

How will your party prioritize mental health funding within the health care budget?

**Progressive
Conservatives of
Nova Scotia**

Our party prioritizes mental health funding through the dedicated Office of Addictions and Mental Health (OAMH), which receives annual funding as part of the Department of Health and Wellness budget. This office funds a wide range of mental health and addiction services, including outpatient care, inpatient treatment, and crisis support.

Our goal is to ensure that addiction treatment and recovery programs are accessible to everyone across Nova Scotia, reinforcing our commitment to comprehensive mental health support.

We have also leveraged resources from other departments to fund mental health initiatives. For instance, we allocated \$37.4 million through the Department of Advanced Education to St. FX for the Institute for Innovation and Health to enhance health promotion, mental health, and wellness in rural communities.

A re-elected PC government will continue to use a multi-faceted approach to funding mental health initiatives.

**Nova Scotia Liberal
Party**

A Nova Scotia Liberal government will build and expand 40 collaborative care clinics, which will include mental health practitioners. This will ensure that Nova Scotians have access to primary care close to home, focusing on proactive measures to mental health care and a more holistic approach in our system.

**Nova Scotia New
Democratic Party**

The NDP prioritizes and supports mental health care as a very important part of the overall healthcare system in the province. We will facilitate more timely healthcare provisions including mental health care by building more collaborative care teams and faster access to care.

An NDP government will open 15 collaborative Family Doctor Clinics across the province in our first year. These clinics will connect every Nova Scotian currently on the waitlist to primary care, and continue to open 15 clinics per year, over the next three years (total of 45) to ensure doctors and patients can choose where to provide and receive care. With mental health care workers part of the collaborative team, earlier diagnosis and treatment will be possible and a NDP government will connect Nova Scotians to a Family Doctor faster by moving to universal, automatic, location-based attachments model, seen around the globe as the best way to create primary care connections and the fastest way of reducing family doctor wait times. This universal attachment will facilitate links to mental health care.

The Canada-Nova Scotia Agreement to Work Together to Improve Health Care for Canadians has \$19 million for *Improving access to quality mental health and substance use services*. Does your party commit to spending the full amount on improved access to mental health and addictions support for all Nova Scotians?

**Progressive
Conservatives of
Nova Scotia**

Our government was pleased to sign this deal with the federal government, and we intend on using the funds to continue to help accelerate efforts already underway in Nova Scotia to improve health care access and services.

**Nova Scotia Liberal
Party**

If elected, we commit to spending the full amount of this funding on improving access to mental health and substance use support across the province. We also have plans outlined in our platform to implement anti-poverty and housing first measures as healthcare, as we understand that there are intersecting components that affect mental health and substance use disorders.

**Nova Scotia New
Democratic Party**

Nova Scotia has these agreements with the federal government for new and continuing mental health care funding: an estimated new annual investment \$19,343,000 per year under the Addictions and mental health: Improving access to quality mental health and substance use services, and an estimated Investment per Year (Previous Bilateral Agreement): \$15,700,000 per year under the previous Investment of the Four Remaining Years of the 2017 Common Statement of Principles on Shared Health Priorities.

A NDP government will commit to spending the full amount from the bilateral agreements with the federal government to improve access to mental health and addiction support for all Nova Scotians and will leverage federal funding to make our province’s dollars go much further to improve our healthcare system.

How will your party support the recruitment and retention of public health and school psychologists?

**Progressive
Conservatives of
Nova Scotia**

The first pillar of the PC’s Action for Health plan is to become a magnet for health providers. This plan is making things happen by streamlining recruitment with clear and effective processes and timelines for hiring, supporting internationally educated health providers to work in the province, including supporting their transition and integration into communities, and providing communities with funding for local recruitment and retention efforts.

