

**Provincial Advisory Council
on
Aging and Seniors
Activity Plan**

April 1, 2011- March 31, 2014

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Chairperson's Message



In accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, I am pleased to present the 2011-2014 Activity Plan for the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors. The Advisory Council has been included under the *Transparency and Accountability Act* as a Category 3 entity and will now be planning and reporting in keeping with these requirements. This process better enables the Advisory Council to enhance recognition of issues impacting seniors and achieve its accountability requirements to the public.

In the development of this Activity Plan, consideration was given to Government's strategic directions, as well as the mandate and activities of the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors. This Activity Plan represents the Advisory Council's continued efforts to support healthy aging and to build on the *Provincial Healthy Aging Policy Framework*.

My signature below is indicative of the entire Council's accountability for the preparation of this Activity Plan and achievement of the objectives contained in this Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leo C. Bonnell". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a horizontal line.

Leo C. Bonnell, Chairperson
Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors

OVERVIEW

On November 26, 2004, Government announced the establishment of a Ministerial Council on Aging and Seniors, the Division of Aging and Seniors and the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors (PACAS).

The Ministerial Council supports policy development across all government activities on behalf of seniors. It is the goal of the Ministerial Council to strengthen relationships among departments that have responsibility for legislation, policies and programs affecting seniors. The Ministerial Council is chaired by the Minister of Health and Community Services who is also the Minister Responsible for Aging and Seniors.

The Office for Aging and Seniors (formerly called the Division of Aging and Seniors) serves as the Secretariat to the Provincial Advisory Council and the Ministerial Council. The Department covers expenses of the members related to participation in Council activities.

MANDATE

The PACAS assists government in preparing for an aging population by ensuring that a seniors' perspective is reflected in policy development and in planning for future service delivery. The mandate of this Council is to advise and inform government on issues, concerns and needs of seniors. The Council provides a mechanism for seniors to have a strong voice in the development of comprehensive programming to support the independence and well-being of an aging population. The PACAS aims:

- To promote the value and worth of people as they age;
- To foster an environment of understanding within government and the community with regard to aging;
- To identify areas of opportunity within government to develop and/or adapt legislation, policies, programs and services to better support an aging population; and
- To inform government on the potential impacts of legislation, policies, programs, and services on people as they age.

The Council has the opportunity to engage community experts and facilitate discussions in response to emerging issues or concerns that affect seniors.

PROVINCIAL HEALTHY AGING POLICY FRAMEWORK (PHAPF)

The PACAS endorses the *Provincial Healthy Aging Policy Framework* launched in July, 2007 and endorses the following six priority directions.

Recognition of Older Persons through increased societal respect and regard for older persons; age-friendly policies, programs and services; and greater social inclusion of seniors in our society;

Celebrating Diversity by ensuring that the diversity of the aging population is seen and valued in provincial policies, programs and services;

Supportive Communities by enhancing the role that communities play to support an aging population;

Financial Well-being by improving the financial well-being of seniors through identification of opportunities; improving knowledge about government services and programs; and encouraging financial and retirement planning;

Health and Well-being by ensuring people as they age have the best possible physical, emotional, social, mental, and spiritual health and well-being; and

Employment, Education and Research by focusing on the impact of an aging population on employment, education and research.

Council has participated in the implementation of the *Provincial Healthy Aging Policy Framework* by providing a seniors lens through participation in various initiatives such as

:

- Seniors of Distinction Awards;
- Healthy Aging Research Program in partnership with the NL Center for Applied Health Research, MUN;
- Public awareness campaign to prevent Violence Against Older Persons in collaboration with Women's Policy Office and,
- Provincial Food and Nutrition Seniors Expert Working Group.

STRUCTURE/ MEMBERSHIP

The PACAS consists of a diverse cross-section of seniors and other individuals who are familiar with seniors' issues. Consideration is given to geography, cultural diversity, gender, background, experience and skills when choosing the members of Council. The Council consists of 12 members in addition to a Chairperson. All members and the Chairperson are appointed by the Minister of Health and Community Services, as the Minister Responsible for Aging and Seniors. Members serve up to a three-year term. (See Appendix B).

