

CANADA

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Hospital beds down a third, says Statistics Canada study

TORONTO (CP) — Canadian hospitals have closed nearly a third of the beds that were available to patients a decade ago, says a Statistics Canada report.

More than 50,000 beds were closed between 1986 and 1995 in a nationwide move to downsize hospitals, cut costs and gradually shift from in-patient to out-patient care, says the report, to be released today.

At the same time, the country's population rose by 12 per cent, making the bed closings that much more severe.

But David MacKinnon, Ontario Hospital Association president, said the figures actually show how diligent hospitals have been in adjusting to advances in medical technology.

The report shows a dramatic shift in patient care in Canadian hospitals, re-

sulting in fewer beds available for a larger population, said Patricia Tully, co-author of the report Downsizing Canadian Hospitals, 1986-87 to 1994-95.

Annual hospital reports from the last two fiscal years, 1995-96 and 1996-97, were not available for the analysis, she said.

"Up to the early 1980s, there was growth in the hospital area, so this is a change we're seeing," Tully said.

Ontario and Alberta had the lowest ratio of staffed beds to every 1,000 people. By the end of the 1994-95 fiscal year, Ontario had 3.4 beds per 1,000, compared to Alberta's 3.1 beds.

Quebec had the highest ratio, with 5.3 beds per 1,000.

The Statistics Canada report did not include hospital cuts under Ontario Premier Mike Harris's government.

Bad language nearly gets Reform MP tossed

OTTAWA (CP) — Reform MP Ian McLelland called Deputy Prime Minister Sheila Copps a "bitch" in the Commons on Tuesday before retracting it under strong pressure from the Speaker.

The exchange was prompted by a conversation McLelland had with Copps a few minutes before the daily question period officially started in the Commons.

He was seeking a \$40,000 grant for an Alberta author. McLelland said later he was just passing along a request made by a constituent of Energy Minister Anne McLellan, whose riding neighbors his own in Edmonton.

Copps raised the request in the Commons after Reform MPs ganged up on the Liberals for the billions of dollars in spending they have announced leading up to what is widely expected to be an election call this weekend.

"Mr. Speaker, the Reform party is publicly decrying the government for making investments in very important job-creation issues. However, just before question period the member for Edmonton Southwest slipped me a note asking if he could get a \$40,000 government grant for someone in his constituency."

McLelland responded: "Sheila that was a shitty thing to do and confirms you are one bitch."

Passenger identified in bus crash

EDMONTON (CP) — Investigators concluded Tuesday that three people died in Saturday's fiery head-on collision between a Greyhound bus and a pickup truck and not four as they had originally believed.

Edmonton's medical examiner has identified Julia Matte, 40, of Edmonton as the one passenger to die in the crash near Fox Creek, Alta.

Greyhound bus driver Claes Dahlqvist, 49, of Edmonton and pickup driver Ivan Laforce, 24, of Spruce Grove were also killed.

Using dental records, they are still trying to positively identify the driver of the pickup truck but friends and family have said he is Laforce.

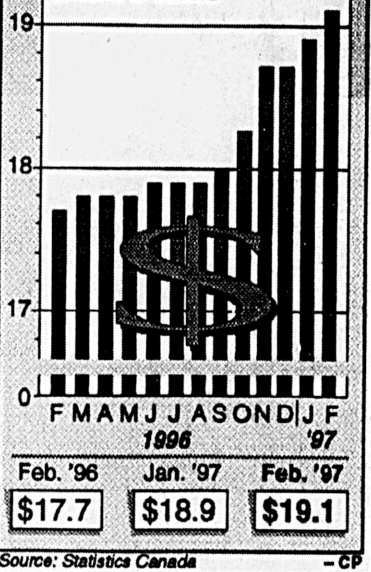
The medical examiner's office is doing alcohol tests on the drivers of both vehicles but results aren't expected to be available for six to eight weeks.

