

May 18, 2011

Dear [Board Chair]:

**Re: Strategic Directions to Improve the Administration of the PDD Program**

As you are aware, in June 2010 I engaged KPMG to carry out a review of administration costs within the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) program. The review examined current processes to administer the program and the associated costs of administration, including the administrative operations of the Community Boards, the department's PDD Program Branch, and administrative funding provided to contracted service agencies and families who manage supports directly.

The review was completed and the final report and recommendations were submitted to me in September 2010. Attached is a copy of the final report for your information and review. It is also available on the Ministry's website at: [www.seniors.gov.ab.ca/PDD/AdminReview/](http://www.seniors.gov.ab.ca/PDD/AdminReview/). It is important that you and all members of your Community Board are aware of the results of the review. Many aspects of this report will be the basis of continued discussions about how to improve the administrative efficiency of the program.

I am committed to taking significant and concrete steps to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the PDD program. Any savings as a result of administrative efficiencies will be reinvested in frontline services for adults with developmental disabilities. At the same time, I want to ensure services to individuals are not disrupted and their safety is maintained.

The KPMG Report recommended significant changes to the governance and operational structures of the PDD program. In order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness in how the program is administered, I have accepted four of the six recommendations, as follows:

- ensure consistent administration of the PDD program that includes clearly defined roles and responsibilities and common processes;
- support and enhance the use of Family Managed Services as an option for families;
- replace the current information system with an integrated case management system that will allow for one view of the individual by both the PDD program and the service provider network; and
- improve the process to contract with service agencies for the provision of supports for adults with developmental disabilities by implementing a new alternate contracting strategy.

I have not accepted KPMG's recommendations to dissolve the six Community Boards and establish an advisory council. I believe that significant improvements can be made in the PDD program when the Community Boards are working together with Ministry officials on our common goal of creating the best outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities.

I have also asked Mrs. Genia Leskiw, MLA for Bonnyville - Cold Lake, to lead the consultation with individuals, families and PDD-funded service agencies on implementation of an alternate contracting process. The consultation process will involve focus group meetings with service agencies and families in six communities (one per region) in June. Separate sessions will be held for self-advocates in each of the six communities. I look forward to your support of this consultation process.

The results of the administrative review and the government's decisions on the recommendations reflect and reinforce my commitment to the PDD program and the individuals it serves. My goal is to ensure the PDD program is:

1. focused on positive outcomes for adults with developmental disabilities;
2. consistent and effective in the administration and delivery of supports and services based on a "one program" approach; and
3. sustainable.

### **Strategic Directions for Improvement**

In order to ensure that my, and government's, goals and priorities are achieved, and in accordance with the authority set out in section 9.1 of the *Persons with Developmental Disabilities Community Governance Act* ("the PDD Act"), I am directing the six Community Boards and the department to work together to:

- Develop and implement a common approach to communicate information about the PDD program to the public through the Ministry website. Community Board websites will be amalgamated into the Ministry website by September 30, 2011.
- Take active steps to support and enhance the use of Family Managed Services by September 30, 2011. This will include developing common information, resources and tools that will be accessible to families across the province who want to use this option.
- Establish and implement common processes to support the administration and delivery of the PDD program in alignment with the Alberta Supports initiative.
- Develop a common organizational approach across the regions for management and frontline positions that reflect a one-organization approach for the PDD program by December 2011.
- Identify and implement opportunities for improved internal efficiency through consolidation and centralization of some common functions.
- Share best practices on an ongoing basis and report quarterly across regions to ensure the PDD program demonstrates continuous improvement to our clients.

- Based on the consultation results, design an alternate contracting strategy to focus on improving positive outcomes for clients and reduce external administration costs.
- Develop a strategy for a common accountability framework for funded service agencies by December 31, 2011.
- Establish one or more pilot projects in January 2012 to test specific components of the alternate contracting strategy in order to achieve full implementation of the new contracting approach in April 2013.
- In collaboration with other regions and my officials, develop the business requirements for a new and improved integrated client information technology system that will provide improved case management, payment for services, and monitoring of supports for individuals with developmental disabilities. This work will be done by the Spring of 2012, and must be done within the framework of the Alberta Supports initiative.
- Develop and implement a process to redirect any saving from the measures identified in this letter and other administrative savings to frontline services for individuals supported by the PDD program.

The PDD Council of Chairs will play a key role to oversee and monitor progress on the implementation of the above directions, and ensure that all of the Boards and regional operations are working collaboratively and sharing best practices to further enhance the program. I have also asked Ministry officials to play a key role in coordinating and supporting this work to ensure that it is undertaken in a timely manner. Regular reports on progress are to be provided to me on a quarterly basis. The first report will be due to me by September 30, 2011. A template will be developed to assist in the reporting process to ensure that critical areas of focus, achievements and challenges are reported on.

I am committed to improving the administration of the PDD program. I want to ensure that the administration of the PDD program is effective and efficient, supporting the achievement of positive outcomes for adults with developmental disabilities. I will be personally reviewing the progress to implement the above-noted directions, and expect significant results in each quarterly report. I am confident you will be able to achieve the needed results to meet the established goals.

I want to thank you for your work, your efforts to date, and your support for the direction and changes to the PDD program. I believe that the Boards, under the leadership of the Council of Chairs, will continue to play an important role in improving the program and ensuring that Albertans with developmental disabilities receive the services they need in an efficient way. I look forward to continuing to work with you.

Yours truly,

Mary Anne Jablonski  
Minister

Attachment

cc: Robert Bhatia  
Deputy Minister