

## OPHA's Overview of Ontario's Budget 2023 Measures Related to Health and the Determinants of Health

Ontario's Minister of Finance Peter Bethlenfalvy released the [Ontario 2023 Budget - Building a Strong Ontario](#) on March 23, 2023 with a focus on two themes, "Building Ontario" and "Working for You."

Minister Bethlenfalvy has committed to "staying the course," with the budget focused on many of the same issues as the 2022 Budget: developing infrastructure, strengthening the health care system and economic development.

Below is a snapshot of budget measures related to health and the determinants of health.

### Health and Health Human Resources:

- Expanding the ability of pharmacists to prescribe medications for common ailments
- \$60M over two years to expand existing primary care teams and create up to 18 new primary care teams in communities with the greatest need
- \$200M in 2023-24 to expand supports to address immediate health care staffing shortages
- An additional \$72 million for expansion of Integrated Community Health Service Centres
- \$80M over three years to increase enrolment by 1,000 registered nurse, 500 registered practical nurse and 150 nurse practitioner seats
- COVID-19 paid leave measures will expire on March 31, 2023

### Home and Community Care:

- Investing more than \$174M over two years to continue the Community Paramedicine for Long-Term Care Program
- Accelerating funding in 2023-24 to \$569M, including nearly \$300M to support contract rate increases, to stabilize the home and community care workforce
- \$5M annually to support 6,500 people with dementia to live in the community

### Seniors:

- Proposing changes to expand the Guaranteed Annual Income System (GAINS) program, starting in July 2023 to see about 100,000 additional seniors be eligible for the program, and adjusting the benefit annually to inflation
- \$120M in Seniors Care at Home tax credits

### Mental Health and Addictions:

- An additional \$425M over three years to support mental health and addictions services as part of the Roadmap to Wellness commitment of \$3.8B over 10 years

### Indigenous Communities:

- An additional \$25.1M in 2023-24 to support the identification, investigation, protection and commemoration of residential school burial sites and provide mental health supports for First Nations communities

### Environment:

- Launching a voluntary clean energy credit registry to boost competitiveness and attract jobs

- Continuing to provide more than \$6.5B in electricity price relief for people and business under the Comprehensive Electricity Plan, Ontario Electricity Rebate and other targeted programs
- An additional \$14M in 2023-24 to expand the Greenlands Conservation Partnership
- Committing to \$9.5M over the next three years on Ontario's Agricultural Soil Health and Conservation Strategy
- Exploring the creation of a new provincial protected area in the Township of Uxbridge

**Child Care, Child Benefit and Social Services:**

- 50% reduction to childcare fees for children aged 0 to 5 through a \$13.2B investment made jointly with the Government of Canada

**Housing:**

- An additional \$202M each year in the Homelessness Prevention Program and Indigenous Supportive Housing Program
- Aiming for 1.5 million homes built by 2021, in part through the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022

**Education:**

- \$170M over three years to support the Ready, Set, Go program aimed at improving long-term outcomes for youth leaving the child welfare system
- \$6.8M over three years for students to further their financial literacy learning

**Employment and Skills Training:**

- \$224M in 2023-24 for a new stream of the Skills development Fund to provide more accessible, flexible training opportunities for workers
- An additional \$25M over three years to enhance to Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program to attract more skilled workers to the province
- An additional \$3M in 2023-24 to expand the Ontario Bridge Training Program to help internationally trained immigrants find employment in their fields

**Business:**

- Investing \$107M in new critical technology initiatives, including 5G/Next Generation Networks, artificial intelligence, quantum, robotics, blockchain and cybersecurity
- Conducting a review of Ontario's tax system to make Ontario an attractive place for businesses to invest and grow

**Justice:**

- \$13.4M in 2023-24 to fight gun-and gang-related crime, building on the success of the Guns, Gangs, and Violence Reduction Strategy

**Infrastructure and Public Transit:**

- Investing in GO Transit to improve access and convenience across the Greater Golden Horseshoe and into Southwestern Ontario
- Building transit-oriented communities to build vibrant, complete, mixed-use communities at/or around transit stations
- Building subways to provide better travel options, alleviating gridlock on roads and creating jobs
- Investing nearly \$4B to ensure every community across the province has access to high-speed internet by the end of 2025