




Canada Social Report
Provincial/Territorial
Policy Monitor

May 2016



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

INCOME SECURITY

The government launched an online calculator to enable low-income residents to determine the approximate benefit they will receive from the new Newfoundland and Labrador Income Supplement and the enhanced Seniors' Benefit announced in Budget 2016. The calculator also provides seniors with the revised projections for the enhanced Seniors' Benefit and will indicate the quarterly payment available to eligible residents.

<http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2016/fin/0502n08.aspx>

The government announced a \$3 million increase in the existing fuel supplement for Income Support recipients to heat their homes and residences. This amount is in addition to the announcement in Budget 2016, which includes an annualized investment of \$63.7 million to assist the most vulnerable residents. Beginning in June, funding for the fuel supplement provides an additional monthly benefit of \$42 for Income Support recipients in Labrador who receive the fuel supplement and \$21 for recipients in Newfoundland. Income Support recipients in Labrador who qualify for the fuel supplement will now receive \$132 each month and eligible recipients in Newfoundland will receive \$71.

<http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2016/aes/0513n01.aspx>

New Brunswick

EDUCATION

The provincial government tabled amendments to the Post-Secondary Student Financial Assistance Act, which will make tuition free for New Brunswick students from low-income and many middle-class families.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2016.05.0420.html

MENTAL HEALTH

The province is investing \$8 million to fund research activities in youth mental health. It will provide \$500,000 of the \$2.5 million in total funding for a dedicated Research Chair on Youth Mental Health at Université de Moncton. It will also contribute \$2.5 million to help support a \$5.5 million research project with the Canadian Institutes for Health Research for youth and adolescent mental health, called ACCESS-Open Minds-New Brunswick.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2016.05.0352.html

SENIORS

The provincial government is investing \$600,000 to improve dementia care through the appropriate use of antipsychotic medication at nursing homes in New Brunswick. The province has among the highest rates of antipsychotic medication use in the elderly. In 2013, the rate of this medication use was nearly two times higher in the province than in the rest of Canada. The funds will help health care providers in nursing



homes use data to identify patients who may benefit from non-drug therapies to treat behavioural issues associated with dementia.
http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2016.05.0417.html

Nova Scotia

DEMOGRAPHICS

The province released Guidelines to Support Trans and Gender Variant Employees for government workers, making Nova Scotia the first provincial public service in Canada to do so.
<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20160517001>

DISABILITY

As part of Budget 2016-17, the province is investing \$3 million for new initiatives in the Disabilities Support Program. New funding of \$2.2 million will support moving 25 residents from larger adult residential or regional rehabilitation centres to smaller community settings, including independent living or alternative family support programs. Another investment of \$800,000 will go to the province's adult service centres that promote the abilities and inclusion of people with disabilities in daily community activities.
<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20160516005>

EDUCATION

As part of Budget 2016-17, the province is investing \$1 million to support coding in schools. As part of Nova Scotia's Action Plan for Education, coding promotes problem-solving, teamwork, critical thinking and innovation. These skills are directly linked to many of the growth industries in Nova Scotia, including computer programming, marine, manufacturing and communications.
<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20160506002>

The province has added an additional \$3.6 million per year in Budget 2016-17 to ensure that all preschool-aged children with autism spectrum disorder can receive Early Intensive Behavioural Intervention treatment before they start school at age 6. About 180 children with autism spectrum disorder each year will now be able to receive treatment. The province currently spends \$14 million each year on this program.
<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20160512002>

FOOD SECURITY

Farmers who donate to food banks in Nova Scotia will qualify for a new tax credit to encourage fresh produce donations. Donations of fresh, surplus produce can be made to a registered food bank by an individual or corporation carrying on business as a farm and will receive a tax credit equal to 25 per cent of the fair market value of the donation. They will also be eligible for the charitable donation tax credit.
<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20160519005>

Prince Edward Island

HOUSING

The federal and PEI governments will invest \$1.35 million over the next three years for affordable housing. An additional 75 units will be funded through rent supplements and will benefit low-income seniors, families, non-senior singles, persons with disabilities and those with mental health issues.
<http://www.gov.pe.ca/newsroom/index.php?number=news&newsnumber=10767&dept=&lang=E>

