

NEW BRUNSWICK FAMILY PLAN

SUPPORTING THOSE WITH ADDICTIONS
AND MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

MAY 2017



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Province of New Brunswick
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ISBN 978-1-4605-1725-3 (PDF: English)
ISBN 978-1-4605-1724-6 (PDF : française)

Education. Jobs. Families. Listening and getting things done.

Like the strong ties that bind families in our province together, this government has linked three major plans that – together – will improve the lives of all New Brunswickers for decades to come. Each plan is important in and of itself, but each plan also needs the others to succeed.

The **New Brunswick Family Plan** builds on the goals and achievements of our **Economic Growth Plan** and our **10-year Education Plans**. It also works in tandem with those plans to ensure that government is tackling important issues holistically and not operating in silos.

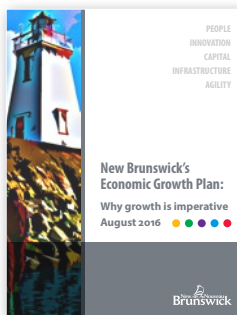
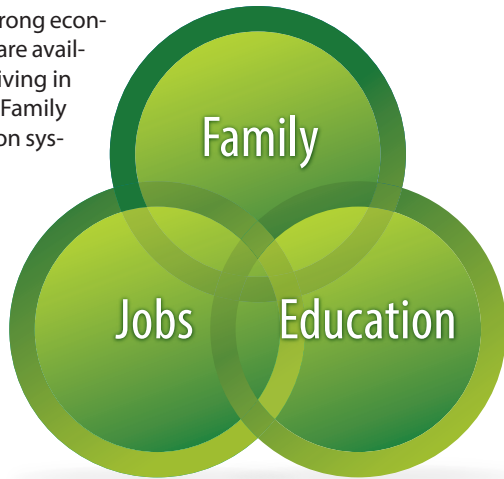
Our Economic Growth Plan must be supported by our education plans to be successful and to ensure that our workforce is well trained and innovative. Our economy also needs the social supports contained within the Family Plan in order to thrive fully.

Likewise, our education system needs a strong economy so that our graduates can find meaningful work here in New Brunswick. Our education system also needs the Family Plan so that the social determinants that impact a student’s ability to learn can be addressed early on.

Finally, our Family Plan needs a strong economy so that equal opportunities are available for women and for people living in poverty or with a disability. The Family Plan also needs a strong education system to act as a social equalizer.

An integrated approach such as this one is important, especially when a number of government initiatives cut across all three of these plans.

For example, literacy is crucial to our Economic Growth Plan that aims to maintain an educated workforce. Literacy is



also an important aspect of our education plans where students are expected to make a seamless transition between learning to read and reading to learn. And finally, literacy is a key component of the Family Plan, especially as it relates to our ability to lift people out of poverty.

Other initiatives tie these plans together as well. For example, improved access to quality and affordable daycare services is as relevant to the New Brunswick workforce as it is to the education system where more students will arrive better prepared for their first year of learning. Of course, the expansion of daycare services supports various initiatives in the Family Plan, such as reducing poverty in our province.

Your government has laid the foundation for these plans to work together to achieve our collective goals. We achieve the best results when we work together and create interconnected plans focused on what matters most to New Brunswickers and their families.

These three plans work in tandem to create a unified vision that will guide your government in delivering results based on the priorities that you have shared with us.

Our collective efforts will make New Brunswick the best place to live, work and raise a family.

New Brunswick Family Plan

It is clear that individuals' socioeconomic circumstances have significant bearing on their health and vice versa. The *New Brunswick Family Plan* is based on the premise that an integrated system of health and social care will help vulnerable populations lead independent, healthy and productive lives.

Integrating care can be particularly beneficial for the vulnerable segments of society that have difficulty accessing care due to social isolation or other barriers. This can include disadvantaged groups, persons with chronic conditions and persons with mental health problems.

The Family Plan also recognizes that health is much more than health care and that all partners must work together to address the social, economic and environmental determinants of health. Taking action on these factors builds communities and benefits society - good health matters to every person, family and community and is essential for economic and social development.

Just as the Family Plan is part of an integrated approach to help improve the lives of New Brunswickers, each of its pillars works in tandem with the others to provide a unified vision for program development and service delivery. For example, compassionate care and home- and community-based care are also important components of healthy aging and support for seniors, and wellness plays an integral role in disease management and prevention.

Similarly, food security and healthy food availability, as well as affordable housing and transportation, have a deep impact on well-being; working toward equal pay for work of equal value and promoting inclusivity in the labour market are essential for reducing barriers that prevent individuals from participating fully in their communities; and advancing gender equality is critical to all aspects of a healthy society, from reducing poverty to promoting the health and well-being of all individuals.

Each pillar is a starting point for the development and implementation of effective policies, programs and strategies. Their success will be ensured by undertaking a comprehensive approach within and across all sectors and by providing opportunities for all stakeholders to take coordinated action at various levels of influence, and in a variety of ways.

The seven pillars of the New Brunswick Family Plan:

- 1 Improving access to primary and acute care
- 2 Promoting wellness
- 3 Supporting those with addictions and mental health challenges
- 4 Fostering healthy aging and support for seniors
- 5 Advancing women's equality
- 6 Reducing poverty
- 7 Providing support for persons living with a disability

Introduction

As the Family Plan builds on the objectives and achievements of the Economic Growth Plan and the 10-year Education Plans, so too does it build on existing initiatives and strategies of government, such as the Action Plan for Mental Health, Provincial Health Plan, Wellness Strategy, Home First Strategy and the Aging Strategy.

