



Better Care Sooner

Emergency room closures and long waits have plagued Nova Scotia's health care system for years. It's a problem that has led to frustrated emergency room doctors, nurses and paramedics, inadequate treatment of the frail elderly, and a public that has lost confidence in the system.

This budget builds on the province's plan to keep emergency rooms open, reduce waits for patients, and provide better care for Nova Scotia families by investing in the Better Care Sooner plan.

Investing in Collaborative Emergency Centres

In smaller communities, people wait too long to access primary care, such as a family physician. By improving access to primary care we can also relieve pressure on emergency rooms.

The Better Care Sooner plan calls for the implementation of Collaborative Emergency Centres (CECs) to address this problem. CECs will ensure same-day or next-day appointments. They provide communities with collaborative-care teams involving a mix of professionals and 24/7 access to emergency care.

This government will

- Open Collaborative Emergency Centres in at least four Nova Scotia communities this year. This includes investing up to \$800,000 for salaries for paramedics and other health care providers.
- Provide \$3 million protection fund to help keep emergency rooms open.

Better Care for Seniors

The budget builds on the plan to improve health care for seniors. This government will

- Hire four new nurse practitioners for nursing homes in Cumberland, South Shore, South West, and Cape Breton district health authorities, at a cost of \$568,000.
- Recruit additional nurse practitioners and other health-care providers to work in primary care settings and collaborative practices, including Collaborative Emergency Centres, at a cost of \$1.5 million.
- Add 169 new and 593 replacement nursing home beds, at a cost of \$21 million.
- Expand the Caregiver Benefit, at a cost of \$1.8 million, helping seniors to remain at home in the communities they helped to build.

Better Hospitals and Community Facilities

Budget 2011 contains \$72 million to support major hospital and community health care projects across the province. This includes money for the following:

- \$2.6 million to build a modern, cost-effective and efficient emergency department at the Aberdeen Hospital.
- construction of the new Colchester East Hants Health Centre in Truro
- purchase and install three new radiation therapy units for the Capital Health District
- improvements to the nursing home and hospital in Inverness
- construction of community living units to provide more appropriate housing options for people with mental illness

Better Care Closer to Home

People are traveling too far for renal dialysis—a life-saving treatment often required several times a week. Budget 2011 invests \$988,000 to expand renal dialysis services in the province. The funding will be used in part to hire 12 nurses to provide renal dialysis closer to home.

Shorter Wait Times, Better Care for Orthopedic Patients

The province will invest \$616,000 to support pre-hab teams in the four district health authorities that perform hip and knee surgeries: Capital, Pictou, Cape Breton, and Annapolis Valley. The clinics also provide patients with tools and information they need to prepare for surgery and to support a successful surgery and quicker recovery.

Advice You Can Trust: 811 nurse line

The number of people dialing the 811 nurse line increased by more than 30 per cent since December 2010, as a result of Better Care Sooner's public awareness campaign. Government will invest \$466,400 as the demand for this important health care service rises.

Improving the Health of Nova Scotians

This budget contains \$500,000 to combat acute and chronic diseases, keeping Nova Scotians healthier in the long term.