

OPPORTUNITIES/SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT--Province Partners with Dalhousie University to Expand Supports for People with Disabilities

The Province is partnering with Dalhousie University to provide more support, including allied health services, for people with disabilities.

The partnership will create one of four new disability support outreach teams in the province. The teams will provide a broad range of services that complement services available in the community. The goal is to help people with disabilities live more independently and successfully in their communities.

Through the Dalhousie partnership, the university will provide space and support for clinical education and training, while the Province will fund key outreach team positions and operational supports. The new opportunities for education, training and research will better prepare future health professionals to deliver inclusive, community-based care.

“I’m excited about this partnership with Dalhousie University and the opportunity it creates to connect education, training and care,” said Susan Corkum-Greek, Minister of Opportunities and Social Development. “By creating more opportunities for practicum placements, training and research, we are helping future health professionals better understand how to support persons with disabilities in a way that respects their rights and dignity.”

Establishing allied health teams supports one of the key directions of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Remedy. Allied health refers to health professionals who provide essential support in diagnostics and therapeutic services to aid in the treatment and management of health conditions.

The teams are multidisciplinary and may include occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech language pathologists, social workers, dietitians and other health specialists. Some of the services the teams will provide include:

- health assessments, treatment and/or recommendations
- skill development to support physical, mental and social well-being
- education, coaching and consultation for families, caregivers and support providers.

Quotes:

“Dalhousie’s faculty of health is well positioned to lead this integrated, multidisciplinary community health hub, building on the strong foundation of our social work community clinic. By bringing our existing clinic together with provincially funded interprofessional health services, we are expanding access to co-ordinated, person-centred care while deepening hands-on learning opportunities for students across health disciplines – strengthening both our communities and the next generation of health professionals.”

— *Brenda Merritt, Dean, Dalhousie faculty of health*

Quick Facts:

- a disability support outreach team will be available in each region – western, central, northern and

eastern

- the Dalhousie partnership will serve the central region and will be in place later this year
- the western region team is currently providing services, and planning is underway for services in the eastern and northern regions
- Disability Support Program participants will be connected to services through their care co-ordinator, intensive planning and support co-ordinator, or local area co-ordinator
- the initiative supports Nova Scotia's work to strengthen disability supports, enhance community-based services and advance work on the Nova Scotia Human Rights Remedy, complementing services provided by Nova Scotia Health, IWK Health and community partners

Additional Resources:

Disability system transformation news and updates: <https://www.dsp-transformation.ca/>

Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission – Remedy in Disability Rights Coalition vs. Province of Nova Scotia: <https://humanrights.novascotia.ca/remedy>

News releases related to the Nova Scotia Human Rights Remedy:
https://news.novascotia.ca/search/all?field_topics=339

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