

For Immediate Release
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RECORD INVESTMENTS IN COMMUNITY-BASED SUPPORTS HELP PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

As the McGuinty government is transforming Ontario's developmental services system, it is making record investments in community-based supports and giving greater choice and flexibility to individuals with a developmental disability and their families.

In 2006, the government will invest nearly \$84 million in new funding for developmental services. This funding is the largest single-year increase for these programs, and balances new resources for community-based services with direct funding for individuals and families. The new funding includes:

- \$11.1 million for the Passport program to support approximately 900 more young adults in a range of community participation supports and mentoring activities
- \$12.5 million for the Special Services at Home program, providing funding directly to approximately 3,150 more individuals and their families for supports that best meet their needs such as respite, parental relief or assistance with daily living skills
- \$30.2 million to help more than 370 community-based agencies across the province address salary and other operating costs as they continue to provide high quality supports
- \$10 million to create approximately 200 new residential spaces in communities across Ontario, including group, independent and family supported living arrangements
- \$20 million in permanent funding so agencies can provide long-term residential care for approximately 250 people, many of whom previously received services from the child welfare system or have aging parents.

All of the new funding is ongoing, and brings the government's 4-year funding increase for community-based developmental services to a record \$276 million, an increase of 16 per cent since 2004. In total, this historic investment is:

- Creating nearly 2180 new residential spaces, including 1000 for residents leaving the Province's institutions, 580 spaces for individuals who live in the community but need urgent support due to a change in their circumstances and 600 for individuals who already live in the community but need the extra support that a group home or supported living environment can offer. More than 470 spaces are already up and running.
- Strengthening specialized services for adults with a developmental disability who also have mental health issues or challenging behaviours. The government's specialized services plan includes Ontario's first ever Community Networks of Specialized Care, a new grant program to encourage more young people to work in developmental services and 90 specialized care spaces to provide permanent and temporary residential care for individuals who have high care needs.

- Giving more than 5000 more individuals and their families Special Services at Home funding so that they have easier access to personalized supports that provide more flexibility and choice, and help families care for their loved ones at home.
- Creating a new Passport program that is providing meaningful community participation supports for 1600 young adults who have recently left the school system. Individuals and/or families will have the option of direct funding or agency-based programs for community participation supports. This program also includes the Passport Mentoring Initiative that pairs young people with a developmental disability with adult mentors who also have a developmental disability and gives the young adults the guidance, skills and inspiration they need to achieve success in life after school.
- Helping agencies address a variety of operating costs, including employee wages, safety and security improvements and utility costs.

Ontario spends more than \$1.35 billion each year to support people with a developmental disability to help individuals live as independently as possible in their communities.

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