

Statement from Andrea Hesse, CEO, October 28, 2020

Addressing Misperceptions about Community-Based Disability Service Delivery

On June 10, the Government of Alberta issued a notice to select AUPE members and guardians of individuals with developmental disabilities (individuals), regarding the government's exploration of alternative service delivery for individuals currently served in public institutions. This has understandably caused concern with the families and guardians of these individuals, due to the uncertainty surrounding these individuals' future supports, and the potential disruption that any changes may bring to their lives. ACDS is sympathetic to these concerns and we encourage careful consideration of any changes to services, with the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities at the centre of any decisions made.

In related discussions, and media stories, there have been troubling misperceptions shared regarding the nature of contracted, community-based disability service delivery. We wish to correct these misperceptions.

Community disability service providers are largely non-profit organizations, that have offered high-quality services to Albertans with developmental disabilities for over 60 years. Currently, [over 12,600](#) individuals receive services through the PDD program. [Over 90%](#) of these individuals access services from contracted community-based service providers, or by staff hired directly through Family Managed Services (FMS). This service delivery model ensures individuals have access to services by skilled, local community agencies where they live and throughout their lives. All service providers, whether government-operated or community-based organizations, must meet approved accreditation standards.

Community-based disability service providers have the expertise, experience and partnerships to provide high quality services aligned with worldwide best practice standards. They also possess a nimbleness to respond to community and individual needs, and mobilize community and regionally based partnerships to innovate and respond to emerging challenges as evidenced in their recent exceptional pandemic response.

ACDS is proud to have been the collective voice for community disability service providers in Alberta for 47 years. Currently, with [over 140 members](#) located in every region of Alberta, ACDS represents close-to 85% of PDD-funded agencies. We advocate for effective policy, advance excellence and best practices through standards development, build organizational capacity, and provide professional development and training for community disability workers.

Andrea Hesse
CEO, ACDS

Visit the [ACDS website](#) for further information about the Community Disability Services sector.