

Office of the Seniors Advocate Monthly Update - June 2021

What's Happening in June

[ALS Awareness Month](#)

[Stroke Awareness Month](#)

[Intergenerational Day](#) (June 1)

[National Health and Fitness Day](#) (June 5)

[Seniors' Week](#) (June 6-12)

[World Food Safety Day](#) (June 7)

[World Elder Abuse Awareness Day](#) (June 15)

[National Indigenous Peoples Day](#) (June 21)

COVID-19

COVID-19 Vaccinations

Everyone in B.C. must register for the COVID-19 vaccine using the [Get Vaccinated provincial registration system](#), or by calling the provincial phone line at 1-833-838-2323. All people born in 2009 or earlier (12+) are now eligible to get their first dose. If you booked your first vaccine by phone or through a pharmacy, you must still register online to receive your second dose.

B.C. is accelerating second dose appointments for all eligible people due to increased vaccine supplies. Invitations for the second dose will be sent according to the date of your first vaccine.

[Learn More](#)

COVID-19 Update

In B.C. the third wave of COVID-19 pandemic peaked in early April 2021 with new cases averaging over 1,000 per day but case counts and hospitalizations have been steadily declining since then with the seven day average falling below 300 cases by May 27, 2021. On May 25, the province launched a four-step plan to carefully bring people back together. Progression through this plan will depend on the number of adults vaccinated, COVID-19 cases counts, hospitalizations and deaths, and the number of clusters and outbreaks.

[Learn More](#)

Provincial News

Statements from the Provincial Health Officer and Minister of Health

The Provincial Health Officer and the Minister of Health release regular statements that can be accessed on the [BC Government News](#) website.

United Way Healthy Aging connecting seniors through new digital project

(Delta Optimist)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many turned to technology to stay connected. The use of digital devices has grown significantly among seniors, but the need for education and technology resources remains. The United Way Healthy Aging has launched a year-long project to address this gap.

[Learn More](#)

B.C. ombudsperson urges caution if governments adopt COVID-19 vaccine passports

(CBC)

Vaccination certification programs are being explored in B.C. but the BC Ombudsman cautions that the use of vaccine passports may have unfair and unjust consequences. Dr. Bonnie Henry said that such programs may be necessary for international travel but does not recommend their use for services within B.C.

[Learn More](#)

Recent Announcements from the B.C. Government Impacting Seniors

- May 31, 2021 [Affordable rental building opening in Nelson](#)
- May 28, 2021 [Affordable homes open for families, seniors in Trail](#)
- May 28, 2021 [New homes for seniors coming to Vernon](#)
- May 25, 2021 [B.C. launches restart plan to safely bring people back together](#)
- May 20, 2021 [Poverty reduction grants addressing local needs in Kamloops](#)
- May 20, 2021 [Poverty reduction grants addressing local needs in the Lower Mainland](#)
- May 20, 2021 [Poverty reduction grants addressing local needs in northern communities](#)
- May 20, 2021 [Poverty reduction grants addressing local needs in Cariboo](#)
- May 19, 2021 [New supportive homes open in Dawson Creek](#)
- May 17, 2021 [New affordable homes open for Mission seniors](#)
- May 14, 2021 [Bridging to retirement 1,000+ forestry workers](#)

- May 14, 2021 [Abbotsford Regional Hospital improvements nearing completion](#)
- May 14, 2021 [Emergency preparedness funding benefits B.C. communities](#)
- May 13, 2021 [Province partners with northern communities to strengthen services for people](#)
- May 11, 2021 [State of emergency extended to continue B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#)
- May 10, 2021 [Minister's statement on National Nursing Week](#)
- May 7, 2021 [Funding helps people facing food insecurity](#)
- May 5, 2021 [Cellular investments continue for B.C. highways](#)
- May 4, 2021 [Transforming primary care in the North with new virtual clinic](#)
- May 4, 2021 [Langley Memorial Hospital new emergency department opens](#)
- May 4, 2021 [New affordable homes on the way for Merritt seniors](#)
- May 4, 2021 [Internet speeds get a boost in Clinton](#)
- May 3, 2021 [More cellular service for B.C. highways](#)

National News

Statements from the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada

The Chief Public Health Officer of Canada releases regular statements that can be accessed on the [Government of Canada News](#) website.

