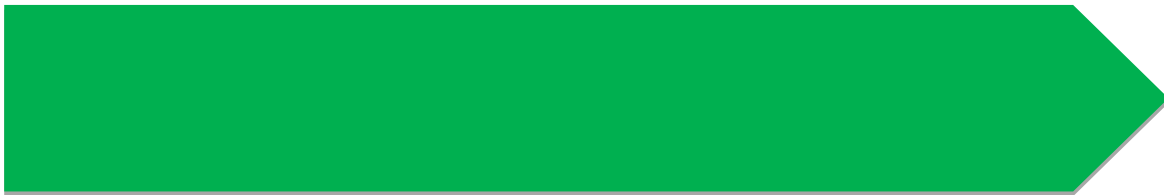


Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors

Annual Report 2019-20



Please Note:

This document was prepared in consultation with the Disability Policy Office to maximize accessibility and follows:

- Government of Newfoundland Labrador's **Accessible Communications Policy** in which clear/plain language, accessible formatting and taglines are used to ensure content is readable and understood.
- **Clear Print Accessibility Guidelines** (Canadian National Institute for the Blind). Italics or upper-case letters have not been used for the titles of acts, titles, sub-titles or for emphasis. Bold or larger fonts are used for emphasis.

Available in Alternate Format

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Message from the Chair

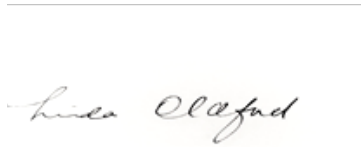
As Chair of the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors (Council), I am pleased to present its annual report for the fiscal year 2019-20. The period covered by this report has been a challenging time for seniors in the Province due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, Council has focused on supporting seniors and will continue to bring forward lessons learned from 2020 as we re-evaluate our goals for the future.

This Activity Report has been prepared and submitted in accordance with the Council's obligation as a category three entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**. The work undertaken by the Council during the reporting period supports the mandate of the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development.

The Council supports the Provincial Government in its efforts to strengthen Newfoundland and Labrador's position as an age-friendly province. Additionally, Council provides a valuable voice that facilitates the responsiveness of the government in addressing the issues facing older adults in the Province.

My signature below is indicative of the Council's accountability for the preparation of this Activity Report and achievement of the results reported herein.

Sincerely,

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Oldford".

Linda Oldford, Chairperson
Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors

Overview

The Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors (Council) was announced in 2004 as one initiative to facilitate the provincial response to the needs of an aging population. In 2005, the Council was established to provide advice to the Minister Responsible for Aging and Seniors (currently the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development) on issues related to older persons and the aging process.

The 2019-20 Council consists of 12 members, including a Chair. (See Appendix A) and is listed in Schedule C of the **Public Service Commission Act**. The Public Service Commission (PSC), through the Independent Appointment Commission (IAC), solicits candidates for vacancies with consideration given to geography, culture, gender, background, experience and skills. Members are appointed for terms of up to three years by the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development. The Seniors and Aging Division of the department serves as the Secretariat to the Council, including the provision of support for meetings and other activities.

Council members represent a diverse cross-section of older adults, many of whom are experienced in working with stakeholders in areas of critical importance to seniors, including health care, long-term care, mental health, and financial well-being. As a result, Council benefits from a membership with a broad base of knowledge in areas of importance to seniors and those who support them.

More information on the Council may be found at:

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/cssd/seniors/focus/provincialadvisory/>.

Highlights and Partnerships

Fiscal year 2019-20 was a challenging time. In addition to a weather related state of emergency in the St. John's Metro Area, the COVID-19 pandemic emerged in early 2020, resulting in many restrictions for the provincial population. Many of these restrictions magnified the issues currently faced by older adults, including social isolation, food insecurity, financial well-being, and lack of access to healthcare.

Despite the challenges noted above, 2019-20 provided opportunities for the Council to inform and advise the Province on issues related to older persons, aging, and demographic change. Key activities included:

- Responded to the first report of the Seniors' Advocate: On September 25, 2019, the Seniors' Advocate released the office's first report **Long May Your Big Jib Draw: Setting Sail**. The council met with the Advocate (Dr. Suzanne Brake) in October 2019 and February 2020 to discuss how the Council can inform current work being completed and discuss further work.
- Participated in Older Worker's Summit hosted by the Office of the Seniors' Advocate and the Harris Centre: On November 13, 2019, the Office of the Seniors Advocate partnered with Memorial University's Harris Centre, Older Workers NL, and the St. John's Board of Trade to present a day-long workshop regarding older workers. Topics included the current labour market shortage, an increased number of older workers, and social pressures related to work and retirement.
- Assisted in the selection of five Seniors of Distinction: This annual award recognizes and celebrates the contributions, achievements and diversity of seniors throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

