



Premier of Alberta

Office of the Premier
Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
Canada T5K 2B6
Telephone 780 427 2251
Fax 780 427 1349

February 3, 2010

Mr. Bob Greig
President
Alberta Council of Disability Services
Bay 19, 3220 - 5 Avenue NE
Calgary AB T2A 5N1

Dear Mr. Greig:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) program. I have reviewed your concerns and appreciate the opportunity to respond.

The PDD program is well-funded with a budget of \$604 million to support 9,200 adult Albertans with developmental disabilities. However, in these economic times, it is important that the program is as effective and efficient as possible, and that it results in positive outcomes for the people it supports.

As you may know, the PDD program is delivered through six regional Community Boards. The Community Boards are working with service providers to meet in-year spending adjustments and address cost pressures in ways that will affect Albertans who are supported by the program as little as possible. The Community Boards have looked at internal efficiencies and are asking agencies to do this as well. If, in addition to administrative savings, it is necessary to make changes that will affect individuals supported by the PDD program, PDD Community Board staff and agencies will work with individuals and families to manage those changes.

In terms of the in-year spending adjustments to the PDD program, it is important to keep the scope of the savings in perspective. Budget savings of \$11.3 million represents about two per cent of the program's overall 2009/2010 budget of \$604 million. Since 2005/2006, the PDD budget has increased by more than 20 per cent while its caseload grew by only two per cent.

In December 2009, the Honourable Mary Anne Jablonski, Minister of Seniors and Community Supports, toured the province and met with families, self-advocates and service providers to share information about the six Priority Areas for Action to improve the PDD program. Work is proceeding under the six Priority Areas for Action that will lead to increased clarity, consistency, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability for the PDD program. At the same time, actions are being taken to improve communication and increase transparency, to promote more positive relationships and a stronger foundation upon which challenges can be addressed.

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One of the concerns raised by some service providers is the need for increased flexibility in the ways that funding provided by the PDD program is used by agencies. Minister Jablonski will be discussing with service providers ways to provide increased flexibility in the contracting process. The Minister will share further information about these discussions in the near future.

Please be assured that my government is committed to providing supports to adults with developmental disabilities, and to ensuring the PDD program is sustainable for years to come.

Thank you again for your letter and your commitment to supporting Albertans with developmental disabilities.

Sincerely yours,



Ed Stelmach

ES/rw

cc: Honourable Mary Anne Jablonski
Minister of Seniors and Community Supports

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M.L.A., Calgary-East