MINIMUM WAGE

On 1 June 2016, the minimum wage will increase from \$10.50 per hour to \$10.75 per hour.
<http://www.gov.pe.ca/newsroom/index.php?number=news&newsnumber=10812&dept=&lang=E>

Québec

DISABILITY

Following inter-ministerial committee work to provide support for seriously ill children and children with significant disabilities, the government announced the establishment an additional aid measure for families. Persons eligible for this exceptional extra help are forced to make difficult choices, especially regarding their own careers, to ensure special care for children whose health status requires monitoring and constant supervision. Eligibility criteria and program details will be announced in the coming weeks.
[Link](#)

LABOUR MARKET

The province is investing \$2.1 million in a training project that will strengthen the forest industry and contribute to the economy of north-western Québec by encouraging specialized training in the area of the second and tertiary wood processing. The employer, Amos Forex, has committed to creating 180 new jobs within three years. The project will also enable the creation of 60 indirect jobs in the management of the lumberyard.
[Link](#)

MINIMUM WAGE

The government approved the study of a bill that would cover the progressive raising of the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.
[Link](#)

SOCIAL ECONOMY

The government announced \$10 million in funding for the province's social investment network (RISQ). One of the measures announced in the 2015-20 government action plan on the social economy, this recapitalization of the organization's intervention fund will support social



economy enterprises through the phases of start-up, consolidation, expansion or reorganization.

<http://www.fil-information.gouv.qc.ca/Pages/Article.aspx?aiguillage=ajd&type=1&idArticle=2405177112>

WOMEN

A new report, Statistical Portrait gender equality: all of Québec, found a 30 percent difference between the wages of women and men without degrees. Women without postsecondary education working full time earn only 69.8 percent of the median wage of a man in the same situation. When they have a degree, their wages reached 80 percent of male graduates. Further, when women hold a university degree, their employment rate is 81.5 percent compared to 83.4 percent for men. With a college degree, the rate is 78.3 percent for women and 81.0 percent for men. The employment rate of women without postsecondary education is 38.3 percent compared to 52.3 percent for men in the same situation.

[Link](#)

Ontario

CHILDREN

New regulations under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, will begin to take effect on July 1, 2016. Key aspects of the regulations include:

- the introduction of a new, optional, pilot approach to ratios and age groupings. Licensees will have a choice to operate under the current requirements or apply to participate in the pilot. Ontario will work with partners and stakeholders to develop the pilot approach and evaluate and measure its impact
- the expansion of before- and after-school care for 6- to 12-year-olds as well as the provision of authorized recreation programs for up to three hours per day for the same age group
- new rules about sleep monitoring, playground safety and transition times for service system management plans and authorized recreation providers.

<https://news.ontario.ca/edu/en/2016/05/ontario-strengthening-and-modernizing-child-care-rules.html>

Ontario is proposing a regulation that would ban licensed child care centres and home child care agencies from charging fees to join a waiting list for child care programs.

<https://news.ontario.ca/edu/en/2016/05/ontario-proposing-to-ban-fees-for-child-care-wait-lists.html>

COMMUNITY

Ontario is investing nearly \$90 million dollars to expand child care and child and family support programs in schools as well as create spaces in schools for community use. The province is also expanding the list

of public organizations able to purchase or lease surplus school property before it is placed on the open market. This list will now include Children's Mental Health Agencies, First Nations and Métis organizations and others.

<https://news.ontario.ca/edu/en/2016/05/ontario-helping-more-schools-become-community-hubs.html>

DISABILITY

Ontario is investing \$2 million over two years in six additional community-based housing initiatives for adults with developmental disabilities. This will add to the 12 projects undertaken in 2014-15, and are part of the province's three-year, \$810 million investment to support the transformation and modernization of developmental services.

<https://news.ontario.ca/mcss/en/2016/05/ontario-investing-in-housing-for-people-with-developmental-disabilities-1.html>

EDUCATION

Ontario's high school graduation rate has increased to 85.5 per cent – the highest level in the province's history. The government has introduced a number of programs through its Student Success Strategy that are credited with helping to boost the graduation rate since 2004. These include Specialist High Skills Majors, dual credits and expanded co-operative education.