- Participated in working groups that support the implementation of the recommendations of the All Party Committee on Mental Health and Addictions.
- Promoted the information and referral services of SeniorsNL. SeniorsNL also regularly presents to the Council, informing members about issues actively raised by seniors and individuals who support seniors throughout the Province. The Chair of the Council is the vice-president of the Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) 50+ Federation and each group regularly informs the other regarding priorities related to seniors.
- Participated in the COVID-19 Vulnerable Task Group and Seniors Working Group to inform challenges faced by and those who support seniors, during the pandemic.
- Participated in the Public Health Agency of Canada's Pan-Canadian Age-Friendly Reference Group. This group is committed to advancing the age-friendly movement nationally and internationally through the development of flexible national guidelines, the creation of helpful community resources and the coordination of knowledge exchange activities.
- Participated in the Age-Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Working Group to advise and recommend improvements to the Age-Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador Communities Grant Program.
- Attended the Canadian Association on Gerontology 48th Annual Conference, **Navigating the Tides of Aging Together** in Moncton, New Brunswick, as part of the Aging Research Centre of Newfoundland and Labrador's (ARC-NL) delegation.

Report on Performance 2019-20 Objective

Issue: Promoting Age-Friendly Communities

Population aging, whereby older individuals account for a proportionately larger share of the total population, is a global trend that effects policy development in key areas such as workforce development and healthcare policy. In 2016, Newfoundland and Labrador had an estimated 101,242 people over 65, representing 19.1 per cent of the provincial population. By 2026, the proportion of people over 65 will increase to an estimated 27 percent of the population. There are three factors underlying this trend: increased longevity, declining fertility, and aging of the generation born between 1946 and 1964. The opportunities and challenges resulting from both population aging and shifting demographics must be considered in the development of policies, programs and services.

The Council has a responsibility to ensure that the Provincial Government is aware of the viewpoints of older adults; likewise, Council members work to engage with communities, listen on behalf of Council, and provide informed advice to the Minister Responsible.

Annual Objective:

By March 31, 2020, the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors will have advised the Minister Responsible on key issues relating to older adults.

Indicators:

- Obtained expert and member expertise
- Invited stakeholders to provide information
- Prioritized advice to be provided to the Minister Responsible
- Identified target audience for related age-friendly government initiatives
- Made recommendations on related government initiatives.

Indicator	Report on Activities
<p>Obtained expert and member expertise.</p>	<p>During 2019-2020, individual Council members elicited input from seniors and others in their communities and surrounding regions and relayed this information back to government to inform policy development and decision-making. Many members of the Council have specific knowledge of government/agency programs, policies and services impacting seniors due to their lived experience and extensive volunteer and work experiences. This ongoing knowledge-exchange ensures there is robust communication between government/non-government agencies and seniors.</p> <p>During the reporting period, Council met with the following experts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SaferMeds; • Chief Mi'sel Joe, Miawpukek First Nation; • HCS officials and subject matter experts; • Representatives of the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation; • ARC-NL; • Connections for Seniors; • SeniorsNL; and • Seniors' Advocate. <p>In October 2019, Linda Oldford (Chair) attended the Canadian Association of Gerontology conference in Moncton. This provided an excellent opportunity to benefit from expert and member expertise.</p>
<p>Invited stakeholders to provide</p>	<p>The Council regularly identifies areas of opportunity within Provincial Government to develop and/or adapt legislation,</p>

Indicator	Report on Activities
information.	<p>policies, programs and services to better support seniors. As well, the Council informs the Provincial Government on the potential impacts on people as they age.</p> <p>To ensure the Council is kept abreast of new and emerging issues, the Seniors and Aging Division coordinates information and updates via presentations, discourses, position papers, etc. from community stakeholders, government, and agency representatives. Members share this information with older adults in their respective regions at various conferences, annual general meetings, member newsletters, and through other media on an ongoing basis. In 2018-19, the Council invited and received presentations from departmental staff (Children, Seniors and Social Development), along with other government and non-government stakeholders on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NL 50+ Federation • Age-Friendly NL Community Program • Age-Friendly Transportation Pilot • <i>Adult Protection Act</i> • Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors Forum • Mental Health and Addictions (All Party Committee) • Office of the Seniors' Advocate • Seniors and finances • Seniors and prescription medication
Prioritized advice to be provided to the Minister Responsible.	In 2019-20, the Council prioritized key information and ensured that discussions and decision points were recorded and/or discussed directly with the Minister Responsible

