

Building for Our **Future**

The Way Forward







Together we will achieve a strong, diversified province with a high standard of living.

This is our roadmap to get there.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is working to strengthen our economy and position the province as an ideal place to live and raise a family. To achieve this, we must create the conditions necessary for economic growth and private-sector job creation, and return the province to fiscal balance. Our government remains committed to returning to surplus.

In November 2016, our government released the first phase of **The Way Forward: A vision for sustainability and growth**, which outlined our priorities for the first six months. During this phase, entitled **Securing Our Footing**, our focus was on significantly enhancing government efficiency and reducing spending. In March 2017, we released the second phase, entitled **The Way Forward: Realizing Our Potential**, which focused primarily on building a stronger economic foundation.

Our government now presents the third phase of **The Way Forward: Building for Our Future**. This phase of our plan continues the work carried out under the previous two phases of **The Way Forward** by advancing work to further strengthen our economic foundation and improve public-sector efficiency, while improving services and outcomes for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

The Way Forward: Building for Our Future is the result of ongoing dialogue with Newfoundlanders and Labradorians on the province they want for themselves, their children and their grandchildren, and others close to them. This plan also reflects processes internal to the public service aimed at rethinking government as a provider of services, an agent of economic development, a facilitator of collaboration, and a driver of change.

Three Phases of Action

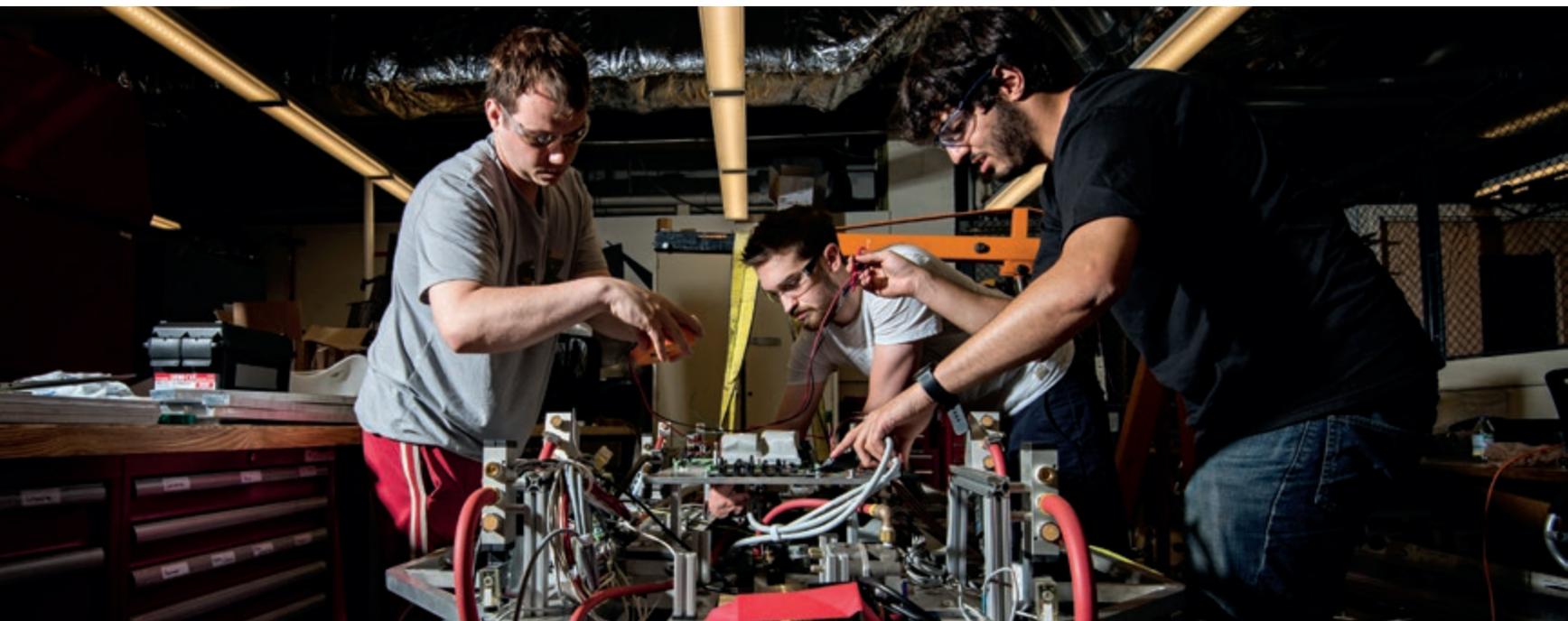


A Focus on Improving Outcomes and Growing the Economy

Newfoundland and Labrador is a place of contrasts: rich resources and inventive people, but also persistent demographic, employment and health status challenges. High levels of expenditure in recent years have not improved our health and education outcomes. Despite growth in health care spending by \$1.1 billion and K-12 and post-secondary education spending by \$425 million between 2006-07 and 2016-17 – an increase of 61 per cent and 48 per cent respectively – many of our indicators remain out of step with national and regional averages. Provincial spending must bring about better outcomes.

A prosperous future for Newfoundland and Labrador cannot be achieved by one government department acting alone. Through the three phases of **The Way Forward**, we have adopted a government-wide approach to improving outcomes and growing the economy in a manner that unlocks the inherent potential of collaboration.

To achieve the vision for Newfoundland and Labrador offered by **The Way Forward**, our actions for 2018-19 and beyond will continue to rest on four areas of focus: a stronger economic foundation, a more efficient public sector, better services and better outcomes.



Our Four Areas of Focus







Focus Area 1

A Stronger Economic Foundation

Our vision for the future of the Newfoundland and Labrador economy is one that is:

- Locally thriving and globally focused;
- Sustainable and resilient;
- Inclusive and equitable;
- Driven by diverse sectors;
- Knowledge and skills-based; and
- Innovative.

While our government has been working to deliver quality services more efficiently and cost-effectively, the private sector – from micro, small and medium-sized businesses to large industry – is creating jobs and contributing to the sustainability of our communities. **The Way Forward** has committed to support the private sector by fostering the growth of high-potential industries and promoting economic diversification.

On the following pages are strategic actions we will take in 2018-19 to build a stronger economic foundation. These actions add to the work advanced in previous phases of **The Way Forward**, such as supporting entrepreneurship and accelerating the growth of high-performing businesses.

Action 3.1

Diversifying the Economy to Support Private-Sector Job Creation and Economic Growth

In partnership with industry, our government has released and begun implementation of work plans to grow the agriculture, aquaculture, technology, and oil and gas sectors. This work will continue with new sectors in 2018-19.

► Action 3.1.1 Growing the Potential of our Mineral Resources

Mining presents a strong opportunity to grow the province's economy. Already a major economic contributor, mining is forecasted in 2018 to employ 6,000 people and generate \$3.4 billion in mineral shipments. As evidenced by our world-class publicly available geoscience, significant potential exists for further exploration and development of vast mineral deposits, particularly in Labrador and in Central Newfoundland's gold opportunities.

