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Our Liberal Government's Work on
**IMPROVING
HEALTHCARE**



Reducing Wait Times



Investing in Affordable Dental Care



Expanding Mental Health Supports



Ending Discrimination in the Healthcare System

Our Plan for Health

Every Canadian deserves high-quality health care whenever and wherever they need it. However, long wait times, a shortage of family doctors, reduced community clinics and hospital hours, and a lack of mental health care have left Canadians worried. Our Liberal Government knows Canadians deserve better, which is why we are providing \$198.6 billion in additional federal funding over the next ten years, including an immediate, unconditional \$2 billion top-up to the Canada Health Transfer to address immediate pressures on the healthcare system, especially in pediatric hospitals and emergency rooms, and long wait times for surgeries.

To address issues in the health care system, we know that money alone is not the answer. We need to deliver real results for Canadians, so we will sign agreements with provinces and territories to ensure that they meet their responsibilities and provide the standard of care Canadians deserve. As part of these efforts, we will invest \$25 billion over ten years to advance shared health priorities through tailored bilateral agreements that will support the needs of people in each province and territory in four areas of shared priority:

- Family health services;
- Health workers and backlogs;
- Mental health and substance use; and
- A modernized health system.

We are also ensuring that frontline workers in our healthcare system receive a meaningful wage increase. We are investing \$1.7 billion over five years to support personal support workers and related professions as federal, provincial, and territorial governments work together on how best to increase recruitment and retention.

Together, we will strengthen our healthcare system, address the challenges within our system, and ensure that all Canadians can continue to access and receive the best care possible.



Our Liberal Government has acquired safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines for all Canadians aged six months+. We strongly encourage everyone to vaccinate to protect themselves and their loved ones.



We are making historic investments in medical research and vaccine production to ensure Canadians are protected and healthy. Health Canada's world-class approval process ensures we can quickly test, procure, and supply new treatments when they are discovered.

Hiring More Healthcare Professionals

Our Liberal Government is helping bring more healthcare workers to the communities that need them most. We have increased the maximum amount of forgivable Canada Student Loans by 50 percent for doctors and nurses working in underserved rural and remote communities. This will mean up to \$30,000 in loan forgiveness for nurses and up to \$60,000 for doctors.

Long Term Care

Despite long-term care falling under provincial and territorial jurisdiction, our Liberal Government is committed to ensuring that all seniors across Canada receive the quality care they deserve by continuously working with our partners. That is why, in addition to the annual \$40 billion healthcare budget allocated to provinces and territories through the Canada Health Transfer, a further \$3 billion will be invested by Health Canada to specifically address national standards to affect permanent change in the long-term care sector across the country. During the pandemic, we allocated up to \$4 billion to ensure care centres could put in place the proper protective measures and continue to effectively serve their residents.

We also recognize the importance of supporting seniors at home, which is why Budget 2021 introduced a new Aging-Well-At-Home Initiative. As we know, the ongoing pandemic has been incredibly isolating for many elderly individuals who had been previously relying on a personal network of friends and family for support. The program helps address this issue by matching low-income and vulnerable seniors with volunteers from community-based organizations. These volunteers help them with any assistance they might require in their day-to-day lives.

Pharmacare

No Canadian should have to choose between paying for prescription medication and necessities like rent or putting food on the table. As we work to build a better healthcare system for all Canadians, our Liberal Government is working with provinces and territories to implement a universal national pharmacare program.

Since taking office, we have taken historic action to lower drug prices, including introducing new rules on patented drugs. On March 22, 2022, the Prime Minister announced Delivering for Canadians Now: A Supply and Confidence Agreement between the Liberal Party and the NDP. This agreement outlines our joint commitments toward delivering results for Canadians, including continuing progress toward a universal national pharmacare program by passing a Canada Pharmacare Act by the end of 2023.

In addition to advancing universal national pharmacare, we are streamlining the approval of new drugs, developing a national strategy for drugs for rare diseases, and proceeding with an ambitious biomanufacturing and life sciences strategy. Throughout these efforts, access for all remains our priority.

Dentalcare

A primary driver for serious health problems in children is poor dental health. Tooth decay and a lack of access to affordable dental care can cause serious health incidents and lifelong consequences. That is why our Liberal Government is investing \$13 billion for 5 years and \$4.4 billion in ongoing funding to build a national dental care system. Families with children under the age of 12 will be able to claim \$1,300 over two years to pay for dental, and we will slowly expand the program to cover all Canadians earning less than \$90,000 a year. We are also investing \$250 million over three years and \$75 million after that annually, for an oral health fund to reduce barriers to oral care especially in rural and remote communities. Additionally, we are investing \$33 million from the start of fiscal year 2022 to the end of fiscal year 2024 into improving data collection regarding oral health to support our work to improve outcomes.