PRIMARY CLIENT

The Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services and Minister Responsible for Aging and Seniors, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador as its primary client. By fostering an environment of understanding within government about the aging population, older persons in the province are also served.

VISION and VALUES

The Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors supports the following visions and values:

VISION

The vision of the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors is ***for individuals, families, communities and society as a whole to foster healthy aging in order to achieve optimal health and well-being.***

This vision has been endorsed by seniors through community consultation and builds on the Department of Health and Community Services' ***vision for individuals, families and communities to achieve optimal health and well being.***

VALUES

The Council recognizes the following values to which members can aspire in carrying out their role on Council:

Justice: Each member shall abide by rules of equity, equality, fairness and need.

Empowerment: Each member provides advice to help government strategically focus work and achieve goals.

Accountability: Each member contributes to reporting on achieved results.

Confidentiality: Each member manages and protects information appropriately.

Collaboration: Each member promotes connectedness, sharing, inclusiveness and trust.

Diversity: Each member recognizes and respects the strengths of other members.

MISSION

Our province is experiencing *population aging*, a process whereby older individuals account for a proportionately larger share of the total population. Population aging is usually attributed to less children being born and people living longer. However, the movement of people between countries and provinces and territories also plays an important role. Population aging is happening on a provincial, national and international level.

Currently, almost 199,000 residents of the province are 50 years of age or over. They represent well over one-third of the provincial population (39 per cent). Further, there are approximately 77,600 people aged 65 years or older in Newfoundland and Labrador who make up 15 per cent of the population.¹

The median age is the age above which half the population falls. Newfoundland and Labrador has the highest median age in Canada, that is, 43.3 years. As we move into the future, Newfoundland and Labrador is expected to have increasing numbers of residents in the older age groups. For example, while in 2010 there are about 77,600 people age 65 years or over, it is estimated that by 2020, this number will increase to 112,400. This is a 45 per cent increase over 10 years.²

Why is this of interest to us today? The Province of Newfoundland and Labrador recognizes that we need to plan for the needs and contributions of two distinct groups of older persons: the seniors of today and those of tomorrow. Today's seniors are living longer than the generation that came before them while the "baby boomers" continue to grow older. In fact, the first of the baby boomers turn age 65 in 2011. Overall, they are better educated, tend to own their own homes and are more financially stable.

¹ Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Finance, Economics and Statistics Branch, *Population Projections – Newfoundland and Labrador, April 2010 medium scenario*.

² Statistics Canada. *Population estimates, age distribution and median age as of July 1, 2010, Canada, provinces and territories. Preliminary postcensal estimates*; Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Finance, Economics and Statistics Branch, *Population Projections – Newfoundland and Labrador, April 2010 medium scenario*.

The Provincial Government is aware of these trends and is working to address the aging of the population through legislation, policies, programs and services. The Advisory Council supports the strategic direction of Population Health and the focus on “healthy aging” and the Department’s mission:

By March 31, 2017 the Department of Health and Community Services will have provided leadership to support an enhanced health care system that effectively serves the people of the province and helps them achieve optimal health and well-being.

The performance indicators that accompany the Department’s mission are separate and distinct from the PACAS, which contributes to the mission by assisting government in preparing for an aging population and ensuring that a seniors’ perspective is reflected in policy development and in planning for future service delivery. The PACAS contribution to achieving the Department’s mission will be limited due to its advisory mandate.

ANNUAL OBJECTIVES

Creating an Age-friendly Newfoundland and Labrador

The geography and diversity of our province must also be considered when planning. For example, if we consider the Stephenville - Port aux Basques region, we see that more than 30 per cent of the population is expected to be 65 years or older by 2020. Also, while the number of people over the age of 65 years in Labrador is relatively low, it is expected to increase by 64 per cent over the next ten years. For planning purposes, it is also helpful to keep in mind that approximately 44 per cent of people 65 years or more live on the Avalon Peninsula.³

The health and well-being of people as they age in our province is of concern. In 2007/2008, almost 72% of the population of Newfoundland and Labrador (aged 65 and over) had at least one chronic disease or condition. While this rate has not changed significantly since 2003, there has been growth in the subset with three or more chronic conditions. In fact, while in 2003 13% of persons aged 65 years or older had 3 or more chronic conditions, in 2007/2008 this increased to 18%. This may place an added strain on the health care system as people with more than one chronic condition consult with health care professionals more often, have more overnight stays in hospital, and use home care services more often than those with just one chronic condition.⁴

Meanwhile, in 2006, 87.6% (117,420) of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians 55 years and over owned their own homes, while 12.4% (16,680) rented. Of those who owned their own homes, 24% (28,170) had a mortgage at that time.⁵ Related documents that support the work of the PACAS are located in Appendix C.

