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Message from Parliamentary Secretary Dr. Darryl Plecas



I hope everyone enjoyed the holiday season and is looking forward to the new opportunities that a new year brings.

Looking ahead to 2016, I will continue to travel around the province meeting with seniors and seniors' groups to hear about the issues that matter most to them. These opportunities are helpful in making sure that we can work together to enable a high quality of life for seniors in every region of B.C.

One of the highlights of the coming year will be the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors meeting in Victoria this June. This is an opportunity for ministers to gather with colleagues to discuss their work to promote the well-being of older adults across Canada.

These types of forums help us to better anticipate and respond to the changing needs of the country's aging population, and when all levels of government work together, seniors are even better supported.

Honours for Dr. Perry Kendall, Provincial Health Officer

Dr. Perry Kendall, B.C.'s Provincial Health Officer (PHO), received the Legacy Premier's Award in 2015, and was inducted into the BC Public Service Hall of Excellence the same year. Previous honours include the Order of British Columbia (2005) for Dr. Kendall's contributions to Public Health practice and harm reduction policy and practice in B.C., and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal (2013) for his outstanding contributions to the health of all British Columbians.

Dr. Kendall, who has held the role of PHO since 1999, has devoted his professional life in British Columbia to promoting and pursuing innovative health promotion and disease prevention programs, practices, and policies. As the senior public health official in British Columbia, the PHO monitors and reports on the health of the population and provides independent advice to the Minister of Health and senior health officials on ways to improve the health of British Columbians. Health Minister Terry Lake recently said, "Over the past decade and a half, Dr. Kendall has served under multiple administrations, always acting with integrity and independence, and in the best interest of British Columbians. He has seen our province through several public health emergencies, from SARS in 2003 to H1N1 in 2009, and most recently Ebola."



Dr. Kendall is considered to be one of Canada's leading authorities on public health and drug addiction. He was co-chair of the task group on the feasibility of supervised injection site research, and was instrumental in developing needle exchange programs and Canada's first safe injection site in Vancouver in 2003. According to Dr. Kendall, this work has been one of the highlights of his career.

For more about Dr. Kendall, including his Legacy Premier's Award video, visit www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/careers/hall-of-excellence/perry-kendall

For more about the Office of the PHO, visit www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer

Seniors' Social Isolation and Social Innovation in the Comox Valley

On December 10, 2015, the B.C. Ministry of Health and the Hornby and Denman Community Health Care Society hosted an ideas exchange event in Courtenay to foster dialogue on seniors' social isolation and innovative ways to address it in the Comox Valley. The event was held on behalf of the Forum of Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Ministers Responsible for Seniors.

Social isolation is a growing issue that affects the health and well-being of seniors and their families, caregivers, and communities. The ideas exchange event brought together 40 diverse stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of social isolation among seniors and build a foundation for future work to promote seniors' social integration. While discussing ways to increase seniors' social inclusion in the Comox Valley, participants generated ideas about how innovative approaches to transportation could help to address seniors' social isolation. This work will continue at the community level in the new year.

The event included a welcome from K'ómoks First Nation Elder Mary Everson, opening remarks from Dr. Darryl Plecas, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health for Seniors, and a presentation, *Isolated and Lonely: Are Older Canadians at Risk?*, by Dr. Norah Keating, Co-director of Research on Aging, Policy and Practice at the University of Alberta. (You can read more about Mary Everson and Norah Keating on the following page.)

For more information on seniors' social isolation, see the following:

- National Seniors Council reports (2014): www.seniorscouncil.gc.ca/eng/research_publications
- How Age-Friendly Communities Can Reduce Social Isolation (Webinar), co-hosted by the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Canadian Association on Gerontology, January 27, 2016, 10-11:30 am Pacific Standard Time: www.chnet-works.ca

For more information on the Forum of F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Seniors, visit www.seniors.gc.ca/eng/working/fptf/

Meet Mary Everson



Photo courtesy of the Comox Valley Echo, www.comoxvalleyecho.com

Mary Everson is an Elder from the K'ómoks First Nation. She was born and raised in the Comox Valley. She has lived both on- and off-reserve, but returned to settle permanently on reserve lands in 1985. Mary's first language is Kwak'wala. During her 52 years of marriage, Mary and her husband raised eight children and fostered 60 children. In addition to her role as a foster parent, Mary is actively involved with the K'ómoks First Nation in organizing Potlatches and other celebrations. Mary's many years of experience living on-reserve have helped her to understand how maintaining strong ties with the community offers protection against becoming socially isolated.

Meet Dr. Norah Keating



Professor Norah Keating is a social gerontologist. She is Co-Director of Research on Aging, Policies and Practice at the University of Alberta; Professor of Gerontology at Swansea University and Extraordinary Professor at North-West University in South Africa. As part of her international research and capacity-building activities, she directs the International Association on Gerontology and Geriatrics' (IAGG) Global Social Initiative on Ageing.

Her research and capacity-building activities are in families, liveability, and care. Her recent work includes editorship of special issues on "Families and Aging in Global Context" (*Canadian Journal on Aging*, 2015) and on "Ageing and Community" (*Journal of Community and Social Psychology*, 2014). Her work on social isolation includes the book *From exclusion to inclusion in old age: A global challenge* (with Professor T. Scharf, 2012), and articles on loneliness of older Canadians.

