

Over-arching Concerns:

“There is no consistent government policy regarding the need for supports and services for adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), nor agreement of which ministry/ministries should be involved in funding these services. Further, there is no “generic” system of adult services for those people with [high-functioning autism] to fall back on, unlike the developmental services sector that supports those with a cognitive impairment.”

Forgotten, Autism Ontario

Over-arching Concerns:

- "Based on a prevalence of 1 in 150 children, there are about 70,000 individuals on the spectrum in Ontario- with more than 50,000 of these being adults."
- "Current services for adults, funded through the developmental services system, are designed for people with an intellectual disability (IQ < 70).....Up to 50% of individuals with ASD's do not have an intellectual disability....."

Forgotten, Autism Ontario

Young Children:

ABA → IBI

- Demand exceeds resources
- Waiting Lists – access/prioritization issues
- Effectiveness &/or for whom?
- Is IBI the “only” model?
- Pivotal Response Treatment (PRT) in Nova Scotia

School-age Children:

- Autism School Support Program – a “school-based solution”
- Not for individuals but to support teachers and boards
- \$6 M (?)
- Shut out/marginalized by many boards – union issues(?)

School-aged Children:

- Special Services at Home (SSAH) funding
- Provides 1:1 supports outside the school
- Demand exceeds resources
- Access/prioritization issues

School-aged Children:

- Within last 3 years:
- “Transition to high school” funding (MCYS) targeting high-functioning individuals
- Collaboration problems
- “Respite” funding (MCYS)
- Demand exceeds resource

School-aged Children:

- Education-funded initiatives
- "Generic" programs
- "Specialized" programs
- May include "high-functioning" students
- "Patchwork" in southern Ontario; very limited in northern Ontario

“[after the diagnosis of his daughter] I began to see people with autism at the local swimming pool, at school functions, in shopping malls, at playgrounds. They were there all along; I just wasn’t primed to see them. Now, more than a decade later, the world is also primed to see and understand autism. ***But when the many children diagnosed with autism grow up, will we also be ready to see autistic adults?***”

Roy Grinker, *Unstrange Minds: Remapping the World of Autism*, 2007

Adults:

- Outcome studies are limited but are consistent in showing generally poor outcomes across all areas:

- Housing
- Level of independence
- Work
- Social well-being/network
- Financial well-being
- QOL

IQ is not an indicator of better outcome

Adults:

“Within this more able group, employment levels and residential placement may be more dependent on where individuals live, and what support services are available, than on any other factors.”

Howlin, 2000

Transition-aged Youth:

- Individuals leave children's funding streams
- Adults supported by MCSS Developmental Services system only if IQ < 70
- "Foundations" & "Passport" Initiatives
- Demand exceeds resource
- Access/ eligibility discrepancies

Adults:

- Historically have been accommodated in “generic” DS services
- Many inappropriately have ended up in hospital or correctional facilities
- Exceptions:
 - Woodview Autism Services
 - Kerry's Place
 - Surrey Place
 - Redpath
 - Geneva Centre

Adults:

- Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) Income Supports
- \$6,000+ below LICO/"poverty line"
- "Clawback" of work earnings is a disincentive to work
- Use of ODSP Income to support basic services leaving individuals with minimal "comfort allowance"

Adults:

- ODSP Employment Supports
- Find, learn, maintain a job
- New (last 2 years) “results-based” funding format excludes the most in need
- “Creaming” – support those that are likely to be successful
- Does not allow for the long-term support of those with inadequate work skills/capabilities

Bill 77:

- “Developmental Disability” will be broadened to include both “significant limitations in cognitive functioning and adaptive functioning”
- “‘adaptive functioning’ means a person’s capacity to gain personal independence, based on the person’s ability to learn and apply conceptual, social and practical skills in his or her everyday life”

Bill 77:

- No new funding attached
- “Policy directives” impacting eligibility, method of assessment, resource allocation, waiting lists, prioritization, etc. have yet to be set out
- In the meantime, it’s business as usual.

Hodgepodge of Ideas/Issues:

- Funding – ideal for “interministerial co-operation”
- “High-functioning” ...renders one “invisible” in terms of funded services and supports
- Specialized services/supports for adults inconsistently available across province
- Difficulty maintaining a satisfying QOL in the face of poverty
- Need for co-ordinated research – program evaluation; outcomes; epidemiology

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- Services/supports required in order of priority:
 - Seamless service delivery
 - Clinical supports
 - Range of school support programs
 - Day support options
 - Transition planning and supports
 - Vocational training and support options

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- Supports/services required in order of priority:
 - Housing options
 - Respite
 - Public awareness, information, advocacy
 - Special services at home funds
 - Support groups – individual, parent, siblings, family