Minerals and metals are essential ingredients of a green and technologically advanced economy. Our government intends to seize this opportunity. With the growing popularity of electric vehicles and other new technologies that require metals such as nickel, copper and cobalt, which our province has in abundance, there is even greater potential for growth in our mining industry.

In 2018-19, in collaboration with the mining industry and community stakeholders, we will develop a strategic framework for growing the provincial mining sector in a manner that is responsible, sustainable, competitive and supportive of private-sector investments and job growth in our rural areas.

▶ Action 3.1.2 Diversifying the Forestry Sector

Our province has rich forest resources. Yet, our forestry sector has faced challenges in recent years with the rising cost of transportation, a decline in the global demand for newsprint and other print materials, and recent protectionist decisions by the United States. In 2018-19, in collaboration with the recently formed Newfoundland and Labrador Forest Industry Association and other stakeholders, our government will develop a plan for diversifying the province's forestry sector. By 2020, we are targeting a 20 per cent increase in timber allocations and harvest levels over the previous five-year period.

▶ Action 3.1.3 Doubling Oil and Gas Production in Newfoundland and Labrador

The oil and gas industry is very important to our province's economy, making up 25 per cent of our GDP and accounting for 41 per cent of our exports over the past 20 years. Through **Advance 2030: The Way Forward on Oil and Gas**, our government is working with oil and gas partners to promote the development, competitiveness and sustainability of the industry in this province. We have set a number of long-term targets, including the direct employment of at least 7,500 people in operations and the drilling of over 100 new exploration wells by 2030.

Our government knows the potential of our undiscovered and undeveloped oil and gas reserves. We will leverage our globally competitive position and our highly competent and professional workforce to double production to over 650,000 barrels of oil per day by 2030. To support the achievement of this goal, in 2018-19, our government is transitioning the oil and gas subsidiary of Nalcor Energy to a stand-alone Crown corporation with a mandate to accelerate the growth of the oil and gas industry.

► Action 3.1.4 Building a Renewable Future

Newfoundland and Labrador has an abundance of wind, hydro and tidal energy resources that have not been fully developed. Surrounded by water and with significant amounts of unoccupied Crown land, this province is a prime location for harnessing the potential of renewable energy. We have the space, resources and environmental conditions, as well as the experience and expertise in the energy sector that we can leverage to supply the cleaner, greener energy of tomorrow. Our government will work with industry and other stakeholders in 2018-19 to develop a renewable energy plan that is focused on creating employment opportunities and further positioning the province as an energy hub.

As governments and industries across Canada and around the world lower greenhouse gas emissions, reduce waste and conserve energy, there is an opportunity to stimulate clean economic growth and create jobs by driving innovation in clean technology. In 2018-19, our government will work with its partners to find opportunities to develop and deploy clean technologies and leverage federal funding. This work builds on our commitment to grow the technology sector, as outlined in **The Way Forward on Technology**, a collaborative work plan developed with industry.



▶ **Action 3.1.5** **Increasing Aquaculture-Related Employment by 1,100 Person-Years**

Our government has committed to help the mussel sector grow to 10,750 metric tonnes and our salmonid sector to 50,000 metric tonnes in annual output. Achieving this goal will result in an increase in direct and indirect jobs across the province. In 2018-19, we will provide funding for technology innovation, research and infrastructure to support mussel and salmonid sector growth. We will work with our counterparts to identify an allocation under the Atlantic Fisheries Fund for this purpose.

Further, in 2018-19 our government will shift from an annual to a multi-year aquaculture licensing process. This shift will offer our aquaculture industry the benefit of longer-term focus, greater predictability and more time to devote to business growth, market development, job creation and safe product supply by reducing administrative burden. These actions will advance **The Way Forward on Aquaculture**.

▶ **Action 3.1.6** **Supporting Growth in the Technology Sector**

Technology presents significant employment and business growth opportunities for our province. In 2018-19, our government will capitalize on the potential of technology to create jobs for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians by positioning the province for technological excellence and innovation. Our government will continue implementing **The Way Forward on Technology** through actions such as prioritizing the technology sector for Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Nominee Program supports, and providing supports for unemployed skilled trade workers to retrain for technology-related occupations.

In 2018-19, we will also work in partnership with industry and academia to seize local opportunities flowing from the recent federal announcement on the establishment of an Oceans Supercluster in the Atlantic region.

► Action 3.1.7 Doubling Tourist Spending in Our Province

Almost ten years ago, a target was set with industry to double resident and non-resident tourism spending to \$1.6 billion by 2020. Our government remains committed to this target. In 2016, combined resident and non-resident visitor spending was \$1.13 billion and 2017 saw the highest non-resident visitor spending our province has ever seen, at an estimated \$575 million.

In 2018-19, our government will continue its creative and award-winning tourism marketing campaigns. Under the Atlantic Growth Strategy, we are also working with the Maritime Provinces and the federal government on a new market focus in China and Germany.

Building on the actions of the **Provincial Tourism Product Development Plan** released in 2017, our government will implement initiatives aimed at creating new tourism experiences and business opportunities. In 2018-19, we will partner with tourism stakeholders to connect prospective and existing tourism businesses with the tourism growth opportunities available throughout the province using Tourism Opportunities Sessions.



▶ **Action 3.1.8** **Identifying Market Access and Value-Added Opportunities for Fish and Seafood**

A viable commercial fishing industry is important to the development and sustainability of our economy, in particular in rural communities where the fishery is often a main employer. In 2018-19, our government will engage industry stakeholders, the federal government and other provincial and territorial governments to seek market access and value-added opportunities for fish and seafood products to increase employment and the economic benefits of available fish resources. We will also hold a focus group with representatives of the fishing industry to discuss the opportunities presented by the Atlantic Fisheries Fund.

▶ **Action 3.1.9** **Doubling Provincial Food Self-Sufficiency by 2022**

Our government has committed to increase the province's food self-sufficiency to at least 20 per cent and is working with farmers and other partners as part of **The Way Forward on Agriculture** to achieve this goal. In 2018-19, our government will implement a pilot project to serve locally farmed products in public health facilities. This coming year, we will also supply producers with at-cost fruit and vegetable seedlings for priority crops. To do this, we will leverage the newly formed provincial Centre for Agriculture and Forestry Development in Wooddale to pilot a project that identifies the inputs and practices necessary for optimal transplant production. Our government will also identify a way to provide abattoir services to producers in Labrador to support the establishment of viable local livestock operations.

▶ **Action 3.1.10** **Recognizing the Important Role of the Community Sector**

The recent government-industry partnerships used to create employment, growth and diversification plans for the agriculture, aquaculture and technology sectors are examples of our government's commitment to collaboration to diversify the economy. Supporting and working with the private sector is, however, only one part of the picture – the community sector also generates significant employment and its members, both paid and volunteer, are helping to build healthy, dynamic and prosperous communities.

