

2025-2026

Annual Report

Seniors





MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

I am pleased to present the Department of Seniors' Annual Report for the period October 29, 2025, to March 31, 2026. In accordance with the requirements of a Category 1 entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, the report outlines the Department's accomplishments under its first Strategic Plan. As Minister of the Department of Seniors, I acknowledge my accountability for the results reported in this annual report, the achievements, and any variations contained herein.

The establishment of the Department of Seniors marked an important step in strengthening leadership, coordination, and accountability for policies, programs, and services that support seniors throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. During this initial reporting period, the department focused on building a strong foundation while continuing to advance initiatives that promote healthy aging, support seniors to remain independent and connected in their communities, strengthen services across the care continuum, and protect vulnerable adults.

These achievements reflect the contributions of our employees and the strong collaboration of Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services, community organizations, municipalities, Indigenous partners, other government departments, and federal, provincial, and territorial partners. Working together will remain essential as we respond to the evolving needs of seniors and continue to build a province where older adults can live with dignity, safety, independence, and quality of life.

I look forward to building on this foundation and continuing to advance programs, services, and partnerships that support seniors, their families, and caregivers across Newfoundland and Labrador.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Pardy'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Hon. Craig Pardy
Minister of Seniors

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Departmental Overview

Organizational Structure

This annual report reflects the Department of Seniors' initial period of operation following its establishment. During this transitional year, the department focused on establishing foundational governance, strengthening oversight and coordination, and ensuring continuity of services while providing clear system direction and supporting the implementation of seniors-related policies and programs.

The establishment of the Department of Seniors reflects government's commitment to strengthening leadership, coordination, and accountability for policies, programs, and services that support seniors across Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Department of Seniors provides leadership and direction to support the delivery of programs and services that promote the health, safety, and well-being of seniors. The department is responsible for developing, implementing, and evaluating policies, programs, and services related to healthy aging, adult protection, and continuing care. Additional information regarding the department's vision, mandate, primary clients and lines of business can be found in the Department of Seniors Strategic Plan October 29, 2025 – March 31, 2026.

Staff and Budget

As of March 31, 2026, the Department of Seniors employed 18 staff, all based in St. John's.

Division	# of Employees	Budget
Minister's Office	0	\$-
Executive Support	2	\$252,500
Seniors Health Care	8	\$2,622,900
Seniors and Aging & Adult Protection	8	
Total	18	\$2,875,400

Seniors Health Care and Seniors and Aging & Adult Protection are allocated under one activity with a total budget of \$2,875,400 (\$1,754,100 salaries and \$1,121,300 operating and grants).

Highlights and Partnerships

During 2025–26, the Department of Seniors advanced a range of initiatives to support healthy aging, strengthen services across the care continuum, and safeguard vulnerable adults. The focus during the reporting period was on building strong governance and system coordination, and on working collaboratively with partners across government, the health system, and community organizations to improve programs and services for seniors across Newfoundland and Labrador. The highlights below reflect some of the key initiatives and partnerships that supported these priorities.

Highlights

Establishment of the Department of Seniors

The Department of Seniors was established to strengthen leadership, coordination, and accountability for policies, programs, and services that support seniors across Newfoundland and Labrador. During its first six months of operation, the department focused on establishing foundational governance, strengthening system oversight, and advancing collaboration across government and with key partners.

This work supports a coordinated approach to healthy aging, continuing care, and adult protection while laying the foundation for longer-term planning and improvements to programs and services for seniors.

Advancing the Seniors' Health and Well-Being Plan

During 2025–26, the Department of Seniors supported the continued implementation of initiatives under the Seniors' Health and Well-Being Plan, which promotes healthy aging, social inclusion, and improved supports for seniors and caregivers across Newfoundland and Labrador.

The plan focuses on healthy aging, access to health and community services, caregiver support, safety, and well-being.

