

Special Needs Strategy – Integrated Rehabilitation Update

September 1, 2017

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On September 1st a Memo was sent to all planning committees working on the Integration of Rehabilitation Services. The memo thanks all the people working on the proposal planning committees and asks them to cease work immediately.

The Memo outlines the steps that the Ministries will be taking regarding integration of occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech-language pathology services. These steps are:

- The contracts for provision of OT, PT and SLP services currently provided by the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINS) and formerly by the Community Care Access Centres (CCACs) will move to the Children's Treatment Centres (CTCs) on April 1st, 2018.
There is no indication the terms of the contracts will be changed from the current mandate of the School Health Support Program, that is to provide services to enable students to access schools and the curriculum.
- An expert advisory committee will be established to make recommendations on three key issues:
 - Policy/Program Memorandum 81, Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings
 - Implementation of Tiered Intervention Model for rehabilitation services
 - Use of technology for information sharing, reporting, funding and accountability

Based on the recommendations of the expert advisory committee, the Ministry will determine next steps.

Implications:

1. Who will provide services to children and youth with rehabilitation needs?

- The existing system will be unchanged.
- School boards will continue to provide the OT, PT and SLP services they currently provide. (Most boards provide SLP services and a few also provide OT and PT).
- The Preschool Speech and Language Programs (PSLP) will continue to provide speech and language services to all preschool children. The age of transition to school services will vary depending on the existing protocols between PSLP and school boards.
- LHINS will continue to be responsible for OT, PT and SLP services for children and youth with acute needs, who attend private schools or who are home schooled.
- CTCs will remain the key service provider for the OT and PT needs of preschool children, and will maintain any existing contracts with the LHINS and PSL.

2. **What does this mean for school boards?** – No changes to current services and service delivery models for SLP, OT and PT services. No further participation in local planning Integrated Rehabilitation committees.

School boards will continue to be partners in the implementation of local plans for Service Coordination for families of students with multiple/and or complex needs, including the move to single plans of care.

3. **What does this mean for SEACs?** – No further action or discussion on the integration of rehabilitation services, other than an update on this announcement. The local Steering Committees for Service Coordination may provide updates to SEAC, or request feedback as needed.

4. **What does this mean for families?** – Rehabilitation services for children and youth will be unchanged. Earlier this year the funding for OT, PT and SLP services provided through the School Health Support Program was transferred from the CCACs to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. On April 1st, 2018 the program will be moved to Children’s Treatment Centres across the province. Contracted agencies will continue to provide the services to students.