In 2018-19, our government will lead a process to recognize the social and economic contribution of the community sector through a work plan process in collaboration with the Community Sector Council and community organizations throughout our province. Also in 2018-19, our government will deliver on its commitment to begin implementation of multi-year core funding for community groups. Multi-year grants will eliminate the burden of applying for funding on an annual basis and will allow community groups to focus more on what they do best – serving the diverse needs and interests of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

▶ **Action 3.1.11** **Positioning Our Artists for Success**

Artists in Newfoundland and Labrador bring high levels of technical proficiency to their disciplines and collaborate with a community of global artists at the top levels of their fields. In 2017, our government introduced the Status of the Artist Act, which recognizes the contributions that artists make to our province's economic and social well-being, as well as our collective health, culture and quality of life.

It is important to support professional artists and to maximize the benefits from this economic activity that employs nearly 5,000 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Through a collaborative effort with interested professional artists, in 2018-19 our government will pilot an Arts Accelerator Program to assist emerging and established professional artists in evaluating their market presence and to introduce new tools in managing, promoting and developing their artistic practice. In doing so, the hope is that artists can expand their audience, engage in future planning, and ultimately allow for sustainable creative processes.

Action 3.2

Attracting Investment in the Newfoundland and Labrador Economy

Direct investment in the province, including local, national or foreign, is a critical driver of economic growth. Direct investment in the Newfoundland and Labrador economy contributes to job creation, attraction and retention of talent and capital, innovation, productivity and new market access. **The Way Forward** has positioned our province to attract national and international companies and their wealth of assets, knowledge and experience.

► Action 3.2.1 Strategically Attracting Investment in Priority Sectors

Our government is strategically targeting sectors of our economy to support growth and diversification, including mining, forestry, oil and gas, tourism, agriculture, aquaculture and technology. We have taken steps to attract more investment activity in these sectors. In the agriculture sector, for example, we have made more than 64,000 hectares of new Crown land available for farming, which provides strategic opportunities for investment.

Further, the recent favourable private-sector response to a Request for Proposals to lease the Bull Arm fabrication site points to the interest in, and potential of, targeted and strategic investment attraction activities. In 2018-19, our government will align resources to target key sectors and identify priority business opportunities and markets to advance economic development in our province.

► Action 3.2.2 Taking a Longer-Term Approach to Infrastructure Development

Our government will continue to implement its multi-year infrastructure plans. A longer-term approach to infrastructure development provides certainty for investors, who often consider local, regional and provincial infrastructure development when making business decisions. Multi-year planning also creates more certainty for related industries, such as the construction industry, which enhances their ability to plan their human resource needs and create job opportunities for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. In 2018-19, our multi-year infrastructure plan will provide almost \$620 million for infrastructure and economic stimulus, including:

- Memorial University's Core Science Facility in St. John's;
- The Centre of Excellence for Heavy Equipment Industrial Trades at College of the North Atlantic in Stephenville;
- The continued development of the new regional hospital in Corner Brook;
- The replacement of the Waterford Hospital and the expansion of community-based mental health services;
- The development of the Green Bay Health Centre in Springdale;
- The construction of the Labrador Wellness Centre in Happy Valley-Goose Bay;
- The construction of new schools in Paradise and Coley's Point, as well as repairs and maintenance of many existing schools;
- Paving projects on the Trans Labrador Highway and for the Provincial Roads Program; and
- Vessel refits and the maintenance of ferries, ferry terminals and wharves.

▶ **Action 3.2.3** **Ensuring the Province's Tax System is Competitive and Fair**

Competitive taxation is a key contributor to attracting investment. In August 2017, our government announced a review of the province's tax system. To guide the review, an independent five-person committee of members with backgrounds in economics, taxation and public policy was appointed. The main objectives of the independent tax review are to:

- Ensure the province's tax system is competitive and fair;
- Identify ways to simplify the tax system;
- Reduce costs for both government and tax payers; and
- Consider the progressivity of the tax system and whether the appropriate tax mix is applied to taxpayers.

The Independent Tax Review Committee has been mandated to complete its review and submit a final report to the Minister of Finance in 2018-19.

▶ **Action 3.2.4** **Streamlining Business and Innovation Supports**

We are positioning Newfoundland and Labrador as a strategic and straightforward place to do business. One key step that we have taken in this regard is the streamlining of business and innovation supports for companies. By making it easier to avail of provincial services, we are helping to attract new firms to our province and retain those already doing business here.

In 2017, our government launched InnovateNL, a single-window service delivery approach to innovation programs. In 2018-19, we will pilot a streamlined application process for innovation supports that will reduce administrative burden for established clients.

▶ Action 3.2.5 Spurring New Business Ideas Through Innovation Challenges

Our government is looking for entrepreneurs and creative thinkers who are interested in coming up with new ways to solve problems. Innovation challenges are a creative and increasingly common use of public funding that calls on individuals, businesses and community partners to enter competitions to design new solutions to old problems. Innovation challenges encourage outside-the-box thinking to address social, economic or technological problems, where no solution exists or where current solutions are inadequate. To help drive innovation in Newfoundland and Labrador, our government will launch its first innovation challenge in 2018-19 through the Newfoundland and Labrador Innovation Council. Innovation challenges have the potential to spur new business activity and investment.

▶ Action 3.2.6 Unlocking the Potential of Data

We are living in the age of analytics where data is **the** renewable resource of the future. Government agencies are the holders of considerable public data that has the potential to be used by researchers and the private sector to develop new products, services and solutions while also creating business and job opportunities. We will help unlock the potential of data by initiating the development of a regulatory framework in 2019 for the commercial use of health and genetics data that is respectful of existing privacy legislation and ensures a scientific and financial return to Newfoundland and Labrador.

Throughout the world, health data is also being used to analyze population health and disease patterns, predict risk and negative events and, ultimately, improve patient experience and care. In 2018-19, our government will launch, under the leadership of the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information, an online Provincial Health Data Lab to provide researchers and entrepreneurs with secure access to health data, such as laboratory test results.

Action 3.3

Investing in Our Workforce

Governments must support human capital to ensure businesses and industry have access to the professional and technical skills needed to remain competitive and create jobs in an ever-changing economy. Educational and training institutions are key partners in preparing for future skills requirements.

▶ Action 3.3.1 Creating the Post-Secondary Landscape of the Future

Recognizing that Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic make valuable social and economic contributions to our province, our government will use the Independent Appointments Commission process to appoint a committee of experts to undertake a review of the province's public post-secondary education system. The committee will explore how our system compares to other jurisdictions and will recommend options to achieve better outcomes in post-secondary education in a more cost-efficient manner. Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic will play key roles in this review.

Further, in 2018-19, the Council on Higher Education, which has a mandate to facilitate collaboration and make recommendations on public post-secondary institutions, will identify opportunities for College of the North Atlantic and Memorial University to pool applied research resources to support the growth of priority sectors. The Council will also identify ways to facilitate and further support the transfer of students between the two institutions, thus supporting academic mobility, non-duplication of effort and cost-efficiency.

