

MEMORANDUM**COM-C 1-2020**

Subject: EarlyON System Transformation Update
Date: January 14, 2020
To: Public Health and Social Services Committee
From: Adrienne Jugley, Commissioner, Community Services

As of January 1, 2018, Niagara Region Children's Services became responsible for the local planning and administration of EarlyON Child and Family Centres, on behalf of the province. Niagara Region Children's Services has been charged to locally implement the provincial vision of an integrated and coordinated early years system, with seamless transitions between programs and services that support early learning and healthy child development.

At the initiation of this new responsibility, as a short-term strategy, Niagara Region Children's Services entered into temporary service agreements with existing service providers to allow for a period of local planning, analysis and review of provincial policy. As part of the local planning, a needs assessment and environmental scan was completed in 2017. Throughout 2018, ongoing planning, data collection, and community engagement with key stakeholders (children and their parents and caregivers, service providers, and staff) was used to inform a procurement framework and process.

As a step toward implementing the provincial vision, Niagara Region Children's Services issued a (Negotiated) Request for Proposals (NRFP) to help identify service providers that would support the transition and transformation of the existing EarlyON service system to be aligned with the Ministry of Education expectations within provincial budget allocations.

With the recent conclusion of the NRFP process for EarlyON service delivery in Niagara, the successful proponents are:

Agency/Organization	Zone(s)
District School Board of Niagara	Zone 10
Niagara Catholic District School Board	Zone 8, 11 and 13
Port CARES	Zone 1, 2, 3, 9 12, 14, 15 and 16
YMCA of Niagara	Zone 4, 5, 6 and 7

These agencies/organizations will operate an EarlyON Child and Family Centre in one (1) or more of the sixteen (16) service zones across Niagara, and participate in a new integrated early years system.

Appendix 1 offers a map that provides more detailed information regarding the service zones where each service provider will operate an EarlyON Centre.

In order to ensure minimal disruptions to service, Niagara Region Children's Services allocated funding to support a six-month transition period for sites as required. This will allow for the continued operation of a number of impacted sites while Niagara transitions to the new system. The six months will also allow for adequate planning regarding any changes to staffing, locations, and hours of operation.

Niagara Region Children's Services, in its role as service system manager, will continue to work closely with the successful proponents to ensure EarlyON services are accessible in all communities, increasing hours of service where appropriate, ensuring locations are well situated and utilized, and delivering the EarlyON service system within the current provincial funding available.

Niagara Region looks forward to working with EarlyON services providers, municipalities, educators, community agencies and parents/caregivers to ensure EarlyON Child and Family Centres continue to provide quality programs and services that meet community needs, and support the healthy development and learning of children across Niagara.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Adrienne Jugley, MSW, RSW, CHE
Commissioner

Appendix 1 EarlyON Service Zones awarded

Appendix 1

COM C 1-2020
January 14, 2019

Niagara Region EarlyON Child and Family Centre Service Zones
with Successful Service Delivery Agencies

