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Federal budget hangs B.C. out to dry on health care
\$5 billion cut to health care transfers for B.C.

Vancouver — The BC Health Coalition says the 2015 federal budget entrenches deep health care cuts for B.C. and fails to include much-needed reforms, such as national pharmacare, to meet the needs of Canada’s aging population.

“B.C. is facing a \$5 billion cut to health care under the federal government’s new funding formula,” says BC Health Coalition co-chair Rick Turner of today’s budget.

The federal government has said that it will not renew the 2004 Health Accord, and the new funding formula for federal health transfer payments will mean that B.C. will receive less federal funding than the province has received in the past 10 years.

Starting in 2017-18, the Canada Health Transfer payments will no longer include a 6% escalator. Instead, payments will only grow in line with a 3-year moving average of nominal GDP growth (with a minimum increase of 3 per cent per year guaranteed).

These changes will cut nearly \$36 billion in funding to the provinces over ten years, according to the Council of the Federation Working Group on Fiscal Arrangements.

“Not only are there deep cuts to health in this budget, there is no plan for a national pharmacare program or national seniors care strategy – both of which have high support among Canadians,” says Turner. “The federal election is just around the corner and it’s up to all of the political parties to provide people in Canada with a health care platform they can vote for.”

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