

**MANITOBA'S
POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY**

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INTRODUCTION

Budget 2020 makes investments to improve the lives of all Manitobans, including for those in greatest need of support. In 2020, cornerstone initiatives include investments in the areas of mental health, addictions, the development of a new disability income support program, and Manitoba's second social impact bond.

The Manitoba government is responding to the needs in local communities, including job creation, lowering taxes and supporting community-based organizations. Investments are showing positive impact for the great majority of Manitobans. The most recent low-income data (2018) shows that the poverty rate among Manitobans is 9.3 per cent, a decrease of 22.5 per cent compared to the baseline year of 2015. The impact has been even more significant among children. The low-income rate was 11.3 per cent among children in 2018, a decrease of 31.1 per cent, compared to 2015. Detailed low-income information is shared in the table below, including a look at how Manitoba is doing relative to other provinces, and data comparisons from the last few years.

The Manitoba government is committed to transparent reporting on government's progress. Manitoba's Balanced Scorecard includes broad priority areas that support achieving better outcomes for Manitobans. Three of Manitoba's poverty reduction indicators are reflected in Manitoba's Balanced Scorecard dashboard measures, including:

- (1) Market Basket Measure (Canada's official poverty line) for child poverty
- (2) Manitoba's employment rate
- (3) Manitoba's graduation rate

The inclusion of these three poverty reduction indicators reinforce government's commitment to supporting a reduction in poverty and better quality of life for Manitobans.

The Manitoba government is committed to continued progress in 2020/21 and to empowering individuals and families to achieve a brighter future.

Low Income in Manitoba, 2008, 2015-2018, Statistics Canada, Market Basket Measure¹

							Per Cent Change	
		2008	2015	2016	2017	2018	2015 to 2018	2017 to 2018
All Manitobans	Rate, per cent	11.1	12.0	9.4	8.7	9.3		
	Rank (1 is best)	2	4	4	2	7	-22.5%	6.9%
	Number	124,000	146,000	115,000	108,000	117,000		
Children	Rate, per cent	14.7	16.4	11.9	9.5	11.3		
	Rank (1 is best)	3	10	5	4	8	-31.1%	18.9%
	Number	37,000	43,000	32,000	26,000	31,000		
Persons in Lone-Parent Families	Rate, per cent	29.0	41.3	36.9	23.3	26.1		
	Rank (1 is best)	2	7	8	5	8	-36.8%	12.0%
	Number	22,000	22,000	22,000	16,000	15,000		
Persons in Youth-Led Families²	Rate, per cent	35.7	30.6	35.9	29.1			
	Rank (1 is best)	3	1	6	2	not yet available	not yet available	not yet available
	Number	16,000	17,000	18,000	14,000			
Single Individuals (45-64 years)	Rate, per cent	27.9	30.6	31.0	29.3			
	Rank (1 is best)	2	3	3	5	not yet available	not yet available	not yet available
	Number	13,000	16,000	15,000	15,000			
Indigenous Persons (off-reserve)	Rate, per cent	16.5	21.6	23.2	16.9			
	Rank (1 is best)	4	4	8	4	not yet available	not yet available	not yet available
	Number	15,000	24,000	23,000	16,000			
Persons with Disabilities	Rate, per cent	11.4	16.7	13.2	12.4			
	Rank (1 is best)	2	3	3	2	not yet available	not yet available	not yet available
	Number	31,000	42,000	35,000	34,000			
Seniors	Rate, per cent	3.5	4.8	2.5	3.8	3.3		
	Rank (1 is best)	2	3	1	6	6	-31.3%	-13.2%
	Number	F	9,000	5,000	7,000	7,000		

¹ In February 2019, Statistics Canada changed its Market Basket Measure (MBM) methodology, with the release of MBM 2008 series. Thus, the 2008 data shown differs from data earlier reported. Data for All Manitobans, Persons in Lone-Parent Families, Children, and Seniors are from Statistics Canada's published data. Data for Persons in Youth-Led Families, Single Individuals (45 - 64 years), Indigenous Persons (off reserve), and Persons with Disabilities are from custom data from Statistics Canada.

² Age of primary income earner is 24 years or less.

