

Office of the Seniors Advocate Monthly Update - May 2024

Activities of the Office of the Seniors Advocate

May Message from Seniors Advocate Dan Levitt

Last month I mentioned I have been touring the province to meet with seniors and hear their ideas for improving programs and services as well as learning firsthand about the challenges and issues they're facing. I have been to Port Hardy, Dawson Creek, Cranbrook, Abbotsford, Pemberton, Chase, Pender Island and many communities in between.

[Learn More](#)

OSA at South Vancouver Seniors Forum

On May 10, Seniors Advocate Dan Levitt will be speaking at the at the South Vancouver Seniors Forum. OSA will also have a booth where attendees can drop by to meet our team and learn more about our office. Join us at this free event taking place at the Jewish Community Centre from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. To register, contact the South Vancouver Seniors Network at 604 660-8380 or email michael.lee.mla@leg.bc.ca.

[Learn More](#)

Current Issues and Resources

Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) Subsidy Increase

The Province has made improvements to the SAFER program which will help support low-income senior renters. Current recipients will receive a one-time \$430 benefit and an increase in their monthly subsidy. There will also be an increase in the income limit for eligibility so more seniors will be eligible. For more information about the SAFER program, and find out if you are eligible for rental assistance, contact BC Housing toll free at 1-800-257-7756 or visit the [SAFER webpage](#).

Scam Alert - OSA has become aware of scams involving fraudsters contacting seniors via telephone and text message and inviting them to claim their benefit with the purpose of stealing banking and other personal information. Please note that NO ACTION IS REQUIRED for SAFER clients to receive their one-time benefit.

[Learn More](#)

Emergency Preparedness Week Webinar

Are you and your loved ones ready for an emergency such as a flood, wildfire, earthquake or power outage? Emergency Preparedness Week is May 5-11 and a great time to learn more about emergencies, create a plan and build an emergency kit. Get started with a free B.C. government webinar taking place on May 9th at 5:30 p.m. Attendees will be entered to win a 4-person emergency kit.

[Learn More](#)

Caregiver Awareness Month Events

Family Caregivers of BC has compiled a list of free in-person and online events taking place in May to celebrate caregivers and provide them with support, education and resources. OSA staff will be at the Caregiver Wellness Fair in Sidney on May 11th from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Drop by our booth to say hello and learn more about our office.

[Learn More](#)

Property Tax Deferral Applications Opening Soon

British Columbians who own their homes will begin to receive property tax notices this month. If you can't afford to pay your property taxes this year, consider applying for B.C.'s Property Tax Deferment Program. The program allows eligible homeowners 55 and older, surviving spouses and persons with disabilities to defer paying their property taxes and the best time to apply is right after receiving your property tax notice. Remember that you need to renew your application every year to continue with the program.

[Learn More](#)

Provincial News

Recent Announcements from the B.C. Government Impacting Seniors

- April 30, 2024 [Affordable, accessible homes coming for seniors in Elkford](#)
- April 22, 2024 [Minister's statement on National Immunization Awareness Week](#)
- April 16, 2024 [Parliamentary secretary's statement on Advance Care Planning Day](#)
- April 12, 2024 [Hospital-level care at home launches in Lower Mainland](#)
- April 12, 2024 [Expanded adult day program supports Surrey seniors](#)
- April 11, 2024 [Province takes more actions to strengthen primary care for people](#)
- April 9, 2024 [SAFER improved, top-up benefit coming for people on rental assistance](#)
- April 8, 2024 [Launch of spring COVID-19 vaccine boosters marks end of respiratory illness season](#)
- April 4, 2024 [Climate action tax credit helps people with everyday costs](#)

- April 3, 2024 [Flipping tax means more homes for families, not speculators](#)
- April 2, 2024 [More protections for renters, parents, landlords, families](#)
- April 2, 2024 [Parliamentary Secretary's statement on National Caregiver Day](#)
- April 1, 2024 [Saving people money on their energy bills](#)

National News

Recent Announcements from the Federal Government Impacting Seniors

- April 16, 2024 [Budget 2024: Fairness for every generation](#)
- May 1, 2024 [1 million seniors can now access services under the Canadian Dental Care Plan](#)
- May 1, 2023 [Message from the Minister of Health and the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health on National Physicians' Day](#)

Recent Research

Mapping the Caregiver Experience in a Canadian Province: Research Methodology for the Saskatchewan Caregiver Experience Study

(Canadian Journal of Nursing Research)

Policies and services for older adults are increasingly focused on living in the community, rather than relying on institutions. A total of 70–80% of community care for older adults is provided by family and friend caregivers. With Canada's aging population, the number of caregivers to older adults is growing. The purpose of this paper is to describe the research methodology that was employed in the Saskatchewan Caregiver Experience Study to map their experiences and identify their priority support needs.

[Learn More](#)

Caring in Canada Survey insights from caregivers and care providers across Canada

(Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence)

Canada is facing a caregiving crisis that will only get worse without real action. A perfect storm is brewing: demand for care is growing, caregivers are aging, the number of available caregivers is shrinking, and care needs are becoming more complex due to our aging population and rising rates of disability and mental health conditions.

[Learn More](#)

7 Steps Toward Better CPP/QPP Claiming Decisions: Shifting the Paradigm on how we help Canadians

(National Institute on Ageing)

When to claim benefits from the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) — or its Quebec counterpart, the Quebec Pension Plan (QPP) — is one of the most important retirement financial decisions Canadians will make. This 8-part series aims to shift the paradigm toward more informed decision-making. Its purpose is simple: to propose new ways to help Canadians understand and benefit from the value of delaying CPP/QPP benefits.

[Learn More](#)

Outreach by the OSA

If you would like to invite BC Seniors Advocate Dan Levitt 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.

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