

Q&As for DSOs, Service Agencies and Passport Agencies

RE: Potential Client Concerns About Sharing Information

Individuals and primary contacts who don't want to share their information with the Ministry/DSO have been asked to contact their agency. These Q&As should help you ensure that they understand the implications of their decision.

Q1) Why is the government collecting this information?

A1) Right now, every agency across the province keeps its own lists of people receiving and waiting for services. Developmental Services Ontario is the new window to apply for services. All applications go through DSO. So all service information has to be with DSO, too.

The government has asked us to share individual's service information with them, to be shared with DSO. This way DSO knows who is eligible to get services and supports, when available. They will know what services people receive and any supports they are waiting for. It will help them offer better customer service, by reducing the number of times people have to provide their information.

Sharing information will not affect any services or supports people get right now, or are currently waiting for.

Q2) Why don't individuals have to consent to this information being shared with the government?

A2) The new legislation for adult developmental services in Ontario allows the Ministry of Community and Social Services to collect this information from agencies.

Section 35, Subsection 1 states:

The Minister may collect personal information directly from persons who apply for or receive services and supports from service agencies or direct funding under this Act, or indirectly from others, for purposes relating to the following matters and may use it for those purposes:

1. Administering this Act and the regulations.
2. Monitoring compliance with this Act, the regulations and the policy directives.
3. Reviewing, assessing and updating policy directives.
4. Evaluating the performance of service agencies, application entities (known as Developmental Services Ontario) and the funding entity, in the future.

5. Planning and forecasting the need for services and supports in various geographic areas in the Province and the human and financial resources that will be required to meet changes in those needs.
6. Risk management or activities to evaluate the services and supports that are provided under this Act, so as to promote the safety and security of persons with developmental disabilities. 2008, c. 14, s. 35 (1).

If an individual does not want their information to be shared, they can notify their agency contact.

Q3) What should we do if an individual does not want to share their information?

- A3)** If an individual notifies your agency that they do not want to share their information, please talk to them to ensure they understand the implications of their decision.

If they verify that they understand the implications, don't include their information in the Microsoft Excel reporting template. (We will send you this template with instructions on how to complete it and what information to include in the near future.)

Q4) What if an individual does not want to share their information?

- A4)** If an individual's information is not shared with DSO, the DSO will not know that they are eligible to receive services and supports. The DSO won't be aware of their needs or be able to help them find services that they may need (where available). DSO staff need to know who people are to be able to help them.

If an individual doesn't allow their information to be shared, and they are currently receiving services, their supports will not be affected.

If an individual doesn't allow their information to be shared, and they are on a waiting list, their name will not automatically be included on the list held by DSO. If they want to be on the waiting list to receive services and supports in the future, they will have to contact DSO directly

Q5) Will individuals' information be safe?

- A5)** Yes. The DSO's electronic information system has strict and comprehensive privacy and security controls to keep individuals' information safe.

Q6) Who will have access to individuals' information?

A6) Agencies will share individuals' information with the Ministry of Community and Social Services. They will enter it into DSO's information system. Once this information has been entered into DSO's system, the Ministry will not access it further.

Regional DSO offices will use individual's information to help them get the services and supports they need, when available. DSOs will only share individual's information with developmental services agencies when making arrangements for available services and supports.