




Canada Social Report
Provincial/Territorial
Policy Monitor

July 2013



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

CAREGIVING

\$3.5 million to help expand the level of financial support to personal care and community care home operators as well as home support agencies. The monthly subsidy for personal care homes and community care homes has been increased by \$50 per client to \$1,850. Home support agencies will receive funding for one hour of administrative time for every 35 hours of service for subsidized clients and a \$60 fee for short-term

clients retroactive to July 1, 2013. The increase recognizes the rising cost to deliver services to clients. The province is making these improvements as part of its \$300 million 10-year *Close to Home: A Strategy for Long-term Care and Community Support Services*.

<http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2013/health/0723n01.htm>

New Brunswick

DISABILITY

New Brunswick is the first province to integrate access to the digital content of the CNIB Library with its own online catalogue.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2013.07.0705.html

HOUSING

The province will spend \$2 million to help low-income homeowners save money and reduce greenhouse gases. The Low Income Efficiency Program will begin in November to identify eligible homes and carry out fully funded and facilitated retrofits for energy efficiency. It will target homes in need of major efficiency upgrades, especially insulation and heating systems, resulting in significant energy savings for homeowners who have difficulty meeting their household financial obligations. About 100 energy retrofits are expected to be completed this fiscal year and another 300 next fiscal year.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2013.07.0657.html

Nova Scotia

COMMUNITIES

\$650,000 in operating funding announced for 14 community-based transportation organizations through the province's Community Transportation Assistance Program. The program offsets operating expenses for transit groups that provide transportation in low-population density areas of the province at a per capita rate. Municipalities and community-based organizations can apply for funding once they have completed a feasibility study, business plan and pilot project. The work supports the province's sustainable transportation strategy launched in April.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130715002>

Working on Our Futures (WOOF), a program where offenders help train dogs for families wanting to adopt, is being extended for another year. Work will also start on Re-Cycle, a new bicycle recycling program that provides bikes to low-income children.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130718001>

GOVERNANCE

Small and medium-sized businesses will receive support and training from Dalhousie University's new Big Data Analytics Institute. Big data analytics is the process of collecting, analyzing and understanding complex and large amounts of information to support business decisions. Big



data comes from posts to social media sites, digital pictures and videos, cellphone and GPS signals, texts, blogs and sensors that gather important climate information. The first of its kind in Canada, the Institute will boost education in big data analytics. Its work will enable greater collaboration and research within the province's growing information and communications technology sector and help establish Nova Scotia as a centre of excellence in the field.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130718006>

HEALTH

The province is partnering with a Halifax health centre to more than double the number of children under 16 who receive dental surgery each year. The provision of treatment to 600 more children will help shorten wait times and reduce emergency room visits.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130730003>

INCOME SECURITY

According to Statistics Canada, the number of people in the province with low incomes dropped by more than 7,000 to 64,000 in 2011, a decrease of 10 percent over 2010. Seven percent of the population is considered to be living in poverty, the lowest percentage of low-income residents on record for the province. The number of children in low-income households also improved, decreasing by 2000 to 13,000, a drop of 13 percent. A recovering economy, improving labour market conditions and government programs have contributed to higher employment and higher incomes.

<http://novascotia.ca/coms/noteworthy/Decreasingpoverty.html>

Prince Edward Island

No updates this month.

Québec

HEALTH

The province will host its first International Forum on Health in Montreal in October 2013. The Forum is organized by the five University Health Centers of Québec in cooperation with the health care sector. The event will provide a venue for health care providers, education specialists and business people to meet. It will also create opportunities to identify concepts, methods and skills required for the transformation of health systems and facilities.

<http://congresmtl.com/en/2013/07/creation-of-the-first-international-forum-on-health-in-montreal/>

Ontario

COMMUNITY

\$30 million over three years to improve delivery of front-line client services through Family Law Service Centres and community and legal clinics across the province. In the first year, 70 percent of the new funding will expand the reach of Legal Aid Ontario's Family Law Service Centres,

making it possible for more low-income families to access legal advice, duty counsel and mediation services. Thirty percent of the new funding will increase the capacity of community and legal clinics to meet clients needs. This investment could include new or enhanced services that help clients with poverty law, housing, mental health and domestic violence.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mag/en/2013/07/improving-access-to-justice-for-vulnerable-people.html>

DISABILITY

A provincial Budget 2013 commitment of \$42.5 million will assist families and adults at high risk reduce wait list pressures, and better support persons with complex needs. Enhanced supports include:

- emergency assistance for an estimated 600–800 adults with a developmental disability who have an unexpected temporary need, such as the sudden illness of a caregiver
- training and specialized equipment, such as bed lifts, for community agencies to help adults with complex needs
- new or additional direct funding for 850 adults with a developmental disability to support community participation and provide respite to caregivers
- residential accommodation or support to help up to 250 adults facing high safety and security risks (e.g., former Crown wards with no family support).

