

Early Years Services

Update and Progress Report

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Community & Social Services

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Overview

- **Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Service Plan Update**
- **Service System Pressures & Provincial Funding Update**
 - Administration Cost Share & Transitional Grant
 - Cost-Escalation & Emerging Issues Funding
 - Awaiting New Funding Model
- **Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC)**
 - Administration
 - Workforce
 - Directed Growth Strategy
 - Start-Up Grant
 - Current Projects & Projected Growth



ELCC Service Plan Update

- Five Year Service Plan is required by Ministry of Education (MEDU)
- Current plan spans 2019-2024, with a new plan to be developed for 2025-2030
- Impacts to current plan and 2025 preparations:
 - COVID-19
 - CWELCC transition
 - New funding model



ELCC Plan: EarlyON Highlights

- Expanded EarlyON outreach to **5** partner locations and **4** libraries, including Northumberland Forest
- Number of visits to EarlyON increased by **118%** between 2022 and 2023
- **94** families participated in EarlyON Bingo
- **5%** increase in average EarlyON program attendance during this period



Northumberland EarlyON Child and Family Centres'

Family Fun

B I N G O

Attend an indoor or outdoor exploration program	Share one of our posts on Facebook @NHSEarlyONCentres	Read a book together	Read more about our programs Northumberland.ca/EarlyON	Try a new fruit or veggie together
Bring a friend and their family to an EarlyON program	Do an activity together on Family Day	Explore the language of the Anishinaabe people language@nhland.com	Attend our March Break program at Haute Goat	Be curious & learn something new together
Attend an EarlyON Indigenous program	Register for a program using KEyON.ca	FREE SPACE	Follow us on Facebook @NHSEarlyONCentres	Sing together
Play together	Attend an EarlyON program at your local library	Attend our March Break program at Old Mill Alpacos	Share a photo of your family at an EarlyON program on FB and tag us @NHSEarlyONCentres	Find your local EarlyON centre Northumberland.ca/EarlyON
Attend our March Break program at the County Forest	Explore somewhere new together	Visit our new Cobourg Division Street location	Create something together	Tell a friend or family member about EarlyON

EarlyON Highlights: Continued

- March Break Events with community partners
- Offering a light dinner program in the evenings as well as weekend programming
- A prenatal program and a postnatal (“Fourth Trimester”) program were established to support new parents

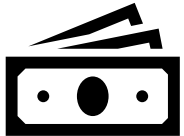


ELCC Plan: Child Care Highlights

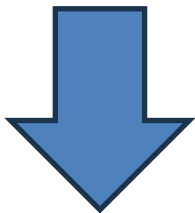
2019-2023 Progress



131 new spaces



\$20-\$21 daily average fee



Needs Assessment Survey:

- 2022: **51%** reported affordability as a barrier to access
- 2023: Reduced to **1%**



ELCC Plan: Fee Subsidy Highlights

- Fee Subsidy Promotional Campaign
 - Families supported by CWELCC can also receive fee subsidy
- Early Summer 2024: Launching Online Fee Subsidy Portal
 - Will allow for secure communication
 - Online applications and electronic document management

Ongoing Service System Pressures

- Delayed and/or changing guidelines and communication
- Increased administrative burden and responsibility
- Insufficient funding and/or reduced funding
- Lack of consideration of necessary resources and funding for expansion
- Loss of direct MEDU Program Advisor support

Provincial Funding Update

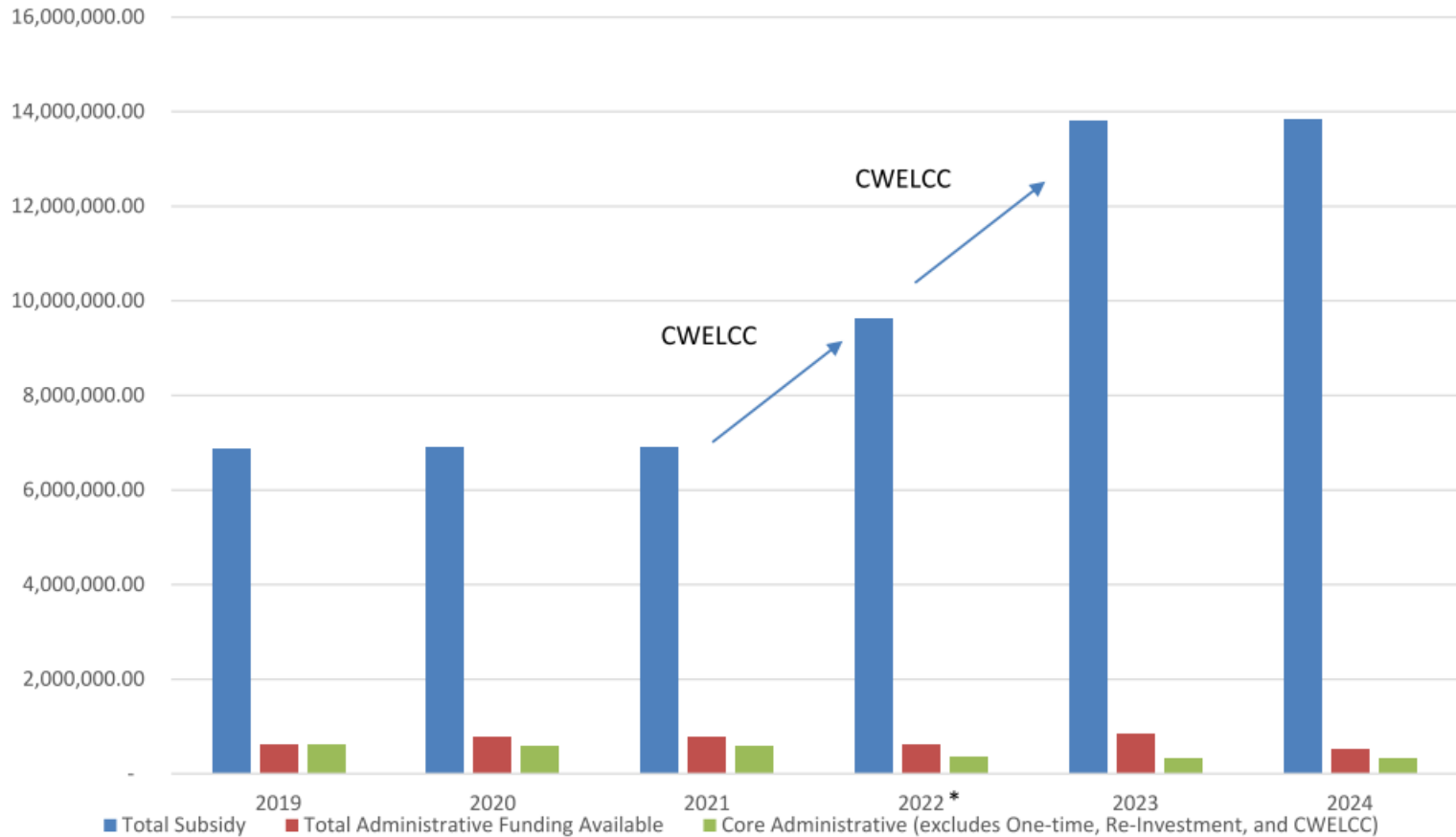
- New Funding Model
 - To be announced in 2024, for implementation in 2025
- Administration and Cost Sharing Changes
 - Announced 2018, came into effect 2024
 - Adjustments to 2019 budget in preparation
 - Offset by one-time transitional grants (2021-2023)
 - Results in a decrease to program funding

