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## AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT ON TARGET SAY CHILD CARE OPERATORS

*For Immediate Release*

**October 1, 2025**--The Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario (ADCO), the industry association for Ontario's independent licensed child care providers, both commercial and not-for-profit, wishes to congratulate the Province's Auditor General, Shelley Spence, and her team, on their work assessing Ontario's roll-out of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care program (CWELCC) and on the release of their [Special Report](#) earlier today.

"Today's report highlights many of the issues identified by Ontario's independent licensed child care owner/operators since the CWELCC's implementation began in 2022," says Andrea Hannen, ADCO's executive director. "Our members have always been concerned that the federal program's design would wind up excluding many lower-income families. We could also see waitlists growing exponentially, while spaces sat vacant because of the federal rules limiting small business participation in the program. The Auditor General's report is an important step toward getting these issues resolved."

In addition to access challenges for families, the report identifies staffing shortages as another area of concern. "Child care owner/operators have struggled with this since Ontario introduced its government-run kindergarten program, which put a teacher and an ECE in every school-based kindergarten classroom," says Hannen. "Staffing levels in the sector have never really bounced back from this. We appreciated that today's report acknowledged the lack of wage parity between ECEs working in the school system and those working in licensed child care centres."

Hannen notes that staffing issues in the sector are complex and references the December 2024 [Performance Audit of the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program](#), which pointed out that nominations for ECEs and ECAs have not kept pace with the growth in demand for these professionals. "To fully address Ontario's child care staffing shortages, there needs to be much more collaboration between the federal and provincial governments to prioritize permanent residency for recent graduates who have earned their ECE certifications at Ontario's post-secondary institutions."

Today's report also identifies a significant funding shortfall in Ontario, calling into question the CWELCC's long-term sustainability. "Nobody should really be surprised by this given that Ontario is the only province that filters federal funds through municipal governments before they can be used for child care, so the money doesn't go as far here as it might in some other jurisdictions," says Hannen. "We were pleased to see the Ministry of Education commit to doing things in a more standardized way, as reporting requirements for child care centres currently vary widely from one municipality to the next. Hopefully, greater standardization will reduce red tape for child care operators and bring about cost-savings in the municipal administration of the program. Both are important for improving sustainability and access for families."

ADCO appreciated the opportunity to contribute to the Auditor General's review of Ontario's CWELCC roll-out and looks forward to working with the Province to help implement many of the recommendations it contains.

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***Established in 1981, ADCO is the industry association for Ontario's independent licensed child care centres, both commercial and not-for-profit. Independent licensed child care centres are those that are not run by public sector entities such as municipalities or school boards, or by large multi-service agencies such as YMCAs. Most are small businesses, owned and operated by women. For further information, please contact: the Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario (ADCO) at admin@adco-o.on.ca or Andrea Hannen at 1-877-685-4288, ext. 1.***