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EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES 2007 ACTIVITY UPDATE

The Community Services and Housing Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, April 29, 2008, from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. This report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report provides Council with an update of the activities and initiatives of Early Intervention Services in 2007.

3. BACKGROUND

York Region directly delivers Early Intervention Services to children with special needs from birth to school entry from six offices located across the Region. Early Intervention Services are provided under both the *Day Nurseries Act* and the *Child and Family Services Act*. A portion of these fully integrated services is cost shared 80:20 under the *Day Nurseries Act* with the Province funding 80%. The remaining portions are funded 100% provincially under the *Child and Family Services Act* through Infant Development and under the *Day Nurseries Act* through Best Start.

Early Intervention Services support various stakeholders in supporting the development of children with special needs.

Our clients are children aged birth through six years of age who have, or are at risk for having, delays in development due to established or biological risk factors. In 2007 53.5% of children enrolled had a diagnosed developmental special need. Of all children enrolled in Early Intervention Services, 16.3% (301) had some form of autism, while 20.2% (381) were born premature.

In addition to the children, family members of children enrolled in Early Intervention Services, child care operators, and community programs accessed by children enrolled in Early Intervention Services (e.g. All Our Kids, Child Development and Parenting Programs and Ontario Early Years Centres) are supported to maximize the child's development in the natural routines of their environment. Public, separate and private

school staff are supported through the transition from home or child care to the school environment through Early Intervention Services' facilitation.

Early Intervention Services provides a continuum of care through various services

The Family and Children's Services Branch operates a toll free telephone line, 1-888-703-KIDS (5437) for referral and information to Early Intervention Services, as well as the Preschool Speech and Language Program and the Tri-Regional Infant Hearing Program, delivered by Markham Stouffville Hospital.

Once Early Intervention Services are accessed, children receive ongoing developmental assessments provided by cross disciplinary teams, including parents, early interventionists, speech-language pathologists, occupational and physiotherapists.

Individual Family Support Plans are developed based on the assessment results. Individual and/or group child development programming is provided in the child's home, in the child care setting in which the child is enrolled, in the therapy suites of the Early Intervention Services offices, and in other community settings as appropriate.

Through a funding contract with the Children's Treatment Network Simcoe York, service coordinators, occupational and physiotherapists provide direct treatment for children enrolled in Early Intervention Services having severe motor and complex developmental needs.

Families are assisted in understanding and navigating the system of services that exist to address the special needs of the child and family through service coordination/case management. Referrals for other appropriate services are facilitated and joint service planning meetings are conducted to insure efficiency and reduce duplication.

Early Intervention Services staff support capacity building among other service providers by delivering training to staff of child care centres, community based programs and school boards.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Growth in demand for Early Intervention Services exceeds the rate of child population growth in York Region.

According to census data for York Region, the rate of population growth between 2001 and 2006 for children birth to four years of age was 16.5% and for children five through nine years of age was 10.1%. Early Intervention Services experienced significant growth between 2001 and 2007 which exceeded the rate of child population growth. This trend is the result of both a local factor and a factor which affects the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Locally, York Region has the highest child population growth in Ontario. Across

the GTA there has been an increase in the number of children identified through other provincially funded initiatives (e.g. Healthy Babies, Healthy Children: screening of all children at 18 months). Table 1 compares the increase in service demand and delivery in 2001 compared to 2007.

Table 1
Increase in Service Demand and Delivery, 2001-2007

	2001	2007	Difference	% Increase
Total Yearly Referrals	420	768	348	83%
Newly Enrolled in Year	429	656	227	53%
Monthly Average Served	719	1,398	679	94%
Total Served in Year	1,147	1,924	777	68%
Monthly Average Wait List	85	138	53	62%
Wait Time From Referral to Service (in weeks)	10	11	1	10%

Early Intervention Services implemented various strategies to address service demands in 2007

- Coordination of service plans and joint service delivery occurred for 901 children involved with 437 community programs.
- Office based service delivery hours increased by 301% (1,044 to 4,188 hours) between 2001 and 2007.
- An evidenced based clinical approach, Preterm Pathways, was implemented to address the needs of the 20% of children enrolled due to premature birth.
- The multi-service hub for children with special needs was opened in June 2007 and has facilitated the delivery of coordinated services with two partner agencies, Markham Stouffville Hospital and the Children's Treatment Network of Simcoe York.

Participants continue to be very satisfied with the services they receive

Early Intervention Services regularly seeks the customer view of families to determine their needs and satisfaction with the services provided. Responsive changes in intervention approaches have resulted in the ongoing maintenance of high customer service satisfaction ratings in the face of increased service demand.

Table 2 outlines the results of customer satisfaction surveys conducted in 2007.

Table 2
Customer Satisfaction Survey Results, 2007

Type of Survey	Items rated	% of Ratings Satisfied/Very Satisfied
Initial Service Plan Meeting Survey	Information received was helpful.	100%
	I left this meeting feeling encouraged and connected to services.	99%
	My questions were answered.	100%
Intervention Group Surveys	I learned something new.	94%
	I would recommend this group.	94%
	Quality of staff.	100%
End of Service Survey	Child made gains due to EIS.	94%
	Quality of staff.	91%

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The total cost of delivering Early Intervention Services in 2007 was \$7,078,680 gross and \$593,249 net. Funding provided at 100% under the Provincial Best Start program was \$2,846,772.

There is a financial consideration when the 100% Best Start funding ends in March 2010. This funding enabled York Region to serve 498 additional children in 2007.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Early Intervention Services are delivered in all local municipalities, therefore, residents of all municipalities in York Region benefit from the increased level of service. The reconfiguration of Early Intervention Services teams has responded to child care population growth in local municipalities while the addition of a central office provided improved access to residents of central York Region.

7. CONCLUSION

The Community Services and Housing Department, Early Intervention Services Unit has met increased service demands through increased service levels and enhanced service delivery which are responsive to customer needs.

For more information on this report, contact Elizabeth Wagle, Director of Family and Children's Services at Ext. 2089.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.