

2013

# Improving Care for B.C. Seniors: An Action Plan



## REPORT ON PROGRESS

APRIL 5, 2013



Ministry of Health



## Background

On February 14, 2012, the Province released *Improving Care for B.C. Seniors: An Action Plan* (the Seniors Action Plan) to address concerns expressed by seniors, their families and care providers, as well as the provincial Ombudsperson, about seniors' care in BC.

The Seniors Action Plan commits to making system-wide change through several key actions, grouped into six thematic areas:

1. **Concerns & Complaints:** To provide appropriate avenues to have complaints heard and dealt with in a fair manner;
2. **Information:** To improve the scope, quality and access to the information seniors and their families need to understand and access services in a timely and informed way;
3. **Standards & Quality Management:** To ensure more consistent delivery of care across services;
4. **Protection:** To improve the protection of vulnerable seniors from abuse and neglect;
5. **Flexible Services:** To provide flexible services to meet care needs: and,
6. **Modernization:** To modernize the home and community care system to provide sustainable and lasting improvements that will better serve seniors across the province.

The focus of the Seniors Action Plan is on improving the system of care for seniors. The improvements we are making to services for seniors do not stop with the commitments made in the Seniors Action Plan. There are many complementary initiatives (“Related Achievements”) that support healthy aging to improve the quality of life of seniors and help them remain independent for as long as possible.

There has been considerable activity on the Seniors Action Plan this past year, and much has been accomplished (see Appendix A). This Report on Progress will provide an update on our progress to date in each theme area.

## Action Theme 1: Concerns and Complaints

The Province is ensuring that concerns and complaints about home and community care are responded to and resolved in a timely manner through the establishment of the Office of the Seniors Advocate, and through the establishment of a toll-free phone line to allow families and seniors to report concerns about care.

### Completed Actions:

- **Seniors Advocate Consultations** – Seniors Advocate consultations were held from May to July 2012 – the Ministry met in-person with over 500 seniors, families and other stakeholders around the province to solicit feedback on the potential mandate and

functions of a new Office of the Seniors Advocate. The Ministry also received over 100 written submissions from the public, senior-serving organizations and others.

- **Phone Line** – The Seniors Health Care Support Line was established in June 2012 to allow seniors and their families, or other concerned individuals in their lives, to report concerns about care. This toll-free phone line is intended to supplement existing care concern avenues with dedicated support for seniors that have complex needs. The line is available Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – with the exception of statutory holidays – by calling 1 877 952-3181 or 250 952-3181 in Victoria.

#### **Actions Underway:**

- **Office of the Seniors Advocate** – Input from the public consultation process was used to inform the work now underway to establish the Office of the Seniors Advocate. Legislation pertaining to the Office was introduced on February 20, 2013 and passed on March 14, 2013.

#### **Related Achievement Profile: *New Minister of State for Seniors***

- September 2012 – The **Honourable Ralph Sultan** was appointed as the new Minister of State for Seniors, who acts as the voice of seniors at the Cabinet table.

## **Action Theme 2: Information**

Enhancements have been made to web and print materials to improve access to information for seniors and their families so they can make informed choices about care.

#### **Completed Actions:**

- **Advance Care Planning** – April 2012 – the Ministry released *My Voice: Expressing My Wishes for Future Health Care Treatment (My Voice)*, a comprehensive guide and workbook containing advance care planning information and tools to help people prepare for their future health care. For advance care planning information, brochures, videos and the *My Voice* advance care planning guide, visit: [www.gov.bc.ca/advancecare](http://www.gov.bc.ca/advancecare).
- **Website** – September 2012 – the Ministry launched substantial changes to both the [SeniorsBC](#) website and the [Home and Community Care](#) website. Navigating and searching for information on the two websites is now made easier by organizing content

according to topics of interest to seniors and their families and by presenting updated information in plain language.

