

Office of the Seniors Advocate Monthly Update - February 2024

Activities of the Office of the Seniors Advocate

Province Names New Seniors Advocate

The Office of the Seniors Advocate is pleased to share that the Province has appointed Dan Levitt as the new seniors advocate for British Columbia to support oversight and advocacy toward seniors care and the programs and services seniors need.

[Learn More](#)

OSA Council of Advisors Winter Meeting

The OSA Council of Advisors met in Vancouver this week to share ideas and discuss emerging seniors' issues in their communities. This meeting focused on the many challenges facing seniors living in rural and remote areas. A special thanks to our speakers Gloria Gutman, Professor Emerita of the Department of Gerontology Research Centre of Simon Fraser University and Paul Adams, Executive Director of BC Rural Health Network, as well as Susan Walsh, Seniors' Advocate for Newfoundland and Labrador.

[Learn More](#)

Upcoming Release of Report on Rural Issues for B.C. Seniors

Later this month, the Seniors Advocate will release a new report on the experiences and challenges specific to B.C. seniors living in rural and remote areas of the province. Stay tuned to our social media feeds and website for more information about the report.

[Learn More](#)

Seniors Advocate Tour of Rural B.C.

The Seniors Advocate will be visiting rural areas of B.C. throughout the month of February to engage with seniors, their loved ones and health care providers to discuss seniors' issues in their communities and share the findings of her upcoming report. Town hall locations include Prince George and Quesnel and several communities in the West Kootenay region and the west coast of Vancouver Island.

[Learn More](#)

Current Issues and Resources

Canadian Revenue Agency Webinar for Seniors

The filing deadline for 2023 income tax returns for most people is April 30, 2024. On February 14, 2024, the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) is holding a live webinar specifically for people aged 65 and older to help explain tax credits and benefits, pension income splitting, and other CRA services for seniors.

It is more important than ever to file an income tax return, even if you don't owe any money. Your eligibility for many important government supports, such as the new Canadian Dental Plan and Guaranteed Income Supplement, are based on your annual income tax return.

[Learn More](#)

Forward with Dementia: Culturally-Specific Dementia Resources

Free, downloadable resources for people with dementia, care partners and health care providers that have been developed specifically for different cultural communities are now available on the Forward with Dementia website. These new brochures, Q&As and other materials are available in English, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Italian, and Punjabi, with French coming soon.

[Learn More](#)

Free Senior Peer Support Training

The B.C. Jewish Seniors Alliance is offering free training for seniors interested in becoming Senior Peer Support Volunteers. Once training is complete, volunteers offer friendly phone calls and home visits, bereavement support and accompaniment to appointments for other seniors.

[Learn More](#)

Provincial News

Recent Announcements from the B.C. Government Impacting Seniors

- January 31, 2024 [Additional rent-bank funding will benefit more people](#)
- January 30, 2024 [BC Stats report confirms growing population](#)
- January 30, 2024 [Secondary suite program expands, adds housing in 15 regional districts](#)
- January 30, 2024 [State-of-the-art technology enhances cancer diagnostics, research, care](#)

- January 29, 2024 [New affordable homes coming for seniors in Lumby](#)
- January 17, 2024 [Support for local governments to deliver housing for people faster](#)
- January 17, 2024 [Homeowners should prepare for speculation and vacancy tax declarations](#)
- January 11, 2024 [More shelters open, prepare for plummeting temperatures](#)
- January 11, 2024 [Record number of rental homes registered in B.C. in 2023](#)
- January 5, 2024 [Money from Climate Action Tax Credit helps people after the holidays](#)
- January 4, 2024 [Province seeking input on support for evacuees](#)
- January 4, 2024 [New homes open for seniors, people with disabilities in Port Alberni](#)
- January 2, 2024 [Homeowner grant provides property tax relief for people in B.C.](#)

National News

Recent Announcements from the Federal Government Impacting Seniors

- January 31, 2024 [More than 400,000 Canadian seniors have been approved for dental care under the Canadian Dental Care Plan](#)

Recent Research

AgeTech, Ethics and Equity: Cultural Shifts in AgeTech Ethics, Research and Development

Population ageing is a global phenomenon which presents major challenges for the provision of care at home and in the community (ONS, 2018). Challenges include the human and economic costs associated with increasing numbers of older people with poor physical and mental health, loneliness, and isolation challenges (Mihalopoulos et al., 2020). The global ageing population has led to a growth in the development of technology designed to improve the health, well-being, independence, and quality of life of older people across various settings (Fang, 2022).

[Learn More](#)

Perspectives on Growing Older in Canada: The 2023 NIA Ageing in Canada Survey

(National Institute on Ageing)

The 2023 NIA Ageing in Canada Survey report by the NIA, in partnership with the Environics Institute for Survey Research, takes an in-depth look at the perspectives of growing older in Canada using a base sample of 5,875 Canadians. The survey is the largest of its kind in Canada and provides the first follow-up look at the perspectives and experiences of Canadians 50 and older across three key dimensions of ageing well — social well-being, financial security, and health and independence — since its inaugural launch last year.

[Learn More](#)

Landmark Study, Volume 2: The Many Faces of Dementia in Canada

(Alzheimer Society Canada)

Dementia is a major public health problem in Canada and around the world, affecting millions of people. Research indicates significant variations in the risk of development, prevalence, clinical presentation, and health outcomes across various communities in Canada, including differences in ethnicity, race, sex, gender and age.

[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.

Please note that Isobel Mackenzie will retire after March 18, 2024, therefore our office is not accepting invitations for events after this date at this time.

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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