F: too unreliable to be published

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Budget 2020 aligns with the priorities and goals of Pathways to a Better Future: Manitoba's Poverty Reduction Strategy. Released on March 4, 2019, Manitoba's strategy is a whole-of government approach to address the multiple dimensions of poverty. Extensive consultations with Manitobans, including those living in poverty, helped inform the strategy. The six priority areas that continue to guide government's actions are:

1. Invest in Manitoba's future prosperity through supports to children and youth.
2. Work together to improve health outcomes and standard of living.
3. Promote economic inclusion through employment, education and training.
4. Facilitate partnerships and support community-based organizations.
5. Strengthen client-centred service delivery.
6. Make positive change through social innovation.

The 2020/21 Poverty Reduction Budget Paper highlights initiatives and investments that support the priority areas of Pathways to a Better Future.

Above all, Manitobans want to see results from a poverty reduction strategy. To this end, the Manitoba government has committed to a target of reducing the number of children living in low-income households by 25 per cent by the year 2025, compared to the baseline year of 2015. This is measured using Canada's official poverty line, also known as Statistics Canada's Market Basket Measure.

Manitobans have a lot to be proud of with respect to progress made. Manitoba's child poverty rate was 11.3 per cent in 2018. This is an improvement of 31.1 per cent relative to 2015, which means that Manitoba's target related to child poverty is being achieved. The challenge ahead will be to sustain a lower child poverty rate over time. Manitoba's Balanced Scorecards include a more robust target of achieving a child poverty rate that is better (lower) than the 2017 level of 9.5 per cent. As well, Pathways to a Better Future emphasizes that the commitment to poverty reduction does not end once targets are achieved. The Manitoba government's long-term aspiration is for the eradication of all poverty in the province.

PRIORITY AREAS AND HIGHLIGHTS OF GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

Investing in Manitoba's Future Prosperity through Supports to Children and Youth

Investing in Early Learning and Child Care

The Manitoba government is investing in early learning and child care to provide quality, accessible and affordable child care options for parents. Robust early learning and child care helps to reduce poverty by supporting parents to enter or stay in the workforce, while promoting positive educational and child development outcomes for Manitoba children.

Manitoba has embarked on a comprehensive review of the early learning and child care funding model, with a goal to modernize how child care is delivered and funded in our province. New approaches, including a portable child care benefit and the Child Care Centre Development Tax Credit, will provide families with greater choice and flexibility to access a wider variety of child care options.

In 2020/21, Manitoba will invest an additional \$1.5 million to provide operating grants to:

- four school-based capital child care projects, representing 286 new spaces
- two community-based capital child care projects, representing 122 new spaces

A total of \$95,000 in operating grants will be allocated toward 50 new, licensed, home-based child care spaces, targeted to open in 2020/21.

An innovative \$11.5 million endowment is being established to support ongoing sustainability of Manitoba's more than 1,100 child care centres. The new Child Care Sustainability Trust is available to support the diverse array of challenges that face child care operators across Manitoba, from minor repairs and maintenance for aging centres, to new equipment to improve learning opportunities. Applications can also be submitted for one-time deficit or emergency support for operators who provide strong financial management plans but require a little extra support to get back on track. The fund is also intended to support innovative approaches to child care and initiatives/projects to improve accessibility – for example, pilot projects that expand or shift hours to meet the needs of a modern workforce.

The Manitoba government has funded more than 2,270 new child care spaces since 2016, with another 1,600 new spaces estimated to be created by the end of the 2019/20 fiscal year. In 2019/20, the Manitoba government budgeted more than \$177 million in financial assistance and grants for early learning and child care.

Child Care Centre Development Tax Credit

Increased access to early learning and child care services supports economic development, and reduces barriers to labour force participation. In 2020/21, Manitoba will invest an additional \$4.74 million over five years to expand the number of child care spaces available for development under the Child Care Centre Development Tax Credit. The increase enables corporations to open new licensed early learning and child care spaces to support their employees and surrounding communities, which may open up to 474 spaces in future years.

Thrival Kits™

As part of a comprehensive whole-of-government approach to improving mental health and addictions programming, the Manitoba government is investing \$160,000 in 2019/20 and \$580,000 in 2020/21 to expand the distribution of Thrival Kits™ to grades 4 to 6 students across the province. Thrival Kits™ are currently being distributed by the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth and the Canadian Mental Health Association, under a pilot project in some Manitoba schools. Thrival Kits™ are a mental wellness and promotion program, incorporating evidence-based practices where students are provided their own kit and introduced to themes and activities throughout the school year, led by their teacher.

