

# Ministry of Health



## Plan for 2021-22

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# Statement from the Ministers



*The Honourable Paul Merriman  
Minister of Health*



*The Honourable Everett Hindley  
Minister of Mental Health and  
Addictions, Seniors, and Rural and  
Remote Health*

We are pleased to present the Ministry of Health's 2021-22 Plan.

This past year presented all of us with an unprecedented challenge due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Government Direction and Budget 2021-22 is focused on protecting Saskatchewan people through the remainder of the pandemic, building the infrastructure that a strong economy needs, and growing Saskatchewan to help ensure a strong economic recovery.

The safety and well-being of our residents, families and communities are of paramount importance. The Ministry of Health acted quickly and early in the pandemic to enact measures to protect the people of Saskatchewan, especially our most vulnerable. We have worked closely with partner agencies, including the Saskatchewan Health Authority, to navigate our way through these trying times together. Saskatchewan people are doing their part by following the advice provided by Health officials.

The 2021-22 Budget will help protect the lives and health of Saskatchewan people through the rest of the pandemic, with more people getting vaccinated every day.

A further \$90 million will support the Province's comprehensive COVID-19 response. This includes a mass vaccination rollout, personal protective equipment (PPE), contact tracing, testing and assessment sites, maintaining additional lab capacity, and long term care support.

While addressing COVID-19 has been the focus this past year, we continue to address other critical areas of work. Mental Health and Addictions will receive a significant boost in 2021-22 to assist individuals struggling with these issues. Key investments include mobile harm reduction services, integrated youth services, more addiction beds in Estevan and further support for *Pillars for Life: The Saskatchewan Suicide Prevention Plan*.

We will invest in critical and acute care areas to help our citizens, from infants to seniors, through challenging and unexpected times with their health. Seniors will benefit from a significant reduction in ambulance fees per trip, from \$275 to \$135. Millions will be dedicated toward several Emergency Medical Services (EMS) initiatives, and an expansion will occur at Victoria Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) in Prince Albert to care for our precious newborns.

We are also investing in health care programs and facilities to provide improved care and service delivery for our residents. This includes new funding for the continuing care aide platform commitment, and expanding supports for people with diabetes.

We continue to build and upgrade our provincial health care infrastructure system, including the Grenfell and La Ronge Long Term Care facilities, Urgent Care Centres in Regina and Saskatoon, Weyburn General Hospital and Prince Albert Victoria Hospital.

COVID-19 has been an enormous challenge, but together we'll get through it. Saskatchewan people and our health care workers are determined, hard-working, compassionate and resilient. Our Ministry will work hard together with our partners to put COVID-19 behind us, so we can look forward to brighter days ahead. Saskatchewan people should continue to be vigilant, follow public health guidelines and take safety precautions to reduce community transmission of COVID-19 Variants of Concern.

# Response to Government Direction

Protect. Build. Grow. The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to protecting Saskatchewan people through the rest of the pandemic as life returns to normal and our economy grows. Investing in infrastructure like hospitals, schools, and highways will help build a strong economy and create jobs for strong families, strong communities, and a better quality of life.

## Saskatchewan's Vision

*"... to be the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life."*



**A Strong Economy**



**Strong Communities**



**Strong Families**

Saskatchewan's vision and three goals provide the strategic direction for organizations to align their programs and services to build a strong Saskatchewan.

All organizations will report on progress in their 2021-22 annual reports.

# Operational Plan

## Mandate Statement

Through leadership and partnership, the Ministry of Health is dedicated to achieving a responsive, integrated and efficient health system that puts the patient first, and enables people to achieve their best possible health by promoting healthy choices and responsible self-care.

## Mission Statement

The Saskatchewan health care system works together with you to achieve your best possible care, experience and health.





## Government Goals

A Strong Economy

Strong Communities

Strong Families

## Ministry Goal

### Effective COVID-19 response and recovery

Contain the transmission of COVID-19 in Saskatchewan, minimize serious illness and deaths due to COVID-19 and the burden on health care resources. Start facilitating the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and a gradual lifting of public health restrictions.

