



e-Newsletter

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Message from Parliamentary Secretary Dr. Darryl Plecas



June marks the start of summer and is a time when we celebrate and acknowledge the contributions of older adults to our province.

The provincial government proclaimed June 1st as Intergenerational Day Canada to enhance connections and understanding between younger and older people in order to help alleviate ageist attitudes. This is followed by B.C. Seniors' Week, June 7-13 and the internationally recognized World Elder Abuse Awareness day on June 15. Later in the summer, the 55+ Games will be held in North Vancouver from August 25-29, 2015. The summer can provide the opportunity for more time outside, and connecting with friends and neighbours.

Social connectedness has been shown to have extensive health benefits, especially for older adults, as it can contribute to higher self-perceived health, less loneliness and greater life satisfaction. It also helps to counteract stress and depression.

We know that significant life changes, such as the development of personal health issues or the passing of a loved one, can impact seniors' social lives. Many organizations throughout B.C. provide programs and activities that encourage social interaction and provincial initiatives like the Age-friendly grant program and Better at Home help seniors stay connected to their communities.

Supporting seniors requires collaboration and resources from communities, grassroots organizations, friends, family and all levels of government. Collectively, this approach ensures we provide a multifaceted network of supports. For example, the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Forum of Ministers Responsible for Seniors has identified social isolation as one of its priorities this year, and the federal government recently launched two New Horizons for Seniors program calls for proposals aimed at strengthening social ties.



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The first call for proposals is for pan-Canadian projects, and invites organizations to apply for funding for projects that will help prevent and reduce social isolation amongst seniors. Each project will be up to three years at between \$150,000 and \$750,000. The second is the annual **New Horizons for Seniors program call for proposals for community-based projects, which encourages** organizations to apply for funding of up to \$25,000 for projects that help empower seniors to share their knowledge, skills and experiences with others and support communities by increasing their capacity to address local issues. The deadline for both programs is July 10, 2015.

Both of these opportunities will fund projects that benefit seniors in communities across B.C. and Canada. In addition, the [Government of Canada – Action for Seniors](#) report was released last fall, a resource highlighting current federal programs for seniors, their families and caregivers. This resource dovetails with the many programs and services available to B.C. seniors, outlined in the [BC Seniors' Guide](#) and on www.SeniorsBC.ca. The report and more information on federal programs for seniors can be found at: www.Canada.ca/Seniors.

Throughout the province, organizations and municipalities have hosted events during Seniors' Week to celebrate and support older adults in their communities - an opportunity for all British Columbians to recognize seniors and their many contributions to our lives.

I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge seniors for the knowledge, skills, experience and perspective they share with society. You are an integral part of the strength of our communities.

Thank you,

Darryl Plecas

Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors to the Minister of Health

For more information about seniors' services and supports, visit www.seniorsbc.ca.