Supporting Those with Addictions and Mental Health Challenges is the culmination of efforts undertaken in these areas. It is based on current initiatives, ongoing commitments and stakeholder feedback, and lays out the goals and actions that will help address the challenges in achieving a better balance between prevention and the provision of care.

The goals and actions of this plan will help create a system that is responsive to individual, family and community needs, and one that is more accessible and coordinated with better supports and outcomes for our citizens. The focus will be on renewing our collaborative efforts so that New Brunswickers suffering from addictions and mental illness receive the care and support they require to live a fruitful and productive life.

Supporting Those with Addictions and Mental Health Challenges is also supported by initiatives underway as part of the Priority Delivery Unit on Families. The priority delivery units oversee cross-departmental initiatives to significantly reduce silo thinking and improve access to quality services and programs. One initiative in particular has an overall impact on addictions and mental health.

The Enhanced Action Plan on Addictions and Mental Health will address continuity of care and access issues for a broader segment of the population. Building on the success of the Integrated Service Delivery approach in schools, the Flexible and Assertive Community Treatment Teams (FACT) in communities and the implementation of the Supervised Community Care frameworks, the action plan will focus on ensuring evidence-based, person-centred services.

These initiatives set the stage for a robust action plan for achieving the areas of focus outlined in the following pages.

Areas of focus

Without good mental health, New Brunswickers are at greater risk of developing addictions, mental illness and chronic diseases. To ensure individuals, families and communities have access to the programs and services they need, enduring gaps must be addressed. This will be achieved by focusing our efforts and undertaking concerted actions to achieve the areas of focus outlined below.

Adopting a proactive approach to improving mental health. Developing mental fitness and resilience will support mental health and is key to overall health and well-being. As mental health is inter-dependent with physical health, earnings, education and standards of living, addressing gaps in the social determinants of health will also support population wellness. A proactive approach includes effective strategies and policies that serve to build resiliency as well as intervention practices that identify and address needs as early as possible.

Actions

- Expanding successful addiction and mental health promotion and prevention initiatives throughout the province.

Bridging gaps in existing programs and services such as those addressing addictions. Appropriate supports for adults, in addition to children and youth, can only be ensured by addressing access and continuity-of-care issues in service provision. This includes, but is not limited to, engaging under-represented segments of the population, such as young adults; addressing financial barriers for vulnerable populations; providing access to timely and relevant services; and employing innovative remedies for rural areas, such as the use of technology. Improving addiction and mental health services along the continuum of care will lead to better outcomes for New Brunswickers.



Actions

- Improving community-based treatment options for those suffering from addictions and serious mental illness, such as implementing Supervised Community Care across the province.
- Exploring the possibility of providing community-based treatment for offenders, which will address their addiction and mental health needs as well as the public safety concerns of communities.

Offering a collaborative model of care through an integrated, person-centered approach to service delivery. A key direction in the delivery of addiction and mental health services is the collaboration of partners in all aspects of health-care delivery to reduce fragmentation and enhance social inclusion. The application of integrated service delivery principles is critical to reducing wait times, enhancing an individual's response to recovery and providing a more positive experience for patients. In addition, treatment and recovery is equally enhanced when achieved through a person and family-centred approach where individuals are supported to make informed choices within an environment focused on recovery.

Actions

- Developing an integrated recovery approach to service delivery across the continuum of care for those with addiction and mental health needs.
- Establishing coordinated and interdepartmental interventions with partners in the primary health care, justice and public safety sectors in support of the treatment of patients with complex mental health needs.
- Establishing a network of excellence in support of treatment of youth with complex mental health needs.

Offering culturally relevant treatments and services, taking into consideration the individual's social context. To create and maintain a person-centred approach to service delivery, the system must be responsive to differences among those receiving health-care services (geography, age, language, gender and culture). To this end, care and consideration must be given to provide respectful, equitable and high-quality services within the context of diversity, including supporting First Nation and Aboriginal people through culturally relevant resources, community capacity building, training and knowledge exchange.

Actions

- Ensuring under-represented groups have respectful and appropriate access to services in addictions and mental health.
- Exploring options to help individuals and families who assist seniors and dependents with a mental illness.

Enhancing the knowledge and awareness of individuals, families and health care and other service providers. Mechanisms to enhance the knowledge of all partners and service providers are essential to ensure that the health-care system is attuned to the needs of service users. This can be achieved through better data collection and use, as well as research capacity and comprehensive evaluation frameworks for current initiatives. Additionally, persons living with an addiction and/or mental illness need to have current information

on government programs and system supports to make educated choices regarding their treatment. Increased collaboration and the sharing of best practices across provincial departments, regions and organizations is also an effective means of addressing gaps.

Actions

- Ensuring that information related to addiction and mental health treatment options are available to the public through various means, including web-based and print materials, and through the addiction and mental health intake process.
- Reporting on progress in closing gaps on a number of addiction and mental health indicators between priority client populations across the province.

Conclusion

This plan closely aligns with the broader goals of improving the social determinants of health, cultivating a culture of wellness, and promoting collaboration to ensure a sustainable health system. Achieving the goals and actions we have outlined in this plan will benefit work undertaken in the third pillar of the Family Plan (*Supporting those with addictions and mental health challenges*) and every pillar as they work in tandem to maximize our results and opportunities.

We want to achieve good mental health for all New Brunswickers. For those experiencing addictions and mental illness, we want to offer respectful supports and services that will enable control of their treatment path and achievement of their personal objectives, while taking into consideration their individual contexts.

Supporting Those with Addictions and Mental Health Challenges is the next step in concretizing these efforts.