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# Message from Parliamentary Secretary Dr. Darryl Plecas



This has been a busy spring and summer for seniors and Elders in British Columbia. June started off with Intergenerational Day Canada (June 1), followed by B.C. Seniors' Week (this year celebrated from June 7-13), World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (June 15) and National Aboriginal Day (June 21).

Most recently, the 39th Annual BC Elders Gathering was hosted by the Tsawout First Nation this year, from July 7-9 in North Saanich, and I hope everyone also enjoyed Canada Day celebrations. The Government of British Columbia applauds the work and contributions of seniors and Elders, families, communities, and the many organizations

that help make our neighbourhoods healthy, safe, and vibrant places to live, work, play and age!

During Seniors' Week, I joined Health Minister Terry Lake and many of our community partners in recognizing the great work being done in communities across the province to support seniors, Elders and healthy aging. Eleven local governments received Age-friendly BC recognition awards for 2015; and the Ministry of Health announced new funding of \$4 million to the United Way of the Lower Mainland for the Better at Home program, as well as six new Better at Home rural and remote pilot project sites.

In addition, the Province demonstrated its ongoing commitment to preventing elder abuse and neglect in B.C. communities with the announcement of \$2.6 million in funding to the BC Association of Community Response Networks. Additionally, \$700,000 in Elder Abuse Prevention Community Capacity-building grants was distributed to support 14 new initiatives to raise awareness, prevent, and respond to elder abuse in the province. You can read more about these and other exciting initiatives in this issue of the SeniorsBC e-newsletter.

I hope you enjoy your summer, and remember to be sun-safe! (For sun safety tips and information, visit [www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/healthy-living-vie-saine/environnement-environnement/sun-soleil/index-eng.php](http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/healthy-living-vie-saine/environnement-environnement/sun-soleil/index-eng.php)).

Sincerely,

**Darryl Plecas**

Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors to the Minister of Health

### Healthy aging tip:

Maintaining healthy social connections is extremely important to all of us, for our health and well-being. But many older adults are aging alone. This means they have a higher chance of becoming socially isolated—a risk factor for elder abuse. Keeping in touch with our older relatives, friends or neighbours will not only reduce this risk, it will promote good health. For more information, visit [www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/home/blog/elder-abuse-prevention-and-you](http://www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/home/blog/elder-abuse-prevention-and-you)

# Seniors Advocate Report on Seniors' Housing

On May 21, 2015, the Office of the Seniors Advocate released *Seniors' Housing in B.C.: Affordable, Appropriate, Available*—a report with 18 recommendations to improve the state of seniors' housing in the province.

To read the report, visit [www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/reports](http://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/reports)



## Seniors' Housing Programs in B.C.

Did you know that there are many programs available to help B.C. seniors make their homes more affordable and more accessible? Whether you own or rent your home, check out the links below to see if there's a program that's right for you.

**Property Tax Deferral** is a low-interest loan program that allows you to defer paying all or part of your property taxes on your principal residence if you are 55 or older, a surviving spouse of any age, or a person with a disability. For more information, including eligibility criteria, visit [www.gov.bc.ca/propertytaxdeferral](http://www.gov.bc.ca/propertytaxdeferral) or email [taxdeferral@gov.bc.ca](mailto:taxdeferral@gov.bc.ca)

**Home Owner Grant for Seniors and the Home Owner Grant Low Income Supplement**  
The Home Owner Grant for Seniors reduces the amount of property tax you pay each year on your principal residence; you may qualify for an additional reduction if your property is located in a northern and rural area. If the grant amount you qualified for was reduced because of the high assessed value of your principal residence and you have a qualifying low income, you can also apply to receive a supplement for all or part of the amount your grant was decreased. For more information, including who qualifies and how to apply, visit [www.gov.bc.ca/homeownergrant](http://www.gov.bc.ca/homeownergrant)

**Home Adaptations for Independence (HAFI)** provides financial assistance for home modifications that improve accessibility and promote safe and independent living for low-income persons with a permanent disability or diminished ability. For more information on who is eligible and how to apply, visit [www.bchousing.org/Options/Home\\_Renovations](http://www.bchousing.org/Options/Home_Renovations) or phone 1-800-257-7756.

**Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER)** provides monthly cash payments to subsidize rents for eligible B.C. residents who are age 60 or over, and who pay more than 30% of their gross monthly income toward rent for their homes. For more information on who is eligible and how to apply, visit [www.bchousing.org/Options/Rental\\_market/SAFER](http://www.bchousing.org/Options/Rental_market/SAFER) or phone 1-800-257-7756.

**Subsidized Housing for Seniors** is long-term housing with rent geared to income for eligible lower-income B.C. residents aged 55+. For more information on who is eligible and how to apply, visit [www.bchousing.org/Options/Subsidized\\_Housing](http://www.bchousing.org/Options/Subsidized_Housing) or phone 1-800-257-7756

HAFI, SAFER, and subsidized housing are managed by BC Housing. For more information about BC Housing programs for seniors, visit [www.bchousing.org/Find/Senior](http://www.bchousing.org/Find/Senior)

## Elder Abuse Prevention Community Capacity-building grants

The Province has provided funding totaling \$700,000 to support the Council to Reduce Elder Abuse (CREA) Elder Abuse Prevention Community Capacity-building grants. These grants are to support community-based awareness building, enhanced training, and improved response to elder abuse through community partnerships and collaboration. Grants of up to \$50,000 each have been awarded to 14 recipients.

For more information about CREA Elder Abuse Prevention Community Capacity-building grants, visit [www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2015/06/province-funds-work-to-raise-awareness-of-elder-abuse.html](http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2015/06/province-funds-work-to-raise-awareness-of-elder-abuse.html)

For information and resources on preventing and responding to elder abuse in B.C., visit [www.gov.bc.ca/elderabuse](http://www.gov.bc.ca/elderabuse)

# Eleven Communities Receive Age-friendly BC Recognition for 2015

On June 10, 2015, during BC Seniors' Week, the Ministry of Health announced Age-friendly BC Recognition awards for eleven B.C. communities. The Province and [BC Healthy Communities Society](#) provide Age-friendly BC Recognition awards to local governments that have committed to making their communities more age-friendly.

The District of 100 Mile House, Village of Burns Lake, Town of Golden, Village of Kaslo, City of Langford, Township of Langley, City of Richmond, District of Sooke, Sun Peaks Mountain Resort Municipality, City of North Vancouver, and District of North Vancouver each received a letter of congratulations, an Age-friendly BC Recognition award poster, and \$1,000 for a legacy project or celebration.

From barrier-free buildings and streets to increased opportunities for seniors to participate in their communities, Age-friendly BC is focused on supporting older British Columbians and ensuring they can continue to contribute their skills, knowledge, and experience to their communities. The goal of the program is to ensure communities are accessible and liveable for seniors and their families; a total of 36 communities across the province have now received Age-friendly BC Recognition.

For more information, visit [www.gov.bc.ca/agefriendly/recognition](http://www.gov.bc.ca/agefriendly/recognition)

## 6th Annual Silver Fox Run for Seniors

This year marks the 35th anniversary of Terry Fox's Marathon of Hope, and the Terry Fox Foundation wants seniors to get involved! Retirement communities are invited to host their very own Silver Fox Run or other Silver Fox event this September (if a run, or even a walk, doesn't suit your retirement community, you have complete creative license to come up with an event that will). Past events have included Terry Fox Movie Nights and even bake sales. However your community chooses to participate, the goal is to bring seniors together to have fun and raise funds for the Terry Fox Foundation and cancer research; there are no entrance fees or minimum donations required.

For more information, or to register your retirement community's September 2015 Silver Fox event, please call 1-888-836-9786 or email [bcevents@terryfoxrun.org](mailto:bcevents@terryfoxrun.org)



6th Annual  
TERRY FOX RUN  
for seniors

Hosted in-house  
No minimum pledge | No entry fee  
For more information contact:  
[bcevents@terryfoxrun.org](mailto:bcevents@terryfoxrun.org) | 1-888-836-9786

Run | Walk  
Wheel | Ride





# Better at Home Rural and Remote Pilot Project

In April 2015, the United Way of the Lower Mainland (UWLM) provided funding to non-profit organizations in six rural and remote areas of B.C. to pilot test new models for delivering Better at Home non-medical home support services to seniors living in rural and remote communities.

