

Peel Region Special Needs Strategy Planning Table

Work to Date – Issue #1

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Special Needs Strategy Vision:

An Ontario where children and youth with special needs get the timely and effective services they need to participate fully at home, at school, in the community, and as they prepare to achieve their goals for adulthood.

What is Ontario's Special Needs Strategy?

Ontario's Special Needs Strategy marks the beginning of a new way of delivering services to children and youth with special needs and their families. The goal is to connect children and youth to the services they need as early as possible and improve the service experience of families in three key areas:

1) Identifying kids earlier and getting them the right help sooner

Trained providers will have a new developmental screen for children in the preschool years. They will screen for potential risks to the child's development as early as possible.

2) Coordinating service planning

New service planning coordinators for children and youth with multiple or complex special needs will connect families to the right services and supports.

3) Making supports and service delivery seamless

The delivery of rehabilitation services, such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy will be integrated. Services will be easier to access and seamless from birth through the school exit.

Transforming how children and youth and their families receive services requires planning, partnership and coordination across government and with communities. Four ministries (see diagram on right) are working with parents, youth, service providers and communities to improve outcomes for children with special needs. This work will result in a system that is accessible, coordinated and centred on the needs of children, youth and their families.



Establishment of the Peel Region Special Needs Strategy



Peel Region is one of 34 planning areas in Ontario. Across the Region, organizations that have a passionate interest in improving service experiences have come together to submit two proposals as follows:

Coordinated Service Planning Committee – As a result of the new strategy, children with multiple and/or complex special needs who need more than one community-based specialized service will be referred to a Service Planning Coordinator at an existing local agency for coordinated planning. The proposal development is being co-chaired by John Roloson (Trillium Health Partners) and David Fry (Mississauga Halton CCAC).

Rehabilitation Services Committee – As a result of the new strategy, children will receive seamless and efficient speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy services from birth through school exit. The proposal development is being co-chaired by Christiane Kyte, Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board and Chris Hartley, ErinoakKids Centre for Treatment and Development.

In order to support the work of the Planning Tables, the government has provided funding to allow each of the 34 planning areas to secure the services of a Project Manager. In Peel Region, Marian Pitters of Pitter Associates is providing facilitation **support** to our Special Needs Strategy Coordinated Services Planning Table.

How Can You Get Involved?

An important part of our work plan involves engaging our community in the vision of a new system of services and supports. The Planning Table is working hard to make sure that we have effective ways to gather the input of children and youth with special needs and their families, as well as front line staff and community partners. Early in 2015, we will be announcing consultation opportunities. Options will include surveys, focus groups, written submissions and interviews.

You can also visit the Provincial webpage at specialneedsstrategy.gov.on.ca for the most up-to-date information.

Membership of the Peel Coordinated Services Planning Committee:

- Associated Youth Services of Peel
- Brampton Caledon Community Living
- Canadian Mental Health Association Peel
- Central West CCAC
- Central West LHIN
- Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud
- Conseil scolaire Viamonde
- Child Development Resource Connection Peel
- Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board
- ErinoakKids Centre for Treatment and Development
- Kerry's Place
- Community Living Mississauga
- Mississauga Halton CCAC
- Mississauga Halton LHIN
- Peel Children's Aid Society
- Peel Children & Youth Initiative
- Peel Children's Centre
- Peel Crisis Capacity Network
- Peel District School Board
- Region of Peel
- Trillium Health Partners

For more information on the Special Needs Strategy please visit www.children.gov.on.ca or contact one of our Chairs:

Coordinated Service Planning Committee

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Rehabilitation Services Committee

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