

**MEDIA BACKGROUNDER**  
**Health Budget 2017-18**  
**Record \$5.2 Billion Investment**

**BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS:**

- **\$3.4 billion for Regional Health Authorities (RHAs)** for operating funding and investments in programs and services. This is a 1.2 per cent increase over 2016-17 and includes:
  - **\$12 million** to support overcapacity pressures and reduced emergency department wait times in Regina and Saskatoon.
  - **\$24.4 million** for operating funding and service pressures.
  - **\$4.4 million** in operating funding for the Children's Hospital of Saskatchewan
- **\$170.4 million** for the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency to provide **cancer care services** to more patients - a 2.0 per cent increase over 2016-17.
- **\$750,000** to begin a **human papillomavirus (HPV) program for Grade 6 boys**, expanding the existing program for girls.
- **\$250,000** in additional funding for the **Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)** for vision rehabilitation services and equipment.
- **\$83.7 million capital investment**, a 17.2 per cent increase, which includes:
  - **\$34.7 million** for capital maintenance;
  - **\$15.3 million** for capital equipment replacements;
  - **\$15.5 million** for the continued construction of the **Children's Hospital of Saskatchewan (CHS)**, and an additional **\$8 million** for **CHS information technology** needs;
  - **\$3.5 million** for **electrical renewal projects at Regina hospitals**; and
  - **\$6.7 million** for **Leader Integrated Facility** funding.

**COVERAGE CHANGES**

The following programs are not insured services and will be phased out by RHAs. Clients will access services through the private system; coverage for low-income residents will be provided by government.

- Hearing Aid Plan (\$3 million savings)
- Podiatry Services (\$1.2 million savings)
- Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) generators (\$800,000 savings)
- Low-cost orthotics (\$285,000 savings)

Currently, these services are delivered through a blend of the public and private system.

**PROGRAM REDUCTIONS**

Parent mentoring and pastoral care services will no longer be offered in health regions (\$1.4 million and \$1.5 million savings respectively).

Chiropractic services will no longer be covered for low-income safety net recipients starting July 1, 2017 (\$1.25 million savings). Coverage was previously removed for other residents.

In addition, travel vaccination clinics will transition from public health offices to private providers (e.g. pharmacies, physicians), which is expected to increase access across the province.

**FEE CHANGE**

- Special care home (long term care) fees will increase effective July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. However, about 50% of residents will continue to pay only the minimum monthly fee (\$1,086). The current minimum fee and portion of income is \$1,086 + 50% of income. This will change to \$1,086 + 57.5% of income. The maximum monthly fee will be \$2,689 (previously \$2,065). Government currently subsidizes 84% of the overall cost of long-term-care. With the fee change the government still pays for 83% of the overall cost, a reduction of 1%.