

**Ontario Health West (South West planning area)
Community Support Services (CSS) Flexible Short-Term Fund**

GUIDELINES

Ontario Health West (formerly South West Local Health Integration Network) created the **Community Support Services Flexible Short-Term Fund** (“Flex Fund”) as a time-limited and flexible pool of annualized funding resources to meet unexpected and/or transitional needs of clients of CSS M-SAA (multi-sector service accountability agreement) funded programs of CSS organizations in the South West planning area. These funds are to assist individuals to remain in their homes, to prevent hospitalization and/or prevent premature admission to a Long-Term Care Facility. The Flex Fund is limited to \$231,745.00 annually and only available to an individual on a temporary basis. These funds are accessible across 7 counties to M-SAA funded Community Support Services (CSS) agencies in the south west planning area (Grey, Bruce, Huron, Perth, Oxford, Elgin, Middlesex). The South West Community Support Services Support and Development Council (“CSS Council”) is accountable for the allocation of the funds. Once the funds are depleted the fund will not be renewed until the new fiscal year beginning April 1st.

Flexible Short-Term needs will be defined as one or more of the following:

- The individual is without a safe place to stay because their current home is no longer safe or available and the situation can be rectified within 3 months;
- Resources are required on a time limited basis to stabilize placement, or to maintain a person in their own home and prevent a discharge to a potentially more costly resource;
- Primary caregivers are unable to provide care;
- Short term support can prevent family or support breakdown or institutionalization;
- The individual requires equipment (not covered by the Ontario Assistive Devices Program) due to changing needs.
- The individual needs temporary support for a variety of reasons which might include:
 - Making a transition to other supports;
 - Needs have increased and an increase in support for a temporary time will allow the service providers to negotiate a change in the plan of service;
 - An increase in service due to illness of the individual and/or caregiver;
 - An individual's service needs have been identified but the recommended or preferred program destination does not have an immediate opening but an opening/vacancy will be available within 3 months.

The need for the types of support available through the Flex Fund may originate anywhere in the community, health or service system, but only M-SAA-funded CSS agencies in the South West can apply and will be approved for funding if the eligibility criteria are met.

In order to be **eligible**, the client must:

- Live in one of the 7 identified counties
- Be a registered client of an M-SAA funded CSS organization
- Be accessing at least one M-SAA funded community support service

The CSS Council will use their discretion in these decisions based on the utilization of the fund in a given year.

South West Community Support Services
Support and Developmental Council

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Requests that are not eligible:

- Equipment covered by the Ontario Assistive Devices Program
- Subsidy of client fees for services that charge a co-pay such as meals on wheels, adult day program, transportation or home help.
- Requests for enhanced PSW support that would be replacing services that Home & Community Care Support Service of South West are funded to provide (e.g. the client qualifies for daily PSW visits from contracted services, but have been waitlist due to a lack the human resources)
- Interim support plans for enhanced PSW support and/or Respite support that exceed 3 months

Some applications may include more than one CSS agency either in the provision of immediate service or the transition plan post 3 months. If so a joint application is required and the payment must be directed to the primary agency providing the services being funded.

PROCESS TO ACCESS THE FUND

The funds will be kept (in trust) with Cheshire Homes of London Inc. (Cheshire) as pay master. Documentation needed to access the fund will be completed and forwarded to Cheshire. Cheshire will ensure that each request for funding is processed, reviewed and shared with the CSS Council electronically for decision in a timely manner.

An application is considered **complete and ready to submit** if the application:

- Identifies a CSS M-SAA funded organization as the applicant and that organization agrees to be the recipient of the funds if the application is approved
- Demonstrates that all local and available resource have been investigated and exhausted prior to requesting funds
- Includes an eventual sustainable service commitment to the client, if the request is for an interim support plan such as enhanced PSW support or respite support.
- Includes all necessary documentation, quotes, signatures etc
- Excludes any unique identifiers related to the client (name, address, phone number, date of birth, etc). These must be removed/blacked out from the application and any supporting documentation prior to submitting to Cheshire.

