



Health and Wellness

BUSINESS PLAN

2023 - 2024



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Deputy Minister's Message

Dear Minister McLane,

It is my pleasure to submit the 2023-2024 Business Plan for the first in the 5-year Provincial Health Plan cycle for the Department of Health and Wellness.

The Provincial Health Plan sets a vision and path for the PEI healthcare system over the next five years. This proactive plan puts people at the forefront, stabilizes the workforce, addresses inequities, advances innovation and promotes the health of the Island.

The business plan begins to develop a foundation that will address the province's healthcare challenges, support people taking charge of their personal health and design a system that will sustain health and wellness in our province.

There are many actions detailed in the plan, key items include continuing to expand the provincial formulary through our partnership with the federal government, initiating the development of a pain management strategy, launch an RFP (requests for proposals) for a new acute care facility and mental health and addictions wellness transitional facility, rollout the continuation of medical homes and neighborhoods in areas across PEI and initiate planning for a medical transport program to provide additional financial assistance to Islanders who have travel for out-of-province medical care.

Let's continue to work together to keep our Island healthy in a growing and evolving health system.

Respectively submitted,

Lisa Thibeaudeau
Deputy Minister



Introduction

The 5-year Provincial Health Plan set a foundation for the healthcare system and establishes a commitment to working across government and community to ensure Islanders have meaningful and equal opportunity for health and wellness. The Department of Health and Wellness 2023-24 Business Plan identifies the first-year activities for the 5-year Provincial Health Plan cycle.

This companion document to the 2023-28 Provincial Health Plan and the Department annual report reflects the planned initiatives in the Department over the 2023-24 fiscal year related to the Provincial Health Plan. Health PEI develops their plan and activities in alignment with the Provincial Health Plan and are communicated separately in their annual business plan and report.

The core function of the Department of Health and Wellness 2023-28 Provincial Health Plan and this business plan are to move initiatives forward that improve the overall health and wellness of our Island population. Over this fiscal year we will advance initiatives that support health and wellness for the population overall and high-risk and equity-deserving groups, all while advancing initiatives that bolster our workforce.

Priority: Keeping our Island Healthy

Over the course of this first of five years for the Provincial Health Plan, we will add infrastructure and programming to improve mental health and wellness for Islanders. We will work with community and government partners (federal and provincial) to reduce barriers to treatment, and we will support community driven initiatives that promote health and wellness at the community level.

Health and Wellness for All Residents

This year we will:

- develop resources for the public that focus on prevention and that help to explain the concepts of public health (population health, health equity, social determinants of health, health promotion, Ottawa Charter, chronic disease prevention, levels of prevention);
- launch public awareness campaigns to raise awareness of the risks and harms of alcohol and tobacco use;
- develop a Wellness in PEI Action Plan that includes four, 5-year wellness goals and within each goal, identifies actions across three approaches (healthy public policy, community action and preventive service delivery) that have been shown to empower individuals to make healthy choices; and
- in partnership with our federal government and municipalities, increase wastewater surveillance capacity in PEI to include additional communities and expand the surveillance beyond Covid-19.

Chronic Disease Prevention and Management

This year we will:

- in partnership with the federal government, reduce financial barriers to medication access by reducing eligible copays to \$5 for selected medications, remove barriers to accessing medications for opioid and alcohol dependency, improve access to the High-Cost Drug Program by removing income level restrictions and lower the annual cap to make Catastrophic Drug Program more affordable;
- expand access to diabetes supplies, such as test strips and needles, to enable better self-management for Islanders living with diabetes; and
- initiate the development of a provincial pain strategy that will coordinate a provincial approach to improve pain outcomes for Islanders of all ages.

