



Surrey Place Centre Welcomes Ontario's Announcement to Provide Faster, More Effective Autism Services

Toronto, March 29, 2016 - Today the Minister of Children and Youth Services, the Honourable Tracy MacCharles, announced a new Ontario Autism Program which will provide children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) critical interventions faster, and provide services that are better suited to their needs.

The new program is part of Government of Ontario's 2016 Ontario Budget that highlighted \$333 million will be invested over the next five years to help improve autism services.

The newly expanded children's autism program will make it easier for families to access services for their children by reducing wait times, providing more flexible services based on children's needs, and serving more children and youth.

"We work extremely hard to ensure the people that rely on us, specifically young people with autism and their families, get the important support they need," said Steven Finlay, Chief Executive Officer Surrey Place Centre. "We are excited for this significant investment and look forward to continue working side by side with the Ontario government."

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a lifelong, complex neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by persistent deficits in social communication and interaction and repetitive patterns of behaviour. There are an estimated 40,000 children and youth in Ontario with ASD.

"By continuing to work together with the Ontario government, we—and our partner agencies—are committed to improving and expanding services for children and youth with autism," said Mr. Finlay. "Our collaborative efforts will make a profound and lasting difference in the lives of our clients, their families and the community at large."

To learn more about the new Ontario Autism Program please visit the Government of Ontario's website at ontario.ca/autism.

About Surrey Place Centre

Surrey Place Centre provides specialized clinical services that are responsive to individual need and which promote health and well-being. In addition to the direct service role, the Centre facilitates system-wide access to information and supports. Our leadership in research, evaluation and education is directed toward advancing knowledge and practice in the field and building the capacity of service systems. As an organization we are committed to supporting the social inclusion of people with developmental disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, as well as young children challenged with visual impairments. For more information visit www.surreyplace.on.ca.

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