

## **Statement from Andrea Hesse, CEO, Alberta Council of Disability Services**

### **High-Quality, Largely Non-Profit, Community-Based Disability Service Delivery**

Across the human services in Alberta, organizations, largely non-profits, have for many years provided high-quality, responsive services to Albertans in the communities where they live. Currently 90% of the services accessed by individuals with developmental disabilities through the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) program and Family Support for Individuals with Disabilities (FSCD) program, are provided by contracted community-based service providers or by staff hired directly by families through Family Managed Services (FMS).

Community-based, service delivery for individuals with developmental disabilities emerged from the deinstitutionalization movement in the 1960's and 1970's, in response to demand for publicly-funded, community-based care in local communities. This was further augmented with the addition of individual and family managed care models in the 1980's. This service delivery model ensures individuals have access to high-quality services by skilled, local community agencies where they live and throughout their lives.

These organizations have demonstrated that services are most effective, responsive and efficient when delivered in communities by contracted serviced providers. Many organizations in Alberta have been providing these services for decades, with unparalleled expertise and relationships in their communities, and by continuing to identify and meet the evolving needs of individuals and families. Based on June 2020 caseload information, of the 12,676 individuals receiving services through the PDD program, 85% (10,836) access services from a contracted service provider with 20% (2534) have FMS and 5% (209) receiving direct government provided services.\*

PDD service providers in Alberta are contracted regionally and employ approximately 13,000 well-trained and dedicated staff to support individuals. All service providers are contractually obligated to be accredited under either the ACDS Creating Excellence Together (CET) standards, or an approved equivalent accreditation body. This includes direct government services who are currently accredited under CET.

ACDS Creating Excellence Together (CET) Accreditation sets the benchmark standards in Alberta for supports to adults with developmental disabilities. CET standards measure quality of service, organizational governance and operational effectiveness, and how these factors impact on individuals' assessment of their quality of life. Organizations must meet CET Level 1's suite of 47 standards (or approved equivalent) to qualify for PDD funding. Organizations may also choose the higher CET Level 2 to demonstrate further excellence. Additional indicators are also available for services for children with disabilities, respite support, and complex supports needs designation.

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. In addition to advocating for effective policy, ACDS is committed to advancing excellence and best practices through standards development, building capacity in organizations, and providing professional development and training for community disability workers.

Currently, with over 140 members located in every region of Alberta, ACDS represents close-to 85% of PDD-funded agencies.

#### **Sources:**

- (1) PDD Caseload by Service Delivery Models. Alberta Open Data Portal accessed Sept 11, 2020
- (2) Sonpal-Valias. 2019. History of Developmental Disability Policy in Alberta. University of Calgary School of Public Policy SPP Research Paper Vol. 12:20.
- (3) ACDS. 2019. Portrait of ACDS Members 2019.

---

\*Some individuals receive services from more than one service model