Matte was on her way to meet her husband where he was working in Valhalla, Alta. when she was killed in the crash, 200 kilometres northwest of Edmonton.

Retail sales

Seasonally adjusted

Billions of dollars



Inflation rate eases in March

OTTAWA (CP) — The pace of inflation eased slightly in March as lower prices for groceries and gasoline gave consumers a helping hand.

Statistics Canada said today the 12-month inflation rate for the month was 2.0 per cent, down from 2.2 per cent in each of the last three months.

Declines in mortgage interest payments have gone a long way to offset price rises in the last year for energy, the purchase and insuring of cars, food and post-secondary tuition, the federal agency said.

Between February and March, consumers paid about 0.2 per cent more for a selection of goods and services.

For the month, higher prices for clothing and shoes, air travel, packaged tours, home-heating gas and cablevision services led the way.

Grocery prices have risen 2.2 per cent over the last 12 months but they fell 0.2 per cent between February and March. Mortgage interest payments were down 5.2 per cent from a year ago.

Gasoline prices were up 5.3 per cent over March 1996, but fell during the month by 1.6 per cent.

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3rd.....\$50

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golf at The Harvest Golf Club**



HOW TO PLAY:

Play each weekly game using your home telephone number. Each day in the weekly games, we will publish a series of numbers. You may use one of the published numbers daily to make up each digit of your home telephone number. Each weekly game will commence on Friday and conclude on the following Thursday. Sundays numbers will appear in Saturdays Citizen.

HERE'S AN EXAMPLE:

Let's say your telephone number is 562-3301. On the first day of the weekly game Friday, if we publish the number five (5), you may start to play the game. If on the second day of the game Saturday we publish the number six (6) you are still in the game. You can continue to play each weekly game if all numbers are published over the six day period that make up your home telephone number. We will indicate on the playing grid below where you should place daily numbers. In fairness to all contestants, no business telephone numbers will be accepted and only one player per telephone number will be accepted.

HOW TO CLAIM A PRIZE:

So, on the last day of the weekly game Thursday you have collected the numbers that make up your home telephone number. Great... now all you have to do is call our Dial & Win hotline. The hotline opens at precisely 6 a.m. and will be open till 5 p.m. that same day. If you get through as a qualifying contestant, you will be asked a few brief questions. As there will be multiple winners and only 3 prizes available we will then have a draw from all winning phone numbers. Winners will be confirmed Friday A.M. each week.

GRAND PRIZE DRAW

Enter daily, if one number in your home telephone number matches with a number listed in today's **Dial & Win Lucky Numbers** (listed below), mail or drop off your entry (including your address) to the Prince George Citizen.

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ Postal Code: _____
Date: _____ Home Phone: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: Box 5700, 150 Brunswick Street, Prince George, B.C. V2L 5K9

WEEK #8 PLAYING GRID:

FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR
			-			

CONTEST RULES

- Any incorrect or defaced entry form will be disqualified.
- Winners will be chosen by a random drawing of all valid entries. All winners will be contacted to arrange for prize pick-up.
- It is not necessary for contestants to make a purchase to enter. An exact hand drawing of the entry form may be made on a plain piece of paper. Photocopies are not acceptable.
- The contest judges will have the final decision on any interpretation of the contest rules.
- All major prize winners must answer a skill-testing question.
- All Weekly Prize Draw winners will have their winnings doubled if they are a home delivered subscriber prior to the last day of the daily number listings.
- As a condition of receiving a Weekly Prize Draw or the Grand Prize Draw, contestants will permit publication of their names and/or photographs without further compensation.
- Employees of the Prince George Citizen and their immediate families are not eligible to enter.
- All the information necessary to play is listed on this page. In fairness to all, the P.G. Citizen cannot answer or respond to telephone calls or correspondence regarding the contest.

WEDNESDAY'S DIAL & WIN LUCKY NUMBERS

63190

THE DIAL & WIN PRIZE LINE IS 960-2769