

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**1. With the move of oversight of EI services from MSF to ECDA, will the provision of EI services to children and families be affected?**

ECDA and MSF will work closely with EI service providers to ensure the smooth transition of EI services for families and children with developmental needs.

Children with developmental needs will continue to be identified based on the existing touchpoints (e.g. hospitals, polyclinics, preschools) and referred to suitable EI services based on the child's specific needs.

Today, children under the age of seven with developmental needs can receive intervention through government-funded EI programmes. Children with mild developmental needs are supported by the LS and DS programmes¹, in a preschool setting. For children with moderate to severe developmental needs, they will be referred by a paediatrician to EIPIC², provided at EI centres. EI services will continue to be delivered by the EI service providers including selected preschools and VWOs such as AWWA, SPD and Thye Hua Kwan.

2. What is the difference between the LS, DS and DS-Plus programmes, given that they are all conducted within preschools?

The key differences between LS, DS and the DS-Plus programme are in the target group of children that each programme caters to, the intensity of the interventions, and the professionals providing the interventions.

¹ For more information on LS-DS programmes, you may wish to refer to <https://www.sgenable.sg/Pages/content.aspx?path=/for-children/development-support>.

² For more information on the EIPIC, you may wish to refer to <https://www.sgenable.sg/Pages/content.aspx?path=/for-children/early-intervention-programme-for-infants-children-eipic/>

	Learning Support	Development Support	Development Support – Plus <i>(to be rolled out in phases from July 2019)</i>
Target group	Children with learning needs	Children with mild developmental needs	Children with mild-moderate developmental needs
Focus of intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language development and literacy skills • Handwriting skills • Social-communication skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational skills • Speech and language skills • Learning support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech and language skills • Social-communication skills • Fine and gross motor skills • Language development and literacy skills • Self-help skills
Weekly hours of intervention	1 – 2 hours, over a period of 3 – 4 months		2 – 4 hours, over a period of 3-6 months.
Professionals involved	Learning Support Educators	Learning Support Educators, Therapists	EIPIC teachers or Learning Support Educators, Therapists

3. Which preschools currently offer DS-LS?

DS-LS is currently offered at about 550 preschools, run by NTUC First Campus, PAP Community Foundation, Skool4Kidz, E-Bridge, Presbyterian Community Services, Perdaus and TOUCH Community Services. MSF and ECDA, together with sector partners, are expanding the pool of LSEds so that DS-LS can be provided at more preschools.

4. Will ECDA oversee the full range of EI services, including EIPIC which is provided in EI centres?

The Disability Office within the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) currently coordinates the planning, development, resourcing and service delivery of programmes for persons with disabilities, including EI services such as LS, DS, DS-Plus and EIPIC. The Ministry also oversees service management for EI services to ensure that service standards are met. MSF works closely with key sector partners such as the hospitals, preschools, SG Enable and VWOs on timely detection of children with developmental needs, provision of early intervention services, caregiver training, manpower planning and capability development.

ECDA will progressively oversee the full range of EI services including EIPIC by end 2020. ECDA and MSF will work closely with EI service providers and key sector partners to ensure the smooth transition of EI services for families and children with developmental needs.

5. How are young children with more severe developmental needs supported within the preschool setting? Will additional assistance and support be given to them?

Infants and young children at risk of moderate to severe developmental needs are supported through the EIPIC, provided at EIPIC centres run by VWOs. This is a government-subsidised programme that provides developmental and therapy services through trans-disciplinary teams, ranging from EI teachers, to therapists, psychologists and social workers. The early intervention children receive at EIPIC centres maximises their developmental potential and minimises the risk of secondary disabilities from developing.

For children enrolled in preschools, EIPIC professionals may support the child's integration into the mainstream preschool by sharing strategies with the preschool teachers on ways to support the child. EIPIC centres also provide parent and caregiver training, through regular workshops, parent-teacher meetings, and occasional home visits. This helps to support the child in his or her natural environment.

With the launch of the inclusive preschool workgroup, MSF and ECDA, together with sector partners, will study and develop recommendations to support children with moderate-to-severe developmental needs within preschools. It will also study the experiences of centres which serve children with developmental needs, to develop approaches that may be extended to more preschools.

6. How is the new inclusive preschool workgroup related to the other two cross-sectoral workgroups announced by MSF during COS 2019? How does this dovetail with EMP3?

Under the Third Enabling Masterplan (EMP3), the Government is partnering the community to support persons with special needs and their caregivers across different stages of life. MSF will deepen engagement with various stakeholders, including persons with special needs and their caregivers, voluntary welfare organisations, employers, technology providers, and educational institutions. This will enable better coordination and provide targeted support to meet the varied needs of differently-abled persons across disability groups, and also increase awareness of the Enabling Masterplans.

To that end, three cross-sectoral workgroups involving people, private, and public sector partners, were launched recently to focus on preschool support, employability and independent living.

- The new inclusive preschool workgroup, co-chaired by Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Social and Family Development Associate Professor Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim and Associate Dean (Education Research) Kenneth Poon from NIE, will focus on ways to support children with moderate-to-severe developmental needs within preschools.
- One workgroup will look at preparing persons with special needs for the future economy, by enhancing access to lifelong learning opportunities and employment pathways. Minister of State Mr Sam Tan will co-chair the workgroup with Member of Parliament (MP) Ms Denise Phua.

- Another workgroup will look into promoting independent living through technology and design, in the home setting as well as within the community. Minister of State Mr Sam Tan will also co-chair the workgroup with Ms Chia Yong Yong, who is President of SPD and also a former Nominated MP.