

MEDIA BACKGROUNDER
Health Budget 2021-22 – \$6.12 Billion Investment

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS:

- The 2021-22 Budget provides the largest budgets ever for the Ministry of Health, Saskatchewan Health Authority and Saskatchewan Cancer Agency.
- The 2021-22 budget for the Ministry of Health is **\$6.12B**, an increase of **\$261M** or **4.5 per cent** from 2020-21.
- Millions will be dedicated to cover the COVID-19 response in order to **protect** the lives and health of Saskatchewan people. This further **\$90M** will support the Province's comprehensive **COVID-19** response. Major costs include:
 - a mass province-wide vaccination rollout;
 - purchase of more personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies;
 - contact tracing;
 - costs for testing and assessment sites;
 - maintaining enhanced lab capacity, and
 - supports for long-term care.
- Mental Health and Addictions will receive a significant boost in 2021-22 of **\$23.4M** or **5.4 per cent** for a total budget of **\$458M** to assist individuals struggling with mental wellness and addictions issues. Of this increase, **\$7.2M** will provide for specific youth-focused initiatives, mobile services, investments in suicide prevention, and significant expansion in harm reduction and addictions treatment. The remaining **\$16.2M** increase is primarily for hospital-based mental health and addictions services.
- The Saskatchewan Health Authority will receive **\$3.96B** for operating funding and investments in targeted programs and services. Highlights for the **\$221.4M** or **5.9 per cent** increase include:
 - **\$6.6M** increase for several Emergency Medical Services (EMS) initiatives, such as additional ambulances in Regina and Saskatoon, offload delays, covering patient wait time fees and a new computer dispatch system;
 - **\$5.1M** increase for the new Royal University Hospital 48-bed acute care unit;
 - **\$3.6M** increase for four additional Intensive Care Unit beds in Saskatoon; and
 - **\$2M** increase for the expansion of the Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit at Victoria Hospital in Prince Albert.

- SHA health care programs and planning highlights to provide improved team-based care and service delivery for patients, include:
 - **\$6M** in new funding for the continuing care aide commitment to meet the needs of long-term care residents;
 - **\$4.4M** increase to improve patient flow and reduce Emergency Department waits;
 - **\$1.2M** increase to address wait times for diagnostic imaging;
 - **\$950K** increase for operating costs associated with the new CT program in Melfort;
 - **\$869K** increase for pediatric hematology oncology;
 - **\$549K** increase to expand interventional radiology services in Regina; and
 - **\$334K** increase for additional respiratory therapists in Prince Albert.
- **\$6.7M** will fulfill a key commitment to benefit Saskatchewan's senior citizens by significantly reducing ambulance fees from \$275 to \$135 per trip.
- **\$6M** to support individualized funding for children between the ages of six and 11 with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- **\$5M** to expand supports for people with Diabetes for continuous and flash glucose monitoring systems for children and youth under 18 who are insulin dependent. The Insulin Pump Program will also be provided to Type 1 diabetics of all ages.
- **\$1.4M** to add a new STARS helicopter to the fleet and meet increased operating costs.
- The budget continues to **build** and upgrade health care infrastructure. **\$21.1M** will support ongoing capital project work, which includes planning and development for new facilities across the province. Infrastructure highlights include:
 - **\$1.4M** for Weyburn General Hospital;
 - **\$5.7M** for Urgent Care Centres in Regina and Saskatoon;
 - **\$1.4M** for Prince Albert Victoria Hospital;
 - **\$3.6M** for Grenfell and **\$7.6M** for La Ronge Long-Term Care facilities;
 - **\$550K** for planning future Watson and Estevan Long-Term Care Facilities; and
 - **\$500K** in planning for long term care facility replacement in Regina.

- An additional **\$7.6M** or **3.9 per cent** increase will be directed to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency (SCA) for enhanced cancer care services, such as new drug treatments and expand treatment available in regional hospitals. This is the highest grant ever for the SCA at **\$204M**. This funding includes:
 - **\$2.9M** increase for new oncology drug programs and growth in existing treatments;
 - **\$884K** increase for additional direct care resource supports such as registered nurses for growth in patient volumes;
 - **\$460K** increase for a new medical oncologist, plus \$297K increase for additional direct care supports to staff the new medical oncologist;
 - **\$425K** increase to expand the Community Oncology Program of Saskatchewan (COPS) in regional hospitals;
 - **\$290K** increase for improvements to the Breast Cancer Screening program; and
 - **\$231K** increase for additional palliative care supports.
- **\$81.2M** for facility maintenance, which is an increase of **\$1.16M**.
- **\$15.3M** or **13.8 per cent** increase to support operations in eHealth Saskatchewan, including new investments in security services and technology.