

Healthier People and Communities

Government will continue to support and improve Nova Scotians' health, wellness, and well-being by acting on its plan for a more accessible healthcare system.

Budget 2018–19 includes

Accessible Healthcare

- \$19.6 million this year, as part of a \$39.6 million multi-year plan to recruit and retain more doctors and increase access to primary healthcare
 - \$13.9 million to increase payments to family doctors with an established family practice
 - \$4.2 million for a new Technology Incentive pilot that pays doctors to communicate with their patients through telephone and e-health services
 - \$1.5 million to financially support family doctors to use electronic medical records to help improve overall quality care in their practice

These investments are in addition to:

- a new Patient Attachment Incentive to pay doctors who accept new patients
- a new Enrolment Incentive to encourage doctors to develop an up-to-date patient list
- expanding the tuition relief program as an incentive to attract graduating doctors to set up practice in underserved areas
- adding 10 family medicine residency positions at Dalhousie medical school and planning for placing medical students in Cape Breton family medicine clinics, both in 2019

- launching a new practice-ready assessment program for internationally trained doctors this year
- an immigration stream to help attract more international doctors and specialists to the province
- \$8 million to enhance and expand new collaborative care teams across the province, increasing access to primary healthcare, for a total of \$17.6 million
- \$8.8 million to do 350 more hip and knee surgeries by hiring more surgeons, creating a central booking system and providing rehabilitation services, bringing the four-year total investment to \$24.3 million
- \$5 million for Emergency Health Services (EHS) to meet the growing call volume for ground ambulance services across the province, for a total of \$132 million
- \$1 million more for youth health centres, for a total of \$3 million
- \$1.2 million increase in the Take Home Cancer Therapies program to help pay for chemotherapy, hormonal therapies, and immunotherapies, for a total of \$2 million

Mental Health and Addictions

- \$2.9 million more for mental health supports, including increased funding for clients in crisis and reducing wait times, bringing the total mental health budget to \$287 million
- \$463,000 to pilot new online mental health therapy tools for post-secondary students
- \$3 million, for a two-year total of \$5.7 million, for the Opioid Action Plan, to reduce waitlists, provide more naloxone kits, and fund more education for the public and for healthcare providers
- Continuing work on new dialysis units at Digby General Hospital, Glace Bay Hospital, South Shore Regional Hospital, Valley Regional Hospital, and Dartmouth General Hospital
- Expanding the pharmacy at Aberdeen Hospital (New Glasgow) and continuing with design and renovations at South Shore Regional Hospital (Bridgewater)
- \$5.3 million more funding for medical equipment, including equipment to do more orthopedic surgeries, for a total investment of \$16 million this year

Continuing Care

- \$5.5 million more to help more seniors stay in their homes longer, including expanding the Caregiver Benefit program, bringing the total for home care services to \$266 million
- \$50,000 to increase the Seniors Safety grant program, for a total of \$500,000

Healthcare Infrastructure

- The 2018-19 Capital Plan contains an overall investment of \$64.8 million in hospital infrastructure projects.
- The largest hospital infrastructure project is the QEII redevelopment project, which includes:
 - o renovations at the Halifax Infirmary
 - o renovations and construction at Dartmouth General Hospital
 - o finalizing the Hants Community Hospital renovation project
 - o continuing the design for the overall QEII redevelopment project
 - o completing the land purchase for the new Community Outpatient Centre, valued at \$7.5 million