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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health

### **Is your community age-friendly? Apply for recognition**

WEST VANCOUVER – Local governments can now apply to have their efforts in creating supportive environments for their community's seniors recognized.

The Age-friendly British Columbia community recognition program is offered in partnership with BC Healthy Communities and rewards a commitment to local initiatives, which allow seniors to enjoy good health and active participation in their community. To be eligible, communities must complete four steps:

- Establish an age-friendly advisory or steering committee, which includes the active participation of older adults.
- Pass a local council or district board resolution to actively support, promote and work toward becoming an age-friendly community.
- Conduct an age-friendly assessment in consultation with older adults.
- Develop and publish an action plan.

Successful communities will receive a poster celebrating their efforts and \$1,000 to help provide an age-friendly legacy project or celebration. Communities will also be required to implement an age-friendly action plan and monitor age-friendly progress by measuring and reviewing activities, and reporting publicly on action plan outcomes.

Premier Christy Clark first announced the Age-friendly British Columbia community recognition program in September 2011, and the first round of nine communities received their awards in September 2012.

Applications for age-friendly recognition will be accepted through Jan. 4, 2013. Successful applicants will be notified in the spring of 2013. For more information on how your community can apply for age-friendly recognition, please visit [www.gov.bc.ca/agefriendly](http://www.gov.bc.ca/agefriendly)

#### **Quotes:**

##### **Minister of State for Seniors Ralph Sultan:**

“This important program recognizes the efforts that communities right across this province that are making life easier for older residents. As a senior, I am well aware of the difference age-friendly initiatives can make. Simple things like barrier free buildings and mobility friendly streets and sidewalks, improved access to local business, parks and parking can make communities more accessible for seniors and their families.”

**West Vancouver Mayor Michael Smith:**

“We were thrilled to receive age-friendly recognition in September and are excited that other B.C. communities now have the opportunity to have the work they are doing to create a more supportive environment for older residents recognized. We have seen great benefits from the work we have done in conjunction with local seniors to support transportation, housing as well as services for our most vulnerable seniors.”

**Quick Facts:**

- Nine communities were presented with age-friendly recognition awards in September 2012.
- B.C.’s first nine officially recognized Age-friendly B.C. communities are: City of Duncan, Township of Esquimalt, District of Metchosin, City of Revelstoke, District of Saanich, District of Sechelt, City of Surrey, District of West Vancouver, and City of White Rock.
- By 2031, close to 1.5 million British Columbians across the province will be over 65 – almost a quarter of the province’s population.
- More than 100 B.C. communities have been supported in their efforts to create age-friendly initiatives to date, ranging from setting public policy to making physical improvements to address the needs of older residents.
- In June 2011, B.C. launched Creating an Age-friendly Business in BC, a guide for businesses to address the needs of older customers and employees.

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