

**Ministry of Education
Early Years and Child Care
Programs and Service
Integration Branch**

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**Ministère de l'Éducation
Direction de l'intégration des
programmes et des services pour la
petite enfance et la garde d'enfants**

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2018: EYCC5

MEMORANDUM TO: Children's Services Leads, CMSMs/DSSABs

FROM: Abby Dwosh
Director (A), Programs and Service Integration Branch
Early Years and Child Care Division
Ministry of Education

DATE: April 30, 2018

SUBJECT: EarlyON Child and Family Centres – Progress Update

Thank you for the important work you are undertaking with your communities to transform child and family programs into EarlyON Child and Family Centres. This work supports our shared vision of ensuring that Ontario's children and families are well supported by an early years system that is high quality, seamless, and accessible for children and their families.

On January 1, 2018, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Service Administration Boards (DSSABs) assumed responsibility for planning, managing and funding EarlyON Child and Family Centres. We are pleased to highlight the considerable progress that we have made together as we move through this transformation.

- In January 2018, the Ministry publicly launched its new [EarlyON website](#) where parents and caregivers can search for centres in their communities by postal code or street address. The Ministry continues to make improvements and updates to the website. Information about on-boarding users will be available in Summer 2018.
- Over the last few months, all CMSMs and DSSABs have received at least one EarlyON signage package for their community to display. The remaining signage orders will continue to be shipped over the next few months. CMSMs, DSSABs

and service providers may continue to submit requests for new signage through the Ministry's online [order form](#).

- The Ministry launched and approved a total of 122 capital projects, which included 35 EarlyON only projects and 12 joint child care and EarlyON projects. This funding will support retrofits, renovations and expansions for EarlyON Child and Family Centres across the province.
- The newly integrated EarlyON system offers children and families access to the same core services at every centre across Ontario. They offer welcoming environments with qualified professionals where families, children, and caregivers can learn, grow and connect together.

Initial Plans – 2017

In September 2017, the Ministry reviewed each plan submitted by CMSMs and DSSABs; below are a selection of the provincial findings:

Promising Practices

- Evidence that the 'child's voice' was integrated into initial plans
- Strong engagement with local communities and early years partners
- Effective utilization of data sources to create comprehensive community profiles
- Shared commitments to communicate system changes with service providers and communities
- Strong focus on the strength and needs of Francophone and Indigenous communities
- Clear identification of opportunities and gaps in the current system
- Promotion of co-location and connections to other programs and services

Opportunities for Further Development

- Transitioning programs to new EarlyON system requirements (e.g. locations, hours of operation, new agency models, moving away from registered programs, etc.)
- Determining strategies to address barriers identified by early years partners and community members (e.g. increasing access in rural and remote communities)
- Exploration of different delivery models (e.g. mobile and/or virtual programs)
- Implementation of new Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE) staffing requirement

Progress Update – 2018

As you are aware, Ontario's Action Plan under the *Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement* included an additional investment of approximately \$40 million for EarlyON Child and Family Centres. This investment is intended to support the transformation of the existing system, grow the positive impacts of EarlyON Child and Family Centres province-wide, and expand service in areas that have relatively few available services and/or have experienced significant population growth.

We recognize that 2018 is a transition year for many communities as adjustments are made to programs and services to align with the provincial vision and guidelines for EarlyON Child and Family Centres. In order to track progress on this transformation, including Ontario's commitments under the *Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement*, the Ministry is requesting a brief report back from CMSMs/DSSABs regarding four key areas:

1. EarlyON Child and Family Centre Programs and Locations;
2. Mandatory Core Services Planning and Delivery;
3. Communications Strategy; and
4. Registered Early Childhood Educator Retention Strategies and Local Exemption Processes.

A template and instructions for this report back are available in the attached **Adobe Acrobat** file. CMSMs and DSSABs should complete this template and submit it to the Ministry through EarlyON@ontario.ca by **August 31, 2018**.

Service System Plans

The *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* requires CMSMs and DSSABs to establish a child care and early years service system plan for their service area that addresses matters of provincial interest under the Act. On June 30, 2019, CMSMs and DSSABs are required to submit their service system plan for their EarlyON Child and Family Centres to the Ministry as part of their existing responsibility. The Ministry will continue to work closely with CMSMs and DSSABs on the transformation to EarlyON Child and Family Centres.

Thank you again for your shared commitment and progress to date in transforming EarlyON Child and Family Centres. If you have any questions, please connect with your Early Years Advisor in the Programs and Service Integration Branch. We look forward to reading about the progress in your communities.

Sincerely,

Original signed by:

Abby Dwosh
Director (A), Programs and Service Integration Branch
Early Years and Child Care Division

Enclosure: Adobe Acrobat - EarlyON Child and Family Centre Progress Update