▶ **Action 3.3.2** **Planning for Our Human Resource Needs**

In order to grow the economy and retain our workforce, it is important that we have access to reliable and up-to-date labour market information that allows us to predict the job opportunities, training needs and skills gaps of the future. In 2018-19, our government will develop a Comprehensive Human Resource Plan guided by labour market analysis to forecast future job opportunities. This plan will consider the needs of Indigenous people, persons with disabilities, youth, older workers, women and newcomers to the province.

▶ **Action 3.3.3** **Improving Wage Subsidy Supports**

The JobsNL Wage Subsidy Program provides funding to private-sector and non-profit employers to create long-term or seasonal employment opportunities, particularly for those who have recently graduated from a post-secondary program, who live with a disability, or who receive Income Support. In 2018-19, our government will announce improvements to the JobsNL Wage Subsidy to ensure that the program better meets the needs of new and small to medium-sized businesses and those seeking employment.

▶ **Action 3.3.4** **Improving Adult Literacy**

For different reasons, some adults did not have the opportunity to build a strong educational foundation early in their lives. Newfoundlanders and Labradorians must be supported to acquire new skills throughout their lives in order to obtain and maintain employment. Literacy supports are therefore essential to building a strong and inclusive workforce. In 2018-19, our government will develop a new Adult Literacy Action Plan. Our approach will consider how to build an even more empowered, skilled and ready workforce for our increasingly knowledge-based economy.

▶ Action 3.3.5 Attracting and Retaining More Immigrants

Our government has committed to welcoming approximately 1,700 newcomers to the province every year by 2022. To help meet our target for increased immigration, we have to make it easier for newcomers to come to this province so they can make social and economic contributions. In 2018-19, our government will streamline immigration application processes and make them available online. We will also add a dedicated stream for immigrant entrepreneurs to the Provincial Nominee Program.

In 2018-19, our government will collaborate with communities to increase newcomer attraction and has introduced a regional Welcoming Communities pilot program to help address barriers to community participation and integration. We will also promote multiculturalism through the K-12 school system and support students from diverse cultural backgrounds by building capacity for educators through training and professional development opportunities focused on multicultural education.

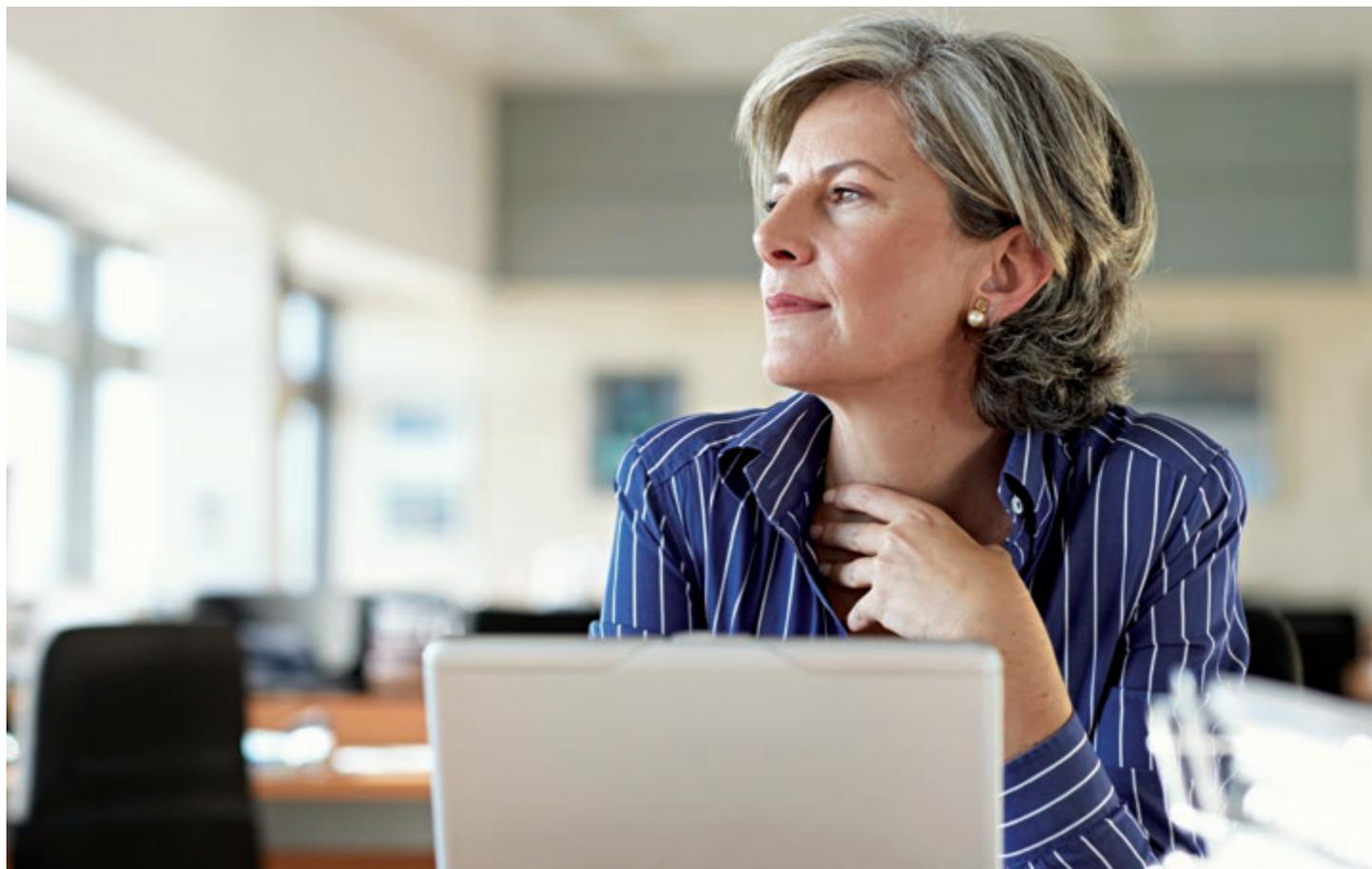
We will work with employers and service providers to offer employment mentorship and leadership opportunities for immigrant women. We will also increase English as a Second Language (ESL) training for newcomers and the number of ESL sites in Labrador, which represents the fastest growing region in the province for immigration.

This work is all part of **The Way Forward on Immigration in Newfoundland and Labrador.**

► Action 3.3.6 Helping Women Advance in Leadership Roles

Women are greatly under-represented in all types of leadership roles, including managerial positions, in politics and on boards. The province loses an opportunity for valuable insight and expertise when women do not meaningfully participate in, or are excluded from, leadership opportunities. In 2018-19, to address this important issue, our government will:

- Implement a government-community leadership initiative that seeks to increase the number of women in leadership roles; and
- Host a conference on the status of women in Newfoundland and Labrador that facilitates knowledge sharing and mentorship.





Focus Area 2

A More Efficient Public Sector

In 2017-18, our government paid \$956 million to service a total net debt of \$13.6 billion. Our government is working hard to control debt growth load to ensure the province can continue to affordably borrow money and return to fiscal balance.

To maximize our government's ability to spend revenue on vital services like health care, education and transportation infrastructure, our government is leading a number of initiatives aimed at lowering costs and increasing efficiency in program delivery. The following actions detail our government's continuing plan for creating a more efficient public sector.

