



Canada Social Report
Provincial/Territorial
Policy Monitor

August 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

CHILDREN

The province is distributing parent resource kits for infants ages two months, four months and six months. Kits provided as part of regular child health clinic visits contain information to help parents ensure their child has the best possible start in life. The initiative is part of the province's early childhood learning strategy, Learning from the Start.

<http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2013/edu/0813n07.htm>

HOMELESSNESS

\$1.2 million from Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation's Provincial Homelessness Fund will enable 17 nonprofit groups to improve services for those at risk of homelessness. Since 2009, 64 grants totalling \$5 million have been distributed to 43 nonprofit organizations. Secure Foundations, released in August 2009, outlines the province's 10-year vision for social housing.

<http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2013/tw/0826n03.htm>

INCOME SUPPORT

The percentage of residents receiving Income Support benefits has fallen to seven percent, the lowest rate on record. Income support statistics can now be viewed online at: <http://www.aes.gov.nl.ca/department/branches/incempyouth/incomesupportcase.html>

<http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2013/exec/0809n03.htm>

New Brunswick

EMPLOYMENT

Release of New Brunswick's Labour Force and Skills Development Strategy 2013-2016.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2013.08.0806.html

HEALTH

In May, the province established Patient Connect NB, a bilingual resource for residents without a primary health care provider. To date, 2,000 new patients have signed up for the service; 800 have been matched with family doctors and nurse practitioners.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2013.08.0731.html

INCOME SECURITY

The Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, in collaboration with WorkSafeNB, is sponsoring a three-year, multi-stage review of workers' compensation legislation.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2013.08.0732.html

POVERTY REDUCTION

A series of public dialogue sessions will be held this autumn by the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation, leading to a renewal of *Overcom-*



ing Poverty Together – The New Brunswick Poverty Reduction Plan.
http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2013.08.0807.html

Nova Scotia

CAREGIVING

Release of *Putting People First: What We Heard*, a report summarizing community input on how to improve provincial supports to people requiring longer-term care. During the input phase, a 19-member advisory committee of government and community organizations, including advocates, service providers, frontline workers and families, developed a road-map to refocus and improve the services and supports for persons with disabilities. The committee was facilitated by Dr. Michael Bach and Don Gallant from the Institute for Research and Development on Inclusion and Society. Action plans to address their recommendations raised through both projects will be released in the coming months.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130829004>

Persons with disabilities, seniors and people with mental health issues will be able to choose the kinds of services and supports they need to live with greater independence in their own communities. Three immediate actions were announced to advance this new direction:

- establishing a single entry point for programs and services, for continuing care and services for persons with disabilities
- launching a demonstration project to help families formulate their own community-based housing solutions
- developing new legislation that will replace the outdated Homes for Special Care Act and provide more modern, people-centred, community-focused support for persons with disabilities, seniors and people with mental health issues.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130829004>

CHILDREN

Elements of the province's new cyber-safety Act will come into effect throughout August and September. People can now seek a protection order from the court or sue for cyberbullying.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130807002>

The booklet, *Sexual Assault, Safety Help and Healing for Teens in Nova Scotia*, is now available online at: <http://0-fs01.cito.gov.ns.ca.legcat.gov.ns.ca/deposit/b10664646.pdf>

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130816003>

Children who are being bullied, or who witness to bullying, can fill out an online form and the information will be automatically sent to their school's principal. The form will be on school board websites and at www.antibullying.novascotia.ca.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130816007>

The Action Team on Sexual Violence and Bullying's progress report received all party endorsement. The team met with more than 100 people and community organizations to discuss sexual violence and bullying. Action identified in the report includes:

- a social marketing campaign to influence behaviour related to bullying and sexual violence, including the Consent campaign now underway
- engaging a community development expert to monitor progress of community projects
- developing safety protocols with school boards and police
- new resources such as the *Parent Handbook on Bullying and Cyberbullying*, and the *Sexual Assault: safety, help and healing for teens in Nova Scotia guide*
- professional development training about sexual violence.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130829001>

COMMUNITY

Through the Accessible Transportation Assistance Program, the province is investing \$270,000 in rural transit organizations to buy accessible vehicles. The program offers up to 50 percent of the total capital cost, to a maximum of \$50,000 for new vehicles or \$10,000 for used vehicles.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130828003>

DISABILITY

Beginning January 1, 2014, the province will help ensure 2,000 people with disabilities get reliable support in their adult vocational and employment programs. \$900,000 will pay for more relief staff when any of the 400 regular staff members in the 29 agencies are sick or need to be away from work.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130827004>

EMPLOYMENT

Announcement of the expansion of START – an employment program which encourages businesses to hire and provide work experience to residents. More than 382 employers have taken part in START, which helps cover costs such as training and wages for new employees. The province is increasing the funding by \$500,000 per year for a total of \$1.5 million over the next three years.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130807004>



HEALTH

Over the next four years, the province is expanding dental coverage to include residents 17 or younger.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130816001>

HOUSING

Launch of Housing Nova Scotia, formerly the Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation. The agency will reinvest profits into creating affordable housing and related programs (e.g., it will develop some housing to sell or rent at market rates, and use profits to lower rent and costs for other residents).