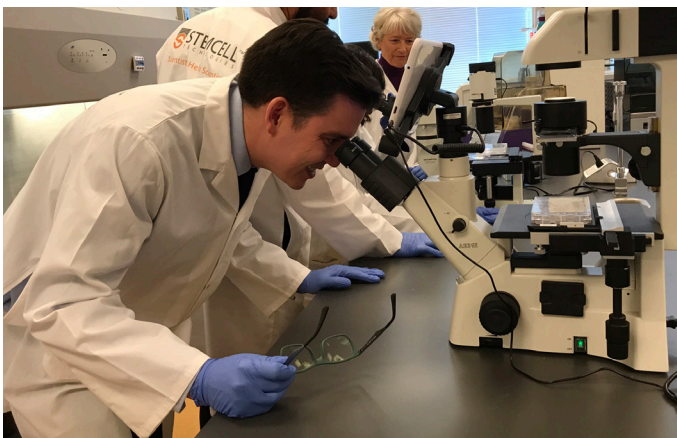
Supporting Canadians with Autism

We recognize that Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has significant lifelong impacts on individuals and families. Federal investments in research, data improvements, surveillance, and training skills are supporting those with autism and their families. An extraordinary network of stakeholders across the country is raising awareness and providing services to families. Our Liberal Government will continue to support these efforts through our programs. Through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, our Liberal government has invested more than \$39 million in autism research over the past 5 years. This investment contributes to providing the research evidence needed for developing new tools and treatments for those who have autism. We invested \$8 million in 2015-16 in ASD research and \$5.3 million in 2016-17 for research at the Hospital for Sick Children. Significant budget investments have been made in developmental and neurological developments, including \$20 million in Budget 2016 for Brain Canada. \$77 million was invested in accessibility in Budget 2017. In Budget 2017, support to parents with disabled children was expanded to up to \$2,769 per child and up to \$2,300 as part of the revamped Canada Child Benefit. Also, the \$5 billion that our Liberal Government plans to invest in mental health for youth will impact young people diagnosed with ASD.

Additional Whole-of-Government efforts are being made to support autism. Under the leadership of the Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, federal accessibility legislation is being developed. Employment and Social Development Canada is investing \$15 million in the Ready, Willing, and Able Initiative (RWA), currently being delivered through a partnership between the Canadian Association for Community Living and the Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorders Alliance.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Our Disability Inclusion Action Plan embeds the rights and needs of those with disabilities into every government policy and program. Our plan will improve the immediate and long-term financial security of persons with disabilities, including creating a new Canada Disability Benefit and updating eligibility to improve access to the Disability Tax Credit. The plan will help us address long-standing barriers that persons with disabilities face in the labour market and workplace by modernizing the Employment Equity Act and investing more than \$270 million in new funding through the Opportunities Fund. We are also working to remove barriers that persons with disabilities face in accessing federal programs and benefits through the Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada. This includes a commitment to hiring 5,000 public service employees with disabilities. Our Liberal Government is investing to make communities more accessible with a new Equitable Access to Reading Program and through renovation, construction, and retrofit projects of workplaces and community spaces under the Enabling Accessibility Fund.



Looking at research being done by STEMCELL Technologies into life sciences that are improving outcomes in our healthcare system.



Thanking the nurses who helped deliver our daughter Nova.

Mental Health Investments

In our community, we have directly invested over \$8,513,187 in mental health support. This includes funding for:

- Programs to help seniors struggling with isolation.
- Research at SFU to better understand and create treatment options for substance use and depression.
- Addressing health and development challenges for children.

On a national level, we have invested:

- \$140 million for the Wellness Together Canada portal to continue providing Canadians with tools and services to support their mental health.
- Support to address the opioid crisis with an additional \$100 million for the Substance Use and Addictions Program.

Substance Use in our Community

There is an ongoing substance use crisis that is hitting every part of our world. Toxic drugs are killing people and destroying their chances of taking control of their lives. Our Liberal Government has created an \$800 million strategy that will create safeconsumption sites, already having treated 42,000+ overdoses without a single death, focus upstream support for addictions and fund the creation of a 988 suicide prevention line. In our community alone, we have invested \$3,266,712 to tackle substance use and help people beat addiction. Our Liberal Government has also taken the most significant measures to change the culture around substance use. Under previous governments, addiction was treated as a crime rather than a health problem. Currently, in British Columbia, we have allowed the province to experiment with a full decriminalization strategy for two years. The results of decriminalization will be studied to see if this is a viable strategy to reduce substance use and save lives.

