

## Developmental services body holding hearings

The Select Committee on Developmental Services concluded a week of public hearings across Ontario, and Dufferin & Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones called them an essential part of the Select Committee's work.

“Hosting public hearings in communities across Ontario is important because it increases people's chances of appearing before the committee,” commented Jones, who sits on the committee. “People and families who have direct experience in the developmental services sector must have an opportunity to come before the committee and present.”

“I have heard from many families in Dufferin-Caledon who are frustrated with the difficulty in accessing services that are provided by different ministries,” said Jones. “After hearing presentations from individuals and organizations in different communities, it became clear to me that families in Dufferin-Caledon are not alone. Individuals and families across the province are facing similar issues.”

A Select Committee of the Ontario Legislature has a much broader mandate and scope than Standing Committees of the Legislature. This is one of the reasons establishing a Select Committee on Developmental Services was important. In order to conduct a comprehensive review of developmental services in Ontario fully, the committee needed to be able to review multiple ministries and programs.

The committee has now held hearings in London, Thunder Bay, Moose Factory, Ottawa and Toronto. Public hearings are scheduled to continue this week in Toronto.

“In Ontario there are approximately 100,000 to 200,000 Ontarians living with an intellectual disability or who are dually diagnosed,” Jones observed. “These hearings have demonstrated that now more than ever we need a comprehensive, long-term plan for the developmental services sector in Ontario.”