FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 30, 2020

CASW Statement on the 2020 Fall Economic Update

OTTAWA - Throughout this deeply unsettling time, the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) has been encouraged by the leadership role that the Government of Canada has demonstrated throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Yet, as the pandemic continues, the federal government must do more to meet this challenge by setting a bold new course, one that structurally addresses the growing inequality in Canada” states CASW President, Joan Davis Whelan. “Inequality profoundly exposed by the pandemic.”

CASW welcomes and applauds the first steps toward a National Child Care Strategy as an important move to address inequality and the “childcare crisis” arising from a lack of access and funding for childcare-related services and supports.

CASW was also pleased to see systemic underfunding of our Long-term Care Facilities partially addressed, as well as temporary supports for low and middle-income families eligible for the Canada child benefit (CCB).

“However, without introducing an economic floor like Universal Basic Income, Canadians will continue to fall through the cracks of temporary fiscal supports; supports that are often clawed back by the provinces” states Davis-Whelan "Leaving people repeatedly exposed to the trap of poverty.”

Consequently, CASW strongly advocates that the Government of Canada adopt a new form of measurement to gauge Canadian’s ability to overcome and succeed throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic and beyond - a Canadian Gross National Well-Being. This index should aim to address all dimensions including economic, environmental, physical, mental, work, social, and political.

“It is the role and responsibility of the Government of Canada to put the needs of Canadians first” states Davis-Whelan “By championing a new kind of fiscal anchor, one based on human and community well-being, Canada has the opportunity to lead the world in recovery. ``

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