

**Priorities Related to the Community Disability Services Sector**  
**Survey of Alberta UCP Leadership Candidates**



On July 26, 2022, ACDS invited all [approved UCP leadership candidates](#) to respond to three questions about their policy and program priorities related to the Community Disability Services (CDS) sector. Responses will be recorded on this chart as they are received.

What policies and programs will you introduce, and what existing policies and programs will you advance to support the quality of life of individuals with developmental disabilities?	How will you improve support to community disability service providers to help them serve individuals with developmental disabilities?	How will you address the Community Disability Services sector's current workforce crisis?
<p><b>Rebecca Schulz</b></p> <p>A Rebecca Schulz government commits to working with the ACDS to review existing programming and financial assistance programs to ensure it is working in the best interests of the individuals who access these programs. We also know families often face confusion in navigating these programs and accessing support. Ultimately, we want all Albertans to be treated fairly and ensure they have access to the support they need to live a full life.</p> <p>Rebecca was the first candidate to release a policy on affordability, which commits to re-indexing personal income tax and creating the Alberta Activity Grant to ensure Albertans can access sport and recreational activities while keeping more money in their pockets.</p> <p>More attention will be paid to increasing financial support for post-secondary learning opportunities for individuals with disabilities and looking at how we can work together for better work integration.</p>	<p>A Rebecca Schulz government would commit to working with all community disability service providers to learn more about the challenges and opportunities and ways in which we can all work together to ensure a better quality of life for all Albertans. As Minister of Children Services, Rebecca worked with child care providers across the province to ensure a fair deal under the federal \$10/day child care agreement.</p> <p>The agreement Rebecca negotiated has been applauded by many other provincial jurisdictions and is the only agreement that included private daycare operators and redesigned the inclusive child care program to better respond to needs across the province and help child care centres to offer parents of children with disabilities the opportunities that child care provides.</p> <p>She also worked with non-profits to review and redesign supports for vulnerable families. Her approach isn't top-down, but is to listen to and partner with community organizations to better serve Albertans. Rebecca will work tirelessly for all Albertans to ensure a better quality of life.</p>	<p>As former Minister of Children's Services, Rebecca knows how incredibly important disability workers are. Employers across Alberta are struggling with significant labour force challenges and creative, common sense approaches are needed to address these, especially in crucial areas like the disability sector. She committed to working with your sector to solve the problems you see every day - this means reviewing the proposal for compensation immediately following the leadership vote.</p>
<p><b>Leela Aheer</b></p> <p><i>Awaiting response</i></p>		
<p><b>Brian Jean</b></p> <p><i>Awaiting response</i></p>		

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<b>Todd Loewen</b>	Awaiting response		
<b>Rajan Sawhney</b>	<p>I was fortunate to serve as Minister of Community and Social Services (CSS) from 2019 – 2021, an experience that changed my life. This ministry oversees AISH, PDD, FSCD and other programs that support vulnerable Albertans. I had to gain a solid understanding of who we serve and why we have these programs. I found that together, these programs serve as a life preserver for tens of thousands of vulnerable Albertans with chronic and debilitating physical - and mental - conditions and their families. Accordingly, I am completely committed to protecting these programs, and indeed investing significantly more in them.</p> <p>During this leadership campaign I have expressed regret that AISH was temporarily de-indexed and have made a commitment that I will once again tie AISH payments to inflation. We know that AISH, which provides for basic costs including housing, food, and medicine, has not kept up with rising costs. In order to keep up with the cost of living and inflation, I commit to indexing AISH and other benefits (like Income support and Senior's benefits).</p> <p>When I was the Minister, I ensured that a significant portion of CERB could be retained and not clawed back so that all AISH recipients who were eligible for CERB were better off than \$2000 / month. I do believe a new formula needs to be in place to review the current claw backs. I would engage with the Disability community to understand where the most impactful opportunities exist. And that does include looking at EI benefits.</p> <p>Community and Social Services has recently conducted a large scale PDD review, work that as Premier I will leverage. I have stated that I will review the operations and funding for all of CSS' programs, including PDD, FSCD, AISH, the FCSS program and more, with a interest in making strategic investments that will benefit the most vulnerable Albertans who depend on these programs</p>	<p>During the pandemic, I made every effort to ensure that the most vulnerable Albertans, and those who care for them, were protected as much as possible. I know that workers who support Albertans with disabilities have largely not seen any increases in wages in several years, and this needs to be addressed. We also need to work together – government, clients, and community agencies – to refine our models of client and worker safety. We need to work with our post secondary systems and immigration and job training programs to ensure that this industry attracts the best and brightest young people. Again, as stated above I will champion this sector and ensure that Alberta is once again the national leader in all aspects of caring for individuals with developmental and other disabilities.</p>	<p>This is a complicated problem, but more can be brought to bare to attempt to address it. First of all, we must seek to create more workers who choose to work in this industry. As stated above, this will need collaboration between government, care providers, patients, and their families, as well as the post secondary education system.</p> <p>We also need to re-evaluate all other forms of workplace attraction. This is a province-wide crisis that is negatively affecting all industries, including the CDS sector, in an acute way. I would like to work with the federal government to determine stronger national standards, with the public and private sector unions, employers and family organizations. I would consider tax incentives, grants, training, and any other tool that government may be able to bring to bare. It is important to state that my approach will be collaborative; it is the sector who already holds much of the knowledge of what needs to be done. I will listen, and I will act on your behalf, as I have always done.</p> <p><a href="#">See additional information provided by Rajan Sawhney in answer to question 3.</a></p>

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<b>Danielle Smith</b> <i>Awaiting response</i>		
<b>Travis Toews</b> <i>Awaiting response</i>		