



Formerly Special Services at Home Passport Provincial Coalition (SSAHP)

1270 Walker Rd, Unit 2
Windsor, ON
N8Y 4T4
pfpfontario@gmail.com

November 24st, 2025

Nicole Norton, Acting Director, Developmental and Supportive Services:
Nicole.Norton@ontario.ca

Kimberley McClean, Manager, Special Services Unit:
Kimberley.McClean@ontario.ca

Riffaat Mamdani, Acting Manager Child Development Unit:
Riffaat.Mamdani@ontario.ca

Dear: Nicole, Kimberley and Riffaat:

Thank you for meeting with us on November 7th to discuss the ministry's two direct funding programs: Special Services at Home (SSAH) and Passport.

As outlined in our September 12, 2025 letter to Minister Parsa, we continue to ask the ministry to address:

1. The decline in per-person SSAH allocations;
2. The erosion of purchasing power of direct funding since the mid 1990's;
3. The persistence of large waitlists;
4. SSAH reimbursement delays of up to 3 to 4 months, creating cash flow strains, credit costs and interruptions of care;
5. Misalignment of government policies and investments with stated goals of community inclusion and independence.

Our letter recommended the establishment of service standards in the form of processing and payment timelines in order to simplify SSAH claims and speed reimbursement. Families consistently report that the excessive categorization of spending on invoices is counterproductive as the funding serves multiple purposes simultaneously. For example, when hired workers support a child's inclusion in the community, parents receive respite.

We are encouraged to hear that the ministry has recently implemented a 30 day standard for reimbursement. However, we are still hearing from families who are waiting several months. As Kimberley noted, delays appear to stem from a long-standing culture, and we welcome management's efforts to build a climate of trust within the case management system.

We briefly discussed waitlists. The last available data showed that 11,100 eligible children and youth were receiving no SSAH funding at all in 2022-2023, almost 3,000 more than the year before. After our meeting we learned of an October 15th memo from MCSS Regional Directors informing SSAH Agency Administrators of new approvals for 5,142 more children and youth this fiscal year. We were surprised that such positive news was not shared more broadly, and we believe a wider public announcement would help families understand progress and plan accordingly.

We also discussed the decline in the annual allocation per child from 1995. Combined with a tripling of the minimum wage to \$18 per hour, this translates into a projected reduction in funded support hours from 14 hours per week in 1995 to 3 hours per week in 2025. You noted that the ASCD (Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities) and the funding for technologically dependent and medically complex children also support families, while valuable, these programs are targeted to narrower populations and have goals distinct from SSAH.

Segregation and isolation make people with disabilities vulnerable to abuse of all types, while community relationships promote safety, belonging, and fulfillment. Parents need to start early to facilitate relationships and community connections, and they need help hiring community-minded support workers or students who can create opportunities for their children. It is often easier for support workers to build meaningful relationships when children are young; those connections can continue into adulthood as informal, unpaid supports, reducing the need for paid hours as youth transition into the Passport Program. Unfortunately, achieving these outcomes is extremely difficult with only three hours of SSAH support per week.

Finally, our apologies to Nicole that we focused our time on SSAH and did not reach Passport during the meeting. We appreciate the additional opportunity to discuss Passport at the meeting Nicole has convened for December 2nd.

Thank you again for your time and for your commitment to improving direct funding. We look forward to continued collaboration to ensure families receive timely, adequate, and uncomplicated support that advances the inclusion and independence of their children.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Dolmage and Susann Palmiere

cc: Ziyaad Vahed, Director, Child Development and Special Services Branch: Ziyaad.Vahed5@ontario.ca

Marilyn Dolmage: inclusion@sympatico.ca