



Canada Social Report
Provincial/Territorial
Policy Monitor

July 2017



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. 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 introduced *The New Child Care Act*. It includes:

- replacing the former *Child Care Services Act* effective July 31, 2017
- improving safety and security standards for the well-being of our children at their most vulnerable stages
- clarifying and strengthening licensing exemptions
- removing the cap on the number of spaces per child care centre
- enhancing qualification expectations by requiring entry-level certification to become trainee certification, requiring early childhood educators to upgrade to a post-secondary one-year Early Childhood Education Certificate within a five-year period
- enhancing qualifications for administrators of infant-only family homes to include the requirement of a Level I certification with an infant classification
- ensuring child care providers have a secure building policy and enhanced physical space requirements to increase quality of care
- committing to a mandatory five-year legislative review with public consultation to allow the opportunity for feedback.

[Link](#)

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Innu Leadership have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines their mutual intent to pursue an inquiry into the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu in the child protection system.

[Link](#)

New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Québec

No updates this month.

Ontario

CHILDREN

Ontario released *Safe and Caring Places for Children and Youth: Ontario's Blueprint for Building a New System of Licensed Residential Services*, a multi-year plan for comprehensive reform to improve the quality of care, enhance the oversight of services and ensure that children and youth have a voice in helping to plan their care.

[Link](#)

Ontario has appointed Dr. Gordon Cleveland to lead a new study with the goal of building a child care system that makes child care universally accessible and affordable to all Ontario families. Dr. Cleveland will provide



policy recommendations, including ways to improve access to child care subsidies. The study is expected to be complete by the end of February 2018.

[Link](#)

CHILDREN/HEALTH

Ontario is providing additional support to detect potential hearing loss in newborns sooner and ensure that families with children who have permanent hearing loss, or are at risk, get the supports they need.

[Link](#)

COMMUNITIES

Ontario is supporting [204 new projects](#) that will help build healthy communities across the province. An additional 11 projects are being awarded [Collective Impact Grants](#), which help organizations work together to address complex social issues in communities.

[Link](#)

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES/MENTAL HEALTH

Over the last several months, Ontario has worked with Indigenous partners across Northern Ontario and federal government colleagues to implement a new Interim Social Emergencies Response Protocol. Developed in response to First Nation youth suicides in Northern Ontario, the protocol is aimed at delivering faster, more efficient assistance when crises occur.

Additional actions being provided in coordination with First Nations communities include:

- developing a robust safety strategy for First Nations students attending school in Thunder Bay
- sending 20 mental health counsellors to Pikangikum First Nation to help the community meet its immediate health crisis
- sending four additional mental health counsellors for Wapekeka First Nation
- providing funding to Wapekeka and Nibinamik for emergency supplies and youth supports
- offering additional crisis funding of \$1.2 million for a total of \$5 million to support crisis in the north through the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness strategy. A total of \$25.7 million is invested by MCSS annually to support mental health and other wellness services in northern communities
- allocating funds to increase the capacity of Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services Unit to improve its ability to provide high-quality and timely access to mental health supports for northern First Nations youth.

[Link](#)

SENIORS

Ontario is creating more spaces and programs to help seniors stay healthy and active by supporting 40 new seniors' centres across the province.

[Link](#)

WOMEN

The province released [Advancing Opportunities for Women and Girls in Sport: Ontario's Action Plan](#). It outlines actions the province will take to increase the number of women and girls who are athletes, coaches, sport administrators and leaders at schools, universities and communities across the province.

[Link](#)

Manitoba

HEALTH

The Manitoba government will introduce a cap on dispensing fees to help reduce costs for patients and the provincial drug plan, and ensure pharmacies remain able to recover costs associated with dispensing drugs.

[Link](#)

Saskatchewan

INCOME SECURITY

Government has made the following decisions regarding certain benefits in the Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP), the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program, and the Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA):

- overpayment recovery rates will be increased. SAP recovery rates have not been changed since 1989
- benefits for high-calorie diets more than 2,999 calories will be updated to focus on clients' specific medical conditions and dietary needs as identified by a health professional rather than the existing 3,000-plus calorie diet benefit, which currently applies only to diabetes, weight reduction and modified fats (low cholesterol)
- to streamline services, clients requiring major home repairs will be directed to the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation's Emergency Repair Program rather than the home repair benefit which is being discontinued.

[Link](#)

MENTAL HEALTH

Effective July 1, the Saskatchewan Prescription Drug Plan provides coverage for two drug products for the treatment of alcohol use disorder: Revia (naltrexone) and Campral (acamprosate).

[Link](#)



POVERTY REDUCTION

The province announced the continuation of funding for the Discounted Bus Pass (DBP) program. Saskatchewan has invested up to \$1.8 million in the DBP program in 2017-18 to keep monthly bus passes affordable for Saskatchewan residents who receive income assistance. The program helps individuals with low incomes search for or travel to work, attend health care appointments and attend to other daily living needs. Cities set transit rates, and the province's DBP program gives riders a discount of \$25 off of the full fare. Participating cities include Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, North Battleford, Yorkton and Swift Current.

[Link](#)

Alberta

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES/EDUCATION

The Alberta government is supporting summer literacy camps that will help hundreds of Indigenous students build their literacy and numeracy skills so they can have greater success in school. The camps are being offered to Indigenous students in 14 communities across Alberta this summer through Frontier College, a national charitable literacy organization. The camps and additional supports for students are being made possible through a \$1.6 million grant over the next three years.

[Link](#)

British Columbia

INCOME SECURITY

The province announced a \$100 per month increase to income assistance and disability assistance rates.

[Link](#)

Yukon Territory

No updates this month.

Northwest Territories

DEMOGRAPHICS

The territorial government has introduced two changes to the Vital Statistics Act that promote inclusion and respect: the ability to use single names based on traditional culture, and changing the sex designation on a birth certificate to better reflect gender identity.

[Link](#)

HEALTH

The Government of Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories and their partners signed an agreement with the Tlicho Government to provide \$24.9 million in funding and in-kind contributions to establish a NWT Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR) Support for People and Patient-Oriented Research and Trials (SUPPORT) Unit – Hotìì ts'eeda.

Hotìì ts'eeda means working together for good health. The vision for the Unit is to support health research and training that is rooted in Dene, Inuvialuit and Métis knowledge – research that is relevant and responds to the needs of patients, communities and governments to build capacity, creating a culturally competent health system and improved health. It aims to facilitate information sharing to ensure patient-centered and culturally appropriate approaches are applied when and where needed.

Hotìì ts'eeda responds to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action through its governance approach, which integrates Indigenous knowledge holders, researchers, and the health and social services system and residents of the NWT. With this announcement, SPOR SUPPORT Units have now been established in all provinces and the NWT.

[Link](#)

Nunavut

No updates this month.