



Health care infrastructure investment a good start; action needed on shortage of professionals

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HSA welcomes plans to invest in new and upgraded health care facilities and hopes to work with the provincial government on a plan to deal with the shortage of health science professionals needed to staff them.

“New buildings are only as good as the people who work in them,” said Val Avery, president of Health Sciences Association of BC. “We’re very pleased the provincial government is planning to invest in new buildings, beds and equipment over the next three years, but we’re concerned we won’t achieve the full impact of this investment if existing facilities are already having a hard time hiring enough health science professionals needed to deliver health services.

“For example, the government recently announced plans to increase funding for MRI scans at public hospitals. The funding could help decrease wait times for thousands of British Columbians, but a shortage of technologists will make this harder. And that’s just one health science profession. Hospitals around the province are already struggling to fill vacancies for ultrasonographers, physiotherapists and occupational therapists.

“We look forward to working with the government on a plan to train and hire the many health science professionals needed not only for these new facilities, but to fill hundreds of critical vacancies at existing facilities around the province.”

The budget specifies investments over the next three years to support new major construction projects and upgrading of health facilities, medical and diagnostic equipment and information management and technology systems at facilities in Kamloops, Vancouver, Penticton, Comox Valley and Campbell River.

“We also welcome new investment in the Ministry of Children and Families, and we look forward to working with the government on a plan to ensure children with developmental disabilities are able to get the early intervention they need to reach their full potential.”

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