

Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors

Annual Activity Report

2016-17

DRAFT

Please Note: In accordance with **Clear Print Accessibility Guidelines** (Canadian National Institute for the Blind: n.d.), italics or upper-case letters have not been used for the titles of acts, titles, sub-titles or for emphasis. Bold fonts of medium heaviness as recommended have been used instead.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR.....	1
OVERVIEW.....	2
REPORT ON PERFORMANCE – Objective 2014-17	4
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES AHEAD	8
FINANCIAL INFORMATION	10

APPENDIX ONE – PROVINCIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING AND SENIORS MEMBERS 2016-17

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



As Chair of the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors, I am pleased to present its annual report for the fiscal year 2016-17.

The annual report has been prepared and submitted in accordance with the obligation as a category three entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**. Since 2011, this Council has been planning and reporting in keeping with these requirements. This process better enables Council to enhance recognition of issues impacting seniors and achieve its accountability requirements to the public.

The work outlined in this Annual Report supports the mandate of the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development and government's strategic direction as outlined in **The Way Forward**.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leo C. Bonnell'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Leo C. Bonnell
Chairperson

OVERVIEW

The concept of the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors (PACAS) was first announced in 2004 as one of three initiatives to help prepare the province of Newfoundland and Labrador for an aging population. In 2005 the PACAS was established to provide advice to the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development, as the Minister Responsible for Aging and Seniors, on issues related to older persons and the aging process. The Seniors and Aging Division serves as a Secretariat to the PACAS including providing support for meetings and activities.

In 2016, Government released **The Way Forward – A vision for sustainability and growth in Newfoundland and Labrador** and **The Way Forward – Realizing our Potential** in 2017. These documents detail a number of initiatives which will benefit an aging population such as a commitment to expanding housing and transportation services for seniors and healthy living assessments for seniors.

The PACAS assists the Provincial Government in its efforts to strengthen Newfoundland and Labrador as an age-friendly province and continuing to be responsive to the needs of today's older adults and planning for tomorrow's seniors.

Structure/Membership

PACAS is made up of a diverse cross-section of older adults and other stakeholders familiar with older adults' issues. The PACAS is listed in Schedule C of the **Public Service Commission Act** and as such, the Public Service Commission (PSC) is required to conduct a search soliciting candidates for vacancies. Consideration is 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 PACAS consists of 12 members plus a Chairperson (See Appendix A).

Mandate

The mandate of the PACAS is to advise and inform government on issues, concerns and requirements of older adults. The Council ensures that the Provincial Government considers the perspective of older adults when developing current and future policies for service delivery. The PACAS provides a strong, collective voice for older adults in the development of a wide range of programs to support the independence and well-being of an aging population.

The PACAS supports the Provincial Government's strategic directions of improved health and well-being outcomes for individuals, families, groups and communities and improved and equitable access to economic, cultural and social opportunities for those who experience barriers to inclusion. The PACAS has a responsibility to present to the

Provincial Government the perspectives of older adults. Members also convey the Provincial Government's perspective to older adults throughout the Province.

The Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors aims to:

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

The Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors continues to promote government's priority directions. As well, Council provides an older adult lens by participating in initiatives, including:

- Seniors of Distinction Awards;
- Healthy Aging Research Program in partnership with the NL Center for Applied Health Research, MUN;
- Age-Friendly NL Community Grants Program;
- Pharmaceutical Drug Program;
- Violence Prevention Initiative;
- Age-Friendly Transportation Program;
- Defining the terminology to best-describe older adults;
- Provincial Food and Nutrition Seniors Expert Working Group; and
- Legislation to establish the Office of the Seniors' Advocate.

REPORT ON PERFORMANCE – Objective 2014-17

Issue: Promoting Age-Friendly Communities

Population aging is a phenomenon whereby older individuals account for a proportionately larger share of the total population. Population aging is taking place in virtually every country in the world. There are three factors underlying this trend: increased longevity, declining fertility; and, aging of “baby boomers”. Population aging impacts future policy-development, particularly in areas of labour/ workforce requirements and health care demands.

According to Statistics Canada, in 2016 Newfoundland and Labrador was estimated to have 101,242 people aged 65 years and older which comprised 19.1 per cent of the provincial population. By 2026, the number of people aged 65+ will increase to about 27 per cent of the population. Presently, one in two Newfoundlanders and Labradorians is older than 45 years. The opportunities and challenges resulting from our shifting demographics must be considered in the development of policies, programs and services.

The PACAS has a responsibility to ensure that the Provincial Government is aware of the viewpoints of older adults; likewise, Council members work to convey the Provincial Government’s perspective to older adults throughout the Province.

In its Activity Plan 2014-17, the PACAS established the following objective to be reported on in each year.

Annual Objective:

By March 31, 2017 the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors will have advised the Minister on key issues relating to older adults.

Measure:

Provided observations and recommendations.

Indicators and Activities:

Indicator	Report on Activities
Obtained expert and member expertise	On June 20 & 21, 2016, the PACAS and the Interdepartmental Working Group on Aging and Seniors (IWG) held an annual meeting to discuss new and emerging seniors’ issues as well as relevant departmental policies and programs. The membership of IWG is drawn from various government departments and agencies having seniors as a specific target-group for policies, programs and initiatives. The four regional health authorities also sit on the IWG. Members of the

Indicator	Report on Activities
	<p>PACAS bring knowledge on seniors-issues. PACAS members encourage input from seniors in their communities and surrounding regions and relay this information back to government. Members of the IWG have specific knowledge of government/agency programs, policies and services impacting seniors. This ongoing knowledge-exchange ensures there is robust communication route between government/agencies and seniors. A primary focus of these joint meetings is a dialogue regarding shared priorities in addressing the needs and concerns of older adults.</p>
<p>Invited stakeholders to provide information</p>	<p>Based on what issues are concerning NL's seniors and the impact of an aging population, the PACAS regularly identifies areas of opportunity within government to develop and/or adapt legislation, policies, programs and services to better-support seniors. As well, the PACAS informs government on the potential impacts on people as they age. To ensure the PACAS 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 experts. Members share this information with older adults in their respective regions at conferences, AGMs, member newsletters, etc. on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>In 2016-17 PACAS received presentations from CSSD and other government departments/agencies on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Income Seniors • 2016 Federal and Provincial Budgets • Healthy Eating in NL • Seniors and Fraud/Financial Exploitation • Age Friendly NL Program • Age Friendly Transportation Pilot • Age-Friendly Business • Community Healthy Living Grants • Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) • Office of the Seniors' Advocate • FPT Ministers with Responsibility for Seniors Forum • Adult Protection Act

Indicator	Report on Activities
<p>Prioritized advice to be provided to the Minister</p>	<p>During meetings, Council prioritized the information that they felt the Minister should be made aware of, and made sure decisions were recorded and/or discussed directly with the Minister during in-person meeting. Sometimes the information provided to the Minister was from an information-sharing view and other times it was in the form of advice whereby the PACAS offered an opinion for consideration.</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 environment are designed to help seniors live safely, enjoy good health and are able to continue to be socially and physically engaged. An age-friendly community benefits all people, of all ages. But as people age, their ability to live in their own homes or communities is supported by an age-friendly environment and easily-available supports.</p> <p>Therefore, the primary target audience identified for age-friendly government initiatives is seniors, their families and community stakeholders; however, the entire population of the province was identified as a secondary target audience for age-friendly government initiatives</p> <p>The PACAS will be working to more closely involve municipalities on age-friendly living, geographical challenges and sharing of seniors’ activities, services, and programs.</p>
<p>Made recommendations on related government initiatives</p>	<p>The PACAS provided feedback for the Minister on the potential impacts of Budget 2016. The PACAS also informed the Minister of the many benefits (to seniors personally and to the province generally) provided by seniors in the workplace and as volunteers, and how seniors could be supported to stay attached to the labour market should they wish. The PACAS and the Minister also discussed how best to communicate government information to seniors.</p> <p>Government had committed to supporting the Collective Memories Project. Council was a strong proponent of this initiative and offered advice to government on how the initiative might be developed</p>

Indicator	Report on Activities
	<p>and implemented. Council, in general, agreed to continue to advise on this Project. As well, three members of Council sit on the Working Group which was established to oversee the work of this Project. With the support of \$50,000 from the Provincial Government, during 2016 the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (HFNL) hired a student to complete the three major objectives: to conduct a survey of existing oral history collections; to conduct oral history interviews with seniors; and to create a plan and toolkit for communities wishing to record and collect their own stories at the local level. The research and new recordings collected during this project will form part of a permanent collection with MUN's Digital Archives Initiative. HFNL has provided a 2016-17 funding report and planned to seek government funding in 2017-18 to continue with the next phase of this initiative.</p>

Council will continue to provide a seniors' perspective while identifying potential impacts of population aging for the Provincial Government's consideration. The full Council will continue to meet with the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development as often as possible and the Chairperson will also communicate with the Minister as needed.

In preparation for the needs of our aging population, Council will continue to inform the Minister on areas where current policies, programs and services may benefit from ongoing review, including education/information sharing to ensure that older adults are educated on the issues impacting them and increasing the number of age-friendly communities by strengthening partnerships and supporting the age-friendly movement.

Regularly scheduled meetings of this Council follow "How We Conduct Our Business" guidelines and a strengthened communication process. Documentation will be prepared after each meeting identifying the major discussion points and action items, and submitted to senior officials and the Minister. Issues raised by the Council members provide the Provincial Government with invaluable frontline opinions from the older cohort of NL's population.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

Opportunities:

- The message that population aging is happening in NL at a faster rate than any other province/territory in Canada is on the radar of the general public more so than ever before. The fact that people are aware of NL's population demographics will certainly enhance the capacity of the PACAS to connect with other older adults and promote the many available programs and services.
- The existence of the PACAS and its work will likely be highlighted as people become more aware of the population aging and its impacts. With almost half of NL's population aged 45 years or older, the focus on the needs and strengths of our older adults will increase; the importance of our senior population will receive more attention.

Challenges:

- Although many inroads have been made, the PACAS continues to challenge ageist, negative stereotypes too-often associated with seniors and the aging process. This work will be a focus for the near future because societal change takes time.
- The PACAS continues to work on normalizing the aging process and normalizing the many conversations related to aging. Because many people find the idea of aging and death difficult, the important discussions about issues such as wills, estate planning, financial planning, etc. are therefore often not discussed openly.
- Educating and communicating with seniors continues to be a challenge because of the diversity amongst the senior population and the geography of this province. Ensuring that all seniors are aware of programs and services has to be communicated in a multidisciplinary manner which includes, print, radio, internet, word-of-mouth; although it is worth noting that more seniors than ever before appear to be embracing technology as a means to provide and receive information.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Members of the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors are appointed from the public and do not receive remuneration. Advisory Council members are reimbursed for expenses and travel costs. The travel expenses and costs associated with the work of the Advisory Council are covered by the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development and are included in its departmental budget. The Seniors and Aging Division supports the work of the PACAS as a secretariat. \$16,269.40 was expended on Council during 2016-17:

Area of Expenditure	Total
Purchased Services (meeting space rentals, food and beverage, etc.)	\$ 865.03
Transportation and Communication (Travel costs, per diems, accommodations, incidentals, etc.)	\$15,404.37
Total	\$16,269.40

Appendix A: Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors Members 2016-17

Leo Bonnell, Chairperson - Clarenville
Maggie Chambers - Flowers Cove
Damien Collier - Goulds
Cecilia Hickey - Grand Falls-Windsor
Joan Hutchings - Mobile
Shirley Letto - L'Anse au Clair
Wayde Rowsell – St. Lawrence
Linda Oldford – Gander
Patricia Burton – Paradise
Josephine Waddleton – Trepassey
Shirley Boone – Mount Pearl
Winston Childs – Pasadena
Maisie Clarke - Campbellton

Appendix B: Contact Information

Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors
c/o Seniors and Aging Division

Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development
6th Floor, West Block, Confederation Building

P.O. Box 8700

St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Telephone: (709)729-4291 or Toll Free 1-888-494-2266

Fax: (709) 729-6103

Email: PACAS@gov.nl.ca