This investment aligns with recommendations put forward in the VIRGO report on mental health and addictions and the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth.

Financial Support for Post-Secondary Students

The Manitoba government, through Manitoba Student Aid, provides front-line services for Manitoba's post-secondary students who are in need of financial support. Students who apply for financial assistance through Manitoba Student Aid are assessed for both the Canada Student Loan Program and various Manitoba Student Aid programs, such as loans, grants and bursaries. In recent years, more students are participating in post-secondary learning programs and benefiting from public financial support. To support more students in need, the Manitoba government is making \$55.4 million in student loans available in 2020/21, an increase of \$5.4 million over the previous year. In addition to loans, the Manitoba government is also making \$27.3 million available through the Manitoba Bursary and Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Initiative in 2020/21, an increase of \$5 million over the previous year.

The Manitoba Bursary is an upfront grant for students who are financially disadvantaged, to help ensure they are able to successfully engage in their studies. Low-income Indigenous students are eligible for additional supports through the Manitoba Bursary.

The Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Initiative (MSBI) is another means by which government financially supports students' success. The MSBI encourages private donations for scholarships and bursaries by providing matching government funds at a 2 to 1 ratio (private to public) to ensure that students with financial need can access post-secondary education. In 2020/21, the Manitoba government will provide an additional \$3.25 million to MSBI, increasing the annual provincial contribution to \$10 million. This means putting \$30 million in the hands of students when combined with private sector investment.

Working Together to Improve Health Outcomes and Standard of Living

Improving Health Outcomes

Support for Mental Health and Addictions

In early 2019, Manitoba and Canada signed a bilateral funding agreement offering targeted federal funding to enhance and implement new initiatives supporting mental health and addictions services in Manitoba. The Manitoba government has taken a whole-of government approach to addressing this issue, recognizing that supports are needed for all Manitobans. Substantial investment for new and enhanced programming has been put forward, including a \$25 million boost in the final three months of 2019. Information on mental health and addictions programs and related funding for 2020/21 are included throughout this budget paper.

Expanded Services for StreetReach Thompson

The Manitoba government is investing \$225,000 in 2019/20 and \$900,000 in 2020/21 to expand StreetReach programming in Thompson and enhance the community mobilization hub.

StreetReach is part of Tracia's Trust, the Manitoba government's strategy to prevent sexual exploitation of children and youth. The StreetReach program currently includes a Winnipeg team with representatives from child welfare, law enforcement and non-governmental organizations who work together to respond to children and youth at high risk of being violently victimized through the sex trade.

As a first step, the province conducted community consultation in late 2019 and will be working with community stakeholders to build a Thompson-specific model. The new program will also integrate existing mobile crisis and addictions programs, and include mental health, and spiritual and elder supports.

In addition to Tracia's Trust, this initiative also fulfils recommendations in the VIRGO report on mental health and addictions.

Enhancing Mental Health, Substance Use and Addictions Services for StreetReach Winnipeg

To help address the growing need for integrated access to mental health, substance use and addictions services among youth with complex, multi-system needs, the province is investing \$88,200 in 2019/20, and \$268,900 in 2020/21, for the Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre (MATC) to work in collaboration with StreetReach. Additional funding is also being provided to fund a spiritual care position. These positions will be embedded into the existing StreetReach outreach team and will work directly with sexually exploited youth. The combined strengths of these organizations to deliver mental health and substance abuse services, and intervene in crises, will help protect children and youth.

Funding for StreetReach fulfils recommendations made by the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth, recommending the expansion of StreetReach services in Winnipeg. It also addresses recommendations in the VIRGO report, including those to increase capacity through expanded community outreach services, significantly enhance the capacity of mental health and addictions services for children and youth, and priority funding for the expansion of services for children and youth. The investment also aligns with key findings in the research report released under the Tracia's Trust Strategy.

