

Improving Access to Healthcare

Government is investing in the next generation of healthcare to better meet the changing needs of Nova Scotians, including improving access to primary healthcare, doctors, and mental health services, reducing wait times for hip and knee surgeries, and redesigning services and healthcare infrastructure.

Budget 2019–20 includes

- \$10 million increase to further develop collaborative care teams to make it easier for Nova Scotians to see a doctor or other primary care clinician, for a total of \$27.6 million
- \$2.9 million increase to open 15 new residency spaces for specialty medical positions at Dalhousie University Medical School, for a total of 65 seats
- \$1.1 million this year to open 10 new family practice residency seats at Dalhousie University Medical School announced last year, for a total of 46 seats
- \$200,000 to support doctor recruitment in our communities, as part of the Culture Innovation Fund
- \$2.2 million increase to improve access to hip and knee replacement surgeries, for a total of \$17.4 million
- \$2.8 million this year, for a total of \$5 million, to implement findings of the Expert Panel on Long Term Care, including wound care, service coordination, and staffing
- The Canada–Nova Scotia Home and Community Care and Mental Health and Addictions Services Funding Agreement will provide \$28.5 million:
 - \$16.8 million to support home care, included in total home care spending of \$283 million
 - \$11.7 million to support mental health, included in total mental health and addictions spending of \$295.5 million — this funding will expand and sustain mental health supports, including extending the adolescent outreach program currently operating in Cape Breton to 41 schools in western and northern Nova Scotia and allowing NSHA and IWK to add 10 more full-time mental health positions this year
- \$1 million increase to complete the provincewide SchoolsPlus expansion, for a total budget of \$10.8 million — SchoolsPlus connects students and their families with mental health and other community support services
- \$600,000 to support the HealthyMindsNS initiative at universities and the NSCC, giving students access to online peer support and professional telephone counselling
- \$8.4 million increase to respond to the growing demands for pharmacare programs
- \$4.6 million increase for Emergency Health Services (EHS) to meet the growing call volume and costs for ground ambulance services across the province

- \$2.5 million for Let's Get Moving Nova Scotia to create a more active, inclusive, and healthier population – this includes a new Active Communities Fund with \$879,000 for physical activity grants
- \$800,000 increase for digital health services, including MyHealthNS, an electronic way for doctors to connect with their patients
- \$156.9 million this year to support progress on two of the largest healthcare redevelopment projects in Nova Scotia history, the QEII New Generation project and CBRM Healthcare Redevelopment project

QEII New Generation project:

- o new and renovated operating rooms
- o new cancer care centre
- o new community outpatient centre

CBRM Healthcare Redevelopment project:

- o expanded emergency departments at Cape Breton Regional Hospital and Glace Bay Hospital
- o improved cancer care centre
- o new enhanced critical care ward

This investment complements a number of other projects for Cape Breton that will modernize health care services including:

- o planning for new community health centres in North Sydney and New Waterford
- o planning for new long-term care facilities in North Sydney and New Waterford
- o a new community-based paramedic program