- **Inspection Reports** – September 2012 – online access to detailed residential care facility inspection reports and assisted living residence investigation reports were made available to help seniors and their family choose a care facility.
- **Care Information** – September 2012 – more information was added to the Home and Community Care website to support people in making informed decisions about their care, and covers topics such as: eligibility criteria for publicly subsidized services; how to arrange for care; costs for services, including specific information about the hardship waiver application process and how pension income splitting can affect the rates seniors pay; detailed descriptions of each service type; accountability for health, safety and quality of care; as well as how to have concerns and complaints addressed.
- **Dementia Information** – October 2012 – new information has been added to the HealthLink BC website to help individuals with dementia and their families better understand and live with dementia, including information about the Alzheimer Society's First Link program. By participating in First Link, those with dementia, their families and caregivers can receive customized information and access to helpful programs and services. In addition, on March 25, 2013, government announced an additional \$2-million provided through the Provincial Health Services Authority to continue to allow the Alzheimer Society of B.C. to expand the First Link program to reach more individuals and families throughout the province.
- **BC Seniors' Guide** – December 2012 – the 10th edition of the BC Seniors' Guide was released in English, French, Chinese and Punjabi. It covers provincial and federal programs, and includes sections on health, lifestyle, housing, transportation, finances, safety and security, and other services of interest to seniors. The 10th edition contains a new section on benefits and also provides tips on healthy aging and encourages seniors to plan ahead for future needs. For more information on the BC Seniors' Guide and instructions on how to order a free print copy, visit: [www.gov.bc.ca/seniorsguide](http://www.gov.bc.ca/seniorsguide).

#### Related Achievements:

- Two **mental health resource documents** were developed in response to identified needs within service delivery areas for seniors:
  - *Meeting Seniors' Mental Health Care Needs in British Columbia: A Resource Document (2012)*. This is a resource for those in the province involved in providing care to seniors, including planners, program managers, policy makers, mental health and other health professionals.
  - *Improving BC's Care for Persons with Dementia in Emergency Departments and Acute Care Hospitals: Findings and Recommendations (2011)*. This is the final

report of a project that examined the care received by persons with dementia in two particular areas of B.C.'s health system – emergency departments and acute care hospitals.

- The Strategies and Actions for Independent Living (**SAIL**) **Fall Prevention Program** for Community Health Workers and Home Health Professionals was updated.
  - The SAIL fall prevention program is evidence based training designed for community health workers (CHWs) and home health professionals (HHPs) who provide support to clients who receive publicly funded home support services. The goals of the SAIL program are to promote the independence and quality of life for home support service clients by reducing their risk of falling and sustaining an injury, and to integrate a comprehensive approach to fall prevention into regular practice. SAIL was updated in 2012 in collaboration with home care administrators, staff and clients, in partnership with fall prevention researchers, policy makers, and health care professionals across the province. It consists of five integrated components – training, surveillance, risk assessment, interventions and evaluation.
- **Alcohol and Aging: Know the Facts** brochure was developed and information made available online at:  
[http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/topic/2038E757D68E49D5DC8C3CD0061E8E1B/pdf/alcohol\\_aging\\_brochure\\_web.pdf](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/topic/2038E757D68E49D5DC8C3CD0061E8E1B/pdf/alcohol_aging_brochure_web.pdf)
- **Planning for Your Care Needs: Help in Selecting a Residential Care Facility** was updated and can be found at:  
<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2013/planning-for-your-care-needs.pdf>.
- **Planning for Healthy Aging** – a new section on the SeniorsBC website provides information to help seniors, their caregivers and families make plans about their future needs in all areas of their lives including housing, transportation, health, healthy eating, fall prevention and more. This will be updated with questions and checklists, and the Ministry will be creating new tools and resources to help people make choices and decisions in advance, so they can avoid making difficult decisions when it may be a time of crisis with fewer options. This can be found online at:  
<http://www.gov.bc.ca/healthyaging>.

### Action Theme 3: Standards and Quality Management

The Province recognizes the need for consistent provincewide standards for residential care services, protected by inspection and enforcement. Work is underway to improve the quality of care that seniors receive in residential care.

