

Budget2015

Balancing Choices for a Promising Future

Health and Community Services

Seniors, Wellness and Social Development

April 30, 2015

Investing in Health and Wellness

Budget 2015 Investments Working to Improve Health Care Delivery throughout Newfoundland and Labrador

With an investment of nearly \$3 billion, Budget 2015 continues the Provincial Government's focus on supporting health and wellness, improving patient care and producing better value to help ensure a sustainable health care system.

“Budget 2015 investments support our five-year plan to achieve sustainability while working to deliver health care that is effective, efficient and responsive with a continued dedication to excellence in patient care. As we continue to engage and consult with Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to improve our health care system, we need to ensure that every dollar committed to health care is spent wisely and effectively. We have a strong, highly-skilled and committed health care workforce and we will need their expertise and knowledge to find new ways of delivering services and create a more sustainable system.”

- The Honourable Steve Kent, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Community Services

Budget 2015 includes a total of \$133.7 million in strategic investments to ensure access to new and modern health care facilities and equipment for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Since 2004 the Provincial Government's total investment has been approximately \$1.5 billion in health care infrastructure. These investments have been essential to the modernization of facilities and supporting the provision of quality care.

Recognizing the importance of ensuring there is sufficient capacity to meet a growing need for long-term care, Budget 2015 provides approximately \$700 million in long-term care and community support services, including home support and personal care homes. As announced Tuesday, April 28, the Provincial Government has also committed to the construction of long-term care facilities in Corner Brook, Grand Falls-Windsor area, Gander area, and on the Northeast Avalon which will see a total of 360 additional long-term care beds.

The Provincial Government is continuing to promote and support the overall wellness of the province's population – from birth to senior years. Budget 2015 includes:

- \$5.9 million for community-based organizations and agencies, which are strong advocates for health and wellness and deliver key programs and services in our communities;
- Approximately \$2.2 million for initiatives, programs and projects focused on healthy living, recreation and wellness at the community level; and
- \$500,000 to develop and implement a new, school-aged physical activity program.

“The Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development was established, in part, to bring more focus to government-wide efforts to support and promote ways in which we can improve our overall health and wellness. It means making healthier choices, and getting



more physically active. Through this year's budget, the Provincial Government is supporting initiatives and putting community supports in place, to enable our citizens to pursue healthier, more active lifestyles. While some personal health issues are beyond our control, we can all make positive changes to our daily lives that can improve our overall health."

- The Honourable Clyde Jackman, Minister of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development

The Provincial Government remains committed to addressing the challenges faced by people with mental health and addictions issues and to ensuring effective programs and services are in place when people need them. Budget 2015 investments include:

- \$482, 000 for a two-year agreement with Health Canada to fund a Provincial Methadone Treatment Policy and increase access to substance-abuse services.
- \$422,000 to provide youth outreach programs and services to vulnerable and high-risk youth;
- \$300,000 to continue the Strongest Families Program that provides care to families through a distance-coaching approach; and
- \$114,900 in annual funding to create a provincial system navigator position, as identified in the Premier's Summit on Health Care, to assist patients and families in accessing mental health and addictions treatment across the province.

Newfoundland and Labrador has among the highest per capita cost for health care delivery in Canada. Without a change in approach, health care will continue to consume an increasingly greater proportion of the provincial budget. In ongoing efforts to seek new and innovative high-quality approaches to deliver health and community services to the people of the province, the Provincial Government will continue to find efficiencies in clinical and administrative operations, with a special added focus to improve shared services among Regional Health Authorities to standardize products and processes and remove overlapping roles and responsibilities in non-clinical areas. Other initiatives include:

- A renewed focus on primary health care to improve quality and access to services while reducing the cost of service delivery; and
- Further advancing the Strategy to Reduce Emergency Department Wait Times in Newfoundland and Labrador with an additional investment of \$938,300.

For more information on health and wellness investments, see the Budget 2015 fact sheets: Health and Investing in Healthy, Age-Friendly, Inclusive Communities.

QUICK FACTS

- Budget 2015 includes nearly \$3 billion in health care investments.
- A total of \$133.7 million in strategic investments will ensure access to new and modern health care facilities and equipment for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. This includes \$40 million for new health equipment and \$20 million for repair and renovation projects.
- Approximately \$700 million will be invested in long-term care and community support services, including home support and personal care homes.
- An investment of \$172,800 to add the Rotavirus vaccine to the Provincial Vaccine Program. The vaccine protects infants from gastrointestinal illness, which can lead to severe illness and hospitalization.

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Media contacts:

John Tompkins
Director of Communications
Department of Health and Community Services
709-729-1377, 728-7762
jtompkins@gov.nl.ca

Heather May
Director of Communications
Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social
Development
709-729-0928, 697-5061
heathermay@gov.nl.ca