

January 29, 2008

Government announces major funding to reduce pressure on acute care system and increase access to services

\$300 million for seven new facilities and hundreds of long-term care beds

Edmonton... The province is addressing increasing pressure on Alberta's health care system by investing \$300 million into 600 new beds and more than 200 replacement beds in seven new care centres across the province.

As part of a province-wide response to address growth pressures in Alberta's health care system, Calgary Health Region and Capital Health will each receive \$125 million in capital funding for high priority long-term care projects. East Central Health and David Thompson Regional Health Authority will receive funding of \$40 million and \$10 million, respectively, to expand long-term care capacity.

"Today's announcement responds to the pressing need for additional long-term care beds to care for Alberta's most frail and vulnerable patients," said Premier Ed Stelmach. "The new long-term care beds will also ease pressure on our acute care hospital system by ensuring Albertans have better and timelier access to the most appropriate placement."

The addition of these long-term care spaces is part of Alberta's long-term capital plan, a 20-year strategy for public infrastructure that anticipates and addresses longer-term needs of a changing and growing province.

"This significant new funding for long-term care, in conjunction with our province's strategy to retain and recruit health professionals, speaks to government's commitment to improve access to health services," Health and Wellness Minister Dave Hancock said. "We remain committed to our 'aging in place' policy of providing continuing care services where Albertans want to receive them with ongoing investment and services in home care and supportive living. However, government also recognizes that there is an immediate need to develop additional long-term care capacity to support Albertans with the highest needs."

Enhancing Alberta's infrastructure is part of Premier Ed Stelmach's plan to secure Alberta's future by building communities, greening our growth and creating opportunity.

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Media inquiries may be directed to:

Michelle Hagen
Communications, Alberta Health and Wellness
Ph: 780-427-7164

To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

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Long-term care projects include:

Calgary Health Region

- **Garrison Green Care Centre (supplementary funding)**
Construction of a 200-bed long-term care facility in the Calgary Health Region.
- **Didsbury, new long-term care facility (supplementary funding)**
A 60-bed long-term care facility on the Didsbury Health Centre site to replace the older 50-bed wing of the health centre.
- **Strathmore, new long-term care facility (supplementary funding)**
A new 100-bed long-term care facility on the Strathmore Health Care Centre site to replace the older existing 23-bed wing of the health centre.

Capital Health

- **Alexandra/Glenrose/Norwood Campus**
Capital Health will add 300 new transition and support beds to its Alexandra/Glenrose/Norwood site to relieve pressure on acute care facilities in the Capital Region.
- **Long-term care facility partnership project**
Capital Health will negotiate with the Good Samaritan Society for the replacement of the existing 40-year-old, 70-bed long-term facility in Stony Plain.

East Central Health

- **Lloydminster, Dr. Cooke Extended Care Centre**
Construction of a new 60-bed long-term care facility on a new site to replace the older existing 55-bed nursing home wing at the Dr. Cooke Extended Care Centre.

David Thompson Health Authority

- **Lacombe Continuing Care Centre upgrade and new dementia cottage**
Renovations and upgrades to the existing long-term care wing. Two four-bed ward rooms will be replaced with a new 12-bed dementia cottage constructed on site.

In each of the past two years, Alberta Health and Wellness has allocated an additional \$27.7 million to increase staffing in long-term care facilities for nursing and personal care, and to add additional therapy services.

As of September 2007, there were 14,596 long-term care beds in Alberta and approximately 200 long-term care facilities.

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