



February 19, 2025

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Construction of the QEII Halifax Infirmiry Expansion

Q1. What is the QEII Halifax Infirmiry Expansion Project?

The QEII Halifax Infirmiry Expansion Project is the largest healthcare infrastructure project in Atlantic Canada to date. It will enhance and modernize the Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre (QEII), specifically the Halifax Infirmiry site by expanding and upgrading existing facilities to meet the growing healthcare needs of the community and the province.

Q2. Why is this expansion necessary?

Several factors drive the need for expansion:

- **Growing Population:** The Halifax region's population has increased, leading to higher demand for healthcare services.
- **Aging Infrastructure:** Some existing facilities are outdated and no longer meet modern healthcare standards. This expansion will enable services to be relocated from aging facilities at the QEII Victoria General campus, to a modern, new building and renovated program spaces.
- **Clinical Excellence:** The expansion will allow for better patient care, improved clinical outcomes, and enhanced research capabilities.

Q3. What are the key components of the next phase of the expansion?

The QEII Halifax Infirmiry Expansion Project will serve residents of HRM, Nova Scotians and Atlantic Canadians. It will feature:

- **A new Inpatient Tower:** 216 acute care beds (an additional 36 under *Action for Health*), 16 operating rooms (an additional four added under *Action for Health*), and specialized inpatient care units, including a 48 bed Intensive Care Unit (ICU).
- **Diagnostic and Treatment Facilities:** A satellite diagnostic imaging department in the Emergency Department, new and upgraded lab spaces including a pathology lab adjacent to the new Operating Rooms, and additional treatment spaces, including hyperbaric medicine.
- **A new, expanded Emergency Department:** A larger and more efficient emergency department to handle increased patient volumes.



Q4. What is the “end result” in terms of construction at Halifax Infirmary?

The end result for the current project is that Nova Scotians will have better access to the healthcare they need with a new acute care tower that features 216 beds, 16 operating rooms, an intensive care unit and a new, larger emergency department.

This new space will enable Nova Scotia Health to utilize efficiencies that will contribute to increased access and improved wait times

Completion of the acute care tower will enable services to be relocated from aging facilities like the QEII Victoria General campus to a modern, new building and renovated program spaces.

The new acute care tower will provide:

- additional capacity to meet patient needs in the Emergency Department, operating rooms and ICU
- a facility that allows for more efficient operations enabling better patient outcomes and streamlined workflows (thanks to input from healthcare providers)
- a modern, light-infused, contemporary workplace for clinicians and other health professionals, with new equipment and advanced technology that will support recruitment and retention
- a facility that is easier to navigate, with a welcoming feel, and
- new underground and surface parking.

Q5. What is the cost of the entire Halifax Infirmary Expansion Project?

The total cost of the project, including the 30-year maintenance agreement, is \$7.5 billion. The maintenance and operating agreement allows for the province to assume control of the building in 2060 that is as new as the first day it opened. This ensures long-term benefits when the province takes ownership, with minimal initial maintenance costs.

Q6. Will construction have an impact on hospital operations?

We understand that construction can be disruptive and challenging – and we are dedicated to making the transition as smooth as possible for all who come to the Halifax Infirmary for care. Site work will continue to be coordinated closely with hospital operations to ensure that the work being done on site does not affect the quality of care being provided by our healthcare teams.



Q7. When will construction of the new acute care tower begin?

Construction began with enabling works in March 2024 preparing the site. The next big sign of construction will be in May 2025 when the tower cranes will be erected, and concrete will begin being placed for the Acute Care Tower Building's foundation.

Q8. What year will the construction of the new acute care tower be complete?

Construction of the acute care tower is expected to be substantially complete in late 2030 and fully complete in Fall 2031.

Q9. How long after completion of construction before the acute care tower is operational?

The QEII Renew project team will work with Nova Scotia Health to activate the new tower for patient care. It is anticipated that the acute care tower will be ready to welcome patients in Fall 2031 – one year after substantial completion.

Q10. What are the top construction priorities/milestones for the first year?

- **February – July 2025:** excavation continues for the building foundation (which began in Summer 2024).
- **May 2025:** the tower cranes will be erected.
- **May – November 2025:** pouring the foundation footing and walls in the lower levels
- **July – December 2025:** concrete structure progressing up to main floor.

Q11. What are the top construction priorities/milestones for the life of the project -2025 to 2031?

2025:

- Tower cranes erected.
- Concrete placed for the tower's foundation.

2026:

- Podium structure built.
- Tower rises to level 10.
- Lower levels enclosed.
- Rought-in and cabling begin.

2027:

- Tower reaches level 15.



- Exterior enclosed.
- Interior rough-in progresses.
- Elevator installation and landscaping begins.

2028:

- Building finishes installed.
- Devices and equipment placed.
- Elevator installation completed.
- Full-building inspections conducted.

2029:

- Final finishes completed.
- Commissioning begins.
- Systems tested.
- Furniture, fixtures, and equipment installed.
- Landscaping finalized.

2030:

- Equipment, finishers, and services completed.
- Commission in wraps up in late summer.
- Substantial completion in fall.

2031:

- Final completion, opening in fall and fully operational

Q12. Where are all the workers/trades for this project coming from? What are the chances you'll be able to find skilled workers in Nova Scotia?

The intent is to leverage trades and specialized workers from the local Nova Scotia market as much as possible while also acknowledging the market is very busy and is not expected to be capable of supplying the quantity of tradespeople necessary to deliver the project in a timely manner. Where needed, workers will be brought in from out of province to fill any gaps. We anticipate that 65 to 70 per cent of the workforce needed will come from Nova Scotia.



Q13. How many workers will be hired for this project?

During peak construction, the number of workers on site is anticipated to be between 800 to 900 with a 10 per cent target for underrepresented communities to gain practical, high-level skills in the Province of Nova Scotia. The overall figure does not include the number of spin-off jobs and the economic boost that typically comes with large scale capital projects of this nature. We are projecting 60 to 70 per cent of the construction costs will be from local trade contractors and suppliers direct to PCL and/or contracted to our key healthcare trade partners.

Q14. Are there enough construction workers in Nova Scotia to support the HIEP?

A significant labour force will be required for the Halifax Infirmary Expansion Project. Currently, Plenary PCL Health (PPH) estimates that there will be a skilled labour shortage during peak construction of HIEP. PPH continues to expend significant efforts to engage the local subtrade community to reduce the extent of the out-of-town labour and to foster apprenticeship programs and development opportunities.