Action 3.4

Managing Our Assets More Strategically

► Action 3.4.1 Examining the Value of Public Assets

Public assets include everything from land, buildings, marine vessels and aircraft to equipment and machinery, infrastructure and computer software. At the end of the 2016-17 fiscal year, these assets had a net book value of \$4.3 billion. While many assets serve a valid purpose, helping provide Newfoundlanders and Labradorians with the services they need, some may no longer provide a net return on investment or meet a strategic policy objective.

In 2018-19, our government will develop an Asset Management Framework to help departments determine how to divest of assets in a manner that ensures optimal social, economic and financial return. In some cases, this may entail selling the asset, while in other instances it may require giving the asset a new purpose within the public sector or in the community. In the meantime, our government will seek opportunities to optimize assets to ensure that they generate an economic benefit for the province.

▶ Action 3.4.2 Taking a Strategic Approach to Attrition Management

Given that more than 5,000 public-sector employees across government departments, agencies, boards and commissions are currently eligible to retire, our government will lead careful workforce planning to reduce the size of the public service and gradually lower spending, in a manner that maintains service delivery and protects a vulnerable economy. This approach will include attrition management as employees retire or resign.

▶ Action 3.4.3 Reducing Our Fleet of Light Vehicles

Following on our commitment to reduce costs associated with owning and operating over 3,000 light-duty, heavy equipment and utility vehicles, we have conducted a review of our fleet, which cost taxpayers \$32 million to maintain in 2016-17. In 2018-19, our government will achieve a 10 per cent reduction in its inventory of light-duty vehicles, which equates to 112 fewer vehicles and a savings to taxpayers of approximately \$500,000 annually through lower maintenance requirements. This will be done by consolidating the management of the fleet.

Our government is committed to exploring other efficiency options for our vehicle fleet, including establishing a pooled-usage system, centralizing repair and maintenance services, and procuring vehicles that are more fuel-efficient.

▶ **Action 3.4.4** **Reducing Government's Footprint**

The public sector must have a physical presence throughout the province to deliver the health, education and other services Newfoundlanders and Labradorians require. This means that the public sector leaves a significant – and costly – footprint in terms of office space and storage requirements. Our government set a target to reduce, in 2020, our leased-space footprint by 110,000 square feet over 2016 requirements. Reductions in leased-space requirements are saving taxpayers approximately \$2.7 million annually. We are now setting our sights even higher by committing to a 130,000 square foot leased-space reduction in the same period.

Action 3.5 **Continuing a Focus on Agency, Board and Commission Efficiency**

▶ **Action 3.5.1** **Reducing Expenditures in Public-Sector Agencies, Boards and Commissions (ABCs)**

In 2017-18, our government implemented a flatter, leaner management structure for the core public service and in select ABCs. In 2018-19, we will continue to work with ABCs to lower operational costs in a manner that is mindful of service delivery requirements and attrition policies.

▶ **Action 3.5.2** **Reducing the Number of ABCs**

Our government is undertaking a review of the more than 200 public-sector ABCs to assess levels of activity and areas of duplication. This review will include advisory, regulatory and adjudicative ABCs, with a focus on those without permanent staff. In 2018-19, our government will continue reducing the number of ABCs.

Action 3.6

Adopting New Approaches to Service and Business Process Design

▶ Action 3.6.1 Sharing Services

Shared services involves the central processing of transactions and services for one or more back-office functions on behalf of several business units within an organization. We will continue to take steps to consolidate corporate services for various accounting and finance processes, such as accounts receivables, collections, accounts payables, banking, payroll and purchasing, as well as human resources and information technology. In 2017-18, we initiated the development of a shared-services work plan and, in 2018-19 we will work with partners in ABCs to identify specific shared-services opportunities for implementation.

▶ Action 3.6.2 Sourcing Goods and Services More Strategically

Achieving maximum value for money is a priority for our government. Every year, the core public service spends hundreds of millions of dollars to acquire the various goods and services required to deliver the public services on which Newfoundlanders and Labradorians rely. A strategic sourcing approach has the potential to bring this number down while maintaining the quality of public services and supporting local economic activity in a manner consistent with trade obligations.

Using the new Public Procurement Act, our government will adopt a strategic approach to procurement that maximizes opportunities for public bodies to purchase commodities through joint and group purchasing initiatives and enables the province to leverage the purchasing potential of intergovernmental arrangements, such as those announced under the Atlantic Growth Strategy. Our approach will also consider opportunities to strengthen our economic base by purchasing from local businesses where appropriate.



Focus Area 3

Better Services

Service delivery has changed considerably in recent years, due in large part to technological advancements and an informed citizenry that expects, rightfully, that services be designed and delivered with their needs in mind. As part of **The Way Forward**, our government has surveyed a random sample of residents on their level of satisfaction with a wide range of provincial services. The survey found that:

- 90 per cent of respondents were satisfied with the overall quality of service when accessing a license or permit;
- 82 per cent were satisfied with the overall quality of service when accessing information or a social or employment support; and,
- 66 per cent were satisfied with the overall quality of service when applying for funding, certification or contracting.

This information is being used to help identify where we need to improve services across our province. The actions that follow further illustrate our commitment to better services.

Action 3.7

Going Digital by Design

Our government is committed to reducing manual, paper-based and other less efficient internal processes and improving the experience and satisfaction of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians as clients of provincial government services. By 2022, our government will increase the number of services delivered online by 50 per cent. Currently our government offers 43 programs online, which is an increase of ten programs since **The Way Forward** was launched in November 2016.

Our government has prepared a Digital by Design roadmap identifying six initial areas of service delivery for redesign. Over the next five years, we will invest in the implementation of this new approach to service delivery in order to meet the evolving needs of our clients, create greater efficiencies in how we do business, provide better services and contribute to better outcomes for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Our vision for this initiative is **One Client. One GovNL. One Relationship.**

The six areas of focus are:

1. **One GovNL Website:** Redesign the www.gov.nl.ca website to make it easier to use, search and understand.
2. **Smart Applications:** Simplify application processes for government services for a more streamlined and personalized client experience.
3. **Alerts and Notifications:** Send status and informational alerts and notifications to clients to keep them better informed.
4. **My GovNL Digital ID:** Provide clients with a single user name and password to use in every digital interaction with the GovNL.
5. **My GovNL Dashboard:** Create a space on the One GovNL website where clients can view a history of their interactions with the GovNL.
6. **My GovNL Profile:** Create a space on the One GovNL website where clients can view and manage their information and preferences across the GovNL.



In 2018-19, our government will focus human resources and financial supports to implement the first year of this Digital by Design roadmap.

Action 3.8

Enhancing Service Capacity and Quality

▶ Action 3.8.1 Piloting an Approach to Regional Sharing of Services

Municipalities are responsible for basic and vital services, such as water, sewage, waste collection, snow clearing, road maintenance, and fire and emergency services, as well as recreation, public transit, land use planning, street lighting, animal control and bylaw enforcement.