## Completed Actions:

- **Facility Inspections** – April 2012 – the Ministry and health authorities began increasing the focus of residential facility inspectors on high risk areas and ensuring any necessary changes are made to maintain safety. A new Risk Assessment Tool (the Tool) was developed by the Ministry together with health authorities, and includes a Facility Risk Rating that assigns a value of low, medium or high risk to the facility. With information from the Tool, licensing officers work with the facility operator to identify the actions and preventative measures needed to protect residents.
- **Standardized Benefits** – Historically, facilities regulated under the Hospital Act have had different regulatory protections for residents than facilities regulated by the Community Care and Assisted Living Act (CCALA). To address these differences, the Ministry has developed a “Plan to Standardize Benefits and Protections for Residential Care Clients (Plan)” with specific actions that demonstrate the Ministry’s ongoing commitment to ensuring that residential care services are safe, transparent, responsive and accountable. Many of the actions in the Plan take immediate steps to ensure the same standards, benefits, active oversight and inspection requirements, including public reporting of inspection reports, and complaints processes apply to all publicly subsidized residential care facilities. Many of the changes described in this Plan also apply to private-pay residential care facilities. Other key priorities to promote standardization are described in the Plan, which can be found at:  
[http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/topic/AE132538BBF7FAA2EF5129B860EFAA4E/pdf/plan\\_to\\_standardize\\_benefits\\_and\\_protections.pdf](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/topic/AE132538BBF7FAA2EF5129B860EFAA4E/pdf/plan_to_standardize_benefits_and_protections.pdf).
- **Residential Care Improvements** – in April 2013, the Ministry will release a report focusing on the changes to the quality of care received by seniors in the residential care system since the release of the Seniors Action Plan in February 2012, addressing those key actions that will make positive changes in services for seniors living in residential care facilities. Three areas for improvement identified as key actions, that would immediately improve the quality of services for seniors within residential care facilities, are regular medication reviews, enhanced training for care providers, and consistent medical oversight. In addition to the provincial perspective, an update about the improvements made in the last 12 months is provided in the report by the health authorities, the BC Care Providers Association and the Denominational Health Association, all of whom are key partners in promoting quality care in B.C.’s residential care system.

## Related Achievements:

- **Residential Care Reinvestment**– Following the restructuring of the client rate structure for residential care services in 2010, government committed to ensuring that any additional revenues from client rates were invested to improve residential care services. The Ministry of Health reported on these reinvestments in March 2012.
- **Guide to Community Care Facility Licensing** – describes the licensing and enforcement system that governs the provision of care and supervision in British Columbia’s licensed community care facilities. Available at: <http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/ccf/publications/a-guide-to-community-care-facility-licensing.pdf>.

## Action Theme 4: Protection

The Seniors Action Plan focused on protecting vulnerable seniors from abuse and neglect through the creation of a prevention, identification and response strategy. Consultations with seniors and key stakeholders have informed the new strategy. In addition, the Province has invested \$1.4-million in Community Response Networks to improve and expand community capacity to prevent and respond to elder abuse.

### Completed Actions:

- **Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy** – The province’s first elder abuse prevention, identification and response strategy – called *Together to Reduce Elder Abuse – BC’s Strategy* (TREA Strategy) – will help strengthen protections from abuse for all seniors, as well as those who report care concerns or complaints. The TREA Strategy, released March 2013, identifies key actions to reduce the prevalence of elder abuse, including the launch of a new Office to Reduce Elder Abuse, located within the Ministry of Health, and an expanded elder abuse phone line. For more information on the TREA Strategy, and information and resources to support elder abuse prevention, visit: [www.gov.bc.ca/elderabuse](http://www.gov.bc.ca/elderabuse).
- **Community Response Networks** – In February 2012, the province provided \$1.4-million to the BC Association of Community Response Networks (CRN) to expand activity in up to 100 communities across the province over three years. This funding is supporting prevention and education activities, in collaboration with local stakeholders, to reduce elder abuse and neglect in B.C. As of February 2013, there are a total of 72 communities now covered by 30 CRN agreements (several are regional agreements) with additional new communities expected to come on stream during 2013.

