

Living in the 21 Century: A Seniors Strategy
WHAT DID WE HEAR? A SUMMARY



Housing
Ageism
AgeTech
Social isolation
Preventing elder abuse
Safe medication use and deprescribing
Improving/ reorienting health services
Long-term care

Key Topics and Trends

Resilience
Diversity and equity
Intergenerational solidarity
Sharing knowledge and wisdom: research, demographics, mapping at community level, data collection and analysis, voices of older people and caregivers

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Healthy aging
Human rights



Answering Some Key Questions



- What does the BC Ombudsperson's office do?
- What are seniors' rights and responsibilities under BC adult guardianship laws?
- What is healthy aging?
- What is your vision of healthy aging?
- What are the key elements in a strategy for healthy aging?
- How do we build resilience?
- What is ageism and how do we counter it?

Some Key Messages



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- There is cause for optimism: strong public support for change = political will to act on behalf of seniors (Isobel Mackenzie)
- As we move forward, let us also remember our past, stay connected to people and nature, and trust our elders (Debra Sparrow)
- A strategy for healthy and active aging starts at the community/local government level (Malcolm Brody)
- It has to be better than it was before (Sheila Pither)
- Seniors live in communities not a health care system! (Jim Sinclair)
- Get rid of mirrors!

Some Key Messages (cont'd)



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- Everyone has the right to be safe and free from abuse and neglect (Sherry Baker)
- Both high (e.g., digital technology) and low-tech technology (e.g., telephone) play key roles in programs to reduce social isolation and loneliness (Andrew Wister)
- The global COVID-19 pandemic has been a disruptive force in all aspects of our lives. It has also really brought home the fact that we live in a digital age (Andrew Sixsmith)
- What matters to me? Having meaning in life, staying active and engaged.
- Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter (Mark Twain)

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Moving Forward: What needs to happen ...

- Mobilize! Encourage older people to take responsibility and become movers and shakers
- Advocate for age-friendly environments (e.g., in housing and communities and places of care) and public policies that support aging people where they live
- Promote and use the UN Decade of Healthy Aging to be innovative and change the narrative about aging into something positive
- Recognize the economic and social contributions of our aging population (e.g., voluntarism, caregiving)
- Create opportunities for intergenerational interaction (e.g., in education) and solidarity (counter ageism)
- Increase support to programs that help reduce loneliness and social isolation and enhance resilience

Moving Forward: What needs to happen (cont'd)

- Increase funding: for caregiving needs, home care
- Lobby for implementing the recommendations not yet implemented in the *Best of Care Report*
- Promote safe medication use: build on the Canadian Deprescribing Network, educate older people and work with seniors' groups, educate physicians and other health professionals, collect and analyze more relevant data.
- Develop policies that address seniors housing: supply, demand, and financing
- Build coalitions for housing with other groups that focus on affordable housing for all ages
- Support programs and policies that reduce the digital divide.