

MEDIA RELEASE

CanFASD Announces New Director of Strategic Partnerships and Initiatives

Ottawa, ON – March 31, 2025 The Canada FASD Research Network (CanFASD) is excited to announce **Audrey McFarlane** will be moving into a new role as the Director of Strategic Partnerships and Initiatives. Kathy Unsworth will transition into the role of Executive Director, effective April 1, 2025.

Audrey McFarlane has been the Executive Director at CanFASD since 2017 and she served on CanFASD’s Board of Directors for several years before that. In her new role, McFarlane will continue to drive CanFASD’s key partnerships and initiatives while scaling back her responsibilities to better balance her passion for the field of FASD and the commitments in her personal life. Her extensive knowledge and network within the FASD community will remain a vital asset to CanFASD as the organization works to strengthen its national leadership and broaden its impact.

Board Chair Olecia Walker expressed enthusiasm about this new position, headed by McFarlane: “CanFASD has grown a lot in a short period of time and our roles and responsibilities are evolving. We are excited about the new role of Director of Strategic Partnerships and Initiatives, as it will be critical to help us build and strengthen key partnerships that our Network is built on, both within and outside the FASD community. Audrey is the perfect person to take on this role. She has been a cornerstone of CanFASD for many years and she will continue to be, playing an instrumental role in the organization’s growth and strategic initiatives.”

“Throughout my time working in this field, I have seen firsthand the incredible impact that research and evidence has had on people with FASD, their communities, and those that support them,” **says McFarlane.** “I believe strongly that the key to our success is collaboration and innovation. Under the leadership of Kathy Unsworth, I am excited to continue to build on the partnerships we have across Canada to support our organization’s ambitious goals, including advancing policy reform, supporting regulatory bodies, and improving national coordination on FASD issues.

About FASD:

FASD stands for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. It is a lifelong disability that affects the

brain and body of people who were exposed to alcohol in the womb. Each person with FASD has both strengths and challenges and will need special supports to help them succeed with many different parts of their daily lives. Find out more about the disability on the [CanFASD website](#).

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