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR COMPLETED REQUEST TO:

Email: info@cheshirelondon.ca (preferred method)

Fax: 519-439-4815

Mail: Cheshire, 2 – 1111 Elias St., London, Ontario N5W 5L1

When a completed application is received Cheshire will:

- Assign each application a number for tracking purposes
- Acknowledge receipt of the application.
- Review the application for completeness and complete any necessary follow up with the applicant to gather additional or missing information.
- Once the application is deemed eligible and complete, the fund manager will send the application electronically to the CSS Council for decision.
- Upon decision by a majority of CSS Council members, Cheshire will notify the applicant of the approval or decline.
- If approved Cheshire's will issue payment to the M-SAA funded CSS organization identified on the application.

If a situation is too urgent to await confirmation of Flex funds, the CSS Council, in its sole discretion, may approve retroactive reimbursement to an agency who has had to provide immediate assistance to an individual.

South West Community Support Services
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An example of this would be a situation that occurs on a Friday evening and agency staff must make an immediate decision to increase staffing (for example) to ensure the safety of the client or to prevent hospitalization and/or institutionalization. In the event that the CSS agency has made this decision and asked for retroactive reimbursement the CSS Council cannot guarantee that the request would be approved.

Cheshire will provide a quarterly summary of expenditures and statistics to the CSS Council and Ontario Health West

APPEALS

Appeals can be directed to the Chairs of the CSS Council in writing within 15 calendar days of application denial. Appeals must include detailed description of reason for appeal. An appeal will be considered by 3 CSS Council members and 2 additional CSS members who will be identified at the beginning of each fiscal year.

ADDITIONAL DETAIL REGARDING CATEGORIES OF SUPPORT

Requests for Equipment

- Equipment requests valued at under \$2000 must include a minimum of 1 quote
- Equipment requests valued at \$2000 or more must include three (3) comparable quotes

If an organization is unable to obtain three quotes an explanation of the reason must be included in the application.

As part of investigating and exhausting local and available resources the applicant should inquire of Ingersoll Services for Seniors to determine whether or not they may have the equipment that your client needs. They offer a FREE Loan Program of Assistive Devices available to support seniors and adults with disabilities across the region.

The Ingersoll Services for Seniors Loans program has wheelchairs (all types); walkers (all types); bath and toilet accessories such as raised toilet seats; hospital beds and much more available. Availability is based on items in stock. They do not have staff available for conducting client assessments to identify specific equipment details. They encourage clients to resource services of OT and PT's prior to requesting equipment. If you are working with a community OT on the application have them call with the equipment specifics to determine if the Loan Program has what is needed.

Equipment is safety checked, sanitized and loaned out FREE of charge with no maximum period of loan. This means that it is available to your client for as long as they need it.

You can access this equipment by calling 519-485-2269 to see what they have in stock and to arrange a time for pick-up at 250 Ingersoll St S., Ingersoll. Pick up of equipment is the responsibility of Borrower. Special arrangements may be available for delivery.

If the Loan Program has the equipment needed, but you need it delivered then you can apply to the CSS Short-Term Flexible fund to cover the delivery costs.

Please note: Equipment that is purchased using the Flex Fund becomes the property of the individual and is theirs to maintain. (See application page 4 for client signature). If the equipment is no longer needed the equipment cannot be sold for personal or estate gain but should be donated to a non-profit organization or an equipment pool so another person can benefit.

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Supporting People in Home and Community

Requests for Respite or PSW Support

- in home support for respite provided by PSW, personal attendant, or companion with the purpose of providing respite to a caregiver
- temporary additional staffing (eg. PSW) for personal care needs
- double staffing for temporary increase in need or to address a safety issue

The funds may be used to implement interim support plans such as enhanced PSW support or respite support (up to a maximum of \$3000 annually). Interim support plans may be resources for a period up to three (3) months, and in exceptional circumstances upon review, an additional extension of up to three months may be granted. Any request for extension requires submission of a new application indicating request for extension, the original approval date and amount previously approved.

Please note that dollars for respite **cannot** be used to hire informal supports such as a family member or neighbour to provide the respite.

Requests for Home Renovations/Modifications

Home renovations/modifications will be considered if this is the individual's permanent residence or they reside in a CSS owned residence, **and** the renovations/modifications will:

- i) improve accessibility, or
- ii) address a H&S need, or
- iii) prevent LTC home placement.