

## MEDIA BACKGROUNDER

### Health Budget 2022-23 - \$6.44 Billion Investment

#### BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2022-23 budget provides the largest budgets ever for the Ministry of Health, Saskatchewan Health Authority, Saskatchewan Cancer Agency and eHealth Saskatchewan.
- The 2022-23 budget for the Ministry of Health is \$6.44B, the highest investment ever to get our health care system back on track. This year's budget represents an overall increase of \$318.7M or 5.2% from last year's Budget. This is up \$3 billion, or 87 per cent since 2007-08.
- This budget will support development of new and innovative solutions to invest in Saskatchewan's valued health care providers and build a more robust workforce. This includes plans to establish a new and independent agency solely dedicated to recruitment and retention of health human resources to Saskatchewan from across the province, North America and overseas.
- This dedicated agency will collaborate with the Ministry of Health and other partners to establish a settlement and relocation incentive program to attract healthcare workers to Saskatchewan from the Philippines to assist in filling critical and hard-to-fill positions.
- To attract and retain specialists and physicians, \$3.5M in new funding will increase the number of specialty and family medicine residency training seats, expand intake for the Saskatchewan International Physician Practice Assessment (SIPPA) program and enhance rural practice incentives for physicians.
- Key commitments in the 2022-23 budget will see significant expansion in critical care and emergency service areas in urban, rural and northern communities. This includes a \$21.6M increase that sets aggressive targets for surgical volume increases beginning immediately. The goal is to reach a total surgical volume of 97,000 procedures in 2022-23, which represents the highest number of surgeries ever performed in our province. This year's investment is part of a three-year plan to eliminate the COVID-19-related backlog by the end of March 2025.
- This includes
  - \$12.5M for 11 additional intensive care unit (ICU) beds – this is the first of a three-year strategy to add 31 ICU beds across the province. This year, 11 ICU beds will be added to the provincial system for a total of 90 ICU beds as the first step to achieving 110 beds to address over-capacity issues and high occupancy rates;
  - \$10.8M increase to stabilize emergency medical services (EMS) with additional paramedics, ambulances and funding in 27 communities across the province, particularly in rural and remote areas;
  - \$4.9 million increase will expand the number of specialized medical imaging procedures, including CT and MRI scans;
  - \$3.0M to introduce 10 high-acuity beds at Regina General Hospital;

- \$2.2M increase for specialized care for the Neonatal ICU at Victoria Hospital in Prince Albert, and
  - \$2.0M increase for 65 additional transcatheter aortic valve insertion (TAVI) procedures for a total of 120 procedures.
- Investments in priority health care programs and services will protect and support Saskatchewan people, positively impacting patients of all ages and backgrounds. Budget highlights include:
- \$17M increase to support seniors including the second year of the three-year commitment to hire additional continuing care aides (CCAs) in long-term care and home care, additional funding to meet increasing demand for home care, additional operating funding for the soon to be opened NorthWest Community Lodge in Meadow Lake, and new funding to expand coverage for high-dose influenza vaccines to all adults aged 65 years and older;
  - \$16M increase for the Saskatchewan Prescription Drug Plan for high-cost drugs, treatment changes and increased medication use;
  - \$1.2M increase to support community-based organizations; and
  - \$394K for six additional hospice beds at Wascana Rehabilitation Centre.
- Mental Health and Addictions will receive an increase of \$9.5M in 2022-23, including \$8 million for targeted initiatives to address complexities faced by patients and provide effective counselling and treatments. Included in this funding will be the first of the 150 new addiction treatment spaces committed to in the 2021 Speech from the Throne. A further \$1.5 million increase will annualize initiatives first introduced in the 2021-22 Budget. A total of \$470 million or 7.3 per cent of Health's overall budget will be invested in mental health and addictions this year.
- This budget provides a \$15.8M or 7.7 per cent increase for the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency to improve treatments, services and resources for cancer patients in order to achieve better outcomes. This is the largest budget ever at \$219.8M, which includes:
- \$4.8 million increase for drugs and other therapies.
  - \$2 million boost to direct care resources (nurses, clinical associates, and others) to support patient and treatment volumes, and other investments in frontline services,
  - \$1.75 million additional investments in screening programs for various cancers including the initial development of a lung cancer screening program for northern Saskatchewan,
  - \$1.1 million increase for additional resourcing and funding to address growing demand in the Bone Marrow Transplant Program,
  - \$674K increase for the development of a provincial Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T-cell Therapy Program, an emerging treatment for select types of cancer,
  - \$575K increase for Community Oncology Programs, ensuring patients continue to benefit from treatment options closer to home, and
  - \$389K increase for a medical oncologist to support the establishment of a new medical oncology residency program in partnership with the College of Medicine.

- This budget is investing \$156.6 million to build a better Saskatchewan through needed infrastructure investments, including hospitals and health care facilities. Some of these investments include:
  - \$15.2M for Urgent Care Centres in Regina and Saskatoon for design and construction expenses as well as site selection activities in Saskatoon;
  - \$13.5M for Prince Albert Victoria Hospital to continue procurement and design stages of the project;
  - \$6.5M to provide design and procurement activities for specialized and standard long-term care beds in Regina;
  - \$6M for Weyburn General Hospital replacement to continue the procurement and design stages of the project;
  - \$5M to continue design, procurement and construction for La Ronge and Grenfell long term care facilities;
  - \$750K to support planning, procurement and design of a new parkade at the Regina General Hospital;
  - \$200K for planning and assessment work for the Yorkton Regional Health Centre replacement; and
  - \$200K each for Watson and Estevan long-term care replacement planning and assessment work.
  
- An increase of \$9.8M or 7.8 per cent for a total operating budget of \$135.6M for eHealth. This funding will be used for critical investments in the health care system and the supporting IT infrastructure, modernization and security. This is eHealth's highest budget ever.
  
- This budget provides \$95M to sustain ongoing COVID-19 public response to continue protecting Saskatchewan people in the transition to Living with Covid. This funding will cover operational costs for a total 58 temporary acute care beds in Regina and Saskatoon. It will also support costs including PPE supplies, ongoing vaccinations, along with enhanced infection prevention in long term care homes.