

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Generations Come Together as Perley Health Opens New Intergenerational Early Learning Centre

Purpose-built Centre with Andrew Fleck Children's Services creates daily opportunities for children, Veterans and Seniors and to connect, while helping build knowledge that can benefit long-term care communities across Canada

OTTAWA, ON, September 16, 2026 — Perley Health and Andrew Fleck Children's Services today celebrated the grand opening of a purpose-built early learning centre where babies, toddlers, preschoolers, Veterans and Seniors can connect as part of everyday community life. The centre, which began welcoming families this summer, provides licensed early learning and care for 49 children.

"For Perley Health, this milestone reflects both our proud history and our future, an enduring commitment to Veterans and Seniors, combined with a willingness to embrace new approaches that strengthen quality of life, belonging and community," said Lieutenant-General (Retired) Lloyd Campbell, Chair of the Perley Health Board of Directors.

within the Perley Health community, it has been designed from the outset to bring children together with Seniors and Veterans through shared spaces, planned activities and the spontaneous interactions that happen when generations regularly share a community. Music, storytelling, gardening, crafts and play are among the activities that can bring generations together. Accessible spaces enable children, older adults with a range of abilities and mobility needs to participate comfortably.

"This centre reflects our belief that children's lives are enriched when their community includes people of different ages, experiences and abilities," said Laura St-Cyr, Past Chair of Andrew Fleck Children's Services. "The opportunity here goes far beyond having child care located alongside a Seniors' community. It is about creating the conditions for relationships to grow naturally over time."

Perley Health has been developing intergenerational programming for years through weekly playgroups, music programs, school partnerships, youth volunteering and student placements. The new centre creates the opportunity for those relationships to become a more consistent part of daily life.

"It gives me pleasure and happiness to interact with these little ones and see how happy it makes them," said Perley Health Senior Living resident Laura Boucher. "It's nourishing for my soul."

The relationships are intended to be reciprocal. Veterans and Seniors bring knowledge, stories and life experience, while children bring curiosity, creativity and energy. For older adults, intergenerational programming can create opportunities for companionship, engagement, belonging and purpose. Children can gain new perspectives while building empathy, confidence and comfort with people of different ages and abilities.

The centre also creates a unique opportunity for Perley Health to learn more about what makes intergenerational programming meaningful and sustainable. Through the Perley Health Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™, researchers will engage Veterans, Seniors, children, families, educators, staff and volunteers through research and co-design. This work will create opportunities to learn from the program and develop practical insights to inform intergenerational programming in other long-term care communities.

"This centre gives us an extraordinary opportunity to create meaningful connections today while building practical knowledge that can benefit other communities across Canada," said Dr. Annie Robitaille, Commissionaires Ottawa Research Chair at Perley Health and Associate Professor at the University of Ottawa. "The goal is not simply to bring generations into the same room. It is to understand how relationships can be intentionally supported so that everyone involved has something meaningful to contribute and something to gain."

The project was made possible in part through donor support to the Perley Health Foundation's \$2-million Bridging Generations campaign, which helped fund welcoming and accessible intergenerational program rooms, activity areas and outdoor spaces.

The grand opening includes a procession of children from Andrew Fleck Children's Services, an intergenerational rendition of You Are My Sunshine and a symbolic "Ribbon-Joining" involving children and a Perley Health resident, representing the connections the centre is designed to foster.

The Andrew Fleck Children's Services Intergenerational Early Learning Centre builds on Perley Health's broader vision of creating a community where connections across generations are not limited to special occasions but become part of the rhythm of everyday life.

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About Perley Health

Perley Health is a leading and innovative healthcare community in Ottawa, dedicated to empowering Seniors and Veterans to live life to the fullest. With a proud history of service spanning more than 125 years, Perley Health supports more than 600 residents and tenants through long-term care and independent living apartments. Perley Health is also home to the Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™, which advances research, education and innovation to improve quality of life for Canada's aging population.

About Andrew Fleck Children's Services

Established in 1911, Andrew Fleck Children's Services is a leading multi-service, multi-site charitable organization serving Ottawa's early learning and child care community. It operates licensed group care at locations across Ottawa as well as licensed home child care, EarlyON programming, the Ottawa Forest and Nature School and Children's Inclusion Support Services.

About Perley Health Foundation

Perley Health Foundation inspires giving that transforms quality of life for Veterans and Seniors. Through philanthropy, donors support care, research, innovation, programming and growth at Perley Health.

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