

# Healthy People & Communities

Supporting the health, wellness, and safety of Nova Scotians is an investment in our communities and in our quality of life.

Budget 2017–2018 advances the redevelopment of the QEII for the next generation. With additional funding, more people across the province will have better access to primary health care, home care services, mental health services, orthopedic surgeries, dialysis treatment, and affordable housing.

This budget provides more support to middle income earners and people who need it most, people with disabilities, and those who live in long-term care.

New funding will make our province more accessible, and this year, government will also release and begin to take action on a plan to address poverty in our communities.

## **Budget 2017–2018 includes**

### Affordability

- Reduce taxes for more than 500,000 people by increasing the basic personal amount by up to \$3,000 for taxable incomes of up to \$75,000. People with a taxable income under \$25,000 get the full benefit. The benefit decreases as income increases. With this change, effective January 1, 2018, more than 60,000 additional Nova Scotians will no longer pay provincial income tax.
- \$1.2 million increase to help foster parents meet the day-to-day needs of the children in their care

- \$38 million, in partnership with the federal government, to increase access to affordable housing this year, including creating new affordable housing units, offering more in rent supplements, and investing in home repair and adaptation programs to assist low-income home owners
- Increased income thresholds to help more Nova Scotians in need to heat their homes through the Heating Assistance Rebate Program (HARP)
- \$440,000 more for the Maintenance Enforcement program to help more families get the money owed to them
- \$2 million to create and begin to implement a plan to address poverty in Nova Scotia, which aligns with municipal and federal governments

### Health and Wellness

- \$6 million to advance new collaborative care teams across the province, increasing access to family doctors, nurses and other primary care providers for thousands more Nova Scotians. This builds on the \$3.6 million previously announced for additional family practice nurses and nurse practitioners that will be in place this year.
- Advance planning, design, and construction of satellite dialysis units at hospitals in Bridgewater, Kentville, Digby, and Glace Bay, and expand dialysis services in Halifax and Dartmouth
- Continued progress on the QEII redevelopment

- \$2.4 million more to support recruitment and retention of doctors by adding 10 new seats in the Dalhousie Family Medicine Residency program and 10 spaces for a new practice-ready assessment program for doctors who were trained internationally and want to come to practice in Nova Scotia
- \$5.1 million more for home care services, including increases for the self-managed care and the caregiver benefit programs, bringing the total increase in additional funding for home care to \$64 million since 2013
- \$3.7 million more to provide additional orthopedic surgeries and offer prehabilitation services that help patients prepare for a successful surgery
- \$3.2 million to enhance mental health programs and services including creating a central intake approach; additional support for community-based mental health services in Cape Breton; and expanding crisis services across the province
- \$300,000 to continue the Chronic Disease Innovation grant program
- \$3 million, in partnership with the federal government, for shelters and other transition housing that support victims of domestic violence

## Community Support

- \$3.9 million to support more people with disabilities to live independently in the community including creating more small options homes; expanding day programs; and funding more independent living options
- \$1.8 million to increase ACCESS-Ability grants for community buildings and open a new grant program for small businesses to become more accessible
- \$1.1 million to continue work to address sexual violence
- \$836,000 to expand the Domestic Violence Court to the Halifax region and make permanent the court which was first piloted in Sydney