

Auditor General's Comments



Our 2026 Volume II report includes two reports:

- Collaborative Care Clinic Expansion – Department of Health
- Rate Rider Surcharge – NB Power

Collaborative Care Clinic Expansion

Between April 2025 and March 2026, the Department of Health announced 14 collaborative care clinics as part of its primary care reform. We found the Department did not have adequate information to demonstrate clinics were improving access to primary care where it was needed most. Clinic expansion was not guided by a documented provincial assessment of community need. Full costs and long-term affordability were not assessed, and performance targets and monitoring were inconsistent. Patient attachment and waitlist reductions could not be reliably demonstrated because key data and public reporting were incomplete or inaccurate. Recommendations have been made to strengthen needs-based planning, financial analysis, performance monitoring, data quality and accountability.

Rate Rider Surcharge

As of March 31, 2026, variance account balances to be recovered from customers through the rate rider surcharge have grown to \$384 million. NB Power's regulatory variance accounts are used to defer differences between forecasted and actual electricity sales and supply costs. Since 2022, the recovery period has expanded from two to eight years and additions have outpaced recoveries in two of three years, resulting in more costs being deferred to future ratepayers. The long-term sustainability of the framework depends on improved operating performance and limiting further growth in deferred balances.

Recognition

We would like to recognize departmental and Crown corporation staff for their assistance as we completed our work for this report. I also want to thank my team for their dedication and professionalism in fulfilling the mandate of the Office of the Auditor General of New Brunswick.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Martin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" and last name "Martin" clearly distinguishable.

Paul Martin, FCPA, FCA
Auditor General