## Strategy

### COVID-19 response

Respond to COVID-19 through public health measures, surveillance, testing, contact tracing and monitoring of infectious individuals, and vaccinations while ensuring that the Saskatchewan health system has adequate capacity to manage increased demands.

### Key Actions

- Through community care and acute care surge plans, ensure that the health system has the capacity to meet increased demands for COVID-19 care while continuing to provide essential services to non-COVID-19 patients.
- Immunize every Saskatchewan resident who wishes to receive the COVID-19 vaccine as quickly as possible and as vaccine supply allows.
- Continue to deploy evidence-informed public health measures and guidelines as necessary.

## Performance Measures

### COVID-19 vaccination

By September 30, 2021, a COVID-19 vaccine will be offered to all adult Saskatchewan residents who wish to receive it (dependent on the federal supply of vaccines).

## Strategy

### Health system recovery and pandemic planning

Gradually and safely lift public health restrictions and resume deferred health care services. Building on the experience of COVID-19, develop a rolling pandemic plan that is adaptable to future pandemics and ensures needed public health infrastructure and capacity.

### Key Actions

- Develop and implement a new re-opening plan to safely and gradually lift public health restrictions/measures.
- Develop a plan to address any backlogs for patients waiting as a result of COVID-19 health service slowdowns.
- Design a process for renewal of the pandemic preparedness plan that reflects the COVID-19 experience and ensures responsiveness to emerging pathogens.





## Government Goals

A Strong Economy

Strong Communities

Strong Families

## Ministry Goal

### Responsive mental health and addictions services

Continue to build responsive mental health and addictions services as part of a broader health system.

## Strategy

### Improve mental health and addictions services

Continue to address recommendations in the *Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan* (MHAAP), ensuring that Saskatchewan residents have improved access to services from the most appropriate mental health and addictions professional at the right location when needed.

## Key Actions

- Continue to advance priorities of the Drug Task Force, implementing shared priorities, and finalizing the next multi-year action plan based on engagement with community stakeholders.
- Develop and pilot an integrated youth services model.
- Enhance mental health, addictions and harm reduction services, including \$850K for 12 additional provincial addictions treatment beds plus two pre-treatment beds at the addictions treatment centre located at St. Joseph's Hospital in Estevan, expanded access to Naloxone and implementation of Mobile Harm reduction buses.
- Study and scope a plan to improve entry points and navigation for mental health and addictions services to enhance patient and family-centred care.
- Implement actions within *Pillars of Life: The Saskatchewan Suicide Prevention Plan*.

## Performance Measures

### Patients visiting emergency departments for mental health services where effective treatment does not require admission to a hospital

By March 31, 2022, the number of mental health presentations to emergency departments in Prince Albert, Regina, and Saskatoon where the patient is not admitted, will be reduced.

### 30-day readmissions to an inpatient mental health unit

By March 31, 2022, 30-day inpatient readmissions for individuals admitted with a primary mental health-related diagnosis will be reduced.

### Opioid substitution therapy prescribers

By March 31, 2022, the number of Opioid Substitution Therapy prescribers will be increased.



## Government Goals

A Strong Economy

Strong Communities

Strong Families

## Ministry Goal

### Stronger health care system

Build a safe and responsive health system through evidence-informed strategy development supported by policies focused on improving the health and wellbeing of Saskatchewan people.

## Strategy

### Improve team-based care

Ensure citizens get the health care they need sooner, in or closer to their homes, thereby reducing visits to emergency departments. Increase capacity in the acute care system to ensure patients have timely access to medical services and are transitioned to community alternatives or hospital care when appropriate.

## Key Actions

- Continue to recover from the impact of COVID-19 related surgical service slowdown, and set the stage to achieve a three-month surgical wait time by 2030.
  - Develop a plan to achieve progressive multiple-year wait time targets;
  - Allow for health system recovery while taking steps to address the impact of COVID-19 on the surgical waitlist;
  - Optimize existing province-wide surgical capacity and resources through the establishment of local and provincial high performing collaborative teams; and
  - Plan, implement and review a surgical service model line that offers timely and coordinated surgical services.
- Develop the electronic shared care plan to support seamless team-based care and enhance care planning between hospitals and community-based services to improve quality and safety.

