



## ***NEWS RELEASE***

*For Immediate Release*

March 14, 2017

### **B.C.'s health-care costs reach \$19.2 billion and rising**

VICTORIA – The Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia has released an information report on health funding in British Columbia.

Information on health-care spending is in high demand, but not always readily accessible. This report pulls it all together for easier viewing and increased understanding.

Last year in B.C., the health sector spent \$19.2 billion. Of that, the Ministry of Health spent \$17.4 billion, or 37% of overall provincial expenses. This is three times more than the next largest ministry (Education). Health spending per person in B.C. is \$4,050 annually; the Canadian average is \$4,095.

“Between 2013 and 2018, health spending is projected to increase by \$2.7 billion,” said Auditor General Carol Bellringer. “This is more than the combined budget for the 11 smallest ministries, or the budget for the third largest ministry (Social Development and Social Innovation).”

Bellringer also noted, “Not all areas of B.C.’s health-care system are expanding at the same rate.” From 2012-13 to 2015-16, acute-care (emergency, post-surgical, critical-care) spending went up 11%; residential care (seniors’ homes, community group homes) went up 5%; community care (in-home nursing care) went up 14%; mental-health and substance-use services went up 3%. Public health and wellness (prevention programs, screening, communicable disease control) went down 1%.

A significant portion of the province’s health-care funding comes from the federal government via the Canada Health Transfer; B.C. received \$4.5 billion last year. How much is transferred is about to change. Since 2006, the transfer has grown by 6% a year, but as of April 2017 onward, it will only grow by about 3% a year. Under the recently signed agreement with Health Canada, B.C. will also receive an additional \$1.4 billion from the federal government over the next ten years.

In its 2015 report on [B.C.’s fiscal sustainability](#), Bellringer’s office noted that rising health-care costs might threaten the provincial government’s ability to provide services and meet financial commitments, both now and in the future.

This report is an update to the office’s 2013 information piece on health spending in the province.



OFFICE OF THE  
**Auditor General**  
of British Columbia

The full report is available on the Office of the Auditor General website at:  
[www.bcauditor.com/pubs](http://www.bcauditor.com/pubs)

Bellringer will answer questions pertaining to the report via a news conference.

News conference date: March 14, 2017

Time: 1 p.m. (Pacific Time)

Dial-in Information:

From Vancouver: 604 681-0260

From elsewhere in Canada and the USA: 1 877 353-9184

Participant Pass Code: 44848#

During question and answer period, to ask a question: Press 01

During question and answer period, to exit the question queue: Press #

**About the Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia**

The Auditor General is a non-partisan, independent Officer of the Legislature who reports directly to the Legislative Assembly. The Auditor General Act empowers the Auditor General and staff to conduct audits, report findings and make recommendations.

Contact us:

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