

ROBIN HOOD ASSOCIATION

Minister Jeremy Nixon
Minister of Seniors, Community & Social Services
227 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue NW
Edmonton, AB
T5K 2B6
Calgary.Klein@assembly.ab.ca

Dear Honourable Minister Jeremy Nixon,

The **Robin Hood Association** (RHA) would like to sincerely thank you and your department for listening and responding to the essential work being done in the disability sector. Your actions provide the critical first steps needed to support a skilled and sustainable workforce for the disability sector. Internal RHA employee feedback to date, suggests that most staff are very appreciative of the positive actions implemented recently and that there is optimism for a better future.

For the past 60 years, RHA has been the primary provider of services to children and adults with developmental disabilities in Sherwood Park, Fort Saskatchewan, and surrounding areas. Robin Hood Association was founded by and continues to be made up of families and friends of people with disabilities in our community. Governance is provided by a Volunteer Board comprised of Directors who represent RHA individuals/family members, along with individuals from the broader community that have expertise, passion, and commitment to RHA's service objectives. The scope of services provided range from Early Intervention, Birth to "Aging in Place" and End of life. RHA Services are delivered to meet individuals needs and outcomes through Community Access; Hourly and Daily Respite; Employment Services; Support Homes and Supported Independent Living. RHA currently serve approximately 350 adults (PDD) and 350 children (FSCD), and operate 56 overnight staffed homes with 2-8 persons per shared living residence. These children and adults in service include over 140 individuals with complex medical and/or behavioral needs.

RHA also plays an active support role with Alberta Council of Disabilities Services (ACDS) and continues to advocate for the actions identified and shared with you on the Blueprint CDS: A Comprehensive Workforce Strategy.

https://acds.ca/files/Workforce/BlueprintCDSComprehensiveWorkforceStrategyfortheCDSSector_Technical.pdf.

Your announcement to increase our funding contract by 10% for front-line staff, plus a 5% increase in administration expense funding was welcome news. Unfortunately, a significant funding gap remains after your announcement. Specifically, the area of administrative operation expenses remains a

concern, as it impacts RHS's ability to take on new client demand from the community and help alleviate current PDD waitlist. Without the incremental administration funding *since 2014*, the RHA Board had to make the decision *a few years ago*, to freeze new service intakes, to protect RHA's financial health and services for existing RHA clients.

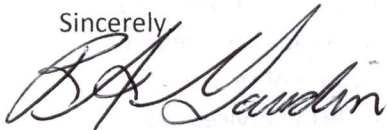
As you are aware, PDD support individuals determined to be the most "critical and urgent" with funding provided for only direct services. This demographic of individuals typically requires more extensive resources to support their needs and transition to services, which requires administrative resources. When direct service grows, incremental administration funding is required to support this growth. With your announcement of \$42.5 million to create more access to PDD and FSCD and reduce waitlists, and \$8.5 million allocated to service providers for administration, RHA is optimistic that it can be a strong partner in supporting the reduction of PDD waitlist, with some enhanced level of administration funding.

RHA intends to submit a future Business Case to Seniors, Community & Social Services that will outline our current situation around our operating expenses and required funding to allow RHA to be a full partner going forward.

On behalf of the Board, Membership, and Staff of RHA we appreciate and thank you again for focusing on the current and long-standing issues in the sector. We look forward to further positive actions and sustainable commitments to improve the lives of persons with disabilities, their families and the essential staff supporting them.

We would also like to extend an invitation to meet with you to share our experiences and collaborate on possible solutions that would better meet the current and future needs for individuals with disabilities and their families in our communities.

Sincerely



R.A. Arnie Gaudin

President, Robin Hood Association Board

cc. Honourable Nate Glubish – Strathcona.Sherwoodpark@assembly.ab.ca

Mr. Jordan Walker – Sherwood.Park@assembly.ab.ca

Honourable Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk – FortSaskatchewan.Vegreville@assembly.ab.ca

RHA Board of Directors