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EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES FOR SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN SUBSIDY REQUEST AND ACTIVITY REPORT

The Community Services and Housing Committee recommends adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, April 21, 2005, from the Commissioner of Community Services and Housing:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. The provincial government be requested to increase York Region's subsidy approval by \$2.01 million through the federal funding for Early Learning and Care in order to cover York Region's subsidy shortfall.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to request that the Province address the \$2.01 million subsidy shortfall. The report also informs Committee and Council of the activities and achievements of Early Intervention Services (EIS) in 2004.

3. BACKGROUND

EIS for Special Needs Children are funded under two different pieces of legislation. The Infant Development component of EIS are funded 100% by the Province under the *Child and Family Services Act*. The Child Care Special Needs Resourcing component of EIS has a legislated cost share of 80/20 under the *Day Nurseries Act*. In response to an identified and increasing community need, The Regional Municipality of York invests additional 100% municipal funding. Without this funding, the current wait list of 125 children would increase by 250 children for a total of 325 children.

In 2004, the Province, through its Early Learning and Child Care Initiative (ELCC), approved funding for EIS to hire staff to help meet service demands, increase service levels by 10% and to offset a portion of the 100% municipal funding. Additional funding will be available through the ELCC Initiative in 2005, of which the Province could again approve a portion to both help meet service demands and to address the subsidy shortfall.

3.1 Our Clients

- Children who have or are at risk of having delays in development due to established or biological risk factors and are aged birth to six years or school entry.
- Family members of children enrolled in Early Intervention Services.

- Child care operators who have children enrolled in Early Intervention Services in their child care centres or approved homes.
- Community based programs and service providers accessed by children enrolled in Early Intervention Services, e.g. AOK Early Child Development and Parenting sites and Ontario Early Years Centres.
- Individual elementary schools of both Boards of Education receiving children with significant developmental needs enrolled in Early Intervention Services.

3.2 Services That We Provide

3.2.1 Assessment

Parents and children enrolling in Early Intervention Services participate in an Initial Service Planning meeting with an Early Interventionist and a Physiotherapist or Occupational Therapists to determine service needs. Once active service begins, staff perform an ongoing functional assessment for the child and assess the capacity of the particular child care centre or community based program to include children with special needs in their programs. Cross disciplinary teams, including Psychometrist, early interventionists, speech-language pathologists, occupational and physiotherapists contribute to the assessments that include parental input. Assessment information is collected in the family's home, the child care centre and/or in our offices.

3.2.2 Child Development Programming

Early Intervention Services utilizes a mediator-consultative model. Staff assist families in facilitating their child's development by providing information and strategies for specialized activities that can be incorporated into typical daily routines. Individual and group 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.

3.2.3 Service Co-ordination / Case Management

Early Intervention Services assist the family in understanding and navigating the system of services that exist to address the needs of the child and family. Service co-ordination and case management activities include accompanying families to other services to ensure understanding and congruence of programming, assistance in making referrals to other appropriate services, and identifying and accessing various funding sources.

3.2.4 Transition to School

EIS assist families in preparing for their child's entry into the school system. Staff provide training annually to the school personnel receiving children from EIS. The transition process for the child begins in the fall of the year prior to school entry in order to provide both the family and the school with the information necessary to facilitate a successful school entry experience.

3.2.5 Resource Libraries

Each of our offices has a library of materials that may be of use to children and families enrolled in the service. These materials may be loaned out or accessed in the office.

3.2.6 Community Integration of Services

EIS' personnel assist other community programs through joint service delivery or through education to staff. Staff participate on 25 external committees, 9 Corporate/Departmental/Divisional committees, and provide joint service with 14 different community service providers.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

4.1 Service Delivery – Early Intervention Services

Table 1 provides information on the number of children served and type of service utilized in 2004.

Table 1
2004 Activity Log

Service	2004
Annual number of children directly served	1,328
Average monthly caseload served	952
Children served through contracts with 3 other agencies	279
Office based service delivery hours: group & individual	2,914
Number of children newly enrolled in year	405
Number of schools receiving EIS transition support	68
Number of child care and other programs supported	219
Number of children served in private home child care	31
Monthly Average number of children on wait list	80

4.2 Customer Service

Parental customer service satisfaction ratings were obtained through 44 in-depth telephone interviews and 115 written mail-out surveys (29% return rate). Community partner satisfaction results were obtained through written surveys from 29 teachers participating in transition training (100% return rate) and 44 child care centres supported by EIS (34% return rate). Table 2 summarizes customer survey feedback in 2004.

Table 2
2004 Evaluation Log

Evaluation	Result
Functional Assessment Training to School Personnel	
“Very Good” or “Excellent”	81%
“Useful”	97%
Parent Telephone & Mail-Out Survey	
Overall Satisfaction with EIS service	97%
“Better” or “Much Better” than other services accessed by family	64%
Child Care Program Satisfaction (5 service area topics)	
“Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied”	91%

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Early Intervention Services receives funding under two different pieces of legislation. The Infant Development component of EIS are funded 100% by the province under the *Child and Family Services Act*. The Child Care Special Needs Resourcing component of EIS has a legislated cost share of 80/20 under the *Day Nurseries Act*.

5.1 EIS – Infant Development Funding Stream

Table 3 identifies the 100% provincial cost share and contribution for Early Intervention Services, Infant Development.

Table 3
Provincial/Municipal Cost-Share EIS Infant Development

	2005 Regional Budget EIS	Provincial Cost Share	%	Regional Cost Share	%
2005 Current Cost Share – EIS Infant Development (100%)	\$1,390,443	\$1,390,433	100%	-	0%

5.2 EIS – Child Care Special Needs Resourcing Funding Stream

The legislated cost-share for the Child Care Special Needs Resourcing component of EIS is 80% provincial and 20% municipal under the *Day Nurseries Act*. Table 4 identifies the legislated cost-share, the current provincial and municipal contributions, as well as the provincial subsidy shortfall, which is currently funded 100% by the Region.

Table 4
2005 Provincial/Municipal Cost-Share EIS Child Care Special Needs Resourcing

	Gross 2005 Regional Budget EIS	Provincial Contribution	%	Regional Contribution	%
Legislated Cost-Share Formula (what should be)	\$4,497,693	\$3,598,154	80	\$899,539	20
2005 Actual Cost Share	\$4,497,693	\$1,586,942	35	\$2,910,751	65
Subsidy Shortfall		\$2,011,212			

Over the past four years and in response to an identified community need and a growing wait list, the Region has contributed additional municipal funding which now stands at over \$2 million. It must be noted however, that in 2004, additional subsidy from the Province allowed York Region to offset some of the 100% municipal contribution. Even so, in 2005, York Region is still \$2 million short in provincial subsidy to bring the cost sharing for existing service levels to the legislated 80/20. The growth in child population has meant that, in spite of the additional municipal contribution, 105 children are still on the wait list for EIS Services as of March 2005.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

EIS are delivered in all local municipalities, therefore residents of all municipalities in York Region have benefited from the increased quantity and quality of the service.

7. CONCLUSION

EIS, in the Family and Children's Services Division of the Community Services and Housing Department, continues to respond to the increased service demands and expanded population requirements as best it can and with improved service delivery and customer service. Additional subsidy received in 2005 under the Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) initiative allowed York Region to add direct service staff to help meet service demands and to offset a portion of 100% regional funding of the Program.

We are expecting that additional funding may be available through the ELCC initiative in April 2005. The provincial government is requested to increase York Region's subsidy approval for EIS by \$2.01 million through ELCC in order to address our subsidy shortfall.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.