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| ***Province*** | ***Législature*** | ***Session*** | ***Type de discours*** | ***Date du discours*** | ***Locuteur*** | ***Fonction du locuteur*** | ***Parti politique*** |
| Nouveau-Brunswick | 56e | 2e | Discours sur le budget | 15-04-2008 | Mike Murphy | Ministre de la Santé  | PL |

*(Le discours est bilingue)*

**Department of Health Hon. Mr. Murphy,** after all items under the Department of Health had been presented:

First of all, prior to presenting the budgetary estimates and responding to questions of my colleagues across the way, I would like to thank the staff who are here with me today. They have helped to prepare me to respond to the grueling questions, no doubt, of the members opposite. I also do not want to leave out mention of my family. Because of the long absences, I do not see nearly as much of them as I used to before becoming Minister of Health.

Earlier today, I wished happy birthday to a very special person. I want to do that again, because she is at home watching. Molly Murphy is 14 years old today. She is now 14 going on 15 and not 13 going on 14. I also want to mention that my son Aodhán is watching. He is 10, and he enjoys this. I want to thank my beautiful wife Moira for looking after everyone at home, including Tim, Keegan, and Tara.

I am very pleased today to share with New Brunswickers my department’s budget estimates for the 2008-09 fiscal year. This year, ordinary account and capital spending in the Department of Health will be more than $2.2 billion. Our ordinary budgetary account is nearly $2.198 billion. We will be investing another $57.5 million in capital construction projects and equipment, not to mention the $85-million hospital being built in Campbellton, New Brunswick, which take us to the largest capital budget in the history of health care in New Brunswick. I would like to highlight some of the specific investments we will be making in 2008-09, as part of our Provincial Health Plan to help New Brunswickers be and stay healthy. We recognize that, to be leaders in health care, we need to attract some of the best health professionals available. We are committed to recruiting and retaining the health care workers we need and to ensuring that we use those we have to their full potential. In the Provincial Health Plan, we have a comprehensive package of incentives and strategies to recruit and retain more health professionals, some of which will be put in place this year. We are also undertaking reviews to ensure that we are optimally using our nursing resources, to assess nurse learning needs and to identify professional development opportunities for nurses.

In addition, we promised to add a minimum of 100 billing numbers for physicians over four years. I am happy to say we will be adding 25 new billing numbers for doctors this year—another promise kept. Our government is also offering incentives to attract family doctors to the province to serve New Brunswickers who do not have access to one. We doubled location grants to $50 000 for family doctors who establish a practice outside the province’s three largest cities. We will also be offering a $25 000 location grant to family doctors who establish a new full-time, community-based practice in Saint John, Fredericton, or Moncton.

Our government’s efforts to recruit doctors are proving to be very, very effective. With our Premier taking a direct role in recruiting and our recently increased incentives, we are seeing fantastic results. During the 2007-08 fiscal year, we had a net increase of 57 new doctors—the highest net increase since 1994. Clearly, we are doing something right in that regard.

E-health will play a large role in improving how we deliver health care to New Brunswickers. Our One Patient One Record vision will link all patient information across the health care system. It will make health care delivery more efficient, by cutting down record-taking time. It will make it safer. By putting all patient information at the fingertips of health care professionals, every time that patient comes in contact with the system, fewer mistakes will be made. Last year, we signed contracts for four key components of the e-health record. Our goal is to have all hospitals linked to the e-health record system by the end of 2009. This year, our government will invest $21 million in developing and implementing e-health initiatives.

Cancer has affected most New Brunswickers in some way or another. None of us have been left untouched, including my own family. This year, our government will be taking action within the Department of Health, and especially through the New Brunswick Cancer Network, to reduce the incidence and number of people who die from this terrible disease. The Provincial Health Plan contains a number of initiatives to prevent and treat cancer. They include a cervical cancer vaccination and screening strategy. Beginning in the 2008-2009 school year, we will be establishing a school-based vaccination program to protect girls against human papillomavirus (HPV), adding it to our publicly funded vaccination and immunization programs. The HPV vaccine will be administered to girls at the Grades 7 and 8 levels in the first year, after which it will be administered in Grade 7 only. We are accompanying this with a population-based provincial cervical cancer-screening program.