Nova Scotia Liberal Party	<p>We recognize the immense value that public health and school psychologists bring to our province and understand that they are affected by the healthcare crisis we are facing, as well as the current issues in schools. Our plan to expand on the collaborative care model across the province, including mental healthcare practitioners, will make working conditions better for public health psychologists. Additionally, we have plans in place to improve our schools, including implementing a mental health skills development course, which will support the work of school psychologists. We will continue to work to ensure that these providers of public services have the support they need to succeed in their roles and remain working in the province.</p>
Nova Scotia New Democratic Party	<p>A NDP government will work with psychologists and other health professions to develop a realistic and long-term health human resources strategy that will include offering new recruitment and retention incentives in return for a long-term Nova Scotia residency guarantee. The strategy will include public accountability for progress in achieving its goals.</p> <p>We will support the recruitment and retention of public health and school psychologists by improving working with APNS to develop a funded action plan that addresses the serious issues you outline, most particularly the poor work-life balance and burnout that need to be addressed throughout Nova Scotia's public services.</p> <p>The NDP will make schools work better for students, parents, teachers, and staff. One pressing step for the NDP is immediate action on the Auditor General's recommendations to reduce school violence which has increased an alarming 60% over the past seven years.</p>

What is your plan for ensuring that the province has enough psychologists in the workforce to ensure that all Nova Scotians' mental health needs are met throughout the province?

Progressive Conservatives of Nova Scotia	<p>To meet the mental health needs of Nova Scotians, our government is expanding training programs. Beginning in fall 2025, Dalhousie University will launch a new clinical psychology residency program, adding four new residency seats. This represents a 28% increase in clinical psychology residency positions across the province, strengthening the workforce and improving access to care. This expansion is part of the government's Action for Health plan, which includes significant investments in training, recruitment, and universal mental health services.</p> <p>The plan also includes \$350,000 in bursaries over three years to support about 35 students completing practicums at the clinic, reinforcing our commitment to student training and workforce development.</p>
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Nova Scotia Liberal Party	<p>We very much value the contributions of psychologists across the province and look forward to working with experts like yourselves if elected to continue to build our workforce. We will ensure immigration targets are focused on growing the number of professionals we need in critical areas, including psychologists, so that some of the folks coming into our province can also work to support the mental health needs of Nova Scotians.</p>
Nova Scotia New Democratic Party	<p>A NDP government will address this goal through the health human resources strategy, a commitment outlined above.</p> <p>While there are no overnight solutions, by engaging other community resources that support mental health, an NDP government will help with prevention by standing up for equity-seeking groups and addressing violence in schools, hospitals and other venues where violence and the threat of violence are a major concern.</p> <p>A NDP government will be conscious of the need for good psychological practices in carrying out steps like: fully fund the 2SLGBTQIA Action Plan to fight stigma and discrimination particularly for 2SLGBTQIA youth, and increase core funding to women’s organizations across the province to ensure that survivors of sexualized violence have access to trauma-informed counselling.</p>

What is your fiscal plan for supporting increased, high quality university training of psychologists at the graduate level across the province?

Progressive Conservatives of Nova Scotia	<p>Last year, our government launched a three-year, \$4.5 million partnership with the Dalhousie Centre for Psychological Health to support high-quality training for psychologists.</p> <p>This investment allows clinical psychology PhD students to gain supervised practical experience, improving their training while expanding public mental health services. This initiative is part of our broader commitment under the Action for Health plan to establish universal mental health and addictions care in Nova Scotia.</p> <p>As of September 2024, the clinic has served over 350 clients and provided more than 1,100 sessions. A total of 31 students have conducted 686 therapy appointments and 305 assessment appointments during the first year.</p>
Nova Scotia Liberal Party	<p>If elected, we will work with experts like yourselves to ensure that high quality training programs for psychologists continue to be supported. It is important to encourage folks to practice in these areas for the future of our province, and we know that there is work to be done to improve collaboration in these initiatives.</p>

**Nova Scotia New
Democratic Party**

University training and residency positions for psychologists will be an important element of the long-term health human resources strategy that an NDP government will develop and pursue in an accountable will include offering new recruitment and retention incentives in return for a long-term Nova Scotia residency guarantee. Funding will be part of each element of the human resources strategy.