Professor Keating is engaged in research on liveability of communities for older persons in Australia, Canada, and South Africa and on economic, health, and social costs of care in Canada and China. She has been an advisor to the World Health Organization on its *World Report on Ageing and Health* (2015).



2016 Age-friendly Community Planning and Project Grant Recipients

In an age-friendly British Columbia, older people are supported to live active, socially engaged, independent lives. Our vision is of a province where people of all ages and abilities feel included and valued in their communities. Through Age-friendly BC, the government of British Columbia is working with local governments and other partners, including the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM, www.ubcm.ca), to achieve this vision.

On December 18, 2015, the Province and UBCM announced the recipients of 2016 Age-friendly Community Planning and Project grants totaling approximately \$500,000. With this funding, 28 municipalities and regional districts across B.C. have been awarded 2016 grants of up to \$20,000 to establish or continue projects and community planning that support healthy, active seniors. For the full list of grant recipients, visit <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2015HLTH0103-002134>

For more information on Age-friendly BC, visit www.gov.bc.ca/agefriendly

Recipe: Herbed Lentil and Barley Soup

This soup is easy, healthy, colourful, delicious, and almost as thick as a stew. It's a great source of fibre and protein, which makes it especially good for vegetarians. It is also inexpensive and freezes well. You can serve it with a slice of whole wheat bread, a small green salad, and low-fat yogurt or fruit for dessert.

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Per serving:

Calories: 202

Protein: 8 g

Fibre: 5.2 g

Carbohydrate: 25 g

Fat: 7 g

Sodium: 287 mgs

Calcium: 78 mgs

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 1½ hours

Serves 4

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Ingredients

- 2 tbsp (25 mL) vegetable oil (canola)
- ½ medium onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic
- ½ medium carrot, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) parsley flakes (or 2 tbsp fresh)
- ½ cup (125 mL) green or brown lentils*
- 2½ cups (625 mL) water
- 1 tsp (5 mL) dried oregano
- 1 tsp (5 mL) dried thyme
- ½ tsp (2 mL) dried sage
- ¼ cup (60 mL) pearl barley
- 14 oz (398 mL) tin chopped tomatoes, with juice
- Lemon slices (optional)
- Seasoning to taste**

Instructions

1. In a large pot, heat oil over medium heat.
2. Add onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft and lightly browned.
3. Add garlic, carrots and parsley.
4. Cover and cook over low heat until carrots are tender.
5. Add lentils, water, oregano, thyme, sage, barley and tomatoes.
6. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook (partially covered) until the lentils are tender, about 1½ hours. If the soup is too thick, add more water.
7. Season and garnish with lemon slices.

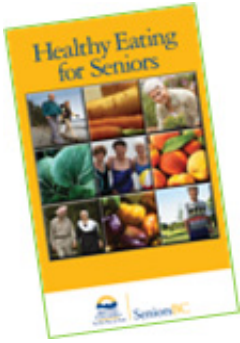
Thanks to Mohinder Sidhu of Vancouver, B.C.

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*Lentils come in three colours: red, green and brown. All are very high in fibre and folic acid (also called folate, a B vitamin). We recommend green or brown lentils for this recipe because they hold their shape better when cooked.

**See page 183 of the Healthy Eating for Seniors handbook (www.gov.bc.ca/seniorshealthyteating) for a tasty, salt-free Universal Seasoning recipe that you can use in this soup.

Healthy Eating for Seniors Handbook



See the Healthy Eating for Seniors handbook for more recipes. Healthy Eating for Seniors is available online and in print in English, French, Chinese and Punjabi, and as an audio book at all public libraries in B.C. It includes a variety of tasty recipes with nutritional information, smaller portion sizes, and cultural adaptations where appropriate.

To order a free copy, call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1, or download a PDF copy from www.gov.bc.ca/seniorshealthyeating

Upcoming Events:

- **British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society's 2016 Vancouver Island Disability and Wellness Gathering**, Victoria, February 22-24, 2016. For more information, visit www.bcands.bc.ca or email accessibility@bcands.bc.ca
- **Nidus Personal Planning Resource Centre and Registry: Free Planning Webinars**. For more information or to register for these and other webinars, visit http://bit.ly/Nidus_Presentations
 - **Planning for Financial & Legal Matters**: Enduring Power of Attorney or Representation Agreement – know your rights. Wednesday, January 27, 2016 – 11:30am to 12:30pm.
 - **Demo of the Personal Planning Registry**: Register important information and documents and make them available to the people and institutions who need to know. Register a Representation Agreement, Enduring Power of Attorney, your Will, memorial wishes and more. Wednesday, February 3, 2016 – 11:30am to 12:30pm.

Healthy Aging Tip

“Healthy aging begins now, in the present moment. It doesn’t start when you’re older or nearing retirement. Lifestyle changes now can make a huge difference later on.”

- Elizabeth Kelson, UBC instructor and postdoctoral fellow studying the social, physical, psychological and cognitive aspects of aging

Courtesy of UBC News. To read more, visit

<http://news.ubc.ca/2015/10/07/every-day-a-new-day-tips-on-healthy-aging>