Supporting Seniors to Age at Home

Supporting seniors to remain safe and independent in their homes and communities remains a key priority. The department supported the implementation and promotion of initiatives such as the Aging Well at Home Grant, which helps eligible seniors access services that support independent living, including snow clearing, grocery delivery, and other everyday supports.

These initiatives contribute to improved independence and quality of life for seniors, while supporting aging in place.

Advancing Age-and Dementia-Friendly Communities

The Department of Seniors continued to work with municipalities and community organizations to promote age-and dementia-friendly communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

These initiatives help communities consider the needs of seniors in areas such as accessibility, housing, transportation, and social participation, fostering inclusive environments that promote active, healthy aging.

Enhancing Dementia Care and Community Supports

Dementia care supports were strengthened through enhanced access to community-based programs and services that enable individuals to remain at home and in their communities. A key highlight is the provincial dementia navigator within NL Health Services, which supports improved navigation and awareness of services. Initiatives such as the Home Dementia Care Program, MINT Memory Clinics, and partnerships with the Alzheimer Society of Newfoundland and Labrador supported earlier identification, and increased access to education and support for individuals living with dementia and their caregivers.

Expanding Community-Based Services and System Capacity

Community-based services and system capacity were advanced through initiatives such as the Home First initiative. Investments in workforce development, including training opportunities and wage increases, contributed to supporting the delivery of care for seniors across Newfoundland and Labrador.

Strengthening Adult Protection

Protecting vulnerable adults remains a core responsibility of the Department of Seniors. During the reporting period, the department worked with system partners to strengthen oversight and support consistent practices related to the Adult Protection Act.

This work included advancing provincial guidance and tools and collaborating with service providers and partners responding to situations involving vulnerable adults.

Partnerships

The Department of Seniors works closely with a range of partners to advance initiatives that support seniors' health, safety, and well-being across Newfoundland and Labrador.

Key partners include Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services, other provincial government departments and agencies, municipalities, Indigenous governments and organizations, academic institutions, and community-based organizations that deliver programs and services for seniors.

Through these partnerships, the department supports coordinated planning and policy development across the health and social services system to better meet the needs of seniors and their families.

The Department of Seniors also collaborates with federal, provincial, and territorial partners through national forums and working groups that focus on healthy aging, service navigation, caregiver support, and adult protection. Participation in these

partnerships supports the sharing of research, knowledge, and leading practices that strengthen programs and services for seniors across the province.

These partnerships are essential to advancing integrated service delivery, improving access to supports, and ensuring coordinated responses to the evolving needs of seniors.

Report on Performance

Strategic Issue 1: Healthy Aging and Seniors' Well-Being

Supporting healthy aging begins in communities. The Department of Seniors will focus on strengthening community capacity, social connection, and supportive environments that help seniors maintain independence, dignity, and quality of life. This work supports continuity of existing initiatives while informing future investments and planning.

Goal/Objective

By March 31, 2026, the Department of Seniors will increase capacity within communities to promote healthy aging by fostering social connection, inclusion, and supportive environments that enable seniors to maintain independence, dignity, and quality of life.

Indicator	Results
Increased initiatives that support seniors to age at home.	• The department enhanced supports to enable seniors to age safely in their homes and communities. The Aging Well at Home Grant program approved 8,476 grants, assisting with services such as home maintenance and snow clearing. • Financial support for caregivers was strengthened through the Caregiver Benefit program, with 84 caregivers approved to support low-income seniors with high care needs, contributing to improved capacity to care for seniors in community settings. • The department also advanced age- and dementia-friendly initiatives by developing resources such as