Indicator	Report on Activities
	<p>during in-person meetings.</p> <p>Emerging issues documented in Council minutes were also discussed with the Minister Responsible. Council minutes are available on the Council's website.</p> <p>Due to the onset of COVID-19, Council met more frequently and was able to communicate its concerns, best practices, and potential solutions to the Minister. In particular, Council worked to apply an age-friendly lens on COVID-19 related policies and programs.</p>
<p>Identified target audience for related age-friendly government initiatives.</p>	<p>Age-friendly means that policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environments are designed to help people of all ages live safely, enjoy good health and continue to be socially and physically engaged across the lifespan. As people age, their ability to live in their own homes or communities is supported by an age-friendly environment.</p> <p>In 2018-19, the Council identified municipalities in general and Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, as target audiences and provided feedback to department officials on how to best direct efforts to promote age-friendly initiatives to this audience. They also received regular progress updates on the Provincial Government's Age-Friendly initiatives, including the Age-Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador Communities Grant Program, Community Transportation Grant Program, and its participation in age-friendly working groups such the Public Health Agency of</p>

Indicator	Report on Activities
	<p>Canada’s Pan-Canadian Age-Friendly Community Reference Group and the Age-Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Working Group.</p>
<p>Made recommendations on related government initiatives.</p>	<p>In 2019-20, the Council engaged the Minister and senior officials in a roundtable discussion and made recommendations on some of the issues that are of concern to seniors in their respective communities. Much of this occurred in support of the recommendations provided by the Seniors’ Advocate. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports Aging in Community Priority of the Federal, Provincial, Territorial Forum on Seniors and Aging • Health care for seniors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Council highlighted the importance of access to a primary care physician, as well as the importance of privacy in public clinics. • Society’s attitude towards seniors and population aging: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Council recommended that more public awareness of ageism is required, as well as the promotion of intergenerational programs. • Housing for seniors and NL Housing Corporation programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing is key to being able to age in place. The Council recommended the Age-Friendly Communities Grant Program be promoted to encourage municipalities to assess housing needs. ○ The Council recommended promotion of NL Housing Corporation’s Programs as a way to support seniors to remain at home for as long as practically possible. Specific programs highlighted included the Provincial Home Repair Program (PHRP) and

Indicator	Report on Activities
	<p data-bbox="678 231 1185 268">Home Modification Program (HMP).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="574 289 1416 760"> <p data-bbox="574 289 836 327">• Transportation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="620 344 1416 760"> <p data-bbox="620 344 1416 760">○ Based on the evaluation of the Age-Friendly Transportation Pilot, and subsequent implementation of the Newfoundland and Labrador Community Transportation Grant Program, the Council recommended that discussion about transportation needs to happen at the community level, using Age-Friendly and other assessment tools to determine need.</p> <li data-bbox="620 781 1416 1033"> <p data-bbox="620 781 1416 1033">○ Medical transportation emerged as a key issue for Council during the reporting period. Council engaged with HCS officials to discuss barriers and solutions as HCS explores and implements potential improvements.</p> <li data-bbox="574 1054 1416 1579"> <p data-bbox="574 1054 1253 1092">• Mental health and addictions among seniors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="620 1108 1416 1369"> <p data-bbox="620 1108 1416 1369">○ The Council recommended increased ease of access to mental health and addiction services for seniors. The Council was represented on all working groups of the All Party Committee on Mental Health and Addictions.</p> <li data-bbox="620 1390 1416 1579"> <p data-bbox="620 1390 1416 1579">○ Council invited SaferMedsNL, which is part of the Canadian Deprescribing Network, to discuss pharmaceutical use and deprescribing among seniors.</p> <li data-bbox="574 1600 1416 1873"> <p data-bbox="574 1600 1172 1638">• Financial literacy and financial security:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="620 1654 1416 1810"> <p data-bbox="620 1654 1416 1810">○ The Council recommended public awareness and education for seniors and caregivers about the importance of financial literacy.</p> <li data-bbox="620 1831 1416 1873"> <p data-bbox="620 1831 1416 1873">○ Ongoing education regarding financial abuse and its</p>

Indicator	Report on Activities
	<p>relationship to financial literacy and elder abuse. This includes ongoing discussions with the Financial Literacy Network and ongoing work by Council member Leo Bonnell.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elder abuse: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ongoing discussions related to elder abuse, both independently and in the context of other issues such as financial abuse. • Information for seniors (i.e. implications of turning 65): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Council recommended increasing promotion to highlight the importance of advance care planning, including the financial implications of turning 65. ○ Presentation from Income Support staff on the transition of income support clients to the federal OAS/GIS system.

