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DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES ADVOCACY GROUP UNVEILS REVAMPED BRAND IDENTITY, MARKING NEW ERA OF CHAMPIONING SECTOR NEEDS

The Great Lakes Society for Developmental Services of Ontario will now be known as the Specialized Clinical Developmental Services Network

KITCHENER, ON | APRIL 17, 2024 – The Specialized Clinical DS Network (SCDSN), a 16-member advocacy group for developmental services organizations across Ontario, is excited to reveal its new brand identity that reflects its continued evolution and vision for the future. Unveiled at its recent Annual Clinical Conference in April, the rebranding helps to solidify the network’s commitment to being a strong and cohesive voice advocating for specialized clinical services in the developmental services sector.

“With local healthcare systems stretched like never before, now more than ever the role of specialized clinical services is essential to supporting the health and well-being of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD),” says Brian Swainson, Board Chair of the Specialized Clinical DS Network. *“The Specialized Clinical DS Network advocates on behalf of those with IDD, ensuring equity in access to healthcare services.”*

In addition to the new name, SCDSN, formerly known as The Great Lakes Society for Developmental Services of Ontario, also has a new logo and [new website](#). By simplifying the name and creating new brand assets, SCDSN hopes to enhance visibility and recognition within the developmental, health and social services communities, facilitating greater access to resources and supports for persons living with IDD.

The 16-member developmental services organizations across the province provide an impressive array of embedded clinical services in developmental services. These services include:

- Audiology
- Applied Behavior Analysis
- Board Certified Behavior Analysts
- Developmental Therapy
- Dual Diagnosis Supports
- Registered Dietitians
- Kinesiology
- Dental Services
- Family Medicine
- Pediatric Medicine
- Neurology
- Pharmacy
- Psychiatry
- Registered Nursing (NP, RN, RPN)
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Psychology
- Psychometry
- Seating Technicians
- Registered Social Workers
- Speech Language Pathology
- and more.

SCDSN participates in advocacy campaigns and position papers on the importance of tailoring healthcare to the needs of persons living with IDD and ensuring equitable access to healthcare. The most recent [position paper](#), published by the *Provincial Network on Developmental Services* in Fall 2023, calls for a commitment of annualized provincial funding to grow and sustain embedded specialized clinical services in the developmental services sector.

This evidence-based recommendation recognizes the critical role of specialized clinical services in preventing and reducing emergency room visits and hospital admissions, enabling timely and successful discharge from hospital, avoiding hospital readmissions, to supporting provincial efforts to eliminate the prevalence of persons with IDD inappropriately housed in hospitals, supports equity in access to healthcare and improve overall health outcomes and quality of life for persons living with IDD.

“Although the recently released provincial budget indicates an additional investment in the developmental services sector, it falls significantly short of the 5% base funding increase advocated for by many provincial associations and service providers in the sector. While health and other community services sectors have benefited from regular annual base funding increases from government to keep pace with inflation, the developmental services sector has not. SCDSN shares the sector’s concern that chronic funding shortfalls put at risk the essential supports and clinical services required by persons with IDD,” Swainson added.

Investing in developmental services is critical to ensuring people with IDD have the supports they need in an inclusive society and to ensure specialized clinical supports protect critical community infrastructure including local hospitals and emergency departments.

To learn more about the Specialized Clinical DS Network please visit: www.scdsn.org

ABOUT SPECIALIZED CLINICAL DS NETWORK MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

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| Access Community Services | Hands TheFamilyHealthNetwork.ca |
| Bethesda | Ongwanada |
| Brantwood Community Services | OPTIONS Northwest |
| Canopy Support Services | Pathways to Independence |
| Central West Specialized Developmental Services | Regional Supports Associates |
| CLH Developmental Support Services | Sunbeam Community & Developmental Services |
| Cochrane Temiskaming Resource Centre | Surrey Place |
| Developmental Services of Leeds and Grenville | Valor & Solutions |

Website: scdsn.org
Email: admin@scdsn.org
Mailing Address: Specialized Clinical DS Network
PO Main Box 28
Peterborough, ON K9J 6Y5

For media inquiries, please contact:

Melissa Durrell, CEO
Durrell Communications
Melissa@durrellcomm.com