Canadian Health Information Podcast (CIHI)

The Canadian Institute for Health Information has launched a podcast where they explore Canadian health topics and trends, bringing the stories of the people who work to keep Canadians healthy. The first episode, published on May 11, focusses on the impact that COVID-19 has had on Canada's long-term care sector and features Dr. Samir Sinha from Mount Sinai Hospital.

[Learn More](#)

Recent Announcements from the Federal Government Impacting Seniors

- May 31, 2021 [Federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for seniors release report on older workers](#)
- May 26, 2021 [Government of Canada works with communities and organizations to support food security for Indigenous Peoples during COVID-19](#)
- May 21, 2021 [Government of Canada extends quarantine measures and travel restrictions](#)

- May 14, 2021 [Ministers of Indigenous Services, Crown-Indigenous Relations, and Northern Affairs Celebrate National Nursing Week and Indigenous Nursing Day](#)
- May 12, 2021 [Government of Canada provides more support to CAN Health Network](#)
- May 11, 2021 [Message from the Minister of Health – National Nursing Week](#)
- May 11, 2021 [Aiding hearing loss with new diagnostic solutions](#)
- May 10, 2021 [Employing technology for long-term care](#)
- May 5, 2021 [Three good reasons to file your tax return – even though the deadline has already passed](#)
- May 4, 2021 [Coverage of oncology medicines well aligned across Canadian provinces, but sources of funding differ](#)
- May 3, 2021 [Minister Murray highlights investments to support seniors in Budget 2021](#)
- May 3, 2021 [Backgrounder: Increased costs for older seniors](#)
- May 3, 2021 [Message from the Minister of Health on Mental Health Week](#)
- May 3, 2021 [Minister of Veterans Affairs marks Mental Health Week](#)

Seeking Your Opinion

Long-Term Care and Assisted Living COVID-19 Staff Survey

The B.C. Seniors Advocate is reviewing COVID-19 Outbreaks in Long Term Care and Assisted Living and she needs to hear from front line staff. A province wide survey open to all staff who work in LTC/AL has been launched and we encourage all members to participate. Contact your facility for the survey access code for your site and the link to the survey or contact the Office of the Seniors Advocate directly at 1-877-952-3181 to obtain this information. Your voice is critical to understanding how we can make LTC/AL better for the people who live and work there. Insights from the front lines are critical to shape a better future.

[Learn More](#)

Developing a New National Long-Term Care Services Standard

The Standards Council of Canada (SCC), Health Standards Organization (HSO), and Canadian Standards Association (CSA Group) are collaborating to develop two new complementary National Standards for Long-Term Care that will be shaped by the needs of residents, families, and Canada's LTC workforce. The public is being asked to provide input on what matters most to you to help shape the future of long-term care in Canada.

[Learn More](#)

Social Decision-Making in the Pandemic Across Adulthood

Researchers with the Cognitive Aging Lab at Simon Fraser University are interested in understanding older adults' mental wellbeing, mental abilities, and fears during the coronavirus-19 pandemic. They wish to understand how these factors affect older adults' decision-making abilities and increase their risk for falling for coronavirus-19 scams. They are looking for volunteers aged 60 years or older, to participate in several online questionnaires.

[Learn More](#)

From Hospital to Home for Persons Living with Dementia

Researchers with the Institute of Health Policy Management and Evaluation at the University of Toronto are interested in understanding the experiences of older adults living with dementia, or caregivers of a person living with dementia, during their transition from hospital to home. They are looking for people over the age of 65 living with dementia who have experienced a hospital transition back into the community to participate in a one-time interview to share their story.