Our government led an extensive public engagement process in 2017 to inform future decisions regarding regional government and service-sharing models for municipalities, local service districts and unincorporated areas. Using the results of this public engagement process, in 2018-19 we will develop pilot project options to encourage communities to pursue infrastructure improvements and deliver services collaboratively in a manner that still ensures a local voice for all residents.

▶ **Action 3.8.2** **Shortening Wait-Times**

For many services, demand is not constant or uniform throughout the year. In 2018-19, our government will begin to identify and address service areas characterized by fluctuating demand that is both long-term and predictable. To illustrate how peak-demand issues can be addressed, in 2018 our government will change motor vehicle registration renewal from an approach that is based on date of vehicle purchase, where there are peaks at certain times of the year, to one that is based on clients' birth dates, which are more evenly distributed throughout the year. This new approach will initially apply to all new vehicles.

▶ **Action 3.8.3** **Creating a Culture of Service Excellence and Innovation**

Following on our commitment to set standards for the delivery of major programs, including all business and economic development programs, Crown lands, student loans, and employment and training programs, we will continue to develop and publish service standards for additional programs in 2018-19. We will also begin to create standards for internal department-to-department functions, such as application referrals, and will deliver targeted Lean continuous improvement training to program-specific teams.





Focus Area 4

Better Outcomes

Our government recognizes that securing better outcomes for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians is the ultimate performance indicator of all our work to strengthen and diversify the economy and deliver high-quality services efficiently. Through the actions below and others already discussed in earlier phases of **The Way Forward**, our government is working to ensure a better quality of life and better outcomes for everyone who, now or in the future, calls Newfoundland and Labrador home.

Action 3.9

Creating Better Health Outcomes through Innovation

Nowhere is the need for better outcomes more important than in the health care sector. Health care makes up approximately 40 per cent of the provincial budget and it is our greatest area of expenditure; yet, Newfoundland and Labrador has some of the poorest health outcomes in the country. Our government is committed to stabilizing spending on health care – which has seen a 130 per cent increase since 2001 and is the highest in the country on a per capita basis – through the adoption of better management practices and a focus on sustainability, value and prevention.

We have set a number of targets aimed at improving health outcomes for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and at bringing indicators more in line with Canadian averages by 2025. These targets are to:

- Increase the breastfeeding initiation rate by seven per cent;
- Reduce the obesity rate by five per cent;
- Reduce the smoking rate by four per cent;
- Increase the physical activity rate by seven per cent; and
- Increase the rate of vegetable and fruit consumption by five per cent.

Our government has adopted the Triple Aim framework for health care: better care, better health and better value. Implementing this framework will require the integration of technology to lower costs and improve services, patient experience and – most importantly – health outcomes.

Building on the momentum of recent investments in e-health infrastructure in this province, in 2018-19 our government will launch a Health Innovation Action Plan. This action plan will mobilize key stakeholders across the health and community services system and the life sciences sector, including government, industry and academia, to improve partnerships and to strengthen innovation. By encouraging the adoption of new processes and improved technologies, the Health Innovation Action Plan will help lower costs, improve services, and provide better care for residents while helping to stimulate investment and employment opportunities in the life sciences sector.



► Action 3.9.1 Expanding Primary Health Care Delivery

As we deliver health care services more efficiently through innovative and technology-based approaches, it is essential that the quality and availability of health care services not deteriorate. Having a service delivery model that ensures maximum impact per dollar spent is critical. With this in mind, in 2018-19 our government will expand its efforts to improve population health through a primary health care-based approach that:

- Increases collaboration among health care providers;
- Enables better access to community-based services;
- Results in fewer costly hospitalizations, surgeries and emergency department visits; and
- Leads to better service delivery and access for under-served individuals or those living with complex needs, which is critical given the prevalence of chronic illnesses in our population and the growing demand for mental health and addictions services.

A key component of the increased focus of primary health care services is expanding the number of inter-disciplinary primary health care teams throughout the province. In 2018, our government will expand this work to nine sites: Corner Brook, Stephenville, Grand Falls-Windsor, Gander, Connaigre Peninsula, Burin Peninsula, Bell Island, Northeast Avalon, and the Happy Valley-Goose Bay area (including North West River and Sheshatshiu). By early 2019, our government will identify five additional sites.

Our approach to primary health care will also include the establishment of programs for community paramedicine and family practice nursing.

► Action 3.9.2 Improving Health Outcomes for Those in Rural and Remote Areas

Providing services to an aging population in small, rural – and sometimes remote – communities increases costs and affects health outcomes. To improve outcomes, in 2018-19 our government will expand the use of the Health at Home program, which uses remote patient monitoring technology, to 1,200 more people. For the first time, this program will be offered across the province. Health at Home reduces the need for travel by allowing patients and their families to remain in their homes to check, record and transmit their personal health indicators such as blood pressure, oxygen or blood sugar levels. This can reduce visits to health care facilities and the need for costly acute care services.

In 2018-19, our government will also improve the delivery of health care services by collaborating with the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information to develop e-ordering processes for diagnostic imaging procedures. We will work to expand telehealth services into new settings, such as the homes of patients and long-term care facilities. This means patients will be able to see health care providers from the comfort of their own homes, when appropriate.

► Action 3.9.3 Personalizing the Health Care System

Our government, through the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information, will enhance digital health in partnership with Canada Health Infoway and the Maritime Provinces. For example, we will improve health outcomes by providing individuals with direct access to their personal health information and digital health services, including services focused on mental health and addictions.

In 2018-19, our government will also commence the development of a Health Services Locator that empowers individuals and their families everywhere in the province to more quickly find the primary health care, mental health care, community supports and hospital services they need through a searchable online platform, mobile devices and the existing 811 HealthLine.

Action 3.10

Supporting Better Mental Health

▶ Action 3.10.1 Continuing to Improve Mental Health and Addictions Services

Our government is committed to implementing all 54 recommendations of the All Party Committee on Mental Health and Addictions. Responsive and timely service, quality care, the breakdown of stigmas, and better health outcomes permeate our short, medium and long-term goals. Together, these actions will transform our mental health and addictions system into one that starts with the needs of the person and works towards recovery for individuals and their families. Our government's approach is based on a stepped-care service delivery model that provides a continuum of services as alternatives to hospitalization.

In 2018, our government will release a Year One Progress Report and better enable Regional Health Authorities and community agencies to deliver critical services through increased provincial funding and \$73 million over 10 years leveraged from the federal government under the new Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Health Funding bilateral agreement. Our government is committed to increasing spending on mental health and addictions to nine per cent of total annual health care spending, up from a starting point of 5.7 per cent, by 2022.

In 2018-19, our government's investments in mental health and addictions services will provide community agencies with funding to expand peer support services and harm reduction initiatives, including the availability of more Naloxone take-home kits and needle exchange kits. Our government will double the capacity of the Strongest Families program to 500 families while expanding the Therapist Assisted Online program – launched here before anywhere else in Canada – from 15 to 30 clinics throughout the province.