The PACAS provides Government with advice related to aging and seniors that supports the Government's strategic direction of Population Health and the focus of "healthy aging". PACAS has chosen to develop three annual objectives that cover the three years of this plan. Additional indicators will be developed after progress in year one (2012) has been considered.

³ Source: Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Finance, Economics and Statistics Branch, Population Projections – Rural Secretariat Regions, Medium Scenario, April 2010.

⁴ Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, Share File, 2003, 2005 & 2007/08.

⁵ Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, Share File, 2003, 2005 & 2007/08.

The Council has a dual responsibility in fulfilling its mandate. While seniors' points of view are presented to Government, Council members also spend considerable time conveying Government's perspective to seniors. Rules of engagement are being developed to further describe this communication process.

By March 31, 2012 the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors will have strengthened communication with government to ensure a seniors' perspective is presented to decision-makers in the development of policies, programs and services.

Measure: Strengthened communication process.

Indicators:

- Developed a strengthened communication process
- Developed rules of engagement for Council members
- Council held a minimum of 2 meetings per year
- Contributed a seniors' perspective to issues

By March 31, 2013 the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors will have provided a seniors' perspective in the development of policies, programs and services.

By March 31, 2014 the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors will have identified potential impacts of population aging on development of policies, programs and services.

APPENDIX A: STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Strategic directions are the articulation of desired physical, social, or economic outcomes and normally require action by or involvement of, more than one government entity. They summarize the outcomes desired for the population and health sector and are communicated to entities that plan and report in collaboration with the Department. The strategic direction and focus area related to PACAS are provided below:

Strategic Direction 1

Title: Population Health

Outcome: Improved Population Health

To achieve “improved population health”, focusing efforts on public health interventions that will; promote healthy lifestyles and reduce health inequalities, prevent acute and chronic illness and injury, and protect people from health hazards, are necessary.

An integrated and collaborative approach, which preserves and promotes health and prevents and controls disease, is needed to:

- reduce the incidence of many of the illnesses that currently contribute to the burden of illness in Newfoundland and Labrador; and
- prepare the health system for illnesses and threats to health that are expected to emerge as society and the physical environment change.

Activities in these areas will decrease the burden of illness and associated health care and treatment costs, and contribute significantly to a sustainable health system. The PACAS focus area for 2011-2014 is provided below:

Focus Areas of the Strategic Direction 2011-2017	The Population Health Strategic Direction is			
	Addressed by the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors':			
		Activity Plan	Operational plan	Work plan
Healthy Aging		√		

APPENDIX B: Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors

Members 2011 - 2014

Leo Bonnell, Chairperson - Clarendville

Maggie Chambers - Flowers Cove

Damien Collier - Goulds

Don Gillam - Robinsons

Alice Harris - Nain

Cecilia Hickey - Grand Falls - Windsor

Joan Hutchings - Mobile

Ronald Hynes - St. John's

Doreen Jackman - Grand Bank

Shirley Letto - L'Anse au Clair

Agnes Murphy - Mount Pearl

Wayne Penney - Gander

Minnie Vallis - Meadows

APPENDIX C: REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The following reference documents support the work of the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors and can be accessed at:

www.gov.nl.ca/health/publications:

- [Healthy Aging Policy Framework](#)
- [Perspectives on a Healthy Aging Plan – Summary of Consultations Provincial Healthy Aging Implementation Plan. Year 1: 2007-2008](#)
- [Healthy Aging for All in the 21st Century – Discussion Paper](#)
- [Healthy Aging for All in the 21st Century – Seniors Profile](#)
- [Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide](#)
- [Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide](#)
- [Healthy Aging in Canada: A New Vision, A Vital Investment, From Evidence to Action](#)

Contact Information

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