

## Office of the Seniors Advocate Monthly Update - February 2022

### What's Happening in February

[Heart Month](#)

[Recreational Therapy Month](#)

[World Cancer Day](#) (February 4)

### Activities of the Office of the Seniors Advocate

#### **Monitoring Seniors Services 2021 Report**

The Office of the Seniors Advocate will release the Monitoring Seniors Services 2021 Report on February 16, 2022. This annual report focuses on key services in the province that fall under the Advocate's legislated mandate. It highlights where seniors' needs are being met and where improvements are most needed.

[Learn More](#)

#### **Home Support Survey**

The Office of the Seniors Advocate has launched a province-wide survey of Home Support clients and their family caregivers. All recipients of Home Support should now have received a survey package in the mail. Family caregivers have been invited to provide feedback in an online survey. For questions or concerns, please contact our office at 1-877-952-3181.

**Survey Deadline Extended to March 4, 2022.**

[Learn More](#)

#### **Income and Affordability Survey for Seniors**

The Office of the Seniors Advocate is undertaking a survey of B.C. seniors living on low incomes. This initiative aims to identify the challenges faced by seniors with limited incomes and determine if the financial supports available to them meet their needs. The survey has been sent out by mail to randomly selected recipients of the B.C. Senior's Supplement program.

[Learn More](#)

## COVID-19

### COVID-19 Vaccinations

Please register for your COVID-19 booster shot now. The booster effectively strengthens and extends our protection from serious illness. To register, visit the [Get Vaccinated](#) website. Having the BC Vaccine Card/passport does not mean you are registered with the *Get Vaccinated System*. The *Get Vaccinated* phone centre is open seven days a week, 7 am to 7 pm. To ask questions and verify your registration please call **1-833-838-2323**.

Proof of full vaccination is required to access some events, services, and business in British Columbia. This requirement applies to all people born in 2009 or earlier (12+).

[Learn More](#)

### COVID-19 Restrictions

A number of public health restrictions are currently in place, limiting indoor personal gatherings, planned gatherings, and events.

[Learn More](#)

### Long-Term Care Update

Visitor restrictions in B.C. long-term care homes have now eased to permit visits from both essential and designated visitors, including during outbreaks.

[Learn More](#)

As of February 2, 2022, there are 46 active outbreaks in long-term care (LTC) and assisted living (AL) facilities.

[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.

### B.C. long-term care residents are entitled to a designated visitor: Seniors Advocate

(Vancouver Sun)

Isobel Mackenzie says in a news release that the need to limit visitors has left a majority of long-term care residents without visits from loved ones.

[Learn More](#)

## **Isobel Mackenzie: We need to get rapid tests for COVID out to B.C. seniors**

(Vancouver Sun)

Opinion: For long-term care, everyone entering who have personal contact with residents needs to be tested that day. Everyone means visitors and staff.

[Learn More](#)

## **Recent Announcements from the B.C. Government Impacting Seniors**

- Jan 5, 2022 [Home Owner Grant helps people with property taxes](#)
- Jan 12, 2022 [BC Senior's Guide now available in Tagalog, Hindi](#)
- Jan 21, 2022 [More than 100 new homes open for seniors, families in Kamloops](#)
- Jan 23, 2022 [Alzheimer awareness throughout B.C.](#)
- Jan 25, 2022 [B.C. vaccine card extended](#)
- Jan 26, 2022 [New affordable homes underway for seniors in Comox](#)
- Jan 27, 2022 [Province extends free, affordable community counselling services](#)

## **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.

### **Recent Announcements from the Federal Government Impacting Seniors**

- Jan 14, 2022 [Government of Canada improves digital access to mental health and substance use resources during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)
- Jan 19, 2022 [Government of Canada makes significant investment in research to transform public health for Canadians](#)
- Jan 19, 2022 [Statement from the Minister of Health on Alzheimer's Awareness Month](#)

## **Seeking Your Opinion**

### **BC PharmaCare: Your Voice**

PharmaCare regularly reviews drugs to decide if they should provide coverage for people enrolled in PharmaCare plans. PharmaCare considers the drug's safety, how well it works and how expensive it is, among other factors. Patients, caregivers and patient groups can share their experience and opinions with the Ministry of Health by completing a Your Voice survey.

[Learn More](#)

## **Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s Long-Term Care Survey**

Do you have a family member living in long-term care or assisted living? The Alzheimer Society of B.C. wants to hear about your experiences with the current visitation restrictions. Take a short survey and help advocate for policies that better support people living in care.

[Learn More](#)

## **Senior Peer Counselling of British Columbia**

Community seniors organizations across B.C. are eligible to receive free training for their seniors volunteers. Senior Peer Counselling in B.C. is seeking to help older adults troubled by loneliness, social isolation, depression, and anxiety. After completing a training course, the volunteers will be able to help address seniors' issues in their community through senior peer counselling and friendly visits or phone calls.

[Learn More](#)

## **Recent Research**

### **Antibody Responses 3-5 Months Post-Vaccination with mRNA-1273 or BNT163b2 in Nursing Home Residents**

(Policy Options)

Nursing home residents may not have a robust response to vaccinations. This study examined SARS-CoV-2 antibody levels in nursing home residents 3-5 months after 2 doses to understand immune response to reduce risk for breakthrough infections and if booster doses are warranted

[Learn More](#)

### **Informal Caregivers Provide Considerable Front-Line Support In Residential Care Facilities And Nursing Homes**

(Health Affairs)

This study presents informal care among older adults with functional limitations across all settings, such as community, residential care or nursing home. Evidence suggests caregiver burden does not end when someone transitions to a residential care or nursing home setting, and that recent visitor bans during COVID-19 have highlighted the invisible work caregivers do to support front-line workers.

[Learn More](#)

### **Evaluating the impact of a training program to support transitioning from the hospital to the community for people after stroke: a community case study**

(BMC Health)

This study evaluates the impact of training physiotherapists and fitness instructors to deliver a group-based exercise program that transitions from hospital to community for stroke recovery.

[Learn More](#)

## **Social Engagement and Subjective Well-Being in Older Adults Newly Diagnosed with Cancer**

(International Journal of Social Sciences)

Older adult cancer patients have reported experiencing heightened levels of anxiety, depression, and isolation. This study describes the role of social engagement in influencing older adult cancer patients' subjective well-being.

[Learn More](#)

## **A Systematic review of smartphone and tablet use by older adults with and without cognitive impairment**

(Innovation in Ageing)

This review presents smartphone and tablet use as memory aids by community dwelling older adults with and without cognitive impairment.

[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](mailto:info@seniorsadvocatebc.ca).

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