	the Age-and Dementia-Friendly Community Pathway Action Guide and Dementia-Inclusive Recreation Guides. These tools can be used by municipalities and personal care homes in creating supportive environments for seniors and individuals living with dementia. • Through the Age-Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador Communities Program, the department supported communities in creating environments that enable people of all ages and abilities to age well in the right place and participate meaningfully in community life. Nine communities received grants to conduct age-friendly assessments or implement aspects of existing Age-Friendly Action Plans. • The department supported accessible and inclusive transportation services in Corner Brook and the Harbour Grace area through the Newfoundland and Labrador Community Transportation Program. These services help residents, including seniors, attend work, school, and medical appointments, run errands, visit loved ones, and participate in social and community activities. • The department also supported seniors to remain connected to their communities through the Seniors' Social Inclusion Initiative. In 2025–26, 135 applications were received and 104 grants were approved to support community-based activities and
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	programs that promote social inclusion, healthy aging, mental wellness, and overall well-being.
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Discussion of Results

During the reporting period, the Department of Seniors increased community capacity to support healthy aging through a combination of direct supports for seniors and caregivers and investments in communities and community-based organizations. These initiatives supported seniors to remain independent, connected, and engaged in their homes and communities.

The Aging Well at Home Grant and Caregiver Benefit provided financial support that helped seniors remain at home and strengthened caregivers capacity to support seniors with higher care needs. At the community level, the Age-Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador Communities Program, the Newfoundland and Labrador Community Transportation Program, and the Seniors' Social Inclusion Initiative supported municipalities and community organizations in creating more inclusive, accessible, and connected communities. The development of new age- and dementia-friendly community resources further strengthened the tools available to communities to support seniors and individuals living with dementia.

Together, these activities advanced the department's objective by strengthening both individual and community based support for aging in place, social participation, inclusion, and independence. They also established a foundation for continued collaboration with community partners and future initiatives that support healthy aging throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Strategic Issue 2: Strengthen Supports and Services Across the Care Continuum

Seniors often interact with multiple services and providers as their needs change. The Department of Seniors will focus on strengthening coordination, standards, and system

enablers that support more integrated, effective, and sustainable services across the care continuum.

Goal/Objective

By March 31, 2026, the Department of Seniors will improve coordination, quality, and sustainability of health and social services for seniors across the care continuum.

Indicator	Results
Expand support for dementia care	• The department provided funding to NL Health Services to enhance access to community-based dementia care supporting individuals to remain at home and in their communities. The Home Dementia Care Program, operationalized by NL Health Services, supported 105 individuals, contributing to improved access and reduced reliance on long term care. • Dementia awareness was strengthened through funding provided to the Alzheimer Society of Newfoundland and Labrador, to deliver education and training initiatives. More than 590 health care providers completed Dementia Passport training, 33 businesses received dementia-friendly training, and over 530 first responders participated in dementia-friendly training to enhance awareness and support for people living with dementia and their caregivers. • Funding provided to the Arts and Aging Network supported social inclusion and well-being for more

	than 8,500 participants, including individuals living with dementia. • The department invested in workforce capacity by providing funding to NL Health Services to train 63 staff to become Gentle Persuasive Approaches certified coaches and hire five additional full-time Behavioural Management Specialist positions to support individuals with complex needs. • The department improved access to interdisciplinary assessment and coordinated care by providing funding to NL Health Services to establish MINT Memory Clinics, supporting earlier identification and connection to appropriate services. The department also funded a full-time Provincial Dementia Care Navigator position within NL Health Services to strengthen navigation supports and improve access to programs, services, and information for individuals living with dementia and their caregivers.
Enhanced community-based services.	• The department strengthened workforce capacity by developing a new Home Support Worker/Personal Support Worker post-secondary curriculum and supporting the development and implementation of a micro-credential program. To date, more than 1,200 individuals have completed the Home Support Worker/Personal Support Worker micro-credential program.

