

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

### What's Happening in October

[Occupational Therapy Month](#)

[International Day of Older Persons](#) (October 1)

[Make-A-Will Week](#) (October 2 - 8)

[World Mental Health Day](#) (October 10)

[Canadian Patient Safety Week](#) (October 24 - 28)

### Activities of the Office of the Seniors Advocate

#### **Report Release – BC Seniors: Falling Further Behind**

In September, the Seniors Advocate released OSA's latest report "BC Seniors: Falling Further Behind" on the income and affordability challenges of B.C. seniors. The report highlights the impact of rising costs on seniors who depend on government pensions and ranks B.C. as the lowest in its financial support for seniors compared to other provinces and territories.

[Learn More](#)

#### **Seniors Advocate Statement on the International Day of Older Persons 2022**

October 1 is the International Day of Older Persons 2022 and an excellent opportunity to recognize the valuable contributions seniors make every day in communities throughout British Columbia.

[Learn More](#)

#### **Meeting of the OSA Council of Advisors**

The OSA Council of Advisors (COA) came together in-person last month for the first time in nearly three years. The Minister of Health and Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors Services and Long-term Care joined us to honour outgoing COA members Bill Routley, Diane Jeffries and Margaret Monro. We wish them well and thank them for their many contributions to OSA.

[Learn More](#)

## **Seniors Advocate at the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Convention**

The Seniors Advocate hosted a workshop and panel discussion on the role of local government in supporting seniors at the 2022 UBCM Convention. The panel discussed innovative projects that exemplify ways that municipalities can leverage provincial investments for the benefit of seniors. She also held meetings with a number of municipal stakeholders on issues related to seniors.

[Learn More](#)

## **Long-Term Care Volunteer Surveyors Share Their Experiences**

Dedicated volunteers from diverse backgrounds are joining the survey team to listen to the experiences of older adults living in long-term care and learn about their quality of life. Some volunteer surveyors are fluent in other languages and invite residents to participate in the survey in their preferred language. Read about one volunteer surveyor who connected with residents while conducting interviews in Mandarin.

[Learn More](#)

## **COVID-19**

### **Rapid Antigen Tests**

Free COVID-19 rapid antigen tests are 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**

The Province is now rolling out its new COVID-19 fall booster campaign. Everyone 5 years and older is encouraged to get a fall booster at a 6-month interval from their last dose. Adults 18+ and high-risk youth aged 12-17 will be eligible to receive a new bivalent vaccine. Vaccination invitations will go out through the Province's Get Vaccinated System.

[Learn More](#)

### **COVID-19 Restrictions**

Most public health restrictions in B.C. remain 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.

COMMENT - PROVINCIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS - enter date, URL and title for each announcement into the table below -->

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

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| September 6, 2022  | <a href="#">Fall booster doses, bivalent vaccine available soon</a>                                 |
| September 7, 2022  | <a href="#">More support to help people with rising cost of living</a>                              |
| September 8, 2022  | <a href="#">Premier's statement on death of Queen Elizabeth II</a>                                  |
| September 14, 2022 | <a href="#">Communities benefit from new heat preparedness funding</a>                              |
| September 15, 2022 | <a href="#">COVID-19 vaccination requirements for health-care system workers remain in place</a>    |
| September 21, 2022 | <a href="#">New homes for displaced seniors underway in Princeton</a>                               |
| September 28, 2022 | <a href="#">Province prepares for fall respiratory viruses, encourages people to get vaccinated</a> |
| September 29, 2022 | <a href="#">New health workforce strategy improves access to health care, puts people first</a>     |
| September 30, 2022 | <a href="#">Joint statement on Orange Shirt Day and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation</a>   |

## 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

- September 21, 2022 [Government of Canada launches call for proposals for community projects to support seniors](#)
- September 26, 2022 [Government of Canada to remove COVID-19 border and travel measures effective October 1](#)
- September 30, 2022 [Statement on National Day for Truth and Reconciliation](#)
- October 1, 2022 [Minister Kamal Khera and Minister Jean-Yves Duclos celebrate National Seniors Day](#)

## Current Issues and Resources

### Kootenay Seniors Fair 2022

OSA staff will be present at the Kootenay Seniors Fair in Nelson this month. The team will be handing out BC Seniors' Guides and information about the Office of the Seniors Advocate. Drop by to say hello and learn more about our office on October 28th from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. at the Prestige Lakeside Resort.

[Learn More](#)

### Seniors First BC Make-A-Will Week Events

Seniors First BC is hosting free in-person clinics and virtual information sessions on advanced planning for Make-a-Will Week. Sessions will cover topics like wills, powers of attorney and representation agreements.

[Learn More](#)

### Scam Alert for Seniors

Vancouver Police are reporting a rise in the “Grandparent” scam targeting seniors in the Lower Mainland. An increasing number of seniors are receiving calls from suspects who pretend to be law enforcement agents demanding bail money or emergency funds for the senior's grandchild or other loved one. Please be vigilant and find out what you can do if you or a loved one are contacted by a fraudster.

[Learn More](#)

### Seniors' Health and Wellness Institute Workshops

The Seniors' Health and Wellness Institute (COSCO) is offering free 60–90-minute workshops to seniors' groups across the province. More than 40 workshops are available on topics ranging from age-friendly communities to fraud and scam prevention. Sessions are available in-person or virtually and are led by trained volunteers who are also seniors.

[Learn More](#)

## Recent Research

### **Navigating the Path Forward for Dementia in Canada**

(Alzheimer Society of Canada)

In Canada, over 600,000 people from British Columbia to Nunavut to Newfoundland and Labrador are living with dementia. People who live with Alzheimer's dementia\*, vascular dementia, and other forms of dementia (including young-onset dementia) and their family and friends are all deeply affected by the cognitive decline, memory loss, changes in mood and behaviour, and loss of functional abilities that can occur.

[Learn More](#)

### **Impacts of COVID-19 on Canadian nursing homes and seniors' homes in 2021**

(Statistics Canada)

The second year of the COVID-19 pandemic (2021) was marked with a very broad range of health events and policies. These included the widespread roll-out of vaccinations, the introduction of vaccine requirements, as well as the arrival of Delta and Omicron variants of COVID-19 which had increased transmissibility and the potential to evade COVID-19 vaccines (Andrews et al., 2022; Buchan et al., 2022; Government of Canada, 2021; Public Health Agency of Canada [PHAC], 2022).

[Learn More](#)

### **Compendium of Good Practices for Improving Seniors Mental Health in Canada**

(Mental Health Commission of Canada)

In 2011, the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) published Guidelines for Comprehensive Mental Health Services for Older Adults in Canada (Guidelines). Since then, the Guidelines has become the gold standard for meeting the rapidly growing demand for geriatric mental health services, being used by mental health services planners and providers across the country (Wilson & Stinchcombe, 2017). The document emphasizes prevention, early intervention, and collaboration while underscoring how an effective and efficient coordination of primary care and specialized health services can help people get the care and services they need

[Learn More](#)

### **Is the mental health of older adults receiving care from their children related to their children's dual burden of caregiving and work stress? A linked lives perspective**

(Aging and Mental Health)

Mental health problems are a major concern in the older population in Sweden, as is the growing number of older adults aging alone in their homes and in need of informal care. Using a linked lives perspective, this study explored if older

[Learn More](#)

## Outreach by the OSA

The Seniors Advocate continues to meet with seniors across the province by attending events and delivering presentations, both in person and 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).

The Office of the Seniors Advocate has an information and referral line that is available 24 hours a day, every day at **1-877-952-3181** (toll free). 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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