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## **THE NATIONAL SENIORS COUNCIL**



## **LE CONSEIL NATIONAL DES AÎNÉS**

# **‘What We Heard’ Report: Consultations on the Labour Force Participation of Seniors and Near Seniors and Intergenerational Relations October 2010 to March 2011**

**June 2011**

This report summarizes the discussions and views of participants during consultations. The views expressed in this report are those of the participants and may not reflect the official views of the National Seniors Council.





## *Letter from the Chair*

On behalf of the members of the National Seniors Council (NSC), I am very pleased to provide you with a copy of the report that summarizes the discussions held during our consultations with stakeholders on our two priorities for 2010-2011: the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors and intergenerational relations.

The consultations consisted of five regional roundtables, one national roundtable, an on-line consultation, and Council members' individual meetings with a number of experts and stakeholders. Your participation at one or more of these events was very much appreciated and your contributions, invaluable. Your views and suggestions are included in this report.

The quality of input received was complemented by the engagement and commitment demonstrated by each participant. For this, the members of the NSC are grateful. The Council will now be able to thoroughly analyze what we heard and formulate meaningful recommendations to the Government through the responsible Ministers.

The next step in the process will be the drafting of a report to be submitted to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, the Minister of Health and the Minister of State (Seniors). This report will be based on "what we heard" and will contain recommendations for government action. The Council will also give serious consideration to all of the recommended actions that were suggested by participants.

I welcome you to forward any comments on this report, and/or any additional information or views related to the two priorities, to the Council.

Again, thank you very much for your contribution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jean-Guy Soulière".

Jean-Guy Soulière  
Chair  
National Seniors Council





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## *Mandate of the National Seniors Council*

The National Seniors Council shall advise the Government of Canada, through the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and the Minister of Health, on all matters related to the well-being and quality of life of seniors, including the opportunities and challenges arising from a rapidly growing and increasingly diverse aging population. As directed by the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and the Minister of Health, the National Seniors Council shall:

