

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GOVERNMENTS OF CANADA AND ALBERTA PARTNER TO HELP UNEMPLOYED OLDER WORKERS IN MEDICINE HAT

MEDICINE HAT, ALBERTA, February 25, 2011—A joint initiative of the governments of Canada and Alberta is helping unemployed older workers learn new skills to assist them in finding and keeping new jobs.

Mr. LaVar Payne, Member of Parliament for Medicine Hat, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, along with Mr. Len Mitzel, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Cypress–Medicine Hat, on behalf of the Honourable Thomas Lukaszuk, Minister of Employment and Immigration for Alberta, announced that the two levels of government are providing up to \$200,000 to support the Working in Successful Employment, or W.I.S.E., project under the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers.

“When Canadians lose their jobs, we want to help them get back into the workforce as soon as possible,” said Mr. Payne. “The Government of Canada, in partnership with the Province of Alberta, is ensuring that unemployed older workers in communities like Medicine Hat can get the support, training and skills development opportunities they need to find jobs and adapt to the changing economy.”

“This training initiative will help 24 unemployed older workers gain new skills, and will prepare them for new jobs,” said Mr. Mitzel. “This partnership demonstrates the commitment from both levels of government in addressing the labour force needs of our older workers.”

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In 2009, Canada's Economic Action Plan provided an additional \$60 million nationally for the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers over three years. The Economic Action Plan is the Government of Canada's strategy to protect the economy by helping Canadians. To learn more about the Plan, please visit the following website: www.actionplan.gc.ca.

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This news release is available in alternative formats upon request.

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Background

The Targeted Initiative for Older Workers is a federal-provincial/territorial cost-shared initiative that provides employment assistance services and employability improvement activities, such as skills upgrading and work experience, to assist unemployed older workers aged 55 to 64 living in a city or town with a population of 250 000 or less and experiencing ongoing high unemployment, and/or significant downsizing or closures.

The Government of Canada launched the Initiative in 2006 with a \$70-million commitment, and it invested another \$90 million in 2008 to extend the Initiative to March 31, 2012. Canada's Economic Action Plan provided an additional \$60 million nationally for this initiative over three years.

To date, 272 projects have been funded under the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers to assist over 14 000 unemployed older workers across Canada.