



## **PRESS STATEMENT**

**The Minister of Social Development and Seniors**

**The Honourable Tinee Furbert JP, MP**

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020, 1pm**

**at Global House**

Good Afternoon Bermuda,

It is my pleasure to address you officially, for the first time, as Minister of Social Development and Seniors.

Throughout my career as an Occupational Therapist, I have had the pleasure of serving persons from across our community and have seen the needs of our people firsthand when it comes to healthcare and social issues.

There is no greater honour for me than to be able to use the skills and knowledge learned throughout my career to bring about change where it is needed most.

To fill the void that exists when young people “age out” of government care, this Government will establish Independent Living Coordinators which will be a part of a transitional service. The Independent Living Coordinators will create individual plans for our young people coming out of care, to provide affordable housing options, post-secondary education and career and financial advice as well as access to physical and mental healthcare.

We must not allow our young people to fall through the cracks; we must offer them the tools they need to make smart and informed choices that stand them in good stead for the future.

This Government is dedicated to helping young people achieve their full potential and we are committed to providing services and programmes that are consumer-centered, which address social and emotional needs and foster self-determination and self-sufficiency.

It is along a similar vein that we will replace the outdated Child Care Placement Board by a Children’s Commission, whose

remit will be to advocate for the children in care. The Commission will comprise of representatives from the Department of Child and Family Services; the Ministry of Health; Child and Adolescence Services and the Ministry of Education. Currently there is no mechanism for children who present multi-disciplinary challenges that are outside of the scope of any individual government department or agency; the Commission will enable a concerted effort in facilitating the wellbeing of the child.

Finally, we will develop a National Seniors Strategy, working in collaboration with government and community stakeholders who work with seniors. The National Seniors Strategy will also address dementia care and a prevention plan for seniors' abuse. The strategies will be designed to address the following goals: planning and accountability, workforce development and education, employment and financial security, healthy ageing, ageing at home, long term care, accessible transportation, safety and security, intergenerational and inclusive communities. Ageing with dignity and supporting families who devote themselves to caring for their senior loved ones is a community effort.

Thank you Bermuda. I am happy to take any questions which members of the media may have.