

Office of the Seniors Advocate Monthly Update - March 2026

Activities of the Office of the Seniors Advocate

B.C. Budget 2026: Seniors Left Behind

The new B.C. budget, released on February 17, maintains core funding for seniors' programs but does not include significant new investments to address cost of living, rising demand for care, or the growth of the seniors' population. In fact, the budget signals delays in several long-term care projects and changes to the Property Tax Deferment Program and includes PST to many goods and services. Read the full budget for more details.

[Learn More](#)

March Message from the Seniors Advocate

The BC Seniors Advocate provides an update on key issues affecting older adults across British Columbia, including recent developments in the provincial budget and ongoing priorities for seniors' services.

[Learn More](#)

Current Issues and Resources

New Changes to B.C. Property Tax Deferment Program

The B.C. Property Tax Deferment Program is changing starting in 2026. If you defer property taxes from 2026 onward, compound interest will be charged at Prime + 2%. Taxes deferred before 2026 are not affected. Despite the changes, this program remains an important support to help low-income seniors manage costs and stay in their homes.

[Learn More](#)

Fraud Prevention Month

March is Fraud Prevention Month, an important reminder for seniors and families to stay informed about common scams and fraud risks. Fraudsters continue to develop sophisticated new tactics, making awareness and early recognition key to staying protected for people of all ages.

[Learn More](#)

Cyber Safety Webinar Workshop Series

In support of Fraud Prevention Month, the Canadian Network for Prevention of Elder Abuse in partnership with Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario and Connected Canadians is offering a series of free cyber safety workshop webinars throughout the month to help older adults and others learn how to protect themselves online. These sessions cover topics like recognizing online scams, securing personal information and how to support victims of fraud.

[Learn More](#)

Getting Ready for the 2025 Income Tax Season

With the 2025 income tax season approaching, now is a good time for seniors to begin gathering tax documents and reviewing available credits and benefits. Filing your tax return on time helps ensure you continue to receive important income-tested benefits such as Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement. The deadline to file your personal income tax return is April 30, 2026.

[Learn More](#)

Upcoming Webinar Series: Housing that Connects Us

The Hey Neighbour Collective is hosting a webinar series called “Housing That Connects Us”, with community housing experts and planners. These online conversations explore how thoughtful housing design and policy can foster stronger neighbourly connections, enhance wellbeing and support resilient communities as cities evolve.

[Learn More](#)

Provincial News

Recent Announcements from the B.C. Government Impacting Seniors

- February 26, 2026 [Enhancing drug coverage for people in British Columbia](#)
- February 20, 2026 [Providing at-home support for more B.C. seniors](#)
- February 19, 2026 [New legislation will allow people to renew, replace driver's licence online](#)
- February 18, 2026 [Fast-tracking homes across B.C. with federal support](#)
- February 17, 2026 [Budget secures B.C.'s future, protects critical services](#)
- February 10, 2026 [Speeding up delivery of homes people need](#)
- February 9, 2026 [Protecting consumers with new rules this summer](#)
- February 4, 2026 [Free court services help available through online platform](#)
- February 2, 2026 [Protecting more than 2,000 homes in B.C.](#)

National News

Recent Announcements from the Federal Government Impacting Seniors

February 23, 2026 [The Minister of Finance and National Revenue and the Secretary of State mark the launch of the 2026 tax-filing season](#)

February 3, 2026 [Secretary of State Long announces renewed funding for tax clinics for the 55th anniversary of the CVITP](#)

Recent Research

Born from Crisis: The Evolution of interRAI and Its Relevance to Today's Healthcare Challenges

(Canadian College of Health Leaders)

Fragmented healthcare systems worldwide struggle to support patient populations with complex health and social needs. System integration requires a standardized clinical health information system to better care for these populations. This review describes how interRAI systems evolved into powerful solutions to support healthcare system integration.

[Learn More](#)

Does age matter? Examining seniors' experiences of romance fraud

(Security Journal)

Using the premise of a genuine relationship, romance fraud offenders deceive victims for monetary gain. Research on romance fraud has grown, but limited work explores the demographic correlates of victimisation. An assumption exists that older persons are more susceptible to fraud, though this dynamic is not consistently evident in the literature. This article analyses 2686 romance fraud complaints to Scamwatch, an online Australian fraud reporting portal, to identify correlates between being 65 years and older and their risk of victimization.

[Learn More](#)

The Overlooked Issue of Shingles Infections in Older Canadians and How to Address It

(National Institute on Ageing)

As Canada marks National Shingles Awareness Week, the National Institute on Ageing is releasing a new report warning that shingles remains a largely overlooked yet preventable health risk for older Canadians. Shingles infections continue to cause unnecessary pain and long-term complications for individuals and avoidable strain on Canada's health care system.

[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 operates a toll-free information and referral phone line staffed by seniors' services specialists who can help put seniors and family caregivers in touch with services and navigate issues and concerns. Call 1-877-952-3181 (toll free) or 250-952-3181 (Victoria).

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