## Related Achievements:

- The **Home and Community Care (HCC) Policy Manual** sets out ministry requirements for health authorities in planning and delivering publicly subsidized home and community care services. In October 2012, the Ministry updated its Home and Community Care (HCC) Policy Manual to require staff to report possible abuse and neglect.
- Additions to the **Assisted Living Serious Incident Reporting Form** – Ministry of Health Policy 8.1, Serious Incident Reporting, in the provincial assisted living health and safety policies and standards, requires that operators maintain a record of incidents that occur within the residence and report serious incidents to the Registrar. It also sets out a formal process that assisted living registry staff follow to monitor operators' compliance with serious incident reporting requirements. The policy includes required and possible follow-up actions that can be taken by staff to ensure an operator takes appropriate action. The assisted living registry has reviewed the list of reportable serious incidents and has expanded it to include missing persons, a police call and flood causing personal injury or building damage.
- **Smoke alarm awareness campaign** – In March 2012, the Ministry of Justice and Surrey fire chief Len Garis launched a provincewide awareness campaign to save lives by having a working smoke alarm in every B.C. household. Fire personnel and local governments in more than 60 communities support the effort, backed by awareness-building and donations by various media, business partners and professional organizations. On March 27, 2013, the Super Save Group joined the campaign, making the additional Kidde alarms - valued at \$145,000 - available for distribution to seniors throughout the province. Recent research shows seniors make up nearly one-third of all B.C. fire victims, even though they account for just 15 per cent of the province's population.

### Related Achievements Profile: *Care Aide Registry Review*

- **Care Aide Registry** – March 2013, the Ministry released its review of the Care Aide Registry, which examined the strengths and weaknesses of the current system. The Ministry agrees with the recommendations and has developed a plan with short, mid and long term strategies that will ensure that residents, patients, their families and the service providers themselves have the confidence to know the registry is operating as it was intended to. This will include extending the mandate of the registry to include private sector care service providers and employees, and reviewing the funding model to ensure it is fair to employees, employers and clients.



## Action Theme 5: Flexible Services

The Seniors Action Plan focused on ensuring seniors have access to the supports they need to age in place in their own homes and communities. The Province has invested, in partnership with the United Way, in the expansion of non-medical home support to more communities. In addition, the Province has increased support for end of life care, established clinical guidelines for frail seniors in hospital care, established policies to provide flexibility in accommodating spouses with different care needs, and produced dementia guidelines to support caregivers.

### Completed Actions:

- **Non-medical Home Support** – February 2012 – the Ministry provided the United Way of the Lower Mainland (UWLM) with \$15 million to establish Better at Home, an innovative, community-based program that is supporting seniors to remain in their own homes longer by giving them access to simple services such as transportation to appointments, yard work, friendly visiting and housekeeping. In April 2013, the Ministry provided an additional \$5 million to UWLM to enhance Better at Home. The new funding will allow the program to expand to serve seniors in up to 68 communities throughout the province and will support the program operating in all sites through to December 2015. For more information on Better at Home, visit [www.betterathome.ca](http://www.betterathome.ca).
- **End of Life Care** – April 2012 – training for family physicians and home health teams providing end of life care was strengthened. New training materials are now available to help physicians and home health teams improve the quality of care of patients with life-limiting and chronic illnesses.
- **Palliative Support Line** – April 2012 – after-hours palliative tele-nursing support to caregivers and families in their home became available provincewide. If you have a terminal illness and are eligible to receive palliative nursing care through the provincial Home and Community Care Program, you and your loved ones and caregivers now have access to after-hours telephone support in your home, with the expansion of the After-Hours Palliative Nursing Service.
- **Hospital Care** – June 2012 – developed new clinical guidelines for frail seniors in emergency and hospitals to improve care outcomes. Clinical guidelines are documents that explain to hospital staff what the best care is for patients, based on the latest medical evidence. The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with health authorities, has developed new clinical guidelines for seniors in hospital, to make sure they get the best care to support their recovery. These guidelines are fully implemented in the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA), and all other health authorities are working on implementation now. Ministry policy requires all health authorities to have 48/6

implemented for all older adults (70+) at all acute care hospitals by the end of March 2014.

