

March 4, 2025

## BACKGROUND

### Strengthening health care and services people rely on

In an uncertain economic environment, it's more important than ever to protect the services people rely on. Budget 2025 invests \$7.7 billion over three years to support health, education and social services.

#### Health care

Budget 2025 provides \$4.2 billion over three years to increase capacity in the health-care system, improve patient outcomes and support a growing demand for services. This includes \$443 million to support the primary care strategy and more than \$870 million toward the opening and operation of new facilities, including the new St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver, the Royal Columbian Hospital redevelopment in New Westminster, the Mills Memorial Hospital replacement in Terrace and Royal Inland Hospital enhancements in Kamloops.

As B.C.'s population grows and ages, additional facilities are needed to support the increasing need for health care. Budget 2025 provides \$15.5 billion over three years in capital investments for new and upgraded acute care, long-term care and cancer care facilities throughout the province. Major projects include the construction of a new acute care tower at the University Hospital of Northern BC; the new Surrey hospital and BC Cancer Centre and new facilities at Surrey Memorial; new long-term care facilities that are starting construction in Chilliwack, Kelowna and Squamish; and cancer centres in Nanaimo and Kamloops.

#### Mental health and addictions

Government has made significant investments to strengthen mental-health and addiction services throughout B.C. Budget 2025 includes \$500 million in new funding over three years for addictions treatment and recovery programs that are underway. These include Road to Recovery, Foundry, secure care, supports for children and youth and Indigenous-led treatment, recovery and aftercare services.

## **K-12 education**

Budget 2025 provides \$370 million over three years to help give children and youth the supportive and inclusive learning environment they need. This includes hiring more teachers and supporting the growing number of children with special needs with funding for special education teachers, teacher psychologists and counsellors through the Classroom Enhancement Fund. Budget 2025 also provides \$17 million for First Nations reciprocal tuition for students attending First Nations schools.

Capital investments of \$4.6 billion over three years will go toward building, renovating and seismically upgrading schools. Major projects include \$392 million in prefabricated school projects that will create 6,485 new seats across 16 school districts; \$203 million for the new 1,900-seat Smith Secondary school in Langley; and \$151 million for the new 630-seat Olympic Village elementary school in Vancouver.

## **First Nations language preservation and revitalization**

Budget 2025 invests \$45 million in new funding over three years for the First Peoples' Cultural Council, nearly doubling the Province's past annual investments for First Nation-led programming. Of this, \$36 million will go toward critical language preservation and revitalization to meet the growing demand for language instruction, as well as support learners and jobs for expert speakers, particularly Elders and First Nations women.

## **Post-secondary education and skills training**

As part of previous budgets, B.C. has committed more than \$700 million over three years through the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan to improve access to post-secondary education to prepare people for the jobs of tomorrow, while helping close the skills gaps that employers are facing.

Budget 2025 supports continued investment in B.C.'s Health Human Resources Strategy. In the first two years, investments have helped fund hundreds of training seats, including 40 new undergraduate medical seats, 162 new residency spots and 65 new nurse practitioner training seats. The remaining funding will continue to train more health-care workers to serve the needs of B.C. families.

Budget 2025 includes \$4.7 billion in capital funding over the fiscal plan for post-secondary institutions. Major projects include \$315 million for the construction of the Centre for Clean Energy and Automotive Innovation at Vancouver Community College; \$108 million for the West Shore Learning Centre Campus for Royal Roads University in Langford; \$57 million for the Centre for Food, Wine and Tourism at Okanagan College in Kelowna; and \$34 million for the interim space for the new medical school at Simon Fraser University in Surrey.

## **Children and youth in care and alternative care**

Budget 2025 provides \$821 million over three years to support children in government care or alternative care arrangements, such as with a family member or someone with an established relationship or cultural connection. These programs include foster care and specialized homes, independent living programs, and similar care programs supported by Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies.

## **Children and youth with support needs**

Budget 2025 provides an additional \$172 million over three years for children and youth with an autism diagnosis and families accessing medical benefits for children with severe disability or complex health-care needs. New funding will provide supports to 2,700 more children, for an estimated total of nearly 30,400 children and youth in 2025-26.

## **Income and disability supports, and supplementary assistance**

To support increased demand for income, disability and supplementary assistance, the budget provides \$1.6 billion more over three years. Approximately 253,000 people receive assistance, including the financial, transportation and crisis supplements, as well as counselling and health supports.

## **Community Living BC**

Budget 2025 provides an additional \$380 million over three years to Community Living BC to meet growing demands. Community Living BC supports more than 29,000 adults with developmental disabilities.

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