

MEDIA BACKGROUNDER

Ministry of Health Budget 2015-16

Record \$5.12 Billion Invested

HIGHLIGHTS:

- **\$3.31 billion for Regional Health Authorities** – an increase of \$55.7 million from last year – for operating funding and targeted initiatives.
- **\$157.3 million** for the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, an increase of \$1.58 million.
- **\$127.4 million capital investment** – an increase of \$32.5 million from 2014-15 – which includes:
 - **\$71.1 million** for the construction of the **Swift Current Long-Term Care Facility** and **Leader Integrated Care Facility**.
 - **\$7.8 million** to complete the new **hospital in Moose Jaw**.
 - **\$4.5 million** to continue work on the **Kelvington Integrated Care Facility**.
 - **\$500,000** for facility planning of **a new hospital in Weyburn**.
 - **\$27.8 million** for **critical infrastructure repairs**.
 - **\$15.3 million** for **diagnostic and surgical equipment**.
- **\$10 million** new investment to **enhance services for seniors at home or in long-term care:**
 - **\$3.5 million** to support seniors who wish to remain at home as long as possible by enhancing the **Home First/Quick Response Program** in Regina Qu'Appelle, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert Parkland Health Regions and expanding the program in the Prairie North Health Region to an additional site. This brings the total funding for Home First/Quick Response to \$8.0 million.
 - **\$2.8 million** in capital renovations in Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region and Saskatoon Health Region to develop **specialized units for individuals with dementia or challenging behaviours**.
 - **\$2.0 million** in individualized funding that provides **increased choice and flexibility for home care clients** to choose their care provider, providing more services and eliminating the current wait list for funding in the Five Hills, Prairie North, Regina Qu'Appelle and Saskatoon health regions.
 - **\$1.0 million** annually to support **Purposeful Rounding**, the practice of proactively seeing to the needs of long-term care residents within a prescribed amount of time, improving resident safety and satisfaction while improving quality of care.
 - **\$700,000** to develop a new **Geriatric Program** in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, including the recruitment of a geriatrician to Regina, to provide a range of services to seniors, including support for quality in long-term care.
- **\$3.0 million** to advance work to **reduce emergency department wait times and improve patient flow**.
- **\$550,000** in annualized funds to make the **Little Tots Autism Spectrum Disorder** program in Saskatoon permanent.

BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS:

- Effective July 1, 2015, the income threshold for the Saskatchewan Seniors' Drug Plan will decrease from the federal age credit (2013 tax year - \$80,255) to the provincial age credit (2013 tax year - \$65,515). Of the 137,500 seniors who are eligible for coverage, approximately 6,000 seniors will be impacted. Seniors who are no longer eligible for the program may qualify for coverage under the Special Support Program if their drug costs are high relative to their income.
- Effective April 1, 2015, the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation, including its provision of annual grant funding, will transfer to Innovation Saskatchewan.