Mental Health and Mental Wellness

This year we will:

- complete construction of the Emergency Department Short Stay Unit and transition to Health PEI to operationalize;
- complete the first phase (request for pre-qualification) of RFP for the Mental Health & Addictions Acute Care Facility/Life skills Centre;
- complete the first phase (request for pre-qualification) of RFP for the Mental Health & Addictions Wellness and Transition Centre;
- finalize contract for design of child and youth inpatient mental health unit;
- complete phase 2 of new road work for the Mental Health & Addictions Campus;
- complete a research study of gambling behaviour in PEI entitled “Impact of COVID-19 on Gambling in Prince Edward Island from 2020 to 2023”;
- in partnership with Health PEI, provide training to Health PEI, civil service, and NGO service providers in CRAFT, an evidence-based therapeutic approach for families and friends of people with substance use problems; and
- support Brain Story training so front-line providers better understand the connection between brain development and addiction and mental health.

Priority: A Healthy and Sustainable Workforce

Building a stable workforce supply takes a variety of strategies to bolster the workforce in the short term and build a depth of resources in the longer term. In this first year of the Provincial Health Plan, we will continue to show our commitment to stabilizing our health workforce by encouraging and supporting employers to create healthy work environments that promote health and retention of existing workforce, all while expanding and diversifying our workforce development streams.

Capacity, Recruitment & Retention

This year we will:

- hire a recruitment lead and initiate an international recruitment strategy to increase the streams of health workforce for PEI;
- work with our partners to implement an applicant tracking system to better manage potential and existing applicants;
- Support implementation of a bursary for return-in-service for Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses and Paramedics, in collaboration with other government partners;
- expand our health workforce by adding new categories of health care providers to the system including Physician Assistants and Associate Physicians; and
- Support planning to increase residency seat capacity so we can train more doctors in PEI.

Supporting PEI's Health Workforce

This year we will:

- continue to work with the Long-Term Care Association to decrease the wage gap between public and private providers;
- partner with Health PEI and the Medical Society of PEI as part of the review and renewal of the current Physician Agreement;
- identify opportunities to reduce administrative burden in healthcare settings; and
- complete implementation of a retention incentive for paramedics.

Partnerships & Collaboration

This year we will:

- partner with our colleagues in provincial and federal immigration to complete international recruitment missions to recruit health care professionals to practice in PEI;
- work with Health PEI and UPEI to identify strategies to support integration between UPEI's medical program and Health PEI programs and infrastructure; and
- complete the development of an Atlantic physician registry to make it easier for physicians practicing in one Atlantic Canadian province to become licensed in another Atlantic province.

Priority: Seamless Access to Care

Access to safe, quality, and timely care is vital to building a healthier tomorrow for Islanders. Throughout the course of the 5-year Provincial Health Plan, we will make significant advancements in expanding access to services by expanding collaborative team-based services, integrating the use of digital solutions and anchoring core services in- and out-of-province so that we ensure reasonable access. Existing and emerging strategic plans will assist in this work, from the Primary Care Roadmap, the PEI Cancer Action Plan 2023-28 and a soon to be released digital health strategy and roadmap.

Seamless Access to Care

This year we will:

- develop a plan to acquire the tools required to bring equitable, timely, safe, and appropriate access to Virtual Care to all Islanders;
- finalize decision on solution for community partner's access to health information, enabling improved communication between programs and providers; and
- launch of patient medical homes and neighbourhoods in 4 settings for a total of 16 by end of fiscal year.

Person-Centred Care

This year we will:

- finalize decision on solution that allows citizens to access, contribute to and share their health information;
- increase the diversity of voices involved in healthy policy decisions by expanding the representation of citizens on the Women and Gender Diverse Health People's Council; complete phase 1 of the Electronic Medical Record (EMR) initiative to implement the EMR with community-based family practitioners and specialists; and
- complete pilot implementation for phase 2 of the EMR that will roll-out the EMR to Community Mental Health and Addictions programs.

Coordinated Care

This year we will:

- complete the development of a digital health strategy and roadmap that will serve to provide strategic direction in the planning and advancement of digital health technologies over the coming years;
- in partnership with Health PEI, initiate planning for an affordable transportation program; and
- develop an action plan to identify measures and plan solutions to address off-load delays.

Priority: Equitable Access

Over the term of the Provincial Health Plan, we will lay the foundation to better assess and respond to health inequities. This foundational work will not delay progress on areas known to have impact. We will continue to advance the work through existing strategies such as Awareness to Action: A Health Strategy for Women and Islanders Who are Gender Diverse 2022-2027.