<http://news.ontario.ca/mcss/en/2013/07/enhancing-support-for-adults-with-a-developmental-disability.html>

INCOME SECURITY

Appointment of a Minimum Wage Advisory Panel. Through consultations with business and labour groups, workers, anti-poverty advocates and academics, the panel will examine the province's current minimum wage policy and provide advice on how Ontario should determine the minimum wage in future. The panel will also recommend a process to set the minimum wage that is both fair to workers and predictable for businesses.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mol/en/2013/07/new-advisory-panel-to-examine-ontarios-minimum-wage-system.html>

POVERTY REDUCTION

The province is renewing its commitment to reduce poverty with the launch of province-wide consultations to hear how government and communities can continue to work together to break the cycle of poverty. Feedback from the consultations will contribute to the development of a new five-year Poverty Reduction Strategy for Ontario. *Breaking the Cycle: Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy* was launched in 2008. Despite a difficult economic climate, more than 40,000 children and their families were lifted out of poverty between 2008 and 2010.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mcys/en/2013/07/ontario-government-renewing-its-commitment-to-reduce-poverty.html>



RECREATION

19 provincial sport and multi-sport organizations will receive support through Ontario's Sport Priority Funding (SPF) program. SPF supports the achievement of Canadian Sport Policy 2012 goals and the Ministry's sport priorities. The program will help the organizations coordinate athlete and leadership development sessions; certify coaches, officials and volunteers; host athlete training camps; and stage competitions.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mtc/en/2013/07/providing-more-opportunities-for-active-living-and-excellence-in-sport.html>

Manitoba

CHILDREN

The province's education ministry announced that a new provincial code of conduct will be developed to address bullying. It will set out a range of appropriate disciplinary consequences that all schools will be required to follow, providing them with more tools for tackling the issue in a clear and consistent way.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=month&item=17971>

Saskatchewan

INCOME SECURITY

Benefit increases to the Seniors Income Plan (SIP) and the Personal Care Home Benefit (PCHB) go into effect on July 1, 2013. The monthly maximum SIP benefit for seniors who live in special care homes will double, from \$25 to \$50. The maximum monthly benefit for seniors living independently is increasing by \$10, to a monthly maximum of \$250. SIP is a monthly supplement available to seniors who have little or no income other than the federal Old Age Security benefit and the Guaranteed Income Supplement. Currently, more than 16,000 Saskatchewan seniors receive SIP benefits each month.

In addition, the government is increasing the monthly income threshold for the PCHB by \$75, to \$1,875 per month. The PCHB provides seniors with additional money to help with the cost of living in a licensed personal care home. Those eligible for the program receive a monthly supplement, amounting to the difference between their monthly income and the income threshold.

<http://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2013/june/24/government-boosts-benefits-for-low-income-seniors>

Alberta

No updates this month.

British Columbia

CHILDREN

\$2.5 million for a new regional innovation chair at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, specializing in Aboriginal early childhood development and maternal and child health. The chair will lead teams

of researchers who will work closely with members of local Aboriginal communities. Community participants will bring their strengths, understanding of their children and tradition to the partnership, and help identify current needs.

<http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2013/07/province-funds-aboriginal-early-childhood-research.html>

DISABILITY

Announcement of a simplified application process for young people with developmental disabilities who are applying for Persons with Disabilities (PWD) assistance. Youth and their families can now use an existing assessment by a registered psychologist or certified school psychologist, instead of completing the PWD designation application. Some 600 youth with developmental disabilities will benefit each year from this simplified approach.

<http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2013/07/new-process-to-simplify-youth-disability-assistance.html>

RECREATION

\$2.8 million in federal and provincial funding for the BC Sport Participation Program (BCSPP) will help children and adults overcome barriers to participating in sport programs. BCSPP has introduced more than 500,000 residents to sport since its inception in 2004 and trained more than 20,000 coaches and sport leaders. Those assisted include Aboriginals, people with disabilities, low-income individuals and seniors.

<http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2013/07/funding-helps-kids-overcome-barriers-to-sport-participation.html>

Yukon Territory

EMPLOYMENT

Citizenship and Immigration Canada has approved the Government of Yukon to launch a one-year pilot of the Yukon Temporary Foreign Worker Program, beginning August 2013. The program has been designed to help meet Yukon's short-term labour market needs in the tourism and hospitality, oil and gas, mineral exploration and mining industries. Any employer hiring temporary foreign workers must pay the median wage for the position as listed in Human Resources and Skills Development Canada's Working in Canada website. The pilot is unique because of how closely program staff will work with the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board for the purpose of on-site monitoring to ensure compliance with the program. Yukon is the first jurisdiction in Canada to take these steps.

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/13-189.html#UfEyol21GWU>

Northwest Territories

No updates this month.

Nunavut

No updates this month.