- **Accommodating Spouses** – September 2012 – the Ministry developed a new policy that provides health authorities with increased flexibility to offer the option of couples residing together in residential care when it is in their best interest and after exploring all other options to maintain the spousal relationship.
- **Dementia Guidelines** – October 2012 – improved quality of care for persons with dementia is being supported through the development of best practice, non-pharmacological approaches that can be applied in all of B.C.'s health care settings. With a specific focus on the appropriate use of antipsychotic drugs in residential care settings, best practice guidelines applied with a practical, electronic decision support tool will assist in clinical assessments and care decisions of persons who may be experiencing behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia.

#### **Actions Underway:**

- **Home Health Care** – Under Integrated Primary and Community Care (IPCC), health authorities are implementing enhanced home-based support programs to assist seniors to remain in their own homes. One example is the Home is Best program, which aims to help seniors, who otherwise would need residential care, live safely at home and avoid future hospital emergency admissions. The program specifically targets seniors waiting for a residential care bed, or residential care eligibility assessment. Under the program, additional in-home care supports are tailored to an individual's needs. Home is Best is being expanded or rolled out in all five regional health authorities, working together with physicians and community services to ensure that all available supports are integrated into a care plan that meets the needs of seniors, their families and caregivers. Regional health authorities will receive up to \$50-million annually over the next three years for targeted primary and community care programs to better support patients and their families. The community-based programs will be tailored to local needs, with a focus on enhancing supports available for patients with complex chronic conditions, those with mental health and substance use challenges, and seniors with complex care needs.

#### **Related Achievements:**

- The Provincial **Dementia Action Plan** for British Columbia released (April 2012). The action plan outlines provincewide priorities for improved dementia care through health system and service redesign work currently underway in B.C. It is intended to support collaborative action over the next two years by individuals, health professionals, health

authorities, and community organizations to achieve quality care and support for people with dementia, from prevention through to end of life.

- **Seniors' Home Renovation Tax Credit** – a refundable personal income tax credit (effective April 1, 2012) worth 10% of eligible expenses to assist seniors with the cost of permanent home renovations that improve accessibility or help a senior be more functional or mobile at home. Budget 2013 committed to continue this tax credit.
- **Age-friendly recognition** – In 2012, nine communities received Age-friendly BC Recognition awards for their actions in supporting older residents to remain healthy and active in their communities: Duncan, Esquimalt, Metchosin, Revelstoke, Saanich, Sechelt, Surrey, West Vancouver, and White Rock. In 2013, an additional eight local governments received Age-friendly BC Recognition awards for their efforts: Armstrong, Burnaby, Clearwater, Creston, Fruitvale, Kamloops, Logan Lake and Riondel.
- **Age-friendly grants** – 27 local governments received 2013 Age-friendly planning and project grants of up to \$20,000, administered through UBCM with funding from the Province. To date, 117 communities have been offered grants to complete community planning initiatives and/or projects focused on the ability of seniors to age in place.
- New **Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act** introduced in February 2013 that will make all workers in B.C. eligible to enrol in defined-contribution pension plans.

### Related Achievements Profile: *End-of-Life Initiatives*

- **Provincial End-of-Life Action Plan** – On March 25, 2013, the Ministry released the Provincial End-of-Life Care Action Plan for British Columbia, to guide health authorities, physicians, health-care providers and community organizations in planning integrated primary and community care services to meet the needs of people coping with end of life, including their families and caregivers. The action plan supports quality hospice, palliative and end-of-life care services throughout British Columbia – with a focus on supporting individuals with life-limiting illnesses to remain at home in their community, reducing the need for hospital or emergency department visits, and improving co-ordination of care across all settings. The End-of-Life Action Plan will help to improve access to quality end-of-life care for patients and families, while fostering the sustainability of B.C.'s publicly funded health care system, through service redesign and enhanced planning of services, provision of information, tools and resources, and strengthened health system accountability and efficiency. To view the plan visit: [www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2013/end-of-life-care-action-plan.pdf](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2013/end-of-life-care-action-plan.pdf).
- **Support for hospices** – as part of the End-of Life Action Plan, funding was provided to support a number of hospices as follows: \$950,000 to help complete and equip the Vancouver Hospice Society's hospice home; \$2-million for Marion Hospice in Vancouver; \$3-million for Peace Arch Hospice in White Rock; and \$2-million for Canuck Place Children's Hospice. This investment will ensure those facing end of life issues will have the medical, emotional and spiritual support they need during a challenging time in their life.
- **End-of-Life Care Centre of Excellence** – in addition to the End-of-Life Action Plan, government has committed \$2-million through the Provincial Health Services Authority to establish a Provincial Centre for Excellence in End-of Life Care. Once established, the centre for excellence will be expected to accelerate innovation and best practice in the field of quality care for people with life-limiting illnesses. Government's intent is for the centre to focus on research, education, information management, policy and clinical care. It is expected that the knowledge and tools it creates will then be shared with health-care professionals and anyone else who is interested.