<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2016/05/high-school-graduation-rate-reaches-all-time-high-of-855-per-cent.html>

The province released a discussion document to engage with education partners, parents and students on the well-being of children and students in Ontario's publicly funded education system. Informed by First Nations, Métis and Inuit ways of knowing and holistic perspectives of education. Ontario will build on the release of the discussion document by launching an engagement process with its education partners to establish a common understanding of promoting well-being in schools and to develop ways to measure progress in promoting child and student well-being.

<https://news.ontario.ca/edu/en/2016/05/ontario-promoting-student-well-being-in-education.html>

HEALTH/INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Ontario is investing nearly \$222 million over the next three years to ensure Indigenous people have access to more culturally appropriate care and improved outcomes, focusing on the North where there are significant gaps in health services. This investment will be followed by sustained funding of \$104.5 million annually to address health inequities and improve access to culturally appropriate health services over the long term.

<https://news.ontario.ca/mohltc/en/2016/05/ontario-launches-222-million-first-nations-health-action-plan.html>



HOUSING

Ontario introduced the Promoting Affordable Housing Act, 2016, that would help ensure better access to affordable and adequate housing. The changes would amend four provincial acts to increase the supply of affordable housing across the province and modernize existing social housing. Ontario announced its update to the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy in March 2016. The update focuses on making housing programs more people-centred and coordinated, and provides municipalities with flexibility to meet local needs through tools like inclusionary zoning.

<https://news.ontario.ca/mah/en/2016/05/ontario-introduces-legislation-to-encourage-more-affordable-housing.html>

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Ontario has passed new legislation to recognize the importance of treaties and to bring awareness to the treaty relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the province. The Treaties Recognition Week Act, 2016 designates the first week of November each year as Treaties Recognition Week.

<https://news.ontario.ca/maa/en/2016/05/ontario-proclaims-first-week-of-november-treaties-recognition-week.html>

LABOUR MARKET

The Ontario Social Impact Voucher program will be renewed for a second year. In partnership with the Ontario Centres of Excellence, the program will provide 200 vouchers worth up to \$3,000 each to eligible social entrepreneurs across Ontario to access relevant training programs, such as business planning or marketing to scale up their business. In 2015, 125 vouchers were fully subscribed within the first six months of the program's launch, allowing participants to grow their business in terms of both customers and partnerships through useful training programs. Participants in the pilot program include social enterprises across a range of sectors, including health, cleantech, digital media, information and communications technology and advanced manufacturing.

<https://news.ontario.ca/medt/en/2016/05/ontario-supporting-young-entrepreneurs-and-social-enterprises.html>

MENTAL HEALTH

Ontario is allocating up to \$1.5 million over three years for a mental health crisis services centre in downtown Toronto for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer and two-spirited (LGBTQ2S) youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The investment will help deliver on Ontario's priority to target youth homelessness as well as its plan to end chronic homelessness in 10 years. LGBTQ2S youth experience far higher rates of homelessness than other young people. The government's Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness reported that LGBTQ2S youth often avoid seeking help from services for homeless people because of concerns about homophobia and transphobia.

<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2016/05/ontario-supports-crisis-counseling-for-lgbtq2s-youth.html>

POVERTY REDUCTION

The province is helping people living on low incomes to build their financial literacy skills by partnering with Prosper Canada to provide financial education services in communities across Ontario, including two new programs in Ottawa and Kitchener-Waterloo.

<https://news.ontario.ca/mcss/en/2016/05/ontario-investing-in-improving-financial-literacy.html>

Manitoba

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Budget 2016 focuses on protecting front-line services while eliminating unnecessary government spending. It includes no new taxes or tax increases and will not draw from the Fiscal Stabilization Fund. Social policy-related highlights include:

support for early learning and child care

- increased resources for the victims of crime
- additional resources to provide supports for Syrian refugees
- \$220-million (3.8 percent) increase in funding for health care to support ACCESS centres, health care centres and hospitals in Winnipeg and rural Manitoba, the provincial oncology drug program and other health care services
- \$37-million (1.4 percent) increase in funding for education and training over the current core government 2015-16 forecast including:
 - a 2.55 percent increase in funding for schools to support initiatives in early years reading, new schools, resources for at-risk and Indigenous students
 - the full implementation of the Masters of Social Worker – Indigenous Knowledge Program at the University of Manitoba operating increases of 2.5 percent for universities and 2.0 percent for colleges.

