



# HSA applauds government announcement on new training spaces for OT and PT

May 27, 2019

The BC government is increasing the number of training seats for occupational therapy and physiotherapy, with new seats coming to Prince George, Vancouver and Fraser Valley.

HSA applauds this announcement. These new training spaces are an important step forward to addressing the growing skills shortage in these professions. HSA has been advocating for increased training opportunities in these and other health science professions to ensure our health care system can deliver robust, team-based, and timely care to all British Columbians.

The government news release states:

"The Province is providing \$2.2 million to UBC for startup and planning to expand a master of physical therapy program in the North in partnership with UNBC, with the anticipated first intake of 20 first year students in September 2020. The physical therapy program is also expected to expand with 20 first-year seats in the Fraser Valley by September 2022. Physical therapists are often referred to as physiotherapists.

"The Province is providing an additional \$1.1 million to UBC to work toward expanding its master of occupational therapy program in the North in partnership with UNBC, with 16 first-year students in September 2022. The occupational therapy program will also expand by eight seats at UBC Vancouver in September 2020."

The Ministry of Health's Workforce Strategy identified OT and PT as priority professions, acknowledging the important role these professionals play in the delivery of modern health care in BC.

HSA also welcomes the expansion of these training opportunities outside Vancouver and the Lower Mainland. The shortage of health science professionals is being experienced across the province, and providing training opportunities in Prince George will help support the health care needs of the region in the long-term.

Read the government's full news release here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2019AEST0039-001047>

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