

Office of the Seniors Advocate Monthly Update - March 2024

Activities of the Office of the Seniors Advocate

New Report - Resourceful and Resilient: Challenges Facing B.C.'s Rural Seniors

Isobel Mackenzie released a new report summarizing the disproportionate challenges to healthy aging experienced by seniors living in rural communities. The report looks at the differences between rural and urban seniors' populations and examines a range of services and supports to compare what is available in both rural and urban B.C.

[Learn More](#)

Seniors' Advocate of Newfoundland and Labrador Visits B.C.

The OSA team was pleased to meet Susan Walsh, Seniors Advocate for Newfoundland and Labrador during her visit to B.C. last month. We enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about her office and collaborate on ways to resolve issues that seniors are facing from coast to coast.

[Learn More](#)

Upcoming Release of 2023 Monitoring Seniors Services Report

The OSA will be releasing the ninth edition of the Monitoring Seniors Services Report on March 14, 2024. The report provides an annual check-up on the state of B.C. seniors' services in the key areas of health care, housing, transportation, income supports, community services and safety. Stay tuned to our social media channels and website for information on how to view the livestream of Isobel Mackenzie's presentation of the report's findings.

[Learn More](#)

Current Issues and Resources

Income Tax Tips for Seniors

It's income tax time. This year's tax-filing deadline is April 30, 2024. It's vital to file your taxes on time, even if you don't owe any money. Eligibility for many important federal and provincial supports and benefits, including the new Canada Dental Care Plan, Guaranteed Income Supplement and Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters, is based on your annual income reported in your tax return. Filing on time helps avoid any disruption to your payments and benefits.

[Learn More](#)

Fraud Prevention Month

March is Fraud Prevention Month, and with reported cases of fraud on the rise, all British Columbians are encouraged to increase their awareness of current scams. According to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, more than 62,000 Canadians reported being targeted by fraudsters last year with losses totaling more than \$554 million. Read OSA's roundup of resources on fraud and scam prevention for seniors to learn how to keep yourself and your loved ones safe.

[Learn More](#)

Seeking Participants: University of British Columbia Allies in Health Study

The Health and Adult Development Lab of University of the British Columbia is conducting a study to assess how social support impacts health behaviours and goals of older adults. The study is open to British Columbians aged 60+ with a "study partner", such as a friend, family member or neighbour who regularly provides social support. Participants will be asked to attend two Zoom meetings, complete short questionnaires and wear a physical activity monitor for ten days. Participants will receive personalized health feedback, as well as a gift card or physical activity tracker.

[Learn More](#)

11th Annual Okanagan Embrace Aging Event

Embrace Aging is a month-long series of events to celebrate and raise awareness about healthy aging and ways to enhance quality of life among seniors. The event includes both in-person and virtual sessions on a wide variety of topics of relevance to seniors, from fitness to advance planning.

[Learn More](#)

55+ BC Games Registration Begins March 1st

The 55+ BC Games are the largest annual multi-sport event for older British Columbians. The Games offer an opportunity to participate in a wide variety of sports and activities, from triathlon to cribbage. The 2024 games will be held in Salmon Arm from September 10-14. Participants must be permanent residents of B.C. who are 55 years or older by December 31, 2024. Volunteers of all ages are also needed.

[Learn More](#)

Provincial News

Recent Announcements from the B.C. Government Impacting Seniors

- February 2, 2024 [More primary health-care services coming to North Okanagan, Shuswap](#)
- February 2, 2024 [More long-term care beds opening in Vernon](#)
- February 8, 2024 [New BC Cancer centre in Kamloops moves forward](#)
- February 8, 2024 [More on-reserve housing coming for Snuneymuxw First Nation](#)

- February 9, 2024 [New compensation model connects more people to primary care](#)
- February 9, 2024 [New non-profit network strengthens vital services in B.C.](#)
- February 12, 2024 [Public safety team connects vulnerable people, services in Port Hardy](#)
- February 12, 2024 [New CT scanner brings advanced diagnostics to Squamish](#)
- February 13, 2024 [Van takes Service BC to the people](#)
- February 15, 2024 [Affordable, sustainable homes coming for Vancouver](#)
- February 26, 2024 [Budget measures ensure homes are for people, not speculators](#)

National News

Recent Announcements from the Federal Government Impacting Seniors

- February 8, 2024 [Government of Canada announces the services covered under the Canadian Dental Care Plan](#)
- February 13, 2024 [Building more homes, faster and strengthening health care for rural Canadians](#)
- February 13, 2024 [Government of Canada increases loan forgiveness for doctors and nurses working in under-served rural and remote communities](#)
- February 22, 2024 [Minister O'Regan outlines how the federal government is helping Canadians age with dignity at the CARP Annual General Meeting](#)
- February 29, 2024 [Government of Canada Introduces Legislation for First Phase of National Universal Pharmacare](#)

Recent Research

The little intervention that could: creative aging implies healthy aging among Canadian seniors

(Aging and Mental Health)

Through a process of 'creative ageing', there is increased interest in how active participation in the arts can help promote health and well-being among seniors. However, few studies have quantitatively examined the benefits of a foray into artistic expression, and even fewer employ rigorous identification strategies. Addressing this knowledge gap, we use a series of quantitative techniques to analyze the impact of an arts-based intervention targeting the elderly.

[Learn More](#)

The state of the health workforce in Canada, 2022

(Statistics Canada)

Moving through and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic has been a time of challenge and innovation, particularly in the area of health human resources. Funding increases, pan-Canadian collaboration and changes in health service delivery across the country have set the stage for new conversations about how to move forward. CIHI has compiled the most recent data on selected health professionals — including physicians, regulated nurses, pharmacists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and personal support workers — to illustrate the current state of the health workforce.

[Learn More](#)

A More Supportive Social Environment May Protect Against Nutritional Risk: A Cross-Sectional Analysis Using Data From the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging

(The Journal of Nutrition)

Nutritional risk has been linked to individual social factors, but the relationship with the overall social environment has not been assessed. To evaluate associations between different support profiles of the social environment and nutritional risk using cross-sectional data from the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging. Subgroup analyses were performed among middle-aged and older-aged adults. Consumption of major food groups by social environment profile was a secondary outcome.

[Learn More](#)

Outreach by the OSA

Please note that Isobel Mackenzie will retire after March 18, 2024, therefore our office is not accepting invitations for events after this date. We are accepting invitations for incoming seniors advocate Dan Levitt to attend events starting in late March. If you would like to invite Dan to speak to your organization or attend an event, please email 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. To contact our information and referral line, please call **1-877-952-3181** or email info@seniorsadvocatebc.ca.

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