Summary

- Issues raised by the Council’s members provided the Provincial Government with valuable input on behalf of seniors throughout the Province. Documentation will continue to be prepared after each meeting, identifying the major discussion points and action items. Advice is provided to the Minister for consideration in policy and program development on the basis of Council meeting decisions.

- The Council will continue to provide seniors’ perspectives while identifying potential impacts of population aging for government’s consideration. In preparation for the needs of our aging population, the Council will continue to advise the Minister on areas where current policies, programs and services may benefit from review. This will include collaboration with the Interdepartmental Working Group on Changing Demographics.

- Council activities will include education/information-sharing to ensure that older adults are educated on the issues affecting them, and working to increase the number of age-friendly communities by strengthening partnerships and supporting the age-friendly movement.

Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities:

- The recommendations and conclusions from the office of the Seniors' Advocate provide an opportunity for Council to provide input and support ongoing development of legislation, policies and programs in the Province.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the identification of many issues facing seniors. This provides an opportunity to bring forward lessons learned from within the Province and other jurisdictions. The COVID-19 pandemic has also highlighted several social issues that existed for seniors pre-COVID-19, including social isolation, the digital divide, and food insecurity. However, these issues were intensified by the pandemic situation.
- COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of the overall health and well-being of seniors. Co-morbidity and multi-morbidity were significant factors in the mortality rate among this age group. This presents an opportunity to focus on gaps in preventative care, advance care planning, and general well-being.
- The fact that more people are aware of the Province's demographic changes will enhance the capacity of the Council to connect with other older adults, promote Provincial Government programs and services, and challenge ageism.
- Through its increasing engagement with both the Provincial Government and non-government organizations, Council has the opportunity to forge new collaborative links with other stakeholders for the benefit of all whom they represent.
- The Council will continue to liaise with other seniors' organizations in the Province to ensure collaboration and communication. These organizations include: The NL 50+ Federation, the Seniors' Coalition, the Seniors Advocate, and SeniorsNL.

Challenges:

- Ageism and negative stereotypes associated with aging continue to exist in society and the Council is helping lead the conversation about changing attitudes.
- Many individuals in the province have not engaged in advance care planning. Council recognizes the importance and value of wills, enduring powers of attorney, and health care directives for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Going forward, the Council has identified this as a priority for research and communication.
- COVID-19 highlighted many issues related to social isolation among seniors. Social inclusion results in better physical and mental health outcomes. Council will continue to promote CSSD's social inclusion initiatives and seek new and advise on solutions for social engagement where physical distancing is required.
- Financial literacy is important for good financial planning. Many seniors in the province live with low and fixed incomes, which sometimes presents challenges. The Council continues to support Provincial Government's efforts to increase financial literacy among older adults while raising awareness of the reality and impact of financial abuse. The Council will also continue to monitor the effects of federal and provincial policies and programs that directly affect the financial well-being of seniors.

Financial Information

Members of the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors do not receive remuneration. The Council members are reimbursed for expenses and travel costs. Council's budget is included in the Seniors and Aging Division's budget. As detailed in the table below, the costs for 2019-20 totaled \$15,665.35.

Area of Expenditure	Total
Purchased Services (meeting space rentals, food and beverage, etc.)	\$6,377.77
Transportation and Communication (Travel costs, per diems, accommodations, incidentals, etc.)	\$9,287.58
Total	\$15,665.35

Appendix A: Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors Members 2019-20

Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors Biographies

Linda Oldford, Chair (Gander).

Linda Oldford spent 35 years in a career with the Federal Government (Service Canada). In addition to working as a union activist, Linda served three terms as the Public Service Alliance of Canada's Director for Women. Linda is the First Vice-President of the Newfoundland and Labrador 50+ Federation and chairs the Burnside 50+ Club. Additionally, she is a member of the Burnside Community Association and the Anglican Church Women.

Linda is a member of several Advisory Boards, including the Town of Gander Seniors Advisory Board, the Aging Research Centre, The Central Wellness Board, and SaferMedsNL. Linda has a keen interest in Indigenous culture and is a member of First Light Newfoundland and Labrador.

Dr. Rana Aslanova (St. John's) Rana Aslanova (St. John's) holds MSc and PhD in Clinical Epidemiology from Memorial University of Newfoundland. She has served as a client/volunteer services coordinator for the Newfoundland and Labrador Sexual Health Centre, and is currently a research manager and lecturer in Faculty of Medicine, MUN. Rana is a member of the Canadian Society for Epidemiology and Biostatistics (CSEB), Research Evidence Into Action for Community Health/ Atlantic Interdisciplinary Research Network (REACH/AIRN), Editorial Offices of the Clinical Rheumatology Journal, The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry & Current Oncology journal, and Women in Science and Engineering Newfoundland and Labrador (WISE).

Leo Bonnell (Clareville) is a retired bank manager and active community leader. He has been active in local community affairs throughout the province and has held leadership positions with his church board, the chamber of commerce, bankers' association, Lions Club International, Rotary International, and other organizations. He is past chair of the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors; vice-chair of the Random Age-Friendly Communities Board, and is an advisory member for the Public Health Agency of Canada's Pan-Canadian Age-Friendly Communities Reference Group.

Noreen Careen (Labrador City) Having an undergraduate degree in women's studies, Noreen Careen was Executive Director of the Labrador West Status of Women's Council for more than 20 years. She served in a variety of roles with the Hope Haven's Women's Shelter for over 20 years and was involved with many other initiatives, from family resource centres to the Labrador West Housing and Homelessness Coalition and the Newfoundland and Labrador Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse through SeniorsNL.

Doreen Chaulk (Deer Lake) Doreen Chaulk has a lengthy history in health care in Newfoundland and Labrador. Graduating as a nurse she also received a Master's in Science in 2001. She served in many capacities including faculty member at Western Memorial School of Nursing; Director of Addictions with the Department of Health and Community Services; and as Assistant Chief Executive Officer with Western Regional Health Authority.

Maisie Clark (Campbellton) was born in Port Blandford and taught school in Newfoundland and Labrador and northern Manitoba. Because her husband served with the Canadian Air Force, she has lived in a number of communities across Canada, the United States and Europe, where she was active with volunteer organizations and local governments. She has been very involved with Girl Guides of Canada, the Lewisporte and Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Lewisporte Area Economic Development Committee. Ms. Clark has served as

the mayor of CFB, Gypsonville, Manitoba and has been the mayor of Campbellton since 2001. In 2013, she was named one of Newfoundland and Labrador's Seniors of Distinction.

Marie Brennan Downey (Stephenville Crossing) holds a Bachelor in Social Work from Memorial University and has worked in a variety of health care related positions throughout her career. In addition to working as a Social Work Clinical Leader, Marie also served as Outreach Services Coordinator, and Program Manager of Rehabilitative Services in acute and long-term care facilities. Marie currently services on the Board of Trustees of Western Health and continues to be active in her community through volunteer activities.

Dr. William Eaton: MD, FCFP,(PC) (St. John's) Earned MD and MSc (Clinical epidemiology) degrees at Memorial University. Dr. Eaton worked clinically for 40 years in Family Medicine, long-term care, and Palliative Care and for 36 years of those years at Memorial's medical school. He is a retired Associate Professor of Family Medicine, a former Chair of the St. John's Alzheimer Society, and a former Program Director for Family Medicine at Memorial University. He has six children and eleven grandchildren.

Helen Handrigan (St. John's) Helen Handrigan received a Master of Social Work degree in 1978 and is now a retired social worker, having 35 years of practice in acute care, family court and tenant relations. Her last position was Senior Housing Officer with the City of St. John's. Since 2013 she has served on the Board of Directors with SeniorsNL.

Roseanne Leonard (Paradise) holds a Master of Business Administration from Memorial University and serves as Managing Director of the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Community Business Development Corporations. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the Alzheimer Society of Newfoundland and Labrador and a former Chairperson of the Newfoundland and Labrador

Employers Council. Roseanne also holds a Masters Certificate in Project Management from York University.

Judy Pardy (Cartwright) Judy Pardy has a lengthy history in socioeconomic development with communities in Labrador. She was previously Executive Director with the Southeastern Aurora Development Corporation and has served in many capacities including archaeology and recreation roles. She is currently involved with the Sandwich Bay 50+ Club and as a peer volunteer with SeniorsNL.

Wayde Rowsell (St. Lawrence) Wayde Rowsell began his volunteer service as a board member with the Newfoundland Association of Public Employees, while employed as a Laboratory Technologist with the U.S. Memorial Hospital. In 1985 Mr. Rowsell was elected to the St. Lawrence Town Council and re-elected an additional six times, serving five terms as mayor. He is a founding member of the St. Lawrence Heritage Society and served on the boards of the Heritage Run Tourism Association and Greater Lamaline Area Development Association. Mr. Rowsell's many activities include health care, economic development, workplace health and safety, heritage and sports.

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