



95 Hanover Street
Kingston

Phone: 922-5585
Fax: 948-6733
E-mail: esp@mlss.gov.jm

July 1, 2020

Ms Ann-Marie Dobson
Director
Documentation Information and Access Services
Ministry of Labour Social Security
1F North Street
Kingston

Dear Ms Dobson

Re: Assistance Aids for Children with Special Needs on the Early Stimulation Programme

Kindly be informed that the Early Stimulation Programme received a total of four hundred and eighty three (483) items (assistive aids) in February 2019 through the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Social and Economic Inclusion of Persons with Disability Project (SEI). The items varies in types, size, shapes, usage and are used to enhance the quality of life of children with disabilities based on their developmental needs.

Thirty seven percent 37% or one hundred and eighty three (183) of the items consist of walkers, wheelchairs, standers and arnest while the other sixty two point one percent (62.1%) or three hundred (300) consist of mouth oral stimulator used for children with excessive drooling and poor mouth status, these items in size are smaller than a baby toothbrush. Over the period February 2019 to present July 2020 more than two hundred (200) children have benefitted from this assistance. Records and accountability can be found within the Early Stimulation Programme clinic as well as the physiotherapy unit.

The assistive aids are given to the client based on his/her development needs, for example a child who is consistent with therapy but is not walking and has acquired the necessary readiness skills for walking would not be encouraged to use a wheelchair as this may delay or impede the chances of him/her getting to walking and as such defeat the purpose. Also bear in mind that not all children within the Early Stimulation Programme, which is over three thousand (3000) in population, are in need of adaptive aids as some have other disabling condition and or intellectual impairment and will need other types of intervention. Therefore the aids are distributed as the need arise to children referred to the Early Stimulation Programme and is diagnosed with Neuro- physical challenges.

While the Early Stimulation Programme serves families and children with disabilities from all strata of society, seventy percent of its users are from poor house hold, PATH beneficiaries and some are jobless due to the situation of having to stay home to care for their child/children with disabilities. The programme also assess and admit between 270-300 children annually of which 30-35% are usually diagnosed with some physical challenge. In light of this, the items are not issued out haphazardly but are distributed with the understanding that a large percentage of the programme users' fall within the categories mentioned and most time finds it very difficult to access these assistive aids, outside the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

Yours respectfully,

Antonica Gunter-Gayle

Antonica Gunter-Gayle (Mrs.) JP
Director