[Learn More](#)

Recent Research

Older adults experience of the COVID-19 pandemic: a mixed-methods analysis of stresses and joys

This study explores older adults' reports about what they found stressful during the pandemic and what brought them joy and comfort amid the stress. The results, released in *The Gerontologist*, found that the most reported factors of stress were confinement/restrictions, concern for others, and isolation/loneliness; the most reported sources of joy and comfort were family and friendship, digital social contact, and hobbies.

[Learn More](#)

Risk factors for outbreaks of SARS-CoV-1 infection at retirement homes in Ontario, Canada: a population-level cohort study

This study examines the relationship between the home and community care characteristics in Ontario assisted living homes and the risk of outbreak of SAR-CoV-2 infection. The results, released in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal (CMAJ)*, found that the risk increased in homes that had a large resident capacity, were co-located with a long-term care home, were part of a larger chain of care homes, offered many onsite services, saw increased regional incidence of SARS-CoV-2 infection, and were located in a regions with a higher community-level ethnic concentration.

[Learn More](#)

Investigations of a severe SARS-CoV-2 outbreak in a long-term care home early in the pandemic

This study describes the factors associated with the severity of a SARS-CoV-2 outbreak in a long-term care home in Ontario, and the impact of infection control measures over the course of the pandemic. The results, released in the Canadian Medical Association Journal (CMAJ), found that while the initial infection rate among residents and staff, and the fatality rate among residents was high, progressive implementation of outbreak management measures prevented further infections among new staff.

[Learn More](#)

A double burden of exclusion? Digital and social exclusion of older adults in times of COVID-19

Older adults, many of whom are in long-term care, struggle with a double burden of exclusion: exclusion from society by physical social distancing, and exclusion from digital services, either by choice or inexperience. This paper, released in The Journals of Gerontology, discusses the potential outcomes of these exclusions and provides recommendations for rectifying the situation.

[Learn More](#)

Stroke admissions, emergency department visits, and prevention clinic referrals

This study assesses the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on visits to the emergency department due to stroke, stroke unit admissions and referrals to the stroke prevention clinics at London's regional stroke centre in Ontario. The findings, released in the Canadian Journal of Neurological Sciences, suggest that the decrease in emergency visits due to stroke was mainly driven by patient fear of SARS-CoV-2 exposure and the reduction in clinic referrals was largely due to hospital policies and government lockdown.

[Learn More](#)

Developer/adapter method: a community-based approach to improve health in Indigenous communities

This research identifies community solutions and knowledge to develop interventions to better support older indigenous persons to age in place and be able to remain independent in the community with access to relevant care. This paper, released in the International Journal of Indigenous Health, describes an approach that allows a self-determining voice for Indigenous peoples and allow them to work collaboratively to develop wholistic care interventions.

[Learn More](#)

Intergenerational housing as a model for improving older-adult health

The living situation of older adults is linked with the risk of loneliness and social isolation based on their living situation. This paper, released in the BC Medical Journal, discusses intergenerational housing projects where older adults live in communities that promote ties with younger generations providing benefits for all involved.

[Learn More](#)

Family and Friend Caregivers on the Front Lines

There are over one million family and friend caregivers in British Columbia. The survey done by the Family Caregivers of British Columbia in December 2020 highlights the essential role that these caregivers play in our healthcare system and understand how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected them.

[Learn More](#)

Rising to the Challenge: How BC's Community-Based Seniors' Service Agencies Stepped up During COVID-19

This report, released by the United Way in the Lower Mainland, studies the effectiveness and responsiveness of the Community-Based Seniors' Service sector in addressing the needs of vulnerable seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results clearly showed that this sector has the ability to connect with seniors and meet their needs, but they have several recommendations in preparing for the future.

[Learn More](#)

Outreach by the OSA

The Seniors Advocate continues to meet with seniors across the province by attending events and delivering presentations virtually. If you would like to invite the Seniors Advocate to present at your event, please contact our office at info@seniorsadvocatebc.ca.

You are receiving this email because you are on our mailing list to receive updates and other occasional correspondence from our office. You can [subscribe](#) or [unsubscribe](#) to this mailing list.

Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) or visit the [OSA website](#).