Under it, all New Brunswick women will be encouraged to have a pap test every three years after two normal tests.

En 2008-2009, notre gouvernement investira 5,8 millions de dollars dans les nouveaux programmes d’immunisation et de dépistage amélioré liés à la stratégie de lutte contre le cancer du col utérin. En investissant dans la prévention, nous nous rapprocherons de l’objectif consistant à être une province où personne ne souffre d’un cancer. Le gouvernement actuel est conscient des besoins de notre population francophone en matière de

soins de santé. L’année dernière, nous avons établi le processus Dialogue Santé pour analyser les besoins de la Péninsule acadienne en matière de santé et pour inventorier les services offerts. Nous avons demandé aux gens de participer et de nous faire des recommandations sur les moyens à adopter pour créer un meilleur équilibre entre les besoins de la population et les services offerts. Environ 30 recommandations ont été formulées, et notre gouvernement a accepté toutes celles qui relèvent du ministère de la Santé. Notre gouvernement donnera suite à un certain nombre des recommandations au cours de l’année.

Nous ajouterons cette année huit lits affectés à la médecine familiale à Caraquet. Les travaux de rénovation nécessaires sont déjà en cours à l’hôpital. Nous instaurerons dans la Péninsule acadienne une unité de formation médicale liée au programme de formation médicale destiné aux étudiants et étudiantes francophones à Moncton.

To increase access to sexual health services, we will hire a sexual health nurse to serve the area. Due to the aging population, the people of the Acadian Peninsula recommended that the department provide more coordination and management of the health problems of the elderly in the area. Therefore, we will be establishing a geriatric clinic in the region. This clinic will promote a multidisciplinary approach for older patients experiencing a change in their functions, memory, or mood, and for those whose medical situation is complex.

As was recommended by the participants, a public information campaign will be launched to

familiarize residents of the Acadian Peninsula with the health services available. We will begin work this year on a $2-million expansion of the emergency room at the hospital in Tracadie. Mr. Landry, you can applaud any time. This government wants health care to be more accessible to all New Brunswickers, including the member for Restigouche-la-Vallée. That is why we will be establishing six community health centres under our Provincial Health Plan. This year, we will establish three satellite community health centres. We will be enhancing access to French primary health care services in English-speaking regions by establishing satellite centres at the Centre scolaire-communautaire Sainte-Anne in Fredericton and at the Centre scolaire-communautaire Samuel-de-Champlain in Saint John. We will also establish a satellite centre in Saint-Isidore, which will be associated with the Caraquet hospital. Our government will invest $1.1 million this year in establishing these

community health centres. In the capital budget, we will be investing $500 000 to replace the

existing health centre in Rexton.

The Fredericton Health Clinic that is operated by the UNB Faculty of Nurses, and supported by business and community leaders, addresses the needs of some of the most vulnerable citizens in the area. It meets the health care needs of the homeless people, people struggling with addictions, people living in poverty, new immigrants, and other vulnerable people in our society. Services include screening for HIV and diabetes, blood pressure monitoring, complete medical physicals, dressing changes, injections, including flu, tetanus, and B12 shots, mental health, lifestyle counseling, and methadone treatment, just to name a few. The clinic also provides nursing students with a valuable real world experience in providing health care. The clinic depends on donations and government funding to support the clinic’s continuing work and improving health care. Our government is providing a further $100 000 to this clinic. I would like to talk now a little bit about the capital budget for 2008-09. This year, we are investing $57.5 million in construction and capital equipment projects. Our priority on cancer care continues to be highlighted in the capital budget. We are investing $19.2 million to replace two linear accelerators at the Dumont hospital oncology centre and two accelerators at the Saint John regional oncology centre. We will also be investing $700 000 to complete renovations at the Campbellton Regional Hospital for a new oncology clinic.

These investments will help us fulfill our commitment to establish a guaranteed wait time for radiation therapy to treat cancer, so that New Brunswickers will receive this care within eight weeks.

