

## **Combined Partnership to Improve Community-based Support Services for Ontarians with Complex Needs**

Goal to improve outcomes while helping reduce strain on system

**TORONTO, October 1, 2019** – Two leading, accredited, not-for-profit agencies, DeafBlind Ontario Services and PHSS (Participating, Housing, Supports and Services), have formed an integrative partnership to jointly advocate for and provide high quality, holistic and robust community supports to individuals who have highly specialized and unique needs across Ontario. The partnership comes at a time when significant changes are underway in Ontario’s health and social support systems as a means to help ensure these populations’ needs continue to be recognized and addressed.

“The combined services of DeafBlind Ontario Services and PHSS provides long-term value through quality, specialized support for individuals with multiple, complex needs,” said Roxanna Spruyt-Rocks, CEO of DeafBlind Ontario Services. “Rather than being inappropriately admitted to a hospital or long term care facility, they can remain in the community with appropriate supports, which is less taxing on the health care system. Savings from this integration will allow us to further bolster the necessary services we provide Ontarians.”

The objective of the partnership is to develop opportunities to integrate administration, systems and approaches that will allow for more efficient, person-focused services while operating in a more cost-effective manner. The partnership will enhance the ability of DeafBlind Ontario Services and PHSS to share specialized expertise and services for the benefit of the people they support, while working together to promote the unique needs of these populations who require access to integrated support services and health care across Ontario.

“We want to achieve an efficient, sustainable system that helps remove barriers for people who require a flexible mix of health care and supports to promote improved health outcomes and increase their independence,” said Brian Dunne, President and CEO of PHSS. “Without this support, the quality of life for individuals, their families, and communities would be negatively impacted and the health care system will continue to be strained.”

The agencies provide different but complementary services: DeafBlind Ontario Services focuses on residential and customized support services across the province for people with deafblindness or sensory loss. They provide Intervenor Services, trained specialists who facilitate the exchange of information and assist with communication to empower people with deafblindness to thrive.. PHSS provides 24-hour support to people with significant developmental and/or physical disabilities and complex medical needs so they can live in their own homes, participate in the community, and enjoy life with family and friends.