## Performance Measures

### Emergency department visits for less severe cases

By March 31, 2022, reduce the proportion of patients who visit emergency departments for less severe needs (i.e. patients triaged as Canadian Triage Acuity Scale levels 4 and 5).

### First offer of surgery

By March 31, 2022, 80% of surgical patients receive a first offer of surgery within 12 months and no patients are on the wait list longer than 24 months.

By March 31, 2022, 90% of urgent cancer surgery patients receive a first offer of surgery within three weeks.





## Strategy

### Invest in health care infrastructure

Ensure hospitals, clinics and other health facilities are safe for patients and employees, provide for the effective delivery of health programs and services, and continue to meet the needs of a growing province.

### Key Actions

- Continue to progress the planning, design, and construction of the following major capital projects:
  - Meadow Lake Long Term Care: replace existing 53-bed facility with a new 72-bed facility (currently under construction, estimated completion 2021).
  - Regina Provincial Hospital Electrical System Renewal Phase 1: replace power distribution centres at Regina General Hospital and Pasqua Hospital (currently under construction, estimated completion 2022).
  - Urgent Care Centres (Regina and Saskatoon): facilities will provide care for low complexity, non-life threatening conditions including mental health and addictions, minor ailments, injury, and respiratory care with on-site diagnostic, pharmaceutical, and laboratory services (currently in design, estimated completion 2022).
  - Grenfell Long Term Care: replace the 33-bed facility (currently in design, estimated completion 2022).
  - La Ronge Long Term Care: expand existing 16-bed facility to 80 beds (currently in design, projected completion 2024).
  - Weyburn Hospital: replace existing hospital with a new 35-bed hospital (25 acute care beds and 10 mental health and addictions beds) (estimated completion 2024).
  - Prince Albert Victoria Hospital: expand from 173 beds to 242 beds including renovation to existing service areas (currently in design, estimated completion 2027).
  - Continue planning and design for the Regina Long Term Care project.
  - Proceed with planning for Estevan and Watson Long Term Care projects.
- Deliver over \$140M to address facility maintenance, equipment and IT renewal in health care facilities across the province to ensure operational continuity and safe health services delivery.

## Performance Measures

### Meadow Lake Long Term Care

By September 30, 2021, construction of the new 72-bed Northland Pioneers Lodge Long Term Care facility in Meadow Lake will be substantially complete.

### Facility maintenance projects

By March 31, 2022, all stimulus funded maintenance projects are complete.

# Highlights

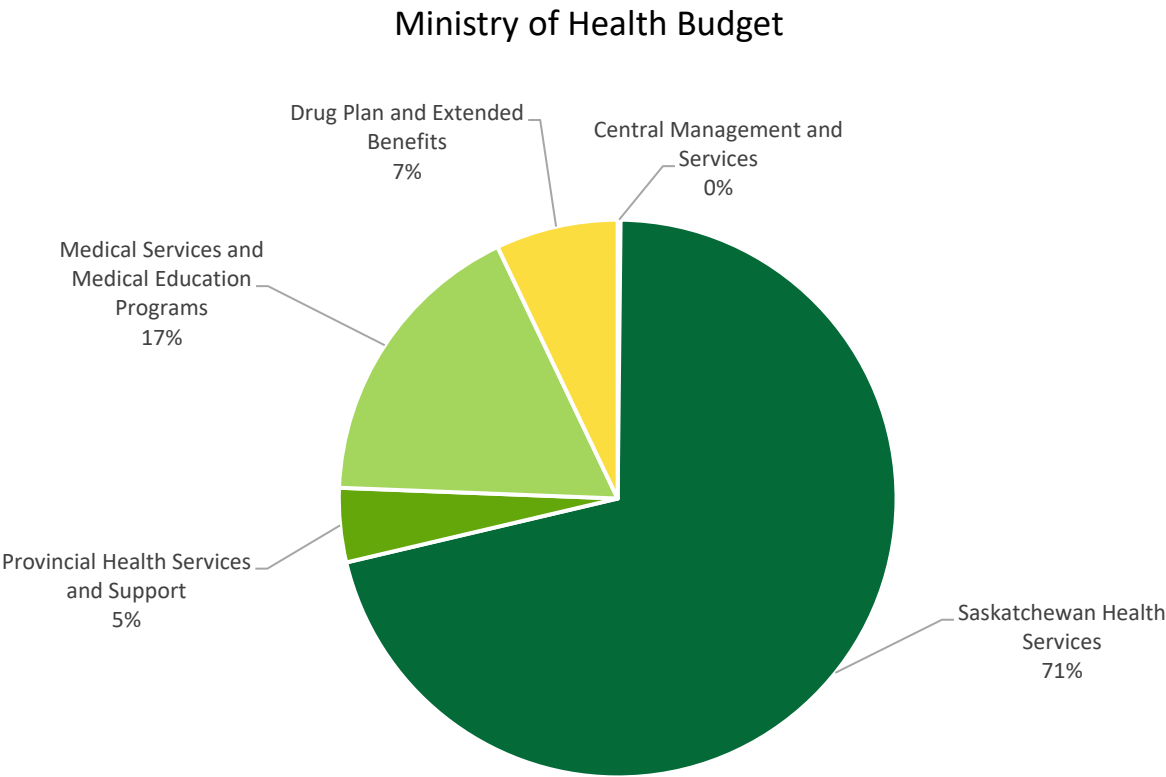
## 2021-22 Budget Highlights:

