the new eligibility criteria and Application Package.
<p>Priority for services and supports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, there are a variety of ways that priority for services and supports is decided. The Ministry will work with communities to find ways to improve the consistency and transparency of how they decide who gets priority for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports. • A new provincial process for determining who gets priority for services and supports will be introduced at a future date.
<p>Assessing service and support needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental Services Ontario will complete all assessments using the new Application Package, to identify the service and support needs of all adults with developmental disabilities. • The Application Package will be used with all new applicants. • Developmental Services Ontario will use the new Application Package to assess the service and support needs of all adults receiving or waiting for service within five years. During this time, people waiting for services and supports will continue to be considered for services and supports as they become available.

What WILL NOT change in July, 2011?

Services and supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service agencies will continue to support adults with developmental disabilities by delivering Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports.
Eligibility for services and supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults who are already receiving services and supports, or who have applied and are waiting for services and supports will not need to re-confirm their eligibility. They will continue to be eligible, and will be “grandparented” into the new system.
Funding for services and supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental Services Ontario will work within available funding and resources in each region. As resources become available, Developmental Services Ontario will link eligible, prioritized individuals to available Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports.
Direct funding options for services and supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New options for direct funding are not available as a result of the opening of Developmental Services Ontario in July 2011. Details about more options for direct funding will be available as this work progresses.
Children’s Services, including access processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At present, there are no changes to access processes for children’s services. Organizations/agencies that provide access functions for Ministry of Children and Youth Services funded children’s services and Ministry of Community and Social Services funded children’s developmental services will continue according to the processes that are currently in place.

What is changing, and why?

New Regional Developmental Services Ontario Organizations: Why change?	
We are moving from:	We are moving to:
Different ways to get access to services, and people having to repeat their story each time they move to a new community, or apply for different services and supports	Developmental Services Ontario: single regional points of contact to apply for services and supports Benefit: people can follow the same steps to apply for services and supports and will only need to tell their story once, through a consistent process; no confusion on where or how to access services and supports
Different ways to confirm eligibility across the province	New legislation and eligibility criteria: clear eligibility criteria defined in legislation and regulations used by the Developmental Services Ontario organizations across the province Benefit: consistent approach for those applying for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports across the province
Different ways to assess an individual's service and support needs	Application Package: a standard provincial application form and assessment process to be used by Developmental Services Ontario Benefit: consistent approach that is fairer and more transparent for those applying for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports across the province
Non-standardized information on the developmental services sector future service and support needs for planning and forecasting purposes	A new electronic information system for the Developmental Services Ontario organizations: a provincial information system to support planning and forecasting Benefit: allows for better system planning and forecasting across the developmental services sector