[Link](#)

COMMUNITY

Changes to the Domestic Violence and Stalking Act come into effect on May 15, 2016, and will provide better access to protection orders to assist victims affected by these serious crimes. The act includes changes to improve access to justice and recognizes the complex issues related to domestic violence.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=37953&posted=2016-05-13>

Saskatchewan

HEALTH

Saskatchewan will be the first Canadian province to take a provincial approach to an open family presence policy in health care facilities. Health regions are now moving toward more flexible visiting hours in



health facilities, which will welcome families 24 hours a day, seven days a week, according to the patient's preference. Open family presence is an internationally recognized best practice that can benefit patients in many ways, including increased co-ordination of care with front-line staff, fewer medication errors, fewer readmissions, and an overall better patient and family experience.

[Link](#)

HOUSING

The government announced the First Home Plan. This new initiative allows eligible post-secondary graduates to borrow up to \$10,000 of their unused Graduate Retention Program (GRP) tax credits to put toward the down payment on their first home. The plan will help recent graduates who have the income to qualify for a mortgage, but may be having challenges saving for a down payment. Under the GRP, recent graduates are eligible for rebates up to \$20,000 of tuition fees if they live in Saskatchewan for seven years following graduation. Under the First Home Plan, graduates will be able to borrow up to \$10,000 of their future tax credit as an interest-free loan to be used toward a down payment on their first home. Borrowers are required to repay the loan using the GRP tax credits they receive annually as part of their income tax filing.

[Link](#)

THRONE SPEECH

The newly-formed provincial government presented its Throne Speech. Social policy-related elements included:

- expanding the “two-for-one” model recently introduced for MRI scans to also include CT scans
- expanding an innovative remote technology health care pilot project in Pelican Narrows to other northern communities
- amending the Saskatchewan Employment Act to ensure that those caring for a family member in the final stages of life will be eligible for 28 weeks of leave per year
- reducing health region administration costs by \$7.5 million per year and re-directing those savings toward front-line seniors' care.

[Link](#)

Alberta

GOVERNANCE

The province introduced the Modernized Municipal Government Act (MGA), a culmination of nearly four years of comprehensive review and consultation. The revised MGA requires municipalities to work together, through municipal partnerships, to deliver more effective, efficient services to their communities. The metropolitan regions of Calgary and Edmonton will do this through mandatory growth management boards,

ensuring regional approaches to the delivery and equitable funding of services including water, wastewater and transportation. They will also be required to develop a growth plan for the region to ensure the preservation of agricultural lands and the wise use of the environment. Outside of the metropolitan regions of Calgary and Edmonton, municipalities will develop inter-municipal collaboration frameworks. Locally negotiated and equitable cost-sharing agreements will be required to help municipalities effectively plan, pay for and deliver the infrastructure and services used at a regional level.

<http://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=4185154FA551C-A8F9-F963-537250BD1AE2EBEF>

HEALTH

Albertans can now obtain take-home naloxone kits free-of-charge from community pharmacies without a prescription. These kits can be used to temporarily reverse overdoses of fentanyl or other opioids, so people have time to seek emergency help. The province is also providing \$3 million to Alberta Health Services (AHS) to support the Opioid Dependency Treatment Plan Strategy, a three-year project that will expand counselling services and access to suboxone and methadone treatment in several communities where the need is greatest. By the end of the first year, an additional 240 Albertans are expected to receive opioid replacement treatment; an increase of 20 percent from the number currently being treated at existing AHS clinics.

<http://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=417414B455D8C-0088-FB3A-364659A0B371C960>

MINIMUM WAGE

The government will hold focused consultations over the next month with key stakeholders, including employers, social service organizations and low-income earners. Discussion topics will include future increases, meal and lodging deductions and the phase-out of the differential liquor server rate.

<http://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=41772AEEB4B1B-C49D-922E-FC9C759CB75E18BB>

TRANSPORTATION

The Government of Alberta is investing \$6.2 million over three years towards a Low Income Transit Pass in Edmonton. As part of their joint efforts to reduce and prevent poverty, the city and province are developing a cost-shared Low Income Transit Pass to increase access to public transit and connect families to community supports and resources. Eligibility for Edmonton's pass will be based on 100 per cent of the low-income cut-off. The City of Edmonton estimates 20,000 people each month would be eligible for, and make use of, a low-income transit pass program. Human Services will cost share the total \$12.4 million required over three years. The Government of Alberta will provide \$213,000 in 2016, \$2 million in 2017 and \$4 million in 2018.

