

April 11, 2019

Alberta Council of Disability Services

2019 Provincial Election Survey Responses

A panel was appointed in September 2018 to review the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Program. This review was recommended during a previous community consultation and has been community driven. Stakeholder and community consultations were held in October – December 2018 with continued work scheduled in 2019 to develop recommendations and a path forward.

What would your party do to ensure that the review process continues and is conducted in collaboration with community stakeholders?

A United Conservative government is committed to enacting policies that support the desires, dignity and choices of Albertans with disabilities.

We will work with the disability community to develop an approach to personal and individualized disability-related supports by restoring the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) program to its pre-2009 eligibility criteria or by eliminating the existing division of age and access by incorporating PDD, the Brain Injury Initiative, FASD Networks funding and Family Supports for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) into comprehensive programming that is family and individual-centered.

PDD contracts with community service providers do not fund all the true costs of service delivery. In addition, funding for staff wages has not been addressed since 2014. Both have a severe impact on organizational sustainability, recruitment and retention, and the ability to provide quality services.

What would your party do to ensure prudent investment in the sector through contracts that recognize true costs, are flexible, responsive, and ensure the delivery of quality care?

If elected, a United Conservative government will seek input from all relevant stakeholders on how best to approach these important issues so PDD contracts reflect the true costs of service delivery, are flexible, responsive and ensure the delivery of quality care.

Individuals with disabilities need access to support services in the communities where they live. Family Managed Services is one option that is suitable for some families however, not all families are able or willing to manage their own services, while others prefer to have agencies provide the services for other reasons. In these situations community agencies are critical to supporting community based supports. Alberta's experience has shown us that service delivery is most cost-effective and efficient when delivered in communities by contracted agencies. Through research, partnerships and continuous learning, agencies have the expertise to provide world-class services consistent with best practice standards. Additionally, they are both strategic and nimble enough to meet unique needs that arise in their community. Contract agencies have succeeded through economic highs and lows by having strong business models, a focus on efficiency, professionalism and a passion for their work. Communities look to these agencies as resources during good times and bad.

What would your party do to work collaboratively and support the provision of community-based service delivery?

Albertans who have disabilities desire to live a full life with dignity. The United Conservatives believe the government should do more to help Albertans with disabilities achieve this goal.

We have committed to restoring the Wellness Resiliency and Partnerships program (ended by the NDP government) to support children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in schools with funding of \$1 million/year. We will expand the successful Family Managed Supports (FMS) model by establishing four new family governed resource centres to serve St. Paul, Grande Prairie, Medicine Hat, and Edmonton families at \$1.5 million/year.

The lives of individuals with disabilities intersect with multiple programs and services, and are shaped by a broad range of policy areas, yet, a disability impact lens is frequently not considered in policy outside core disability mandates.

What would your party do to ensure government policies, programs, and initiatives assess and address their potential impact on individuals with disabilities in the same way that governments often conduct analysis of policies, programs and processes for other frequently impacted groups?

A United Conservative government is committed to an Inclusive Disability Agenda that will support Albertans with disabilities to live full lives with dignity and equal opportunities.

We will on successful partnerships like Abilities at Work and the Rotary Employment Partnerships by providing \$5 million/year for new partnerships to create job opportunities for persons with disabilities. We will provide \$2 million for planned growth of the number of students with developmental disabilities supported to study in inclusive post-secondary education at Alberta universities, colleges, and technical institutes

Convene a Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) Action Group with members from the financial services industry, government, and the disability community. Allocate \$500,000 annually to help Albertans open RDSPs and access the thousands of dollars in federal government grants and bonds available to them

Support Albertans with disabilities to stay in their homes by reducing wait times and expanding access for Self-Managed Care and increasing funds available under the Residential Access Modification Program