## Action Theme 6: Modernization

The Province is working to ensure that our home and community care system is sustainable and continues to meet the needs of B.C. seniors. The Ministry of Health is working with seniors, health authorities, and care providers to modernize and renew the home and community care system.

### Completed Actions:

- **Patient Care Quality** – The Ministry completed a comprehensive evaluation of the Patient Care Quality Program in December 2012, which found the program is meeting its objectives to provide a clear, consistent, timely and transparent care quality complaints process for British Columbians and is replicating international best practices. The Ministry is currently working on implementing many of the recommendations included in the evaluation's final report, including raising the profile of the Patient Care Quality program in the home and community care sector, particularly for residential care.
- **Reporting Concerns** – In November 2012, the Ministry issued a Policy Communiqué establishing provincial minimum standards for health authority safe reporting/whistleblowing policies. By June 2013, all health authorities must ensure that their policies include a commitment to prevent reprisal against anyone who reports alleged wrongdoing or a care quality complaint through an established process such as a Patient Care Quality Office.

### Actions Underway:

- **Best Practices Review** – Through the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR), an independent review will be completed to provide an inventory of promising approaches across jurisdictions, including Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Japan, in order to identify opportunities to improve the system of seniors' care in B.C.
- **Better at Home Evaluation** – in addition to the United Way of the Lower Mainland (UWLM) program monitoring, learning and evaluation program, the MSFHR jointly with the Ministry of Health and the UWLM will evaluate the effect of the Better at Home program on seniors' quality of life, estimate the incremental cost/cost avoidance of the program to the health care sector, and evaluate its cost-effectiveness.
- **Licensing Review** – An independent operational review of the community care facility licensing and enforcement system for residential care will be undertaken to identify what changes are needed to ensure consistent standards of care are met across the province. A short term contract is underway to conduct a review of the current literature, an environmental scan, and a synthesis of best practices and promising future practices in regulatory work for residential care to help inform the independent review.

- **Abuse Prevention** – Work is underway to implement the provincial elder abuse prevention strategy, known as the TREA Strategy. A common theme that emerged from the consultations was the crucial need for collaboration and coordinated action across all sectors that prioritizes the voices of seniors and those who care for them, and encourages the participation of all British Columbians in this effort. It is hoped that the strategy will facilitate opportunities for all members of society to play their part to reduce elder abuse.

## The Future

As this report demonstrates, the Ministry and health authorities are making significant progress in all areas of the Seniors Action Plan. Initial efforts were focused on actions that contribute to improving administrative fairness and access to information within the current legislative and regulatory framework. For example, the updated websites improve access to and the quality of information seniors and their families need to understand and navigate the system. The Seniors' Health Care Support Line enhances seniors' opportunities to raise concerns or complaints and ensure they are heard. We are also making progress in improving the alignment of key benefits and protections for seniors in both Hospital Act and CCALA facilities.

The Ministry is committed to working through the remaining commitments in the Seniors Action Plan over the coming months. The focus will turn to the 6<sup>th</sup> theme of the plan, modernization, which is aimed at ensuring B.C.'s home and community care system is sustainable and continues to meet the needs of seniors in our province.

To learn more about the Seniors Action Plan and to track our progress toward action plan goals and related achievements, please visit: [www.gov.bc.ca/seniorsactionplan](http://www.gov.bc.ca/seniorsactionplan).