<http://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=418184E132212-D399-62E1-7601B394963DDCOC>



The Government of Alberta is investing \$13.5 million over three years toward Calgary's Low Income Transit Pass. Human Services will share the cost of Calgary's existing program for the next three years at \$4.5 million annually. 25,000 Calgarians take advantage of the Low Income Transit Pass on a monthly basis. Their program eligibility is based on 100 per cent of the low-income cut-off.

<http://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=418257C84B791-D3F9-5F8F-9E8D0642B481D4AB>

British Columbia

CHILDREN

A group of independent advisors will work with government to develop a multi-year plan to strengthen BC's child welfare system, starting with more staff, more training and greater transparency and accountability in ministry decision-making and other areas.

[Link](#)

Young people who are in the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development and have complex emotional, mental health, developmental and/or behavioural challenges can now get help through two new community resources in Vernon and Prince George. Each Complex Care Community Residential Resource (CCCRR) has five beds and will stabilize, assess and support children and youth in care (7 to 18 years) who have special and complex needs. Workers are trained to deal with extreme behaviours resulting from previous traumatic events in a young person's life. There are now 16 CCCRR beds available in BC to support and manage the complex challenges of children and youth in the care of the ministry.

[Link](#)

HOUSING/MENTAL HEALTH/HOMELESSNESS

A Housing First Initiative agreement between the BC government and the Capital Regional District (CRD) will build new affordable rental housing in Greater Victoria. The province has committed up to \$30 million in capital funding, with a matching contribution from the CRD, totalling \$60 million. As part of the agreement, Island Health will provide mental health and addiction services for projects where supports are required. The partners have also committed to developing a Regional Housing First Initiative Community Plan to help with the development of new supportive and affordable housing in the CRD. This will be done in partnership with the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness.

[Link](#)

LABOUR MARKET

The UBC Sauder School of Business Centre for Social Innovation & Impact Investing and its project partners have completed the BC Social Venture Sector Labour Market Study. The report provides a profile of social venture organizations in BC and their current and future labour needs.

It also outlines challenges that social enterprises in BC face and recommends actions that would support further development of the sector.

[Link](#)

MENTAL HEALTH

The province has provided \$3 million to the BC Schizophrenia Society to expand their province-wide caregiver network. The network supports family and friends who are caring for loved ones with schizophrenia or serious mental illness.

[Link](#)

To further support the positive mental health and well-being of children, youth and families, the province is investing \$850,000 in the F.O.R.C.E. Society for Kids' Mental Health. A nonprofit founded in 2000, "Families Organized for Recognition and Care Equality" will use the funds to strengthen supports for families, including evaluating and enhancing their Parent and Youth in Residence Program, developed in 2011. Based on their lived experience, parents and youth offer peer support, education, mentorship and assistance to young people, families and caregivers in navigating child and youth mental health services. To date, there are 16 parent-in-residence and two youth-in-residence mentors working in the province's five health regions.

[Link](#)

MINIMUM WAGE

BC will adjust the minimum wage rate beyond BC's Consumer Price Index and will raise the minimum wage in two stages: it will increase by 40 cents to \$10.85 in September 2016 and by 30 cents to \$11.25 in September 2017. The province will also reduce the small business tax rate by 40 percent by 2017-18.

[Link](#)

SOCIAL ECONOMY

A Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation includes social impact purchasing requirements that will create employment opportunities for residents receiving income and disability assistance. The RFP invites qualified service providers to submit proposals for security services at 15 Social Development and Social Innovation offices in the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley area. To meet the social impact requirements of the contract, the successful proponent will have to recruit and fill job vacancies with individuals who receive income or disability assistance. Social impact will be weighted at 20 percent during the evaluation process, along with criteria including the service provider's capabilities, approach and price.

