



## Fact Sheet: Parent Questions & Answers

### Q1. What are the dedicated regional teams and what will they do?

A1. The dedicated regional teams are comprised of ministry staff specifically hired to work with families and Autism Intervention Program providers in order to expeditiously move children from the waitlist and into IBI services. The teams will involve other autism experts as required. The teams will have the authority and the resources to support families to access IBI services within the parameters of the current Autism Intervention Program guidelines and will support family decision making regarding their choice of providers.

Parents will be asked to:

- confirm their wish to proceed with receipt of IBI;
- indicate their preference of the two service option.

### Q2. When will I be contacted?

A2. The dedicated regional teams, with the Autism Intervention Program provider, will be working through the waitlist in a chronological manner. Parents who have been waiting the longest in each region will be the first to be contacted. Teams are already in place and have already started to contact families.

### Q3. How much money and how many spaces are going to each region?

A3. Funds are being distributed on a proportional basis. Each ministry region will receive a share based on its waitlist pressure. Where there are a greater number of children waiting for IBI, more resources are being allocated.

### Q4. How will parents have improved choice between DFO and DSO?

A4. The regional teams will work directly with parents and current regional providers to undertake a case-by-case review of all families on the current waitlist and facilitate their selection of one of the Autism Intervention Program's two service options. Families will be offered the option of receiving IBI services through existing service providers or securing IBI services independently from approved private providers.

### Q5. If I choose the DFO option how do I find a private provider?

A5. The ministry, in partnership with Autism Ontario, has established ABACUS, an on-line directory of available therapists. Parents can access this directory at [www.abacuslist.ca](http://www.abacuslist.ca). Staff from the dedicated regional teams, with the Autism Intervention Program providers will also be able to help parents to access service providers and therapists and to connect with parent networks.

### Q6. If I choose the DFO option, how will the program plan be determined?

A6. The process for developing a child's program plan has not changed. The individual plans will continue to be developed by senior therapists employed by the provider that will deliver the IBI service. Individual plans will be approved based on the current program guidelines. Clinical oversight for approval of the initial plan and for subsequent review will remain with the current regional providers. Issues that may arise will be addressed on a case-by-case basis and the members of the dedicated regional team are in place to help address any concerns.

If you already have a program in place and are offered a placement in the Autism Intervention Program, the regional provider will review the program to make sure it complies with the program guidelines and approve it or work with your provider to revise it.

### Q7. If I already have a therapist in place, will I be able to keep that therapist?

A7. It is critical that children receive quality IBI services and in order to ensure this, the program guidelines require sufficient supervision by a senior therapist and clinician. This principle will remain in place and any issues that arise in this regard will be addressed on a case-by-case basis and the members of the dedicated regional team are in place to help address any concerns.

### Q8. Will I have to wait longer for service if I choose DSO?

A8. The goal of this initiative is to get children into service as expeditiously as possible. Regional teams will have the flexibility to work with either current regional providers or other organization that have the capacity to deliver IBI so as to achieve this goal.

### Q9. Is my child going to have to be re-assessed in order to receive IBI services?

A9. A child will not have to be re-assessed for eligibility for IBI services. However, in order to develop an appropriate treatment plan, the current needs of the child may need to be updated and a corresponding plan put in place. The update will be completed or approved by clinical staff of the Autism Intervention Program provider. The plan will need to be approved by the Autism Intervention Program provider within the parameters of the existing program guidelines.

**Q10. If I am very new to the IBI waitlist, how long will I have to wait for services?**

A10. It is difficult for the ministry to give a specific timeframe for when IBI services will be available to an individual on an Autism Intervention Program waitlist. The immediate priority is to expeditiously make IBI services available to 225 more children currently on the waitlists. Service providers are also continuing to fully implement the targets set with the government's previous investment. Additionally as children leave the program, new children are brought into service.

The dedicated regional teams that are being put in place will create greater capacity to support any enhanced investments in the future.

**Q11. My child is on the waitlist for IBI services but I no longer wish to receive IBI. Can the regional team help me to find other services?**

A11. The regional teams will deal with children's needs on a case by case basis. If you identify a need for other services that can be made available, the dedicated regional teams will assist you in this regard.

**Q12. Should I call the ministry directly about accessing services?**

A12. The team in your region is contacting families according to their place on the chronological waitlist. Those who have been waiting the longest will be contacted first. If you are not called by the team, you should contact your regional Autism Intervention Program provider.

**Q13. I understand that the amount paid to families for independent service arrangements doesn't cover all of the costs. What is covered by the individualized or direct funding rate?**

A13. The individualized funding rate may not cover all costs incurred in private arrangements. It is based on average salary costs for therapists who work directly with the child and for supervision.

**Q14. When will funding begin?**

A14. The regional teams have already begun to contact families. Funding can be immediately made available.

**Q15. How are payments for the individualized funding option going to be made?**

A15. The ministry regional office will process payments for independent service arrangements approved through this initiative. Payments will be made according to the current Autism Intervention Program guidelines. On signing an IBI Services Funding Agreement, a family will receive a lump-sum payment for the first quarter of service delivery. Amount paid will be reconciled against receipts submitted.

**Q16. Who will decide the number of hours of IBI my child will get?**

A16. The existing guidelines for the Autism Intervention Program remain in effect. The determination of the number of hours of IBI that a child will receive is a clinical decision made by the regional program based on the information available to them about the child. The guidelines indicate that the "expected" range is between 20-40 hours of IBI a week.

**Q17. I am currently receiving IBI through the Direct Service option. Can I change to the Direct Funding Option?**

A17. The priority for this initiative is on securing services for families on the waitlist. A family already receiving IBI services and interested in transferring from one service delivery option to another should discuss their situation directly with the Autism Intervention Program provider.

Once this current expansion has been implemented, the ministry and regional service providers will work with families to accommodate such requests.

**Q18. Whom do I call to find out where I am on the waitlist?**

A18. The regional Autism Intervention Program providers maintain chronological waitlists based on the date of contact. If you have questions about your status, you should contact the Autism Intervention Program provider in your region.

Additional information:

- News release