

Ms. Lynn Middleton, Team Leader
Ministry of Children & Families
Box 1860
Summerland, B.C. V0H 1Z0

Dear Ms. Middleton:

I am writing today to express my grave concern regarding the substance of our telephone conversation of September 15, 1998. During that conversation you communicated to me that the Ministry for Children and Families (MCF) will no longer be reimbursing the cost of our son's medically necessary autism treatment. We are formally writing to you today that if due to lack of resources we are no longer able to maintain the treatment program and the autistic disorder of our son worsens, we will hold you and your department responsible and accountable.

As you know from my prior conversations and correspondence with you and MCF staff, for many years Jeremy was enrolled in Government programs designed to address his autistic disorder --- all of the efforts of Government affiliated professionals were universally unsuccessful. Jeremy's negative autistic behaviors worsened and his overall condition deteriorated. Soon after embarking upon the physician prescribed, medically necessary autism treatment we are currently providing privately, the deterioration in Jeremy's condition was arrested and dramatically reversed.

Although the autism treatment we are providing is remarkably effective, the financial burden of maintaining the treatment program ourselves is tremendous. We cannot afford this expense ourselves. Although reimbursement from the MCF only partially covers the cost of Jeremy's medically necessary autism treatment, we do rely heavily upon it to maintain the intensity and effectiveness of the program. Withdrawal of your reimbursement will have a profoundly negative impact on the present and future well-being of our child.

We are aware that a Memorandum was sent from your Ministry in Victoria on August 26, 1998 to all MCF regions stipulating that no new agreements shall be entered into for Lovaas treatment programs. Please be advised that this moratorium does not apply to us in so far as we have an existing agreement and also a written commitment for additional support that precedes the moratorium. (Darcy Nord, July 20, 1998 ---please see attached)

At this time, any change in funding policy toward our son's treatment program could be interpreted by some as related to the Class Action suit launched against your Ministry on August 14, 1998. If this Class Action is certified, we may well become part of the class and your change in policy could be interpreted as an attempt to dissuade us from joining the class (please see attached letter).

.../2

September 25, 1998
Re: Jeremy Rodrigues
Page 2

We must also advise you at this time that if the partial reimbursement we are currently receiving is not maintained, and the July 20, 1998 MCF commitment is reneged, we include this conduct in the record of events we are maintaining so that it will be available for any future tribunal. Moreover, we will endeavor to publicize the plight of our family in every manner possible since we believe it is important that all members of our community clearly understand the culpability of the local MCF office in failing to protect the well-being of our child.

Sincerely Yours,

Barbara Rodrigues

Joe Rodrigues

cc: Mr. Rick Thorpe, MLA, Okanagan/Penticton
Harper, Grey, Easton
Mr. Donald Chaisson, Office of the Attorney General
Mr. Rick Childerhose, Regional Operating Officer
Ms. Darcy Nord, Social Worker
Mr. Mark McDonald, Office of the Ombudsman
Ms. Janet Donald, Children's Commission - File #:199823427
Mr. Rob Houston, local MCF Complaint Manager

Attachments:

Letter to the Office of the Attorney General
July 20, 1998 correspondence from Darcy Nord, Social Worker
Letter from Dr. M.I. deLevie, M.D., Jeremy's Pediatrician
Letter from Dr. R. McIntosh, M.D., Jeremy's Family Physician