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The Children's Aid Society Announces New Executive Director

The Board of Directors of the Children's Aid Society of Haldimand and Norfolk (CAS-HN) is pleased to announce the appointment of Bernadette Gallagher as Executive Director effective April 14, 2015.

Dr. Gallagher comes to CAS-HN with 25 years of experience in child welfare as an executive leader, manager and child protection worker. She has worked at the OACAS since 2008, currently as Director of Child Welfare Service Excellence and previously as Director of Child Welfare Education. She also worked at Native Child and Family Services in Toronto as Director of Clinical Services and as a Manager and Child Protection Worker at The Children's Aid Society of Brant. She began her career as a group therapist at Nova Vita Women's Shelter in Brantford.

For many years, Dr. Gallagher has provided leadership through her participation on a number of provincial child welfare initiatives. Currently, she is Chair of the OACAS Research/Evaluation Advisory Committee, Chair of the OACAS Provincial Training Advisory Committee, and Co-Chair of the OACAS French Language Services Advisory Committee. She is a member of the OACAS Governance and Aboriginal Advisory Committees, Ontario Looking After Child and Youth Council, and OACAS liaison for the Grand River Local Directors Zone.

Dr. Gallagher has completed several research studies and is the author of two publications in the OACAS Journal: *On a Scale of 1-10: How is Child Welfare doing at Improving Wellness Outcomes for Youth?* (2011); and *Adjusting the Lens: Parents create change in Ontario's child protection system* (2009).

Dr. Gallagher holds a PhD in Social Work from Memorial University of Newfoundland, a Master of Social Work from McMaster University in Hamilton and a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Western Ontario in London.

"The experience and caliber of the candidate pool was very strong. In the end Dr. Gallagher was selected for the depth of her knowledge and leadership skills, her vision for the agency, her keen interest in working with staff and community partners, and her easy going style," says John McColl, CAS-HN Board President.

In December 2014, Janice Robinson, Executive Director of the Children's Aid Society of Haldimand and Norfolk announced that she would be leaving the Society as she had accepted the position of Executive Director at Toronto Catholic Children's Aid Society effective February 2, 2015. Renee Smith, Director of Human Resources, stepped in as Acting Executive Director during this interim period.

For further information please contact Renee Smith, Acting Executive Director at (519) 587-5437.