Protecting Women's Rights in Healthcare

We were horrified by the United States Supreme Court's decision to take away the fundamental right of women to have full autonomy over their bodies, including the right to have an abortion. Our Liberal Government is committed to protecting a women's right to choose. Abortion in Canada is legal, safe, and covered by our universal healthcare plan, and we will do everything we can to ensure it always will be. Our Liberal Government will withhold Canada Health Transfer payments to provinces that allow charges or restrictions for abortions and we will invest \$36 million to improve sexual and reproductive health services.

That is why our Liberal Government announced that Action Canada would receive \$2,119,073 to expand its Access Line and Sexual Health Information Hub programs, which offer accurate and affirming sexual and reproductive health information and referrals. This project will improve access to financial assistance to cover travel and accommodation costs and offer logistical support to individuals accessing abortion care.

We are also providing NAF Canada with \$1,469,150 to provide financial and logistical support to women seeking abortion services, train health care providers in providing abortion services, and ensure abortion facilities have the capacity to continue to provide services and related care.

Starting in 2023, we will provide \$1.4 billion annually to support women's and girls' health worldwide.

Indigenous Health

Our Liberal government recognizes that the current state of Indigenous health is a direct result of the shameful historical legacy of colonialist policies and interventions against the well-being of Indigenous Peoples and communities, including Indian residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, and other harmful practices. Meaningful improvements in Indigenous health outcomes will only be achieved if there are fundamental changes in the design, delivery, and control of health services. The goal is to address ongoing health and mental wellness challenges by ensuring continued access to culturally-appropriate services that meet the unique needs of Indigenous Peoples and communities. Simply put, health systems have to be more responsive to community needs.

Since 2015, we've invested over \$5.5 billion, and we've been focusing on taking positive steps forward with significant new investments for Indigenous health. These include, but are not limited to:

- \$69 million over three years for mental wellness teams and crisis stabilization.
- Roughly \$828 million over five years for communicable diseases, primary care transformation, mental wellness, children's oral health, and home and community care.
- \$200 million over five years, with \$40 million ongoing to address the needs of high-risk communities in the area of addictions.

Making an escort, such as a family member, accessible to all First Nations and Inuit women who must leave their home community during their pregnancy.

We invested \$1.4 billion to ensure Indigenous Peoples can access high-quality health care. This plan includes:

- Ensuring continued high-quality care through the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program, which supports First Nations and Inuit people with medically necessary services not otherwise covered, such as mental health services, medical travel, medications, and more.
- Increasing the number of nurses and other medical professionals in remote and isolated First Nations communities and improving access to high-quality and culturally relevant health care for Indigenous Peoples.
- Since 2016, our Liberal Government has made available almost \$2 billion to Jordan's Principle to improve access to lifesaving care and essential services. Jordan's Principle helps First Nations children access the products, services, and supports they need. Since July 2016, 717,000 products, services, and supports have been approved. These included speech therapy, educational support, medical equipment, mental health services, and more. Funding has also been used for responding to high rates of tuberculosis in Inuit communities and supporting the Métis Nation in gathering health data and developing a health strategy to address their unique needs.
- Budget 2022 proposes to invest \$268 million in 2022-23 to continue to provide high-quality health care in remote and isolated First Nations communities on-reserve.



Receiving a medicine pouch from a member of the Tsleil-Waututh community on Truth and Reconciliation Day. An important part of reconciliation is respecting and understanding Indigenous communities' medical practices. We are committed to ensuring that Indigenous communities have good medical resources and professionals.

Mental Health

The National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy has been implemented by and for Inuit people. In addition to these significant investments in Indigenous-designed and implemented health and wellness initiatives, the Government of Canada is actively supporting Indigenous Peoples to take control over their health services.

We funded \$235 million to work with First Nations partners to transform First Nations health systems by expanding successful models of self-determination so that health programs and services are developed, delivered, and controlled by and for First Nations.

In 2021 we announced a distinctions-based mental health and wellness strategy with Indigenous Peoples, including continuing support for former residential school students and their families. This \$597.6 million program will build on existing strengths, help address gaps, and respond to current, emerging, and future needs.

The Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program can also provide access to elders, traditional healers, and other community-based cultural and emotional supports or professional mental health counselling. Survivors and family members can access the National Indian Residential School Crisis Line when in need. This line has been set up to provide emotional and crisis referral services to former residential school students. It's available 24 hours a day at 1-866-925-4419.

Indigenous Treatment in Hospitals and our Health Care System

Indigenous Services Canada included cultural competency training for new registered nurses and nurse practitioners employed by its First Nations and Inuit Health Branch.