In the coming year, our government will improve wait times by expanding walk-in clinics and after-hours services. Addictions services will be enhanced with increased access to Suboxone and other addiction treatment services.

► Action 3.10.2 Replacing the Waterford Hospital

A key step in transforming the province's mental health and addictions system is ensuring people are closer to the services they need. As an outdated psychiatric facility located in St. John's and built for acute and long-term care, the Waterford Hospital has outlived its usefulness and only provides care to between two and three per cent of those who need mental health services. Our government will replace the Waterford Hospital with a new, smaller mental health and addictions facility that is supported by a network of small residential facilities and community-based services located where people need them – closer to home. Through this approach, we will reduce the number and duration of hospitalizations and improve patients' quality of care and quality of life through a range of community-based programs focused on peer support, evidence-based case management, housing and home support, awareness and prevention.



In 2018-19, our government will proceed with the procurement of a new facility to replace the Waterford Hospital, issue a Request for Proposals to assess need related to community-based stabilization services such as community crisis beds, and introduce additional mobile crisis response units in Central and Western regions, as well as additional walk-in clinics under all Regional Health Authorities.

Our government's approach to improving mental health and addictions outcomes will add new dedicated mental health acute care beds and community crisis beds in Labrador and provide responses specific to the needs of Indigenous people.

▶ Action 3.10.3 Establishing a Drug Treatment Court

Drug Treatment Courts exist to address the underlying causes of certain non-violent, drug-motivated crimes and to reduce the number of crimes committed to support drug addictions. Our government has completed a feasibility study for the establishment of a Drug Treatment Court. Following on the recommendations of that study, in 2018-19 our government will pilot a new Drug Treatment Court in St. John's. As this is a pilot project, we will evaluate the effectiveness of the Drug Treatment Court and the feasibility of expanding it to other areas of the province.

▶ Action 3.10.4 Supporting Injured Workers, Including Those Affected by Work-Related Mental Stress

Our government is committed to maintaining a sustainable workplace injury system for both workers and employers. To that end, we are implementing a new five-year injury prevention plan, **Advancing a Strong Safety Culture in Newfoundland and Labrador**, and we have increased the income replacement rate for injured workers from 80 to 85 per cent. Our government worked collaboratively with WorkplaceNL to modernize policies for mental stress coverage recognizing that workplace-based mental stress may be caused by exposure to multiple traumatic events that are an inherent part of certain occupations, such as when first responders witness fatalities. Workers diagnosed with a specific mental stress issue will now be assessed to determine if they qualify for benefits under the workers' compensation system. Our government also approved legislative changes to recognize that firefighters would be covered if exposed to cancer-causing agents. Now, firefighters have access to presumptive cancer coverage.

In 2018-19, WorkplaceNL will continue its review of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder coverage with a view to providing options regarding our workplace injury system and supports for those affected by work-related mental stress.

Action 3.11

Caring for Older Adults and Supporting Persons with Autism

▶ Action 3.11.1 Enhancing Healthy Living for Seniors

Our government has made a commitment to support seniors to lead healthy, productive lives by remaining in their own homes and communities, and avoiding unnecessary entry into acute care or long-term care. Adopting a proactive approach to identifying and addressing potential areas of concern for seniors living at home will support seniors to remain at home longer.

In 2018-19, we will adopt guidelines for delivering a Healthy Living Assessments for Seniors program. We will pilot Healthy Living Assessments for Seniors using a single demonstration site and evaluate the program to inform further rollout.



▶ **Action 3.11.2** **Enhancing Support for Persons Living with Dementia**

Dementia is a condition that significantly affects a person's memory, cognition and behaviour, and limits a person's ability to complete essential activities of daily living. As the disease progresses, it can be very challenging for caregivers to cope. Our government will implement a Dementia Care Action Plan that improves access to information, as well as to supports and services that aim to improve the quality of life for persons living with dementia and their caregivers.

Our government will improve client care by enhancing access to community-based dementia care and support, thereby reducing emergency department visits, hospitalizations and premature long-term care placement. To do this, we will enhance the capacity of the 811 HealthLine to provide professional advice and system navigation services by September 2018, and increase access to specialized adult day programs by March 2019. We will also support 100 individuals living with moderate or late-stage dementia to receive care and support at home from a physician or nurse practitioner through remote client-monitoring technology.

▶ **Action 3.11.3** **Providing Better Services to Persons Living With and Treating Autism**

Individuals living with autism, as well as their families and caregivers, face unique challenges in accessing autism-related services, due in part to the fact that these services are delivered by a number of different government departments. In 2018, our government will develop and implement a new whole-of-government approach to treating autism that ensures more integrated autism-related services for children and adults.

We will also explore clinical assessment models that support better allocation of resources for individuals living with developmental disabilities, including autism, and more informed decision making regarding eligibility for services and supports. This work will culminate with the release of a comprehensive Autism Action Plan in fall 2018.

Action 3.12

Giving Children a Good Start

Everyone wants their children to grow up to lead happy, healthy and dynamic lives. Our government's vision for a prosperous Newfoundland and Labrador is built on a strong educational foundation, starting in early childhood and adapted to diverse needs.

▶ Action 3.12.1 Improving Math and Reading Skills among K-12 Students

Math and reading skills are the cornerstones for all other types of learning. To support our government's implementation of the recommendations of the Premier's Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes, we will improve student achievement outcomes in reading and math through a number of initiatives by 2020-21. In 2018-19, our government will provide supports and allocations in the K-12 system for:

- Reading Specialists, Learning Resource Teachers and Teaching and Learning Assistants;
- Professional learning for teachers;
- Learning resources and school libraries; and
- Bursaries for K-6 teachers to upgrade their knowledge of math pedagogy.

These investments in math and reading also support our government's commitment to prepare students for emerging skills requirements, as evidenced by the announcement in April 2018 that we are increasing the exposure of K-12 students to coding and other experiences with technology.

▶ **Action 3.12.2** **Developing a Model for the Design of Student Services**

Our government is committed to better engaging students in their learning and improving learning outcomes. This commitment is a key component of our response to the recommendations of the Premier's Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes. It requires a model for delivering services to students that better allows for small-group instruction, keeps students in school for the full day, and integrates the needs of students with special needs or exceptionalities.

In 2018-19, our government, in partnership with school districts and early childhood educators, will draft, pilot and begin evaluating a new policy and procedures guide for student services, as well as related professional learning. We will also purchase a new Special Education Case Management System to assist in the delivery of student services by providing accurate student information to guide programming.

▶ **Action 3.12.3** **Supporting Disengaged and At-Risk Youth**

Youth who do not finish school will have more difficulty finding employment, especially as the economy becomes more global, knowledge-based and skills-intensive. The high school drop-out rate in Newfoundland and Labrador was 5.7 per cent (987 students) in 2015-16. Our government is committed to reducing this number by 10 per cent, or approximately 100 fewer drop-outs, by 2020. We have created an advisory committee that includes external partners such as the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, Choices for Youth and Thrive to advise on drop-out reduction. In 2018, this committee will develop strategies to keep students in school, provide alternative opportunities for those who leave school before graduating, and support those who return to school.