CWELCC Agreement

- CWELCC Administration Allocation shortfall
 - Increased scope and complexity of responsibilities
 - E.g., Increased oversight, compliance audits, role in licensing
 - Federal government allows for MEDU to flow up to **10%** of CWELCC allocation for administration
 - Northumberland's CWELCC administration allocation is only **2.5%**

Provincial Funding (2019-2024)

Subsidy to Administrative Funding



*CWELCC Programming commenced March 2022

CWELCC Agreement: Continued

- CWELCC Cost Escalation and Emerging Issues
 - Fees frozen as of March 2022
 - Cost Escalation Funds provided at 4.91% (i.e., below inflation)
 - Emerging Issues Funding Allocation (limited pocket)
 - To support costs beyond operator's control (rent, inflation)
- 10% CWELCC Holdback
 - Funding flexibility is limited, increased pressures due to expansion and educator wage floor adjustments
 - Anticipate that this holdback will be needed

CWELCC Agreement: Workforce Funding

- **Workforce Compensation Improvements**
 - Increase to wage floor and annual increase caps each year (to 2026)
 - Anticipate **100%** of RECEs will receive supports in 2024, up from **68%** for program staff and **48%** of supervisors
- **RECE Workforce Status**
 - **33** RECEs required to operate at capacity (+ 29 for expansion projects)
 - Many positions filled with underqualified “Director Approved” staff
 - Variety of recruitment & retention strategies ongoing

Directed Growth Strategy Update

- Updated Space Creation Plan approved by the Ministry
- Total spaces to be created by 2026 is **404** spaces

Year	School-Based	Community-Based
2022		
2023	10	162
2024		64
2025		98
2026	49	21
Total Spaces	59	345

Provincial Funding–County vs. School Board

- Funding Allocation: Ministry's guideline states up to \$9,000 per space

School Board
(~\$83,691 per space)



County
(~\$4,787 per space)



Provincial Funding: Start-Up Grant

Project	Expected Spaces	Start Up Funding	Projected Budget	Shortfall
Ruth Clarke	70	\$476,172	\$634,000**	(\$157,828)*
Canton Hub	49	\$370,054	\$598,000**	(\$227,946)*
Warkworth	47	\$364,488	\$434,000	(\$69,512)*
Total	166	\$1,210,715		(\$455,285)

*Shortfall to be funded through ELCC, Operators, and In-kind

**Awaiting final quotations and budgets

These projects utilize our full 2023 & 2024 Startup Grant. There remains 60 spaces to meet our growth plan, which requires additional funding.

Directed Growth Strategy Progress



Projected Growth and Progress Report

- **2023 Directed Growth Progress**
 - **10** infant spaces (Brighton)- open and operating
 - **15** family age spaces (Cobourg)- in progress
- **2022-2024 Licensed Home Child Care Growth**
 - 2022: **8** homes operating
 - 2024: **15** homes operating with **9** planned to open by mid-year
 - Total of **144** spaces via LHCC, with all 7 member municipalities represented

Summary and Next Steps

- **Future Expansion**

- Current funding fully expended
- Will continue to work with operators and partners on identifying potential space, when more funding becomes available

- **CWELCC System**

- County may be required to offset costs (MEDU base funding, increase in levy and/or the utilization of reserves) as system is underfunded
- Potential impacts of new funding model are unknown
- Concerns re: further cuts and/or reduced local flexibility
- EY Staff will keep Committee and Council apprised of these changes when they are shared by the Ministry