



Sector Call - Questions and Answers from Winter 2025 Sessions

Thursday, January 30, 2025 from 5:00 – 6:00 pm and

Tuesday, February 4, 2025 from 6:00 – 7:00 pm

Note: *This document is a collation of questions and answers from both above noted sessions. As different questions arose in each session, this is an opportunity to share what was asked, and the response to better promote transparency and consistency across multiple sessions/channels.*

Questions do not appear in the order they were asked but have been grouped by agenda/content theme. Questions and answers have been edited for clarity.

Engagements (Lead: Erika)

Q1: How can I get access to the information from the sector call?

A1: Sector calls are recorded. An email with a link to the recording will be shared so that everyone can have access and review the content presented.

Q2: Who can participate in these call?

A2: Sector calls are open to all regulated early learning and child care providers, including family home agencies and providers, licensed child care providers, and those delivering NS BAP. An email is sent to our distribution list advising of the call and requesting questions in advance to help develop content.

Space Creation Initiatives & Progress (Lead: Krystal)

Q3: Is funding available to private centres to expand?

A3: For-profit providers have access to the same funding as not-for-profit providers except for funding for space expansion, which is prohibited under our Canada-Wide agreement.

Q4: Are there other expansion grant programmes being developed?

A4: Our minor infrastructure programme is ongoing and will be available until the entire budget is allocated. More information on space expansion funding programs is available at [Create Child Care Spaces – Funding Programs | Child Care Nova Scotia](#)

Please reach out to us if you have opportunities that are available immediately.

Workforce (Leads: Hoa and Ryan)

Q5: Do Family Home providers qualify for funding for upgrading?

A5: Generally, family home providers have access to our continuing education fund.

- Continuing Education Program – working at own pace, can take time off to do regular practicums, enroll in any ECE diploma program as a PT student. Submit your tuition and book receipts to us, and we reimburse you after each course. Click [here](#) for more information.
- Specialized cohort through Jane Norman College (online program) allows you to complete your diploma PT while continuing to work and do work place practicums at your place of work with the support of your Family Home agency. This is fully funded (full tuition, textbooks, student fees). The next cohort will be September 2025. You must meet admissions requirement set by Jane Norman College – reach out to them [directly](#) for more information.

If you have additional questions on training, please contact ECetraining@novascotia.ca.

Q6: How do I explain differences in classification level to my staff who have all completed a two-year diploma program but from different institutions in other provinces/countries?

A6: Not all two-year diploma programs met Nova Scotia's standards for Early Childhood Education post-secondary programs. They may be missing courses, practicum credits or required learning outcomes.

If their program does not give them a Level 2 classification and they have experience in the sector, they can apply for and complete the recognition of prior learning (RPL) program.



This will allow them to earn their Level 2 without needing to return to school. For more information or to apply visit <https://aecens.ca/rpl>

Q7: I have questions around my Caat/HANS invoicing/processing. Who do I contact?

A7: Go to childcare.novascotia.ca/benefits and you'll be able to find the best contact for benefits (HANS) and pension (Caat) related inquiries.

Although the department funds these programs, Caat/HANS administrators the programs. You should connect with them if you have specific questions or are not receiving information, such as invoices, in a timely manner.

New Funding Agreements 2025-26 (Lead: Ryan)

Q8: Is there funding available from the department for capital repairs and maintenance?

A8: There is no Departmental grant available for capital repairs. For costs that are not capital in nature, and relate to operations, there is the Operational Support Fund (OSF). Applications for OSF can be found at [operational_support_application.pdf](#)

Q9: Will Family Home providers see any increases to their funding this year?

A9: The Health Benefits Grant, Retirement Savings Grant, Family Home Start-Up Grant, Early Childhood Educator Grant, and other grants provided in 24-25, will continue to be available in 25-26. There are no increases in 25-26 while the Department continues efforts to establish an operational funding model.

Q10: How do providers deal with the rising cost of inflation when child care fees are frozen?

A10: Fees have been frozen as we are moving to implementing \$10/day on average for children under 6 years of age. Recognizing the impact of rising costs, we have issued the discretionary support grant each year, have Operational Support Funding (OSF), and are developing a new funding model.

Q11: QIG funding for wages includes 15% MERCS. Is this on the total hourly wage, or on the portion of the wage funded by QIG?

A11: The 15% MERCS is paid on the portion of the wages funded by the province.

Q12: What is being done to reduce administrative burden on providers and centre directors/assistant directors?

A12: We are working as part of our digital services modernization to address this. Our goal is to streamline processes, leverage information we receive through other channels, and limit request to operators. There may still be a need to reach out to providers, depending on the situation. We hope to increase efficiencies wherever possible.

More information will be shared as we move ahead with our digital transformation work.

Operational Funding Model (Lead: Limei)

Q13: Are centres or family homes allowed to increase their rates?

A13: Family fees are currently frozen, which means that existing providers in the sector, whether it's a licence centre or a family home, cannot increase their fees.

New providers can set their fees at the maximum of the regional average. New Family Home providers coming online can set their fees at the maximum of other providers within the same family home agency.

We recognize this is creating some frustration amongst providers. We are focused on developing the operational funding model, which will help address this.

Q14: Are working conditions (ex. sick days in licenced childcare centres) going to be addressed? Will we receive funding to support staff wages for other positions beyond ECEs?

A14: The department currently adds 15% to the wage funding to providers, meant to contribute to the cost of sick days, vacation days, etc. that employees are eligible for. We



have heard from providers that this is not enough. Our operational funding model work has indicated significant variation across the sector. We are exploring options for additional funding for sick and vacation time in the new funding model.

There is a goal for us to improve upon where things currently are today. In the meantime, we are maintaining status quo.

Q15: When will the new funding model be implemented?

A15: The Canada-Wide Agreement includes implementing a new funding model by March 31st of 2026.

Q16: Will the new funding model still allow for operator autonomy to make decisions like the materials and equipment they buy?

A16:

We continue to work with operators to understand their situation and what our new funding model should look at. We have hundreds of providers across the province who are responding to the unique needs of their communities and the children that they serve. The intention is not to remove that element of autonomy that our providers have.

OTHER

Q17: What are the other key projects and/or new programs are underway that will impact the sector?

A17: While we are doing our operational funding model work, we are working on digital modernization - improving the way that we share information with the sector and how information is collected from operators to facilitate easier collection/payment processing.