Other major projects include the following. There will be $8 million invested in the construction of a new emergency department at the Saint John Regional Hospital, to begin building a one-story addition to the hospital. This $30-million project will be completed over the next three years. Another $4 million will be invested to continue renovations at the Dr. Georges L. Dumont Hospital related to the training program for Francophone medical students in the city. This project is expected to be completed by the fall of 2009. Another $2 million will be invested there to construct a major addition which will provide additional space for clinical services. An amount of $2 million will be invested to begin renovations at the Miramichi Regional Hospital, the Moncton Hospital, the Dr. Everett Chalmers Hospital in Fredericton, and the Saint John Regional Hospital, related to the medical education program for Anglophone students. These are the major investments that will be made in health care this year. These are the investments that put patients first. On top of these new initiatives, we are maintaining all existing services. That means not cuts, no bed closures, and no hospital closures. Many of the initiatives that will be brought forward are going to be initiated across this province with a more standardized approach due to the new governance model that is coming about, effective September 1.

We will have an integrated health care system—one health care system for every New Brunswicker. We aspire to the best health care in Canada. We have made space for both linguistic communities, for our traditions and our heritage, and we will continue to build on that, so that we provide the best health care in this country.

Nous avons un nouveau système de gouvernance au Nouveau-Brunswick. Depuis quelques

semaines, le débat est mené par le chef de l’opposition. Je suggère à tout le monde qui est à l’écoute et qui nous regarde à la télévision d’ignorer les commentaires du chef de l’opposition parce que les plans n’ont pas changé en ce qui concerne l’Hôpital Dr Georges L. Dumont. Rien n’a changé en ce qui a trait aux soins de santé pour la population francophone du Nouveau-Brunswick. Nous avons l’intention de continuer l’amélioration des soins de santé pour tous les gens du Nouveau-Brunswick, autant les anglophones que les francophones.

Je suggère à la population qui est à l’écoute ou qui nous regarde à la télévision d’ignorer les

commentaires du chef de l’opposition, qui tente de trouver des choses qui n’existent pas. Nous avons l’intention de proposer des amendements pour continuer à garantir les soins de santé dans la langue de choix de chaque personne au Nouveau-Brunswick. Nous avons des amendements pour réaffirmer les droits et les acquis de la population acadienne et francophone dans les soins de santé. Il y a des lois en place, et il y aura des amendements pour réaffirmer la langue de travail de l’Hôpital Dr Georges L. Dumont et des autres hôpitaux de la province qui travaillent en français. Toutes ces lois existent, et nous allons réaffirmer cela. Rien n’a changé en ce qui a trait aux droits acquis des Acadiens et des francophones depuis les derniers mois — rien n’a changé. Maintenant, nous avons deux régies. La logique du chef de l’opposition est bizarre. On a réuni quatre régies francophones pour former la régie de la santé A. Pourquoi le chef de l’opposition pense-t-il que cela ne donne pas plus de poids à la population francophone du Nouveau-Brunswick? Je pense que c’est le contraire : cela lui donne plus de poids et de pouvoir.

What I am suggesting is that those who are watching tonight, those who are listening, and those who are in this Chamber should ignore the divisive comments of the Leader of the Opposition in his filibuster that has gone on for 30 hours. We have had 30 hours of fearmongering, 30 hours of a witch hunt. Nothing has changed with regard to the rights of the Francophones of this province in health care. It will only get better for every man, woman, and child, Anglophone or Francophone, in our one health care system, which we will seek to make the best in this country.

We deserve better from an Opposition Leader than fearmongering and using the language card to divide our province. The plans for the Dr. Georges L. Dumont Hospital are safe with this government. The acquisitions of the Acadian population are safe. The acquisitions of the people of the southwest, the southeast, and northern New Brunswick, and their plans for health care, are safe with this government. We do not shut hospitals down, we do not close beds, and we do not fearmonger. I had to get that off my chest, because I have listened to the Leader of the Opposition for 30 hours, seeking to divide our neighbours, our citizens, our communities, our cities, our towns, our rural communities and urban communities, north and south, English- and French-speaking. That is something we do not expect from the leader of Her Majesty’s loyal opposition.

With that, I am open to questions.