We are taking serious steps to improve mental health services for Indigenous Peoples. Joyce Echaquan, a 37-year-old mother of seven children from the Atikamekw de Manawan, died at the Joliette Hospital after receiving degrading insults from two hospital staff. Joyce's Principle aims to guarantee to all Indigenous Peoples the right of equitable access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services and the right to enjoy the best possible physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. In Budget 2021, we made plans to provide \$126.7 million to take action to foster health systems free from racism and discrimination where Indigenous Peoples are respected and safe. Addressing the unique and deeply rooted traumas of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities—which include intergenerational trauma; overt and systemic racism and discrimination; and social and economic inequality—requires a distinctions-based approach to mental health and wellness that is developed and delivered by Indigenous Peoples.

Budget 2022 proposes to provide \$227.6 million over two years, starting in 2022-23, to maintain trauma-informed, culturally-appropriate, Indigenous-led services to improve mental wellness and to support efforts initiated through Budget 2021 to co-develop distinctions-based mental health and wellness strategies.

- Created a national network of 45 treatment centres that provide a range of mainstream and culturally relevant services for Indigenous youth, adults, and families experiencing issues with substance use.
- Invested \$200 million toward delivering culturally appropriate substance use treatment and prevention services.
- Invested \$118.2 million to support additional capacity for essential mental health services, including on-the-land activities and culture-as-medicine.
- Invested in 176 health infrastructure projects. These projects include building or repairing nursing stations, health centres, drug and alcohol treatment centres, and Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve facilities in 164 First Nation communities.

Ending the MSM Blood Ban

Our Liberal Government is committed to supporting blood and plasma donation policies that are non-discriminatory, safe, and scientifically based. Health Canada authorized a submission from Canadian Blood Services to eliminate the current three-month blanket donor deferral period for all sexually active men who have sex with men and instead screen all donors, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, for high-risk sexual behaviours. This marks a significant milestone toward a more inclusive blood donation system nationwide which builds on the progress of scientific evidence from our Liberal Government's research investments in recent years.

Under the Blood Regulations, Canada's two blood operators—Canadian Blood Services and Héma-Québec—are required to make submissions to Health Canada for any changes to their processes, such as changes to donor deferrals. Héma-Québec has removed their donations restrictions on men who have sex with men as of fall 2022.

Medical Assisted Dying

During the Harper Liberal Government, the Supreme Court ruled that every Canadian has the right to Medical Assisted Dying so that, if they are suffering, they can choose to end their life with dignity, respect, and professional oversight. However, the previous Liberal Government refused to act on this ruling. In 2016, we passed legislation that allows eligible Canadian adults to request medical assistance in dying. In 2021, we revised the legislation that makes important changes to who may be eligible to obtain medical assistance in dying and the process of assessment.

In order to be eligible for medical assistance in dying, you must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be eligible for health services funded by the federal Liberal Government or a province or territory (or during the applicable minimum period of residence or waiting period for eligibility). Visitors to Canada are not eligible for medical assistance in dying.
- Be at least 18 years old and mentally competent, which means you must be capable of making health care decisions for yourself.
- Have a grievous and irremediable medical condition.
- Make a voluntary request for MAID without outside pressure or influence.
- Give informed consent to receive MAID.

Supporting the Public Health Agency

Under the Harper Liberal Government, Canada's Public Health Agency's (CPHA) funding was left at unsustainable levels if they were going to meet the Healthcare challenges that Canadians face. That is why we have ensured the CPHA will receive \$639 million in funds through 2028, with \$246 million of that investment being implemented in the 2023-24 fiscal year.

Hiring more personal support workers

Our Liberal Government is investing \$50 million in the Ministry of Employment and Disability Services to explore innovative solutions to recruit and retain more personal support workers. This will help ensure that seniors and people with disability can easily access a support worker when needed.

Suicide Prevention

Even one Canadian dying by suicide is a tragedy, which is why our Liberal Government is supporting the implementation of a 24/7 988 phone line that will provide Canadians immediate support if they are suicidal or are having a mental health crisis. This line will prevent suicide attempts and deaths, and will help Canadians connect to essential mental health services.

Improving Healthcare Data

Our Liberal Government is investing \$620 million into better healthcare data. This will help us enforce the Canada health act, ensure provinces properly spend federal health funding, track the number of healthcare workers, and reduce inequities and wait times.

Looking Forward

This report is just a small snapshot of our work to improve and expand the capabilities of our healthcare system. Through this term of parliament, we will remain focused on improving long-term care outcomes, hiring more medical professionals, and making it easier to recruit them from abroad. We are also expanding medical research to ensure we are prepared for whatever medical challenges may emerge. If you have any questions regarding our Liberal Government's investments, please do not hesitate to reach out.



It is always an emotional experience visiting the hard-working healthcare workers at Royal Columbian Hospital. This is where both Nova and Solar were born, including where Nova spent the first 20 days of her life under the intensive care of a team of Canada's best health professionals. We regularly visit with pizza and chocolate in hand to show our appreciation.