- \$90M will be dedicated to cover the province's comprehensive COVID-19 response in order to **protect** the lives and health of Saskatchewan people.
- The Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) will receive **\$3.96B** for operating funding and investments in targeted programs and services. Highlights for the **\$221.4M** or **5.9 per cent** increase include:
  - \$6.6M increase for several Emergency Medical Services (EMS) initiatives;
  - \$5.1M increase for the new Royal University Hospital 48-bed acute care unit;
  - \$3.6M increase for four additional Intensive Care Unit beds in Saskatoon; and,
  - \$2M increase for the expansion of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Victoria Hospital in Prince Albert.
- SHA health care programs and planning highlights to provide improved care and service delivery for patients, include:
  - \$6M new funding for the continuing care aide commitment to meet the need of long term care residents;
  - \$4.4M increase to reduce emergency department waits;
  - \$1.2M increase to address wait times for diagnostic imaging;
  - \$950K increase for operations with the new computerized tomography (CT) program in Melfort;
  - \$869K increase for pediatric hematology oncology;
  - \$549K increase to expand interventional radiology services in Regina; and
  - \$334K increase for additional respiratory therapists in Prince Albert.
- The 2021-22 provincial budget will invest a record-high \$458M toward mental health and addictions programs and services across Saskatchewan, an increase of \$23.4M over last year.
- We are continuing to **build** and upgrade our provincial health care infrastructure system. \$21.1M will support ongoing capital project work around the province.
- \$6.7M to fulfil a key commitment to benefit seniors by significantly reducing ambulance fees from \$275 to \$135 per trip.
- \$5M to expand supports for people with diabetes.
- \$1.4M to add a new STARS helicopter to the fleet and meet increased operating costs.
- An additional **\$7.6M** or **3.9 per cent** increase will be directed to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency for enhanced cancer care services, such as new drug treatments and expanded treatments available in regional hospitals.
- **\$15.3M** or **13.8 per cent** increase to support operations in eHealth Saskatchewan, including new investments in security services and technology.

# Financial Summary

Ministry of Health 2021-22 Estimates (\$6,125 million)	(in thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services	\$ 10,285
Saskatchewan Health Services	\$ 4,358,019
Provincial Health Services and Support	\$ 263,370
Medical Services and Medical Education Programs	\$ 1,059,252
Drug Plan and Extended Benefits	\$ 434,189
<b>Total Appropriation</b>	<b>\$ 6,125,115</b>
Less: Capital Asset Acquisitions	\$ 7,689
Plus: Non-Appropriated Expense Adjustment	\$ 129
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 6,117,555</b>

For more information, see the Budget Estimates at: <http://www.saskatchewan.ca/budget>



## For More Information

Please visit the Ministry’s website at <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health>