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130830017>

INCOME SECURITY

Effective October 1, the province will increase its maternal nutritional allowance to \$51 a month, a 76 percent increase to help ensure that low-income women who are pregnant can better afford healthy food. The increase brings Nova Scotia in line with other areas in Canada. The province also recently increased the personal use allowance for income assistance recipients by \$17 a month.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130822004>

SENIORS

Announcement of \$1 million funding increase (effective 2014) to the Seniors Citizens Assistance Program. The second increase since 2010, it brings annual funding for the program to \$5.9 million. The maximum grant for home repairs is \$6,500. To be eligible for the funding, home repair projects must address health and safety issues. These can include roofing repairs, plumbing, heating and electrical.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130813001>

The Seniors Navigators Program will make it easier for older residents to get the help they need to stay in their homes and communities longer. Seniors will be able to call on navigators – provincial employees well versed in support and program information – to assess their needs and guide them through the process of accessing help.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130826004>

Prince Edward Island

No updates this month.

Québec

EDUCATION

Cuts in funding to school boards since April 2013 amount to \$280 million.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

Ontario

DISABILITY

An additional 1,300 children and youth served by the province's 21 children's treatment centres will receive improved access to rehabilitative services, such as physical, occupational and speech therapy. The government will expand access to integrated rehabilitation services in full-day kindergarten classrooms by building on pilot programs. More young people with autism will also benefit from improved access to Intensive Behavioural Intervention therapy, which helps reduce challenging behaviours, increase appropriate behaviours and promote positive development.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mcys/en/2013/08/enhancing-supports-for-children-and-youth-with-special-needs.html>

HEALTH

The province is making its cancer system safer for patients, following the release of Dr. Jake Thiessen's review into Ontario's cancer drug supply chain. Thiessen was appointed to conduct a review in response to the discovery of under-dosing of chemotherapy drugs at four Ontario hospitals and one in New Brunswick.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mohltc/en/2013/8/ontario-endorses-thiessens-review-of-cancer-drug-supply-system.html>

Newborns will now be screened for Severe Combined Immune Deficiency Syndrome, bringing the number of diseases and disorders screened in Ontario to 29.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mohltc/en/2013/08/newborn-screening-ontario-to-include-severe-combined-immune-deficiency.html>

The province has released a new cycling strategy to promote safe cycling and encourage more people to ride their bikes to work, school and recreation destinations. The strategy presents a 20-year vision that supports cycling by encouraging and promoting:

- healthy, active and prosperous communities
- improvements to cycling infrastructure
- safer highways and streets
- improved cycling awareness
- tourism opportunities.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mto/en/2013/08/province-releases-new-cycling-strategy.html>

INCOME SECURITY

On September 1, Ontario Disability Support Program benefits will increase by one percent. On October 1, Ontario Works benefits will increase by one percent. Clients in both programs will be able to earn up to \$200 per month through employment before their social assistance benefits are reduced. This change will encourage more clients to gain work experience and will help enhance their opportunities of finding full-time jobs, while improving the incomes of 58,000 recipients who



currently have employment earnings. To further improve financial independence for Ontario Works clients, the province is also increasing the level of assets they are able to keep, such as a car a client may need for getting to and from work.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

SENIORS

Release of the *Age-Friendly Community Planning Guide*, which offers information to municipalities on the development, implementation and evaluation of plans for senior-friendly communities that are socially and physically accessible.

<http://news.ontario.ca/oss/en/2013/08/improving-communities-for-seniors.html>

Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia

No updates this month.

Yukon Territory

HEALTH

The territorial government is committing \$643,000 towards a new study to determine the prevalence of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and other cognitive impairments among its adult corrections population.

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/13-198.html#.UgKmnZK1GWU>

INCOME SECURITY

The territorial government proclaimed Section 3 of the *Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act*. This amendment will help parents caring for a critically ill child by providing job protection when they take a leave of absence without pay. It will also allow parents to access new federal benefit programs. The Government of Canada amended its relevant legislation in June 2013.

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/13-206.html#.UgT8Q5K1GWU>

COMMUNITY

Twelve new graduates from the first-ever Corrections Northern Recruit Training Program have gained the training and skills they need to apply for corrections positions or other security-related jobs in the Northwest Territories. The program supports the goal of ensuring that inmates are served by corrections officers and staff who have a deep understanding of the culture and people of the North.

<http://news.exec.gov.nt.ca/corrections-northern-recruit-program-celebrates-first-fort-smith-graduates/>

Nunavut

No updates this month.

Northwest Territories