

## ***Community Based Services for Children with Disabilities – Modernized***

### **Overview**

The Community Based Services for Children with Special Needs (CBSCSN) program provides social work support and financial resources to families unable to provide all the care and support required to meet the special developmental needs of their child.

The Government of New Brunswick made a commitment to modernize this program so that it would better serve children with disabilities and their families.

To help achieve this commitment, between January and April 2013, an online survey was available to families currently involved in the program and those who used the program within the last two years. The Department of Social Development also met with the families and held meetings with stakeholder groups and staff working in the program.

The changes are the result of the feedback received through this citizen engagement process and also are based on the premise that the program should be delivered in a standardized format through the province, ensuring that the assessment, use of eligibility criteria and provision of service options are consistent.

The program changes, outlined below, take effect April 1, 2014 and will:

- enhance program philosophy.
- increase accessibility for eligible families.
- expand the range of available services.

### **Enhanced Program Philosophy**

#### New Program Name

The name of the program will be changed to Family Supports for Children with Disabilities. The new name reflects that services are provided to support the entire family raising the child with a disability.

#### Revised Program Philosophy

The Family Supports for Children with Disabilities program is founded on the core philosophies of family-centred, strength-based practice.

## **Increased Accessibility**

### New Eligibility Criteria for the Program

The new eligibility looks beyond the child's disability to examine all relevant factors that affect the child's ability to participate in society.

In order to be eligible for the modernized program, the family must identify the unmet needs as a result of raising a child with a disability. The child with a disability must:

- have an impairment, activity limitation or participation restriction that significantly limits the child's ability to function in one or more area of daily living and/or has a significant impact on the family and the parents' ability to manage their care.
- have a letter of support from a professional that is a member of a licensing body that speaks to the child's limited ability to function in normal daily living. (For the purpose of this program, examples of professional who may verify a child's limited ability to function in normal daily living include: physician/surgeon/nurse practitioner, optometrist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, school psychologist, speech language and/or pathologist and social worker.)
- be a resident of New Brunswick for the past three months.
- have a valid New Brunswick Medicare card.
- be under 19 years of age.

### Streamlined Application Process

The new application process reduces the burden on families raising children with disabilities in completing the application process to determine if they are eligible for the Family Supports for Children with Disabilities program.

### Family Financial Contribution towards Services

The new Family Financial Contribution towards Services Policy and Scale increases the net income level a family can earn before being required to financially contribute to the services they are accessing in their case plan and reduces a family's contribution by \$30 per month from the previous scale.

### Direct Case Transfer to the Disability Support Program for Eligible Youth

As youth age out of the children's program, those eligible will be assisted with a direct case transfer to the Disability Support Program.

## **Expanded Range of Available Services**

### Family Centred Meeting For all Families

Every family accepted into the Family Supports for Children with Disabilities program will be provided the opportunity to engage in a family centred meeting. This meeting is an opportunity for family members and service providers working with the family to come together to clearly identify case plan goals and address particular issues faced by the family and child.

### Service Options to Support the Identified Needs of Children and Families

Each child and family's circumstances are unique. Service options promote and allow for greater individualized case planning based on the particular needs of the child and family. Services provided to eligible families depend upon the assessed unmet needs of the child and family and the resources available.

Reimbursement rates have been increased by 10 per cent for clients who are eligible for relief care and supplemental transportation, meals, and lodging for accessing medical services to accommodate increasing costs in these areas.

Enhanced service options will be available for families raising children with disabilities with a high level of assessed unmet needs. These families may receive support to participate in specialized or intensive interventions, parent training, or other applicable education programs for families raising children with disabilities.

Supplementary child care for a child with disabilities over the age of 12 and special medical items are available to families as service options.

### Two-Pronged Services Delivery Model with an Option for Self-Managed Case Management

To accommodate the varying needs of families of children with disabilities, the Family Supports for Children with Disabilities program has implemented a two-pronged service delivery model which allows families to self-manage their case plan or request the support of a social worker.