



Canada Social Report  
Provincial/Territorial  
Policy Monitor

September 2012



CANADA SOCIAL REPORT



The [Caledon Institute of Social Policy](#) regularly scans provincial and territorial government websites in order to follow policy and program developments related to our core work and interests. A partial list includes: disability, education, health, housing, income security, poverty reduction, recreation, seniors and youth. This tracking is intended to inform our analysis of policy trends. Monitors can be searched on the Canada Social Report website by date, jurisdiction and category.

## Newfoundland and Labrador

*No updates this month.*

## Nova Scotia

### SENIORS

The Senior Safety Grant program is accepting applications for 2013, offering up to \$20,000 to nonprofit, community-based safety programs that inform, guide and support seniors. The grants are meant to address safety concerns of seniors and to enhance awareness and education in areas such as senior abuse, crime prevention, and safety and health. They are intended to improve relations between seniors and police.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20120905003>

## New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Québec, Ontario

*No updates this month.*

## Manitoba

### DISABILITY

Manitoba's new Accessibility Advisory Council has delivered its initial recommendations for legislation and standards to help identify, remove and prevent barriers faced by people with disabilities. Recommendations call for:

- a process to develop clear and achievable goals
- accessibility standards for both private and public sectors
- a central role in the development of legislation for people with disabilities and other stakeholders affected by the legislation, such as businesses and municipalities
- no impact on protections in human rights codes
- regular reviews of progress.

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/press/top/2012/09/2012-09-06-150900-15267.html>

### HEALTH

Manitoba government has released *Health and the Human Spirit*, a new spiritual health care strategic plan. It was informed by a spiritual health care strategic planning session involving a wide range of community and professional stakeholders. Research has shown that higher levels of spiritual well-being, along with a sense of inner meaning and peace, are associated with better health outcomes, lower levels of depression and anxiety, and a better quality of life.

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/press/top/2012/09/2012-09-20-080000-15314.html>



## INCOME SECURITY

The province will increase the minimum wage by 25 cents to \$10.25 an hour on Oct. 1, 2012. The minimum wage rate last increased 50 cents to \$10 per hour on Oct. 1, 2011. That followed an increase of 50 cents on Oct. 1, 2010. The amount of income a person can earn before paying income tax is being increased by \$1,000 over four years, reaching \$9,134 in 2014.

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/press/top/2012/09/2012-09-28-142100-15362.html>

## Saskatchewan

### HEALTH

Provincial health system and community leaders are exploring a new model of care that improves patient access to health care services in rural and remote communities. Collaborative Emergency Centres (CECs), a Nova Scotia health care innovation, help improve access to primary health care and emergency services. Modelled on the Nova Scotia innovation, CECs are typically open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. During the day, the centres offer access to primary health care by a team of professionals, including physicians and nurses. At night, care is handled by a team that includes a registered nurse and a paramedic, with physician oversight. The centres offer increased access to services, reduced wait times, same or next day appointments and a team-based approach.

*The original internet link to this item is no longer operational.*

<http://www.saskatchewan.ca/live/health-and-healthy-living/manage-your-health-needs/primary-health-care/collaborative-emergency-centres>

### MUNICIPALITIES

The province has expanded its Discounted Bus Pass Program. People with lower incomes in seven cities now have access to affordable public transportation. Under this program, the province pays participating cities a \$24.50 subsidy for every bus pass sold each month and the city then reduces the cost of bus passes for people with low incomes. The province will invest \$2 million in the program this year.

Passes are available to Saskatchewan residents receiving assistance from the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program, Saskatchewan Assistance Program, Transitional Employment Allowance, Saskatchewan Employment Supplement or the Provincial Training Allowance. There were more than 67,000 discounted bus passes sold in Saskatchewan last year.

*The original internet link to this item is no longer operational.*

[http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/Publications\\_Centre/SocialServices/From-Dependence-to-Independence-2012.pdf](http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/Publications_Centre/SocialServices/From-Dependence-to-Independence-2012.pdf)

## Alberta

### INCOME SECURITY

Effective Sept. 1, Alberta's hourly minimum wage rose 35 cents, from

\$9.40 to \$9.75. The liquor server wage – introduced last year following the minimum wage review – will remain at \$9.05 per hour. This wage rate will hold steady until the general minimum wage reaches \$10.05 per hour, at which time both wage rates will increase by the same amount [original announcement date: May 31, 2012].

<http://alberta.ca/acn/201205/32410A470D535-D778-903B-0F73ECFBB9B088D7.html>

### SENIORS

The province will continue to assist eligible low-income residents when maximum accommodation charges in long-term care settings rise on January 1, 2013. By increasing financial assistance through the Alberta Seniors Benefit (ASB) and Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) programs, the government will offset a five percent, or \$2.80 per day increase, for recipients of those programs.

<http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=32410A470D535-D778-903B-0F73ECFBB9B088D7>

## British Columbia

### CHILD CARE

\$5 million in funding was disbursed in 2012 for 187 new cultural enrichment projects. Created in 2010, First Nations and Urban Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Reinvestment Initiative supports community-based programs that respond to the cultural needs of young Aboriginal children. Investments over the last three years total \$16 million for more than 1,000 projects that have enriched existing early childhood programs for Aboriginal children.

<http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2012/09/187-projects-countless-benefits-for-children.html>

### EDUCATION

BC is providing \$500,000 in support of literacy and this year's Raise-a-Reader campaign. The province has also appointed a new superintendent of reading and dedicated \$10.7 million in increased funding to strengthen early reading strategies and practices across all school districts. Since 2001, BC has invested more than \$1.5 billion in literacy and literacy-related initiatives, including pre-literacy and early learning programs.

<http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2012/09/read-all-about-it-500000-for-bc-literacy-campaign.html>

### HOUSING

In partnership with the Aboriginal Housing Management Association the province will transfer ownership and management of approximately 400 of its 500 Rural Native Housing properties to qualified Aboriginal non-profit housing providers. The transfer is expected to be complete by early 2013. The province commenced transferring ownership of 75 Vancouver Island RNH properties in 2011.

<http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2012/09/transfer-of-remaining-rural-native-housing-portfolio.html>



Youth aged 17-30 in Nanaimo will soon have access to new affordable housing. A renovated rooming house will offer 14 to 16 apartments for employed youth and an on-site resident manager will provide support to the residents. Many of the youth will have completed the Nanaimo Youth Services Association's BladeRunner program – a youth employment training program which delivers employment and skills training to out-of-school and unemployed youth.

<http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2012/09/new-housing-for-employed-youth-in-nanaimo.html>

## Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories, Nunavut

*No updates this month.*