[Link](#)

TRANSPORTATION

The provincial government confirmed its support – a quarter of a billion dollars over the next three years – for public transit in Metro Vancouver



and for finding innovative ways to develop new housing. Investments will support the purchase of more SkyTrain cars, improvements to bus exchanges and SkyTrain stations, enhanced SeaBus service, initial work towards new major rapid transit in Vancouver and Surrey, and the modernization of TransLink's transit infrastructure.

[Link](#)

YOUTH

The provincial government is adding more than \$1.2 million to enhance staffing and expand youth outreach, while working to create a new "no-questions-asked" safe housing option to better support vulnerable youth on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The Ministry of Children and Family Development is investing in and realigning services to respond to the specific needs of at-risk youth in the area.

[Link](#)

The Province is investing \$761,038 to provide 75 at-risk youth with valuable work experience through temporary employment placements with social enterprises in the Lower Mainland and Greater Victoria regions. The BC Centre for Employment Excellence will test whether work placements in social enterprises lead to better outcomes for at-risk youth. The results will be compared with youth who have received services and supports from WorkBC centres but are not offered placements with the pilot's social enterprise partners.

[Link](#)

Yukon Territory

CAREGIVING

Budget 2016 committed \$244,000 to expand home care services in Yukon, subject to legislative approval. The addition of three staff brings the total home care complement to 29.75 full time equivalents (FTEs) this year. In addition, the Yukon Palliative Care resource team received permanent funding last year, adding another three FTEs to the total.

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/16-180.html#VzFCCY-cGHk>

DISABILITY

Changes to the internal structure of the social services division of the Department of Health and Social Services include moving the Family Supports to Children with Disabilities program and the Services to Persons with Disabilities program into one area, reporting to the same director. At age 16, youth and their families work with program staff to begin planning the transition process.

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/16-171.html#VytDU4-cFEw>

The Government of Yukon is investing \$120,000 for speech and language services within the Family Supports for Children with Disabilities program. Services include assessment, treatment, consultation and programming to address children's needs in the home or community.

Children with a broad range of physical, mental, social or emotional impairment or limitations will benefit from these services.

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/16-186.html#VzPdYY-cGHk>

FOOD SECURITY

The government has released the Local Food Strategy for Yukon: Encouraging the Production and Consumption of Yukon-Grown Food 2016–2021. Initiatives outlined in the strategy include:

- providing low-cost leasing options for agriculture land
- enhancing food safety systems
- improving food access
- building infrastructure to support community and backyard food production
- supporting community food processing
- researching cold climate food production
- implementing food waste reduction programs
- increasing government's purchase and use of local food
- supporting the development of certified organic compost.

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/16-188.html#VzPcTY-cGHk>

HEALTH

The Government of Yukon is allocating an additional \$1.277 million in the 2016-17 budget, pending legislative approval, to cover the costs of the Hepatitis C drugs, Sovaldi and Harvoni. In Yukon, 43 persons started treatment for Hepatitis C in 2015. This is a more than three-fold increase compared to previous years. Of those 43, 27 people started on Harvoni and 16 on Sovaldi.

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/16-187.html#VzPc7I-cGHk>

The territory released the Yukon Health Status Report 2015. Issued every three years, the report provides an overview of the health of Yukoners, including statistics on life expectancy, mortality, chronic disease prevalence, mental health and life satisfaction.

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/16-198.html#Vz2jbl-cFuk>

MENTAL HEALTH

The territory released Forward Together: Yukon Mental Wellness Strategy. It is considered a living document that will change over the coming decade as the Yukon government continues to conduct research, adopt new practices and learn from practice. The strategy's immediate focus is on the next two years and identifies three priorities: improving access; focusing on child, youth and family; and building community capacity through training and development.

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/16-172.html#VyyDC4-cGHk>



Northwest Territories

No updates this month.

Nunavut

HOMELESSNESS

The City of Yellowknife and the territorial government are working together to address homelessness. Two groups were formed following a community partnership forum. The first group, led by the Mayor, will analyze and review more than 65 recommendations developed through the workshop and formulate plans for implementation. The second group, coordinated by the Government of the Northwest Territories in conjunction with non-governmental organizations, will be responsible for identifying and resolving barriers and duplication in current homelessness programming.

<http://www.gov.nt.ca/newsroom/news/gnwt-and-city-work-address-homelessness-following-community-forum>