	• The department provides funding to NL Health Services to hire staff dedicated to implementing Home First. Through this initiative 935 clients with complex needs were supported to remain at home or in their communities. • The department supported increased access to specialized services for seniors through funding for a 20-bed enhanced dementia care neighbourhood in a personal care home, which remains fully occupied. • The department funded a project to support rehabilitation and restorative care in personal care homes which supported over 150 people, the majority of whom were discharged to the community and achieved goals of care. • Workforce recruitment and retention were supported through increased wages for Home Support Workers and Personal Support Workers • Workforce capacity was strengthened through funding for the delivery of expanded training opportunities, including palliative and end-of-life care, dementia care, frailty training, and geriatric-focused education for healthcare providers. • Quality of life in long term care was enhanced through funding for 10 full-time recreation therapy
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	workers within NL Health Services, improving access to meaningful recreation programming for residents.
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Discussion of Results

During the reporting period, the Department of Seniors advanced initiatives to improve the coordination, quality, and sustainability of health and social services for seniors across the care continuum. Progress focused on expanding dementia care and strengthening community-based services that support seniors to remain at home and in their communities for as long as possible.

Dementia care was enhanced through increased access to community-based programs and services, including the Home Dementia Care Program, MINT Memory Clinics, dementia navigation supports, education and training initiatives, and specialized clinical supports. These initiatives contributed to earlier identification, improved access to services, and greater support for individuals living with dementia and their caregivers.

Community-based service capacity was also strengthened through workforce development, Home First, rehabilitation and restorative care, enhanced dementia care, and expanded geriatric-focused services. Investments in training and workforce supports helped build capacity to deliver care in home, community, personal care home, long-term care, and acute care settings.

Together, these initiatives advanced the department's objective by strengthening services and supports across the care continuum, improving access to community-based and specialized care, and supporting a more coordinated approach to meeting the evolving needs of seniors across Newfoundland and Labrador.

Strategic Issue 3: Strengthen Adult Protection Oversight and Practice

Protecting vulnerable adults is a fundamental responsibility of government and a core function of the Department of Seniors. The department will focus on strengthening oversight, consistency of practice, and system readiness to support effective adult protection responses. This work will help ensure clarity, accountability, and a strong foundation for future improvements.

Goal/Objective

By March 31, 2026, strengthen the Department of Seniors' stewardship role in adult protection by improving clarity of roles, consistency of practice, and system readiness to safeguard vulnerable adults.

Indicator	Results
Advanced oversight and coordination.	• The department strengthened oversight and coordination of adult protection policy by re-establishing an ad-hoc Policy Working Group for the Adult Protection Act Provincial Policy Manual. Chaired by the Department of Seniors, the working group supports analysis, review, and revision of selected policies and procedures to promote consistency and quality improvement in adult protection practice. In 2025–26, the working group met four times to review and revise identified policy areas to support the introduction of the CorCare system and address other opportunities for improvement. • The department advanced adult protection education and training through the Adult Protection

	Education Working Group. The working group supports continuous quality improvement by providing input on training content, format, delivery, and evaluation. Its work focuses on standardizing and modernizing adult protection education, developing virtual and in-person training content, evaluating training, identifying areas for improvement, and contributing to the development of competencies for clinicians involved in adult protection processes.
Updated provincial guidance and tools.	• Updates were completed to the Adult Protection Act Provincial Policy Manual to strengthen provincial guidance and support greater consistency in adult protection practice. Revisions included updates to Policy 2.1, Reporting Required; Policy 2.3, Investigation; and Policy 2.9, Application for Declaration. These updates clarified expectations and supported quality improvement in key practice areas related to reporting, investigation, and court applications under the Adult Protection Act. • Updates were completed to the Adult Protection Act Provincial Policy Manual to strengthen provincial guidance and support greater consistency in adult protection practice. Some of the updates to highlight include: ○ All User Guides have been updated to reflect documentation expectations for fields in CorCare.