Better at Home Rural and Remote Pilot Project sites have been funded in the following locations:

- Arrow Lakes (serving Nakusp, Burton, Fauquier, and Edgewood)
- Columbia Valley (serving Invermere, Spillimacheen, Edgewater, Radium, Windermere, Panorama, and Canal Flats)
- North Central B.C. (serving Fraser Lake, Fort St. James, and Vanderhoof)
- Robson Valley (serving Valemount, McBride, Dunster, and Tête Jaune Cache)
- Southern Gulf Islands (serving North and South Pender Island, Mayne Island, Galiano Island, and Saturna Island)
- Granisle

Better at Home is funded by the Government of B.C. and managed by UWLM to help seniors with simple day-to-day tasks so that they can continue to live in their own homes and remain connected to their communities for as long as possible. Services vary from program to program, depending on local needs, and may include friendly visiting, grocery shopping, light housekeeping, transportation to appointments, light yard work, snow shoveling, and minor home repairs. Every senior living in a community served by Better at Home is eligible to apply for services.

For more information, or to find the Better at Home program nearest you, visit [www.betterathome.ca](http://www.betterathome.ca)

## 2015 55+ BC Games

North Vancouver will be hosting this year's 55+ BC Games from August 25-29, 2015. For more information, visit [www.55plusbcgames.org](http://www.55plusbcgames.org)

# Dementia Friends Canada and Dementia-Friendly Communities

Dementia Friends Canada was officially launched by federal Health Minister Rona Ambrose in partnership with Alzheimer Societies across Canada, at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Conference held in Edmonton, AB, June 4-8, 2015. Several Canadian Mayors and Members of Parliament signed up as the first Dementia Friends. The goal is to sign up one million Canadians by July 1, 2017. To learn more, or to become a Dementia Friend, visit [www.dementiafriends.ca](http://www.dementiafriends.ca)



The Alzheimer Society of B.C. has been working with a number of local governments in the province to support people in their communities who are living with dementia. As part of its Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative, the Society provides educational workshops and dementia-friendly policy support to local government councils, city staff, and the general public. These workshops help build understanding of dementia and of people living with dementia in our communities.

On April 21, 2015, all B.C. Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) were invited to take part in a learning event, making B.C. the first legislature in Canada to receive dementia education.

For more information, email [dementiafriendlybc@alzheimerbc.org](mailto:dementiafriendlybc@alzheimerbc.org) or visit [www.alzheimerbc.org](http://www.alzheimerbc.org)

If you are a caregiver, or are living with dementia, and would like more information or assistance, please visit the Alzheimer Society of B.C. website to locate an Alzheimer Resource Centre in your area: [www.alzheimer.ca/en/bc/Alzheimer-resource-centres](http://www.alzheimer.ca/en/bc/Alzheimer-resource-centres)



# Recipe: Got a Minute? Make a Muffin!

This Minute Muffin recipe is quick, simple, and nutritious, and makes a good breakfast. Minute Muffins are low in sugar, high in protein, and provide a good dose of fibre. And, you only need ONE MINUTE to make 'em! They take less time to make than a bowl of old-fashioned oats.

This is a single-serving recipe, but you can double the recipe, get out two mugs, and make two muffins at a time.

## Ingredients

- 1 egg, beaten
- 15 ml (1 Tbsp) milk of your choice
- 1 ml (¼ tsp) vanilla extract (optional)
- 5 ml (1 tsp) sweetener of your choice (e.g., honey or sugar)\*
- 50 ml (¼ cup) rolled oats
- 50 ml (¼ cup) ground flaxseeds or oats
- dash of cinnamon
- 5-6 berries (e.g., fresh or frozen blueberries, raspberries, or chopped strawberries)
- pinch of baking soda

## Directions

1. Lightly grease a coffee mug with butter or margarine.
2. Add the liquid ingredients to the mug and whisk with a fork.
3. Add the dry ingredients and berries (baking soda last) and stir until just combined.
4. Microwave on high for one minute!



**Note:** One minute should be enough. Any longer typically makes the muffin overly tough.

Get creative with this recipe! Substitute the berries with other seasonal fruits, like shredded apples in the fall; use baking extracts, like almond or coconut; add “mix-ins” like poppy seeds or sesame seeds.

\* Sweeten according to taste (use honey, sugar, or a couple drops of liquid Stevia; or visit [www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/home/blog/your-guide-sugars-part-2](http://www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/home/blog/your-guide-sugars-part-2) for other options). Or skip the sweetener and spread toppings on the muffin after microwaving (for example, top with jam and/or peanut butter, or try plain or vanilla Greek yogurt with slivered almonds).