

Office of the Seniors Advocate Monthly Update - August 2022

What's Happening in August

[National Immunization Awareness Month](#)

[B.C. Day](#) (August 1)

[World Humanitarian Day](#) (August 19)

Activities of the Office of the Seniors Advocate

Seniors Advocate Urges Seniors and Caregivers to Prepare for Rising Temperatures

Heat wave warnings are in effect across the province and rising temperatures may put vulnerable seniors at risk. With higher temperatures expected, it is recommended that seniors take some additional precautions and family, friends and neighbours are encouraged to check in on older people to ensure they are keeping cool and well hydrated.

[Learn More](#)

Training Kicks Off for Volunteer Surveyors

Calling all volunteers! We're surveying every long-term care resident in B.C., and we need your help. Our first volunteer surveyors are now receiving training to interview seniors about the quality of life in their care homes. The survey will be rolled out to nearly 300 B.C. care homes over the coming months and more volunteers are needed from across the province. Join us to help shape the future of seniors in long-term care.

[Learn More](#)

Office of the Seniors Advocate Annual Report 2021/22

The Office of the Seniors Advocate has released its 2021/22 annual report highlighting the Office's activities during the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Learn More](#)

Connecting with Seniors in Northern Vancouver Island

In July, the Seniors Advocate visited several Vancouver Island communities including Port Hardy, Port McNeill and Campbell River to meet with local seniors and stakeholders to learn more about the issues facing older adults in Northern Vancouver Island.

[Learn More](#)

COVID-19

Rapid Antigen Tests

Free COVID-19 rapid antigen tests are now available to people of all ages at B.C. pharmacies. No ID is required. If you are concerned about exposure to COVID-19, please consider asking those you will be in close contact with to take a rapid test before your visit.

[Learn More](#)

COVID-19 Boosters

A second booster, or fourth dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, is now being recommended to seniors 70+ and Indigenous people 55+ in B.C. through the Get Vaccinated System. The Province has also announced that they are planning for the roll-out of a new booster in the fall.

People under 70 are currently advised to wait until the fall to receive their booster, however those who received their last shot six months ago or more can make an appointment.

[Learn More](#)

COVID-19 Restrictions

Most public health restrictions in B.C. have now been lifted, including wearing masks in public indoor settings, capacity restrictions on personal gatherings, events and more. Proof of vaccination is no longer required to access most businesses, events and services.

[Learn More](#)

Long-Term Care Update

Most visiting restrictions have been lifted at long-term care facilities in B.C. and people who meet the visitation requirements are permitted. Visitors must provide proof of vaccination and a negative rapid antigen test, which may be taken at home up to 48 hours before the visit, or on arrival at the facility. Please review each facility's restrictions before your visit.

[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.

Recent Announcements from the B.C. Government Impacting Seniors

- July 8, 2022 [B.C.'s COVID-19 immunization plan continues with fall boosters](#)
- July 11, 2022 [Province finances affordable co-op housing in Burnaby](#)
- July 15, 2022 [Construction starts on 75 new long-term care beds in Nelson](#)
- July 19, 2022 [British Columbia trains, recruits more allied health professionals](#)
- July 19, 2022 [People encouraged to prepare for potential heat warnings](#)
- July 25, 2022 [Municipalities open cooling centres as heat warnings issued throughout B.C.](#)

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

- July 1, 2022 [Canada provides additional support for seniors community centre in South Vancouver](#)
- July 14, 2022 [Remarks from the Deputy Chief Public Health Officer, July 14, 2022](#)
- July 21, 2022 [Increase to the Old Age Security pension for seniors aged 75 years and older begins next week](#)

Current Issues and Resources

PreparedBC's Extreme Heat Preparedness Guide

The Extreme Heat Preparedness Guide is a roadmap to help you, your family, and your community prepare for the next Extreme Heat Emergency in British Columbia.

[Learn More](#)

University of Victoria Study on Climate Change and Aging

UVic is seeking participants age 65+ for a study about age and climate change. Volunteers will be asked to respond to an online survey from the comfort of their own homes. Participation is free and anonymous.

[Learn More](#)

Webinar: Preventing Injuries and Deaths During Extreme Heat Events

This webinar reviews the effects of the 2021 heat dome in BC and examines how individuals and communities can mobilize to improve our preparedness to respond and adapt to extreme heat events and protect those most susceptible during extreme hot weather.

[Learn More](#)

Guide to Health Checks During Extreme Heat Events

During extreme heat events it is crucial to check in regularly with the vulnerable seniors in your life. The National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health has released a practical guide with key tips for doing in-person or remote health checks to assess people for heat-related illness.

[Learn More](#)

Recent Research

Learnings from the Pandemic to Rebuild Long Term Care

(University of British Columbia, Health Research BC, et al)

The long-term care (LTC) sector was the epicenter of COVID-19, accounting for 85% of COVID-19 mortalities nationally during the first wave of the pandemic. To slow the spread of the virus in this sector, the Public Health Agency of Canada developed a series of rapid redesign and redeployment practices, also known as pandemic management strategies, for implementation in the LTC sector.

[Learn More](#)

Violence against seniors and their perceptions of safety in Canada

(Statistics Canada)

This article relies on multiple data sources to examine the nature and prevalence of violent victimization of seniors. In addition, the article presents the various factors associated with perceptions of crime and safety among seniors. Self-reported data from the 2019 General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) are presented first, detailing seniors' experiences of violent victimization and their perceptions of safety.

[Learn More](#)

Detecting Anxiety in Long-Term Care Residents: A Systematic Review

(Cambridge University Press)

Anxiety is common in long-term care (LTC), but it is unclear which anxiety detection tools are accurate when compared to a reference standard for residents of LTC. Four databases and grey literature sources were searched using the search concepts "anxiety" and "LTC".

[Learn More](#)

Enabling Healthy Aging to AVOID Frailty in Community Dwelling Older Canadians

(Canadian Geriatrics Journal)

The Canadian population is aging. With aging, biological and social changes occur increasing the risk of developing chronic conditions and functional loss leading to frailty. Older adults living with frailty are more vulnerable to minor stressors, take longer to recover from illness, and have difficulty participating in daily activities.

[Learn More](#)

Outreach by the OSA

Seniors Advocate Isobel Mackenzie continues to meet with seniors across the province, attend events and deliver presentations both in person and virtually. If you would like to invite her to present at your event, please contact our office at info@seniorsadvocatebc.ca.

The Office of the Seniors Advocate has an information and referral line that is available 24 hours a day, every day. Our senior service specialists will work with you during our office hours to provide resources and help resolve issues. Staff at BC211 will assist after hours.

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