The Northern Healthy Foods Initiative

The Northern Healthy Foods Initiative (NHFI), a Manitoba government program, supports local and regional projects that contribute to the development of culturally relevant, healthy food systems, while improving health and well-being of Manitobans. NHFI goals are to improve sustainable access to healthy and culturally appropriate foods in Manitoba's north and strengthen community-led development in increasing food security.

While the current NHFI program has made a positive impact in many communities, the issues around food insecurity in northern and remote communities persist and require concerted efforts towards more robust programming and better outcomes. Within the existing program budget of \$1.2 million, Budget 2020 re-allocates a total of \$662,000 to strengthen existing community service delivery and explore initiatives to generate unique solutions to northern food insecurity. This will be achieved through engaging stakeholders, communities and Manitobans in the north. This funding will also reinforce collaborative work at the national level to strengthen efforts toward reconciliation through targeted support for Indigenous food systems and intergenerational knowledge transfer.

Elevating Manitoba's Standard of Living

New Income Support for Persons with Disabilities

In 2020/21, the Manitoba government will continue work on developing an income support program for individuals with severe and prolonged disabilities – a new program that will be distinct from Employment and Income Assistance (EIA). In 2019/20, an initial consultation process was completed, inviting stakeholders to provide feedback to inform the design of the new program. Over 140 Manitobans attended five in-person consultation sessions, and over 400 responses were received through an online survey. This information and continued engagement with stakeholders and persons living with disabilities will help guide program development, with the overarching goal of improving the quality of life and services to Manitobans with severe and prolonged disabilities.

Making Housing Affordable – Rent Assist

The Manitoba government recognizes that safe and affordable housing helps to improve the lives and health of low-income Manitobans. Rent Assist is a portable shelter benefit for low-income Manitobans who are receiving EIA and have shelter costs, or who are renting in the private market and not receiving EIA benefits. Rent Assist is designed to ensure that households renting in the private market do not pay more than 30 per cent of their income for a reasonable rent and utilities. Reasonable rent and utilities is defined as 75 per cent of median market rent as established through rental market surveys conducted by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

In 2020, Rent Assist rates will again be increased to maintain indexation to 75 per cent of median market rent. Budget 2020 includes an increase of \$7.9 million for Rent Assist. This is to fund benefits and annual indexing to 75 per cent of median market rent. Rent Assist supports approximately 27,500 households that reside in the private market and are receiving EIA (an approximate increase of 5,500 households since March 2016). Rent Assist also supports approximately 7,700 households not receiving EIA (an approximate increase of 2,950 households since March 2016) that are renting in the private market.

Increasing Family Income – Basic Personal Amount and Personal Income Tax Brackets

The Basic Personal Amount (BPA) is a non-refundable tax credit that every Manitoba resident is entitled to claim on their income tax return. Manitoba legislated the indexing of the BPA and personal income tax brackets to the rate of inflation, beginning in 2017. The BPA will increase from \$9,626 in the 2019 tax year to \$9,838 in 2020. Since 2016, the BPA has increased by \$704 from \$9,134 to \$9,838.

In 2019, indexing the BPA removed an estimated 3,800 Manitobans from the tax rolls and saved all residents more than \$18.4 million. In 2020, indexing will remove an additional 3,300 Manitobans from the tax rolls for an additional annual savings for all residents of \$16.2 million. These savings will continue growing at the rate of the growth in the consumer price index, meaning that taxable Manitobans are able to keep more of their income.

Indexing the Basic Personal Amount, beginning in the 2017 taxation year, has removed 11,000 low-income Manitobans from the tax rolls as of this tax year.

Basic Personal Amount and Manitobans Removed from Tax Rolls, 2017 – 2022^f, Province of Manitoba

Tax Year	Basic Personal Amount	Manitobans Removed from Tax Rolls (Year-over-Year)	Manitobans Removed from Tax Rolls (Cumulative)
2017	\$9,271	2,150	2,150
2018	\$9,382	1,750	3,900
2019	\$9,626	3,800	7,700
2020	\$9,838	3,300	11,000
2021	\$9,986 ^f	2,300	13,300
2022	\$10,196 ^f	3,250	16,550

f – Forecast and subject to change

Sales Tax Rate Reductions and Exemption Measures

In Budget 2020, our government will once again lower the sales tax rate, from seven per cent to six per cent on July 1, 2020. The sales tax rate reductions introduced in Budget 2019 and Budget 2020 represent a 25 per cent reduction in the sales tax rate over two years, which benefits all Manitobans.