	○ Specific guides have been developed to support service plan and service plan review documentation. ○ All forms have been updated and remain in the manual to support any needs for non-electronic documentation. ○ A court documentation guide has been developed to support data collection for court activities. ○ Policies and procedures related to investigations (policy 2.3) and service plans (policy 3.1) have been strengthened.
Increased information, training, and support.	● Adult protection information, training, and support were strengthened through the continued delivery of online and in-person learning opportunities. During the reporting period, seven e-modules were available for staff to complete individually, as needed based on operational requirements. In addition, six lunch and learn sessions were delivered, reaching approximately 200 to 300 participants. Eight education sessions were also held for a range of audiences, from small interdisciplinary teams to larger groups of professionals seeking adult protection information relevant to their areas of practice. ● Survey feedback from participants indicated that these sessions contributed to enhanced knowledge and skills. These activities supported continued learning, improved access to adult protection

	information, and helped promote a consistent understanding of adult protection processes and practice expectations.
Ongoing data monitoring and evaluation.	• The department continued to support ongoing data monitoring and evaluation by monitoring adult protection education and support activities and facilitating third-party data requests, as required. • The department also supported the development and launch of the CorCare adult protection module throughout 2025–26. This work included advising on evaluation requirements, coordinating input sessions with the Department of Seniors and system partners, participating in working group meetings, updating related policies and documentation requirements, and supporting implementation education in partnership with CorCare and Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services staff.

Discussion of Results

During the reporting period, the Department of Seniors strengthened its stewardship role in adult protection by improving oversight, provincial guidance, education, and system supports. This work focused on promoting greater consistency in practice and supporting effective implementation of the Adult Protection Act across the province.

Oversight and coordination were advanced through the re-establishment of the Adult Protection Policy Working Group and continued work of the Adult Protection Education Working Group. These groups supported the review and modernization of policy,

procedures, training, and practice expectations, helping to strengthen consistency and quality improvement in adult protection services.

Provincial guidance and tools were also updated, including revisions to the Adult Protection Act Provincial Policy Manual, user guides, forms, and documentation requirements associated with the implementation of CorCare. Education and support were strengthened through e-learning modules, lunch and learn sessions, and targeted education sessions for professionals involved in adult protection.

Together, these activities advanced the department's objective by strengthening oversight, improving clarity and consistency of practice, and enhancing system readiness to respond to situations involving vulnerable adults. Ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and implementation support will continue to inform future improvements to adult protection policy and practice.

Opportunities and Challenges

Newfoundland and Labrador has one of the fastest aging populations in Canada. As the number of older adults continues to grow, demand for programs and services that support healthy aging, independence, and quality of life will continue to increase. This demographic shift presents both opportunities and challenges as government and communities work to ensure services remain accessible, sustainable, and responsive.

The establishment of the Department of Seniors provides an opportunity to strengthen leadership, oversight, and accountability across policies and programs that support seniors. It also supports more coordinated planning with partners across government and the health and community system.

Continued efforts to expand home and community-based supports, strengthen caregiver support, and promote age-and dementia-friendly environments can help seniors maintain independence and remain connected to their communities while supporting the sustainability of the health care system.

At the same time, seniors can have complex health and social needs. Many require support from multiple service providers across different care settings. Improving alignment across these services remains a challenge.

Workforce capacity and service availability also continue to place pressure on the system. Ensuring access to qualified staff and consistent service delivery across regions will be important to meeting current and future demand.

Protecting vulnerable adults also remains a critical responsibility. Ongoing efforts are required to maintain consistent practices, strengthen oversight, and support collaboration among partners responding to situations involving individuals at risk.

Through continued collaboration with Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services, government departments, municipalities, community organizations, Indigenous partners, and federal, provincial, and territorial governments, the Department of Seniors will continue to advance initiatives that support the needs of seniors and caregivers across the province.

Financial Information

	Department of Seniors 2025-26 Fiscal Year		
	Actual Expenditure	Operating Budget	Original Budget
Minister's Office	200,401	213,050	-
Executive Support	150,118	170,500	177,200
Seniors and Aging	2,197,855	2,534,350	2,662,900
Total Department	2,548,374	2,917,900	2,800,100