► Action 3.12.4 Finding Homes for Children in Care

The social, physical and emotional development of children is best assured within the framework of a safe and supportive family environment and, as such, children in care who are placed in adoption will experience better outcomes. To increase the number of children in care who are placed for adoption, in 2018 our government will begin piloting a project that will increase the number of dedicated caseworkers assigned to adoptions.

Action 3.13 Supporting Individuals and Families

► Action 3.13.1 Making it Easier to Purchase a Home

Buying a home is the largest purchase most people will ever make. Homes are more than shelter – they provide secure spaces for individuals and families to focus on their futures. To help Newfoundland and Labrador build a stronger economic outlook, our government will make it easier to buy a home. Through the new Home Purchase Program, we will provide grants of \$3,000 toward the down payment of a newly constructed or never-before-purchased home valued up to \$400,000 (including HST) to the first 330 homebuyers who qualify.



► Action 3.13.2 Improving Child Care Quality and Access

Access to quality and affordable child care is a pressing issue for many families in this province. Quality early learning and child care sets the stage for life-long learning, provides children with a solid foundation for acquiring skills, and supports more holistic mental, emotional and physical growth. Further, parents who can access affordable and quality child care services are better able to avail of employment, training and educational opportunities.

Our government will increase access to more affordable child care by adding 180 licensed child care spaces to the Operating Grant Program in 2018-19. We will also introduce two programs that support quality child care. The Quality Improvement Program will allow any regulated child care centre to consult with a dedicated child care quality consultant. Based on these consultations, the Quality Enhancement Grant Program will help child care centres participating in the Operating Grant Program address the cost of improving services.



Action 3.14

Protecting the Environment and Enhancing Public Safety and Consumer Protection

▶ Action 3.14.1 Leveraging Federal Funding to Implement Climate Change Actions

Our government is committed to making progress in addressing climate change. We will release a new Climate Change Action Plan in 2018 and conclude a bilateral agreement with the federal government that will provide for up to \$89.4 million in combined provincial investments and federal funding through the Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund over the next four fiscal years.

Through strategic investments, our government will collaborate with the federal government, communities, Indigenous governments and organizations, non-profit organizations and the private sector to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, while at the same time creating jobs for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

▶ Action 3.14.2 Improving Snowmobile Safety in Labrador

Snowmobile travel is an important and necessary mode of transportation for communities in Labrador. However, not all isolated communities benefit from the Labrador Transportation Grooming Subsidy. In order to provide residents of Nain and Natuashish with safe access to the nearest service centres during the long winter months, our government will expand the Grooming Subsidy program to these communities. To enhance the safety of the traveling public, we will construct safety shelters, place reflective trail markings and provide annual ice-checking services.

► Action 3.14.3 Reviewing Automobile Insurance

Our government has launched its public consultation process on automobile insurance, which will complement the review currently underway by the Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities (PUB). Our consultations are exploring issues outside the scope of the PUB's mandate, such as the rate-setting process. There are also opportunities for the public to share their ideas about measures to improve highway safety and automotive accident prevention in Newfoundland and Labrador. The review of the automobile insurance industry is intended to help modernize the system, provide greater benefits and better value for the residents of the province, find solutions that will benefit consumers, and help bring stability to the industry.



Action 3.15

Strengthening Our Relation with Indigenous People and Governments

▶ Action 3.15.1 Meeting with Indigenous Leaders

In 2017, our government convened the province's first Indigenous Leaders Roundtable to discuss and advance goals shared with Indigenous communities. The National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls, mental health and addictions, and the repatriation of Beothuk remains from Scotland were among the issues discussed.

In 2018, our government will convene the second Indigenous Leaders Roundtable to identify and initiate new areas of collaboration.

▶ Action 3.15.2 Increasing Awareness of Indigenous Cultures within the Justice Sector

In 2018-19, our government will ensure targeted justice-sector workers receive cultural sensitivity training to ensure a better understanding of Indigenous cultures and traditions, challenge common misconceptions about Indigenous people, and improve the interactions and experiences of Indigenous people with the justice system.

Action 3.16

Working with Our Intergovernmental Partners

Our government sees the value in strong partnerships with other governments. A key example of this is our collaboration with the Maritime Provinces and the federal government through the Atlantic Growth Strategy. The strategy allows us to maximize the benefit of federal programs and funding in support of regional and provincial priorities. The Atlantic Growth Strategy also provides a strategic opportunity to ensure federal programs are sensitive to the unique circumstances of the region and our province in particular.

Further, every year, we work with our federal partners to leverage hundreds of millions of dollars in federal strategic investments in infrastructure, economic and technology development, and other areas in support of provincial objectives including health care, early learning and childcare, justice services, transportation, Francophonie, agriculture and aquaculture.

▶ Action 3.16.1 Maximizing Federal Support

In 2018-19, our government will continue to build intergovernmental partnerships that create opportunities for Newfoundland and Labrador to maximize provincial benefit from federal programs and other funding sources.

▶ Action 3.16.2 Pursuing Greater Collaboration with Quebec

Quebec is the only jurisdiction with which Newfoundland and Labrador shares a land border. It therefore makes sense that we work together to develop resources that straddle our border and to support the movement of residents, goods and services between provinces. Our governments have entered into an agreement on the development of mining in the Labrador Trough and the improvement and extension of road infrastructure. This partnership will foster the growth of economic opportunities for businesses and communities that benefit both provinces.

► Action 3.16.3 Reviewing the 2005 Atlantic Accord Arrangement

Our government will review the 2005 Atlantic Accord arrangement with the Government of Canada, as per its terms. This review will consider the extent to which Newfoundland and Labrador has been the principal beneficiary of its offshore resources, and whether the province has realized lasting fiscal and economic gains from its offshore petroleum resource revenues. The review will also consider the fiscal disparities between our province and others. This is timely in light of the fiscal challenges facing our province, and our misnomer as a have province under the current Equalization framework. In 2018-19, our government will engage the Government of Canada in this review.



Conclusion

As a plan for sustainability and growth, **The Way Forward** outlines the actions our government is taking to set Newfoundland and Labrador on a course toward the prosperity we want and know the province is capable of achieving. We have far too many strengths for this not to be possible – abundant natural resources, a strategic global position and, of course, a legacy of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians working hard and showing resilience, tenacity and innovation.

Previous governments have attempted to tackle our social, economic and fiscal challenges with approaches that were either too rushed or one-dimensional. Through the **Securing Our Footing, Realizing Our Potential** and **Building for Our Future** phases of **The Way Forward**, our vision has centred on a balanced and long-term approach to enhancing the quality of public services while creating a more efficient public sector and the conditions that support private-sector job growth.

But **The Way Forward** is far more than a plan: it is also a source of inspiration and a challenge to everyone – communities and community groups, businesses and industry, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians at home, throughout Canada and abroad, and us as a government – to take action, today and every day, to bring the province to its fullest potential. **The Way Forward** is our government's way for Newfoundland and Labrador.



thewayforward.gov.nl.ca