Addressing Inequity

This year we will:

- continue development of a contraception program to improve access to prescription contraception;
- launch the Live Well PEI website as a tool to share “wellness” information (such as resources, videos, fact sheets, infographics, research, reports) focused on the risk factors of chronic disease prevention (healthy eating, reducing alcohol use, physical activity and tobacco use), the social determinants of health and health equity, and further engage in planning to build an interactive platform that empowers communities to collaborate and lead local wellness initiatives;
- complete a review of the Provincial Fertility Treatment Program to better understand opportunities to improve quality and access to out-of-province services;
- launch a social marketing campaign to build awareness of the unique health needs and experiences of women and gender diverse people;
- in partnership with other government departments, launch a sexual violence prevention awareness campaign;
- in partnership with Health PEI, finalize a funding agreement with the PEI Midwives Association to ensure professional liability insurance coverage for practicing registered midwives;
- in partnership with Health PEI, expand the Gender Affirming Care Policy to better align with international standards of care by anchoring programs and services and expanding access to specialized care;
- develop a plan to introduce a welcoming environments initiative across healthcare settings;
- provide training opportunities for health leaders on equity, diversity and inclusion principles;
- develop a plan to support the application of health equity, gender, and diversity lens to policy so that the needs of equity-deserving populations can be considered in the upstream development of policies, programs, and services;
- in partnership with other government departments and Health PEI, initiate the review of Enhanced Emergency Sexual Assault Services; and
- implement an anti-racism learning event for Government, Health PEI, and community partners to create awareness of how racism impacts health and healthcare.

Geographies of Interest

This year we will:

- partner with PEI public libraries and community groups across PEI to offer virtual care workshops and continue to work with public libraries as a point of access for Unaffiliated Virtual Care;
- work with Access PEI to enable access to PEI Health Card Services (application and approvals), Provincial Patient Registry Sign-Up and access to Unaffiliated Virtual Care Sign-Up; and
- continue to launch patient medical homes across the province.

Target Age Groups

This year we will:

- complete Long-Term Care COVID -19 Review and initiate work on recommendations;
- establish a new Youth Gaming/Gambling Specialist role at the Department to address the unique gaming/gambling prevention, early intervention and treatment needs of youth in PEI;
- finalize the First 1000 Days Steering Committee Action Plan – Actions have been divided into two areas: Structure and Evaluation, and Service.
- in partnership with Health PEI, initiate the roll-out of a Primary Caregiver Grant Program for families to support keeping loved ones at home longer;
- expand the provincial smoking cessation program to include nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) as cessation treatment for individuals to quit vaping and extend program supports upon exiting acute care settings;
- expand the provincial smoking cessation program to workplaces and youth settings (schools, organizations) to support employees and youth in quitting smoking and vaping (*Working Together, Quitting Together: A Workplace Guide for Smoking Cessation* and *Quit Your Way: A Program Guide for Youth and Young Adults*);
- in partnership with the Department of Education and Early Learning, the Public Schools Branch and the French Language School Board, develop youth vaping information resources for youth, parents and educators;
- in partnership with the federal government and the University of Waterloo, implement year two of the COMPASS research project (youth grades 7-12) to understand how changes in programs, policies and resources are associated with changes in youth health behaviours and outcomes over time; and
- establish a School Health Grant program that promotes the health and well-being of students, staff and the school community and which encourages schools to use evidence from the COMPASS research study to create healthy school communities.

Financial Statement

Operating	Budget FY 2023-24
Minister's / Deputy Minister's Office	499,700
Community Health & Policy	44,463,000
Health Workforce Planning, Recruitment & Pharmaceutical Services	7,088,900
Chief Public Health Office	12,198,700
Mental Health & Addictions	12,486,800
Health Innovation	10,733,400
Health and Wellness Operating Expenses	87,470,500

Capital	Budget FY 2023-24
IT System Modernization	1,250,500
Mental Health & Addictions Facilities	24,780,600
Health and Wellness Capital Expenses	26,031,100



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