

April 7, 2009

## Province allocates AHS \$550 million funding increase

EDMONTON - Today's provincial budget allocated Alberta Health Services a \$550 million funding increase for the 2009/10 fiscal year. This includes a general base operating increase of six per cent plus an additional increase of \$122 million as a result of taking over responsibility for ground emergency medical services, for a total 7.7 per cent operating increase.

Total operating funding for Alberta Health Services will be approximately \$7.7 billion for the current fiscal year (April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010).

AHS is now awaiting a comprehensive budget briefing from the Department of Health and Wellness and will then assess the budget and consider its implications in detail before commenting further.

Following this briefing, Alberta Health Services' 2009/10 proposed allocated budget will be reviewed by the Board's Audit and Finance Committee and at board meetings in Grande Prairie on May 28, 2009.

At its March 25th meeting, the AHS Board approved an interim expenditure plan allowing AHS to spend for the next three months (April – June) at the same rate as the last three months of fiscal 2008/09 (January – March).

"It's important that AHS deliver on our commitments and this interim expenditure plan allows us to do just that as we work through the process of determining how today's provincial funding announcement will be allocated throughout the organization," said Dr. Stephen Duckett, President and Chief Executive Officer.

"Over the last five years, health care spending in Alberta has increased by an average of 10 per cent annually. Today's announcement underscores the fact that we can't afford to pretend it's going to be business as usual," said Dr. Duckett. "We have a responsibility to manage within our resources by developing a financial plan that balances increased demand for patient care with available resources allocated by government. It's up to us to make the choices and set the priorities for our spending."

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than 3.5 million adults and children living in Alberta. Its mission is to provide a patient-focused health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.

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