

## Office of the Seniors Advocate Monthly Update - July 2024

### Activities of the Office of the Seniors Advocate

#### **New Report – Ageing Matters: Listening to B.C. Seniors**

This new report reaffirms B.C. seniors on fixed incomes are disproportionately impacted by the high cost of living and unable to absorb increased costs for housing, food, medical equipment, mobility aids and other necessities for healthy ageing. The report is based on the issues raised to new Seniors Advocate Dan Levitt during his 'listening tour' in April 2024, travelling throughout the province to meet with seniors in both rural and urban communities and hear their concerns.

[Learn More](#)

#### **B.C. Seniors Advocate and Crime Stoppers Say Reporting Elder Abuse is Essential – And can be done anonymously**

Abuse of elderly people is one of the most underreported crimes in Canada, and the World Health Organization has estimated one in every six seniors over the age of 60 experiences abuse or neglect. June 15th is Elder Abuse Awareness Day in B.C. and around the globe, and it serves as a reminder for all of us to be vigilant.

[Learn More](#)

#### **Report on Seniors Independent Living to be Released this Month**

The Seniors Advocate will be releasing a new report this week on tenancy and cost protection for seniors living in retirement homes. The media presentation will be livestreamed on the [OSA Youtube Channel](#) when the report is released. Stay tuned to our social media channels for more information.

[Learn More](#)

#### **July Message from the Seniors Advocate**

Last month I had the privilege of celebrating my first BC Seniors' Week as the Seniors Advocate. I attended several amazing events in the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island and Northern B.C. and was heartened to see the ways that people came together to honour the seniors who are the backbone of their communities.

[Learn More](#)

## Current Issues and Resources

### **Stay Cool this Summer: Apply for a Free Air Conditioner**

If your household meets the income requirements for the BC Hydro Energy Conservation Assistance Program, you may be eligible to receive a free portable AC unit and one-time installation. People who have received a recommendation letter from their regional health authority's Home Care Program are also eligible, no matter their income. Read the full eligibility and learn how to apply on the BC Hydro website.

[Learn More](#)

### **Raise Your Voice: Long-Term Care Resident and Family Councils Video**

What's a resident and family council and why should you be part of one? In this video by the Independent Long-Term Care Councils Association of BC and UBC School of Nursing, long-term care home residents, family members, operators and researchers share insights on how a council works and impacts quality of life of long-term care residents.

[Learn More](#)

### **National Injury Prevention Day**

July 5 is Injury Prevention Day in Canada and a reminder that falls are the one of the most common preventable injuries for older people. In fact, they are the leading cause of injury-related hospitalizations among people aged 65 or older. Seniors can reduce their risk of falls by increasing their strength and balance, having an annual medication review and vision assessment, and removing home hazards. Assess your fall risk and learn about proactive ways to prevent them on the BC Finding Balance website.

[Learn More](#)

### **Plan, Prepare and Stay Informed in Case of Wildfires**

The chance of wildfires has increased in recent years, due in part to hotter and drier summer conditions caused by climate change. Seniors can be particularly vulnerable to health risks of smoke and poor air quality and may need increased assistance if required to evacuate. Find resources including the comprehensive Wildfire Preparedness Guide to make a plan to keep yourself and loved ones safe.

[Learn More](#)

## Provincial News

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

June 18, 2024 [New affordable rental homes coming for seniors, families in Surrey](#)

June 12, 2024 [B.C. takes action ahead of summer wildfire season](#)

June 7, 2024 [More than 70 affordable units opening in Tofino](#)

- June 7, 2024 [New air ambulances are taking flight in B.C.](#)
- June 6, 2024 [Eighty new homes coming for seniors, families in Kamloops](#)
- June 3, 2024 [Parliamentary secretary's statement on B.C. Seniors' Week](#)
- June 3, 2024 [70 shelter spaces, supportive homes coming for seniors in Cranbrook](#)

## National News

### Recent Announcements from the Federal Government Impacting Seniors

- June 25, 2024 [National Seniors Council Report Recommends How Federal Government Can Further Support Canadians Aging at Home](#)
- June 21, 2024 [Government of Canada invests in initiatives that encourage healthy eating](#)
- June 19, 2024 [Minister O'Regan and Minister Holland announce the appointment of National Seniors Council member as Chairperson](#)
- June 15, 2024 [Ministers O'Regan and Saks mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day](#)

## Recent Research

### UBC Nursing researchers highlight resident and family councils' impact on long-term care

(University of British Columbia School of Nursing)

Two new studies from UBC's School of Nursing are examining how resident and family councils enhance the experience of long-term care (LTC) home residents. Backed by the BC Ministry of Health's residential care regulations, these councils are designed to represent LTC residents' collective interests, giving them a voice in how their home is run.

[Learn More](#)

### Disaster Awareness and Preparedness Among Older Adults in Canada Regarding Floods, Wildfires, and Earthquakes

(International Journal of Disaster Risk Science)

Older adults are significantly impacted by natural hazards and disasters that are exacerbated by climate change. Understanding their awareness and preparedness is essential for enhancing disaster resilience. This study investigated the attitudes, actions, and recommendations of older adults regarding natural hazards that pose risks in their geographic area—specifically floods, wildfires, and/or earthquakes in Canada.

[Learn More](#)

## **Final report of the Expert Panel: Supporting Canadians aging at home: Ensuring quality of life as we age**

(Government of Canada)

This new report from the National Seniors Council provides insights into the services, supports, strategies, and solutions that enable Canadian seniors to age at home on their terms and in good health. It highlights three priority areas for action including additional financial benefits for low-income seniors, reinforced community-based support and services, and new initiatives to promote and help plan for aging, retirement, and life in later years.

[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](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. 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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