Additional sales tax measures are being implemented during our mandate. On January 1, 2020, our government eliminated sales tax on the preparation of wills and on October 1, 2020, will eliminate sales tax on personal income tax return preparation. This ensures that personal income tax returns for the 2020 taxation year are exempt from sales tax. Future measures include the elimination of sales tax on personal services and home insurance.

Elimination of Tax on Probate Fees

The Manitoba government is pleased to eliminate the payment of any probate fees on applications made to the Court of Queen's Bench as of July 1, 2020 for the probate of a deceased person.

Promoting Economic Inclusion through Employment, Education and Training

Economic Growth Strategy and 40,000 Jobs Plan

In December 2018, Manitoba launched an Economic Growth Action Plan that envisions greater coordination between government and the private sector to support a more nimble approach to economic development. A critical element of the Economic Growth Action Plan is ensuring that Manitoba's workforce has the skills required to support industry expansion and economic growth. The Economic Growth Action Plan has gained momentum with the launch of the new Manitoba Works Jobs Plan. The ambitious plan will enable the creation of 40,000 jobs across Manitoba over the next four years with co-operation across government departments, Team Manitoba partners and the private sector.

The Manitoba Works Job Plan is tightly tied to the Economic Growth Action Plan and seeks to enhance partnerships and collaboration with municipalities and Indigenous communities. It aims to build on our strengths in key sectors to grow trade, investment and job creation, and to ensure that policies in areas like permitting, infrastructure investment and regulatory reform align with the Economic Growth Action Plan.

Supporting Employment – Labour Market Transfer Agreements

The Manitoba government is increasing investment for the delivery of employment programs and services by over \$5 million in 2020/21. This increase supports a total budget of approximately \$91.5 million for unemployed and under-employed workers, through programs and services funded under two federal-provincial labour market transfer agreements. A wide range of programs and services are available for adult learners, unemployed workers, persons with a disability, employers and industry for existing workers and new labour market entrants, as well as programs for students and youth transitioning to the workforce. This funding will also support the collaborative efforts of the departments of Families and Economic Development and Training, to help EIA recipients get the skills they need to move into good jobs and achieve financial independence.

Supporting Youth Employment

The Manitoba government is providing a wide range of employment services to help young people overcome barriers and succeed in the labour market. Youth under 30 represent nearly 50 per cent of individuals participating in programs and services funded under the labour market transfer agreements. The Manitoba government is dedicating an additional \$6 million in 2020/21 to youth employment programming that addresses key determinants of poverty, including low literacy and numeracy, mental health and addictions, and disengagement from employment and education. Programming is being delivered to assist current and former youth in care, Indigenous and newcomer youth, and youth at-risk of involvement in the justice system.

The Manitoba government has increased funding to \$900,000 to expand services and supports available to youth-in-care or formerly in care through the Futures Forward program. Futures Forward supports youth in their transition from the child welfare system to independence.

Jobs on Market, Jobs on 9th

Jobs on Market and Jobs on 9th helps individuals who are receiving EIA to prepare for and find employment. EIA staff, through assessment-informed practice, provide rapid engagement supports to participants to understand their needs and to develop personalized plans to support entry or return to the work force. On-site services at Jobs on Market and Jobs on 9th include ongoing assessment, counselling, resume development, job leads, voicemail services, connections to community resources and connections to employers. In just over two years, Jobs on Market in Winnipeg has provided services to more than 6,400 people with approximately 3,000 having moved from EIA to independence. As well, since November 2019, Jobs on 9th in Brandon has provided services to more than 100 people with over one quarter of those served also reaching independence.

Community Helper and Recruitment Training

The Manitoba government is investing \$25,000 in 2019/20 and \$250,000 in 2020/21 to recruit, train and employ 'community helpers' to provide services that reduce the risk of Child and Family Services (CFS) apprehension or placement breakdown.

The new primary prevention program will match community-based support workers with families and caregivers residing in Winnipeg's inner city who are experiencing challenges that could lead to separation. The workers, known as community helpers, will support the stability and wellness of vulnerable families by establishing trusting relationships outside the formal child welfare system. Through these relationships, the caregivers will feel supported, valued and empowered to access additional available services when they are needed.

