



Office of the Seniors Advocate Residential Care Survey volunteers

OSA Surveys Hit Key Milestones

The Office of the Seniors Advocate (OSA) has two major survey projects underway. In September and October, the OSA, in conjunction with BC Stats, mailed out a survey to a random sample of 30,000 HandyDART users across BC (73% of all users are seniors). The survey design and content was informed by the participation of a consultation group representing drivers, clients and additional stakeholders. BC Stats is currently aggregating, tabulating and analyzing the survey data. Results will be announced in the new year.

A significant amount of work has also been undertaken by hundreds of volunteers on the OSA's survey of 27,000 seniors living in 300 residential care facilities in the province. In person surveys and mailout surveys to most frequent visitors will continue into the new year with results expected in 2017.

Across BC, over 580 volunteers have...

- ◆ Interacted with over **13,000 residents** in care homes across the five regional health authorities
- ◆ Conducted over **6,500 interviews** with residents in care homes
- ◆ Logged more than **12,398 hours** of volunteer time since June
- ◆ Attended **89 training sessions** across Vancouver, Fraser Health, Interior Health, Island Health and Northern Health

Highlighting Concerns of BC Seniors to the Federal Government

The Seniors Advocate attended the meeting of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors in Vancouver in September. Seniors' workplace engagement was a key focus of discussions. Currently 26% of seniors between the ages of 65 and 69 are working in Canada. The Advocate met with the Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and the federal Minister Responsible for Seniors. Following the meeting, the Office of the Seniors Advocate's Council of Advisors submitted a paper outlining priorities for BC seniors. Read the submission here: www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/osa-reports/osas-federal-government-submission-outlining-priorities-for-bc-seniors/

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Updates on Reports

Home support survey report highlights where improvements are needed

In September, the OSA released a report highlighting the results of 10,000 home support clients and their family members. Survey results showed that overall most clients are generally satisfied with the quality of the home support services they receive (62%). However, many respondents want more services to be available to them, such as housekeeping (28%) and meal preparation (12%). Additional highlights include an overwhelming recognition that home support staff are caring and respectful (92%), but there are also concerns around the number of different workers clients receive. Up to 48% say they get either too many workers or too many substitute workers. Many clients also expressed concerns around the skills and training of some home support workers with only 47% of clients feeling workers have all necessary skills to provide good care.

In addition to questions about home support services, the survey asked clients about their use and awareness of medications. Results show the need for more diligence around understanding why medications are being taken and their side effects. The survey found 80% of clients knew how many medications they were taking, but there was a much lower rate of awareness around why a client is using them (only 59% know why they are taking all medications) and their side effects (only 17% know the side effects for all of their medications).

New Report Highlights Progress in Residential Care

In November, the OSA released a progress report on its April 2015 report, *Placement, Drugs and Therapy... We Can Do Better*. The progress report highlights that some improvements are being made in the provision of rehabilitative therapies to seniors in residential care, as well as the use of antipsychotic medications; however, the use of these drugs remains high compared to other provinces. Data also show that premature placement of seniors into residential care is declining. The progress report uses health assessment data for 27,000 seniors in residential care for 2015/16. The data show the following changes since 2013/14:

- ◆ A decrease of 9.6% in potentially inappropriate admission to residential care
- ◆ An increase of 7.8% in the percentage of residential clients receiving physiotherapy
- ◆ An increase of 10.6% in the percentage of residential clients receiving recreational therapy
- ◆ A decrease of 16.9% in the percentage of residential clients receiving occupational therapy
- ◆ No change in the percentage of residential clients receiving speech therapy
- ◆ A decrease of 14.2% in the potentially inappropriate use of antipsychotic drugs

Standing up to Ageism

In honour of the International Day of the Older Person, Oct. 1, the Advocate drew attention to ageism, which is described as the most entrenched form of discrimination worldwide. Read the Advocate's op-ed here: www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/osa-reports/opinion-piece-ageism-think-youre-not-prejudiced-when-it-comes-to-seniors-think-again/

Coming Up From the OSA

- ◆ HandyDART survey results
- ◆ Second edition of Monitoring Seniors' Services report
- ◆ Update of OSA Residential Care Quick Facts Directory
- ◆ BC Home Support Review