## Appendix A

### Status of Seniors Action Plan Commitments

THEME	NAME	COMMITMENTS/ACTIONS	
1. Concerns & Complaints	Consultations	Consultation over the next four to six months will provide seniors, caregivers, service providers and other organizations with the opportunity to have direct input into the future role of a seniors' advocate.	✓
	Phone Line	As of June 1, 2012, a single provincial phone line will allow you and your family to report concerns about your care. You will be provided with direct support and timely follow-up through to resolution.	✓
	Advocate Office	The Province will establish an Office of the Seniors' Advocate.	
2. Information	Advance Care Planning	Advance care planning information and tools to help you prepare for your future health care needs will be available online and through your local health authority by April 2012.	✓
	Website	Enhancements to www.SeniorsBC.ca by September 2012 will provide you with easier access to information on home and community health care programs and other services.	✓
	Inspection Reports	Online access to detailed residential care facility inspection reports and assisted living residence investigation reports will be in place by September 2012 to help you and your family choose a care facility.	✓
	Care Information	More online information about your care and support options, how to access health care services, eligibility criteria for publicly subsidized services, wait times, urgency criteria, patient charges and hardship waivers by September 2012.	✓
	Dementia Information	Information provided in October 2012 to assist you and your family to understand and live with dementia, including support provided by the Alzheimer Society's First Link program.	✓
	Seniors' Guide	Updated BC Seniors' Guide will be published by December 2012.	✓
3. Standards & Quality Management	Residential Care Improvements	Over the next 12 months, improvements will be made to the care seniors receive in residential care through regular medication reviews, enhanced training for care providers and consistent medical oversight.	✓
	Facility Inspections	Increase the focus of residential facility inspectors on high risk areas and ensure any necessary changes are made to maintain safety beginning in April 2012.	✓
	Standardized Benefits	Plan to standardize benefits and protections to all residential care clients, regardless of where care is received by January 2013.	✓
4. Protection	Elder Abuse	Ensure the protection and safety of seniors through consultation and the development of a provincial elder abuse prevention, identification and response strategy by December 2012.	✓
	Community Response Networks	Invest in the operation and expansion of Community Response Networks across the province over the next three years, which support coordinated local actions and work jointly with other organizations to prevent and respond to elder abuse and neglect.	✓
5. Flexible Services	Non-medical Home Support	Invest, in partnership with the United Way of the Lower Mainland, in the expansion of non-medical home support services in up to 65 communities across the province over the next three years, to help you age in place.	✓
	End of Life Care	Strengthen family physicians and home health teams providing end of life care through training beginning in April 2012.	✓

## Appendix A

### Status of Seniors Action Plan Commitments

THEME	NAME	COMMITMENTS/ACTIONS	
	<b>Palliative Support Line</b>	Provide provincewide after hours palliative tele-nursing support to caregivers and families in your home as of April 2012.	✓
	<b>Hospital Care</b>	Establish clinical guidelines by June 2012 for frail seniors in emergency and hospitals to improve care outcomes and establish follow up care and supports for a successful return home.	✓
	<b>Accommodating Spouses</b>	Establish policies to provide flexibility in accommodating spouses with different care needs within assisted living and residential care residences by September 2012.	✓
	<b>Dementia Guidelines</b>	Produce guidelines for dementia care to support caregivers and promote evidence based practice in all care settings by October 2012.	✓
	<b>Home Health Care</b>	Over the next two years, innovative approaches for home support services will be piloted in different communities across the province, providing greater choice and flexibility for you and your family.	
<b>6. Modernization</b>	<b>Best Practices</b>	A review of existing best practices of seniors' care across Canada and in other jurisdictions to help us design a system of care that best serves your needs.	
	<b>Licensing Review</b>	An independent review of the home and community care licensing and enforcement system for residential facilities to identify what changes are needed to ensure consistent standards of care are met across the province.	
	<b>Abuse Prevention</b>	Implementing the provincial elder abuse prevention, identification and response strategy.	
	<b>Patient Care Quality</b>	An independent review of the current patient care quality program to examine how your concerns and needs are being met and how you can best be served.	✓
	<b>Reporting Concerns</b>	Examining ways to improve the existing protections for patients and providers who report care concerns or complaints.	✓

NOTE: The above actions/commitments are from *Improving Care for B.C. Seniors: An Action Plan* (February 2012).

✓ Completed