Through facilitated family-led planning, in-home crisis counselling and skill-building exercises, the community helpers will provide children and caregivers with the tools to help manage challenges independently in the long-term, thereby limiting CFS involvement.

This initiative fulfils recommendations from the VIRGO report on mental health and addictions and the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth. This work also aligns with Manitoba's commitment to transform child welfare in Manitoba.

Facilitating Partnerships and Supporting Community-Based Organizations

End Homelessness Winnipeg

End Homelessness Winnipeg (EHW) is an organization established to coordinate a system of supports and services for those experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg. To support the forward momentum of EHW, the Manitoba government is investing \$250,000 in 2020/21. This funding is part of a \$750,000 agreement over three years.

Building Sustainable Communities Grant

The Building Sustainable Communities Program fosters thriving, sustainable communities. Grant assistance, in partnership with support from other funders, will leverage investments to provide a better quality of life for Manitobans. In 2020/21, the Manitoba government is allocating \$8 million to this grant program. More information on the Building Sustainable Communities program and other government grants can be accessed through Manitoba Grants Online at www.manitoba.ca/grants.

Supporting Victims of Family Violence

The Manitoba Status of Women Secretariat continues to support Manitobans who are experiencing domestic and family violence. Annually, 33 community-based agencies receive funding through the Family Violence Prevention Program (FVPP) to deliver a range of intervention services for vulnerable women, men and individuals, along with their children.

In 2019, the West Central Women's Resource Centre became a funded agency of the FVPP. This funding will ensure that women in one of Winnipeg's most vulnerable neighbourhoods will continue to be supported as they heal from family and domestic violence. In 2020, another FVPP agency, Wabhung Abinoonjiag Inc., was chosen to lead

a network of nine other community agencies to help improve housing options for women and children who have experienced family violence. Wahbung will work closely with family violence shelters, second stage programs, women's resource centres and other community agencies to ensure access to appropriate social housing is available to women and children affected by family violence.

Strengthening Client-Centered Service Delivery

Reconciliation Strategy

Following the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC) final report, Manitoba unanimously ratified The Path to Reconciliation Act, which came into force on March 15, 2016. The act was the first reconciliation legislation of its kind in Canada.

Under the act, reconciliation is guided by the principles of respect, understanding, engagement and action.

The act requires government to pursue reconciliation in a way that is guided by the TRC Calls to Actions and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Engagement will occur with Indigenous Nations and peoples, and all sectors of society, to develop a strategic path forward. These engagement efforts will build on current activities to help inform the development of a reconciliation strategy for the province. In 2020/21, \$500,000 is being allocated to support implementation of Manitoba's Reconciliation Strategy.

This work aligns with commitments to advance reconciliation in Manitoba. This includes:

- working positively and respectfully with Indigenous and Northern communities
- supporting reconciliation across government
- furthering reconciliation through a principled approach that will enhance opportunities for economic development with full participation of Indigenous communities

Indigenous and Northern Initiatives Fund

The Indigenous and Northern Initiatives grant program provides funding for projects and initiatives led by Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations and communities to engage in new and innovative approaches to advance reconciliation in the province. The Manitoba government will provide up to \$25,000 for eligible single-year projects through the Indigenous and Northern Initiatives Fund. The fund places a specific focus on strategic projects that advance economic development, including those that support job creation and educational initiatives within the province.

Neecheewam

The Manitoba government is investing \$800,000 in 2019/20 and \$1.5 million in 2020/21 to enable Neecheewam Inc. to expand its Winnipeg facility and improve access to Indigenous-led healing, care and treatment services to sexually exploited youth. Neecheewam operates the Strong Hearted Buffalo Women Crisis Stabilization Unit, a four-bed crisis intervention program for female and transgender youth who are at high risk of sexual exploitation. With new provincial funding, Neecheewam will undergo renovations to pilot a new, longer-term four-bed addition to its treatment facility.

The funding for Neecheewam addresses recommendations in the VIRGO report on mental health and addictions, including:

- establishing culturally relevant treatment for youth with mental health and substance use issues
- increasing capacity through expanded community outreach services
- significantly enhancing the capacity of mental health and addictions services for children and youth
- funding the expansion of services for children and youth

The investment also aligns with key findings in the research report released under the Tracia's Trust Strategy.

Metis Community Addictions Response Team

The Manitoba government will partner with the Metis Child and Family Services (CFS) Authority on a new pilot project that will provide mental health and addictions services to families at risk of child apprehension. The three-year pilot project with the Metis CFS Authority will see \$1.9 million invested over three years (\$400,000 invested in 2019/20 and \$750,000 in each of the following two years (2020/21 and 2021/22)). A team, including a caseworker, a family mentor, and addictions and mental health workers, will provide support for families with parental substance use to prevent children from coming into care. Families will be able to access services quickly, as well as referrals to various community resources. The program, known as Community Addictions Response Team (CART), will also include connections to cultural programming.

This initiative reflects recommendations made in a variety of reports, such as the VIRGO report on mental health and addictions, the Illicit Drug Task Force and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report, and developed by the Metis Authority and its agencies to reflect community and cultural needs.

Making Positive Change through Social Innovation

Manitoba's Social Innovation Office is a newly established hub for social innovation across government. Its purpose is to initiate projects with organizations and develop creative solutions to social concerns. The office will promote the development of social innovation tools, including social impact bonds, social procurement and social enterprise through investment from community partners. The goal is to engage in impactful partnerships to positively benefit and improve the lives of Manitobans.

Social Impact Bonds

In April 2020, the Manitoba government is launching a new social impact bond (SIB) dedicated to helping people quit smoking in partnership with Pharmacists Manitoba. Under this SIB, Shoppers Drug Mart will invest \$2 million over the next three years to fund activities around smoking cessation, including counselling and nicotine replacement therapies.

The goal of the SIB is to enrol at least 4,500 smokers over a three-year period, based on their readiness to quit and to ensure a minimum of 12 per cent quit smoking with the support of one of more than 500 Manitoba pharmacists trained in smoking cessation. Increasing the number of Manitobans who successfully quit smoking could save the province more than \$1 million annually in lower health-care costs.

A SIB is an innovative social policy tool that brings together government, the private sector, not-for-profits and other stakeholders to deliver effective and prevention-focused solutions. Private investment is used to fund the programs initially, and then is repaid if social outcomes are realized. SIBs allow the government to explore more innovative solutions with reduced financial risk, with the ultimate goal of delivering better outcomes for Manitobans.

This SIB builds on previous innovation work. Last year, the Manitoba government partnered with Southern First Nations Network of Care and Wiji'idiwag Ikwewag, an Indigenous doula service provider, on a two-year pilot project designed to connect at-risk Indigenous mothers with doulas, to improve outcomes for children and families.

Manitoba Homeownership Program

The Manitoba government is committed to fostering innovative community and private sector homeownership opportunities for Manitobans. In 2020/21, \$2 million is allocated to provide capital funding and homebuyer assistance to support the acquisition of homes by eligible low to moderate-income families.

Since 2016, support from the Manitoba government has facilitated homeownership for over 180 households through partnerships with municipalities and non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and MB Tipi Mitawa, and through Manitoba Housing's Rural Homeownership Program.

Indigenous-Led Healing Services (Land-Based Healing)

The Manitoba government is investing \$24,000 in 2019/20 and \$68,000 in 2020/21, for a pilot project to develop a land-based healing service through Clan Mothers Inc. This investment will provide vulnerable youth who are working with StreetReach, the opportunity to access twice-monthly land-based teachings and ceremonies. This pilot project offers an opportunity to build cultural connection and address the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual harms caused by trauma and perpetrators.

This investment aligns with recommendations from the VIRGO report on mental health and addictions, Tracia's Trust, the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. It also supports the path to reconciliation in Manitoba.

PROGRESS INDICATORS

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Act requires that the Manitoba government set indicators to measure progress in reducing poverty and increasing social inclusion.

Pathways to a Better Future: Manitoba's Poverty Reduction Strategy identifies 13 progress indicators that align with the goals of the strategy. Manitoba reported on these indicators for the first time in the 2018/19 Poverty Reduction Annual Report, and will continue to share this data on an annual basis. Manitoba's poverty reduction indicators were formally registered in regulation under The Poverty Reduction Strategy Act in May 2019.