



GARY CARR, M.P.P.

Oakville

Constituency Office:
2330 Lakeshore Rd. West
Oakville, Ontario
L6L 1H3

Tel. (905) 827-5141
Fax (905) 827-3786

Master Anthony Faria
400 Tower Drive
Oakville, Ont.
L6L 4R2

July 28, 2003

Dear Anthony;

You will recall that I previously wrote you to advise that I had written to the Hon. Tony Clement, Minister of Health & Long-Term Care, regarding your concerns regarding services for autistic children.

I have just received a response from the Minister of Health and I am enclosing a copy of his letter for your information.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. If I can be of any further assistance to you in the future, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Gary Carr, M.P.P.
Oakville

Encl.

ed



**Ministry of Health
and Long-Term Care**

Office of the Minister

10th Floor, Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto ON M7A 2C4
Tel 416 327-4300
Fax 416 326-1571
www.gov.on.ca/health

Ministère de la Santé
et des Soins de longue durée

Bureau du ministre

10^e étage, édifice Hepburn
80, rue Grosvenor
Toronto (ON) M7A 2C4
Tel. 416 327-4300
Télé. 416 326-1571
www.gov.on.ca/health



13/7/03
Gary Carr, MPP
Oakville
2330 Lakeshore Road West
Oakville ON L6L 1H3

Dear Mr. Carr:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of your constituent, Mr. Anthony Faria regarding services for children with autism. I am pleased to have the opportunity to assure Mr. Faria that I understand the concerns of Ontarians when it is believed that our health care system is not providing every possible health care service for a child.

As Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, I am unable to comment on any issue for which a legal resolution is being pursued. As you may be aware, some parents of children with autism have asked the Crown to review legal arguments about the appropriate care of their children, payment for service and ministerial responsibilities. I realize that you will feel that my response does not provide a solution to your constituent's concerns and I trust that he will understand that I can provide him with no other response at this time.

However, I have forwarded Mr. Faria's letter to my colleagues, the Honourable Elizabeth Witmer, Minister of Education and the Honourable Brenda Elliott, Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services, so that each will be aware of his concerns.

Our government has always put a high priority on supporting the healthy growth and development of young children. We are the first government in Ontario to fund a large scale, **intensive treatment program** for children with autism who are between 2 to 5 years of age. Research tells us that Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI) works best when provided to children at a young age.

The initial funding for the IBI program was announced in the 1999 Budget and we committed \$5 million, growing to \$19 million annually in 2001/02, for the program. In May 2001, we doubled the annual funding to \$39 million through Ontario's Early Years Plan.

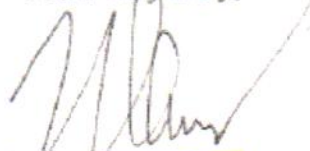
Gary Carr, MPP

On November 18, 2002, Minister Elliott announced that our government is investing an additional \$58.6 million for services for children with autism. This brings our total commitment to IBI and new programs and services to help children with autism and their families to almost \$100 million by 2006/07.

Our program for children with autism was developed from research findings, expert opinion and clinical practice guidelines in other jurisdictions. We listened when autism experts told us that early intervention with young children is most effective but we also recognize that families and children need help over the long-term. That is why we will invest \$19 million in new programs and services for older children with autism, so that they can grow and learn in their transition to school. New programs and services for older children include transition coordinators who will help families with the transition to alternative programs. Elementary school-age children will also have new out-of-class programs available to them that are focussed on developing and improving social interaction, behaviour and communication. Additionally, the Ministry of Education will pilot its Autism Program Standards in the 2003/04 school year and will host forums to help teachers learn about new approaches being used to educate children with autism.

Again, thank you for your letter. I assure your constituent that we will continue our commitment to children with autism through new and expanded services that will improve the lives of these children and help parents raise their children with hope and dignity.

Yours very truly,



Tony Clement

Minister

c: Hon. Elizabeth Witmer, MPP
Hon. Brenda Elliott, MPP