

Requesting an Independent Clinical Review

The Independent Clinical Review (ICR) Process offers your family and your child the opportunity to have key components of your child's OAP Behaviour Plan reviewed by a team of independent Clinical Reviewers.

The ICR process is managed by Contact Niagara, a non-profit agency funded by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. Contact Niagara does not deliver OAP services and supports.

The key components of your child's OAP Behaviour Plan that can be reviewed are:

1. Domain(s) to be addressed (i.e., school readiness, communication, self-regulation, challenging behaviours, etc.);
2. Skill(s) to be increased;
3. Behaviour(s) to be decreased;
4. Planned intervention approach, including intensity and duration; and,
5. Behaviour goal(s)

You can request an independent clinical review of one or more of these key components of an OAP Behaviour Plan.

- ❖ Concerns about how your child's OAP Behaviour Plan has been implemented and/or reviews of funding allocations are out of scope for the ICR process.
- ❖ Clinical Reviewers do not make specific clinical recommendations about what services a child should receive, the number of service hours, or the duration of services.
- ❖ At any point during the ICR, you can choose to withdraw from the process and continue with your child's original OAP Behaviour Plan.
- ❖ Decisions made by the ICR process are final.

The Review Committee

The ICR process is conducted by the Review Committee which is composed of two Clinical Reviewers and a Family Representative. The Clinical Reviewers are responsible for making decisions about your child's OAP Behaviour Plan based on a review of your child's case file and in the context of evidence based practice. Case files include all relevant material related to a child in the OAP. The Family Representative is responsible for working with you to help clearly represent your perspective throughout the review process.

A. The Family Representative

Family Representatives are parents, guardians or primary caregivers of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), who are hired and trained by the ICR Coordinator, Contact Niagara, to help communicate your family's perspective about your child's OAP Behaviour Plan to the Review Committee. Each family in the ICR process is assigned a Family Representative.

As a member of the Review Committee, the role of the Family Representative is to have a conversation with you about your concerns, and to help ensure that you and child's perspectives are accurately presented to the Clinical Reviewers. They are not involved in the clinical review of your child's case file or in making the ICR decision, and they do not play an advocacy role for families or their children in the review process.

B. The Clinical Reviewers

Decision-making in the ICR is guided by the expertise and experience of two clinicians who are familiar with evidence-based behavioural services for children and youth in Ontario. Every Review Committee includes one Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA) and one psychologist/psychological associate. The Clinical Reviewers have a clinical discussion about the case file materials and the Behaviour Plan to determine whether or not the plan is consistent with the case file materials and evidence-based practices. The Clinical Reviewers can either accept the Behaviour Plan as is, or to send it back for revision and/or more information.

ICR Steps

- 1) If you are dissatisfied with your child's OAP Behaviour Plan, you must first contact your Direct Service Option (DSO) or Direct Funding Option (DFO) OAP service provider, and work with them to try to reach agreement about your child's Behaviour Plan.
- 2) If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the OAP provider's internal review, you can request an independent review of your child's OAP Behaviour Plan by completing a *Family Request Form* and submitting it to your DSO or DFO OAP provider.
- 3) Within **5 business days** of receiving an ICR *Family Request Form*, your OAP provider will review your child's case file, working with you to complete it. At this time, you will be given the opportunity to add supporting documentation to the case file.
- 4) Once the file is complete, your OAP provider will send it to the ICR Coordinator.
- 5) Within **10 business days** of receiving your child's case file materials, the ICR Coordinator will send it to a Review Committee. All identifying information will be removed.
- 6) The ICR Coordinator will arrange a conference call between you and your Family Representative, to review your concerns with your child's OAP Behaviour Plan. Your Family Representative will then complete the *Family Perspective Form* and send it to the ICR Coordinator.
- 7) A Clinical Review Meeting conference call will be held with your Review Committee, including your Family Representative and the Clinical Reviewers. Your concerns about your child's Behaviour Plan will be shared with the Review Committee. You can present your concerns to the Review Committee yourself, or have your Family Representative do this on your behalf.
- 8) ICR Clinical Reviewers will provide a written decision to either accept the OAP Behaviour Plan or send it back to be revised or for additional information. The ICR Coordinator will send the decision to you and your OAP provider.

You will receive a decision from the ICR no later than **45 business days** from the date you submitted the ICR *Family Request Form* to your OAP provider.

After the ICR Process

- 1) If the ICR decision is to accept the OAP Behaviour Plan, your OAP provider will work with you to implement the plan.
- 2) If the ICR decision requires the plan be sent back to the OAP Clinical Supervisor for revisions and/or more information, your provider will have **15 business days** from the day they received the ICR decision to work with you to update, finalize and implement the plan.
- 3) If you cannot reach consensus on the revised plan with your OAP provider, you have the option to request a second review of the revised plan.

More Information

The Independent Clinical Review (ICR) Process for the Ontario Autism Program Guidelines and Family Information on the ICR Process can be found on the MCYS Website at: www.children.gov.on.ca.

For more information about the ICR process:

- visit our website: www.contactniagara.org
- call us: **1-866-416-1023** or **289-273-4627**
- e-mail us: ICR@contactniagara.org.

* In addition to coordinating the provincial ICR, Contact Niagara is also the single point of access to Ontario government-funded services for children in the Niagara community.