

**Provincial Advisory Council
on
Aging and Seniors**

**Activity Report
2012- 2013**

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CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to deliver the Activity Report 2012-2013 on behalf of the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors in accordance with the requirements of the *Transparency and Accountability Act* for a Category 3 Provincial Government Entity. This report addresses the Provincial Government's strategic directions, as communicated by the Minister Responsible for Aging and Seniors, and as deemed relevant to the work of this council.

This Activity Report provides an overview of the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors, as well as information on planned and actual objectives met during the fiscal period covered by the report and objectives in the 2011-2014 Activity Plan.

As Chairperson of the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors, my signature below is indicative of the entire council's accountability for the results reported within this document.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leo C. Bonnell', written in a cursive style.

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

OVERVIEW

On November 26, 2004, the Provincial Government announced the establishment of the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors (the Council), a Ministerial Council on Aging and Seniors, and Division (Office) for Aging and Seniors. The Ministerial Council supports the Provincial Government's policy development and 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 serves as the Secretariat to the Council and the Ministerial Council.

The Council is recognized as a Category 3 Provincial Government Entity in accordance with the requirements of the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. An Activity Plan (April 1, 2011 – March 31, 2014) was developed. This document provides an overview of the planned and actual objectives met during the fiscal period 2012-2013.

MANDATE

The Council assists the Provincial 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 the Council is to advise and inform the Provincial 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 Council aims:

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

The 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;
- Age Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador Program; and
- Provincial Food and Nutrition Seniors Expert Working Group (Healthy Eating Resource).

STRUCTURE/MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Council 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 members of the 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 with the possibility of reappointment (*Appendix A*).

EXPENDITURES

The Office for Aging and Seniors supports the work of the Council, and acts as a secretariat. The Department of Health and Community Services has assigned a portion of the Office for Aging and Seniors' annual budget to cover costs associated with carrying out the business of the Council. In 2012-13, \$10,065.64 was expended on the Council, primarily comprising expenditures related to meetings.

VISION 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 the Provincial 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

Newfoundland and Labrador is experiencing *population aging*, a process whereby older individuals account for a proportionately larger share of the total population. Population aging is taking place in every country in the world. There are three factors underlying this trend¹: **increased longevity** - In most parts of the world, people are living much longer than previous decades. For the world as a whole, life expectancy increased by two decades since 1950 (from 48 years in 1950–55 to 68 years in 2005-10); **declining fertility** - The world's total fertility rate fell from 5 children per woman in 1950 to roughly 2.5 today, and is projected to drop further. As families have fewer children, the seniors' share of the population naturally increases; and the **aging of "baby boom" generations** - the aging of large cohorts of children born after World War II is contributing to high numbers of older persons. As a global phenomenon, population aging will impact future policy-development, particularly in areas of labour/workforce requirements and health care demands.

Presently, more than 160,000 residents of the province are 55 years of age or over² and represent over 30 per cent of the provincial population. Further, there are approximately 82,000 people aged 65 years or older in Newfoundland and Labrador comprising 16 per cent of the population.³

The median age is the age above which half the population falls and in Newfoundland and Labrador the current median age is 44 years, the highest in Canada.⁴ Based on population projections, Newfoundland and Labrador is expected to have increasing numbers of residents in the older age groups; it is estimated that by 2021, the aged 65+ population will increase to about 115,294 – a 40 per cent increase over ten years.

The Province of Newfoundland and Labrador recognizes the importance of planning for the needs and contributions of two distinct groups of older persons: the seniors of today and those of tomorrow. The Provincial Government is working to address the aging of the population through legislation, policies, programs and services. The Council supports the strategic direction of the Provincial Government as communicated to Council by the Department of Health and Community Services via its focus on "healthy aging", and 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.

¹ The quantitative demographic data in this section are derived from United Nations Population Division (2011).

² Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

³ Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency, January 2011 & Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

⁴ Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

The performance indicators that accompany the Department's mission are separate and distinct from those of the Council. The mission of the Council is embodied in Council's Terms of Reference. Its mandate is to assist the Provincial Government in preparing for an aging population and ensure that a seniors' perspective is reflected in policy development and planning for future service delivery.

ANNUAL OBJECTIVES

CREATING AN AGE-FRIENDLY NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

To facilitate its role as an advisor to the Provincial Government on aging and seniors issues, the Council further supported the Provincial Government's strategic direction of Population Health and its focus of healthy aging, by developing three annual objectives that cover the three years of this plan. This report addresses progress in the second objective completed in 2012-13. In addition, it provides indicators to describe the third objective to be completed in 2013-14. The Council has a dual responsibility in fulfilling its mandate. While seniors' points of view are presented to the Provincial Government, Council members spend considerable time conveying the Provincial Government's perspective to seniors. The objective, measure and indicators for 2012-13 are as follows:

Objective: 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.

Measure: Provided a senior's perspective.

Indicators:

1. Provided input into the development of Phase Two of the *Provincial Healthy Aging Policy Framework* (PHAPF).
2. Provided input into a provincially adapted seniors policy lens which is intended to be used in the development of policies, programs, and services.
3. Acted as a resource on issues affecting aging and seniors.
4. Participated in an annual planning day with the Interdepartmental Working Group on Aging and Seniors.

Indicator Reporting: Objective 2012-13. The following describes progress made in all four indicators.

Planned for 2012 -13	Actual Performance for 2012 - 13
<p>Provided input into the development of Phase Two of the Provincial Healthy Aging Policy Framework (PHAPF).</p>	<p>The Council has been very active in providing feedback on continued implementation of the Provincial Healthy Aging Policy Framework. Council members provided ongoing feedback as the document was under development. As well, the Council met with the Office for Aging and Seniors and the Interdepartmental Working Group on Aging and Seniors to specifically advise on the next steps which included providing input into areas for possible focus as new and ongoing initiatives are implemented under the guidance of the PHAPF. The Council was very interested in assisting in addressing the challenge of how to better-engage municipalities in discussions about planning for an aging population.</p>
<p>Provided input into a provincially adapted seniors policy lens which is intended to be used in the development of policies, programs, and services.</p>	<p>Discussions during meetings of the Council, with the Office for Aging and Seniors and the Interdepartmental Working Group on Aging and Seniors have been ongoing regarding the need for an adaptation of an existing seniors' policy lens which is intended to be used in the development of policies, programs, and services. A draft version will be circulated at the Council's next meeting for further consideration.</p>
<p>Acted as a resource on issues affecting aging and seniors.</p>	<p>The Council members continued to play an active role in identifying aging and seniors' issues, as well as offering suggestions for addressing challenges. This occurred during scheduled Council meetings through roundtables where members identified and discussed issues and concerns including, transportation options for seniors, aging in place ("aging in place" means having the health and social supports and services you need to live safely and independently in your home or your community for as long as you wish and are able.), and financial well-being. The Council's input has contributed to the establishment of an Age-friendly Transportation Grant program (Budget 2012 allocated \$1.5 million for this three-year pilot). Beginning 2012-13, a number of transportation models will be explored under this initiative. As well, members advised on the development of a healthy eating resource for</p>

	seniors which was developed by the Dietician Network for Seniors Nutrition under the Provincial Food and Nutrition Plan. The Chairperson was afforded a number of opportunities to discuss the work of the Council within the context of ongoing age-friendly communities work.
Participated in an annual planning day with the Interdepartmental Working Group on Aging and Seniors.	On June 7, 2012, the Council and the Interdepartmental Working Group on Aging and Seniors met to discuss seniors' issues. A primary focus of this meeting was a discussion regarding next steps for the Provincial Healthy Aging Policy Framework (PHAPF).

Discussion of Results: Progress continued to be made during 2012-13 to ensure that a seniors' perspective is provided to decision-makers for consideration in the development of policies, programs and services. This is evidenced through regularly scheduled meetings where "How We Conduct Our Business" guidelines are respected and a strengthened communication process exists. Documentation is prepared after each meeting identifying the major discussion points and action items, and submitted to senior officials in the Department of Health and Community Services and the Minister Responsible for Aging and Seniors. Issues and concerns raised by the Council members provide the Provincial Government with invaluable frontline opinions from the very population group for whom the PHAPF, and the Office for Aging and Seniors, serve.

The objective, measure and indicators for 2013-14 are as follows:

Objective: 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.

Measure: Potential impacts of population aging are identified.

Indicators:

1. A joint meeting of PACAS and the Interdepartmental Working Group on Aging and Seniors is held.
2. Development of a summary document.
3. Distribution of the summary document.

APPENDIX A:

Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors Members

2012 - 2013

Leo Bonnell, Chairperson - Clarendville

Maggie Chambers - Flowers Cove

Damien Collier - Goulds

Cecilia Hickey - Grand Falls - Windsor

Joan Hutchings - Mobile

Ronald Hynes - St. John's (*Passed away 2012*)

Doreen Jackman - Grand Bank (*Resigned on October 20, 2012*)

Shirley Letto - L'Anse au Clair

Agnes Murphy - Mount Pearl

Minnie Vallis - Meadows

3 vacant seats

APPENDIX B:

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 Provincial 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 the Council 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 Council 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	√		