

# NOVA SCOTIA BUDGET BULLETIN

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2006-07



## *Health*

### ***Reducing Wait Times***

The province continues its commitment to shorter wait lists for tests, treatment, and care. With the doubling of the federal wait time reduction fund from \$18.2 million to \$34.7 million, some key issues can be addressed. Funding of \$4.0 million will help to bring international medical graduates to the province, providing more family doctors for our citizens.

The province's four new MRIs will become operational with a \$3-million investment for staffing and implementation. There will be \$700,000 provided to address the wait list for individuals experiencing chronic pain. The Sound Start program will receive an additional \$700,000 to ensure that all newborns in the province undergo screening for hearing.

### ***Continuing Care***

The province will spend \$12.6 million on continuing care initiatives and an additional \$3.8 million to develop and expand access to home and community support services.

### ***Community-Based Solutions***

The province will provide \$3.6 million to district health authorities to implement community-based initiatives for patients who need some level of home nursing support. By providing the appropriate level of care in settings other than hospitals, those who require critical and emergency care will be better served.

### ***Improving Access to Cancer Drugs***

Oncology drugs costs are growing by about 25 per cent a year. There have also been significant increases in cancer rates and survivors. To meet increased demands, the province will invest \$15.9 million for new and more effective cancer drugs, more specialists, and more treatment supports for cancer programs in Capital Health and Cape Breton districts.

### ***Improving Access to Dialysis Services***

An additional \$750,000 will be invested to develop a provincial Renal Program and expand services. The funds will be used to hire additional staff, develop standards for renal care, and open a satellite dialysis clinic in the Guysborough Antigonish District Health Authority. As well, an additional investment of \$313,000 will open six new dialysis chairs in Cape Breton.

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### ***Recruitment and Retention***

An additional \$5.2 million will be invested to ensure the province's medical specialists continue to live and practise here. This investment will go to funding plans for 150 of these medical professionals. To ensure the professionals are available to provide care at appropriate locations throughout the province, \$451,200 is once again being provided to fund eight new undergraduate medical training seats at Dalhousie Medical School. Bursaries to medical lab technician students will total \$462,000, while almost \$400,000 will be provided to expand nursing seats at St. Francis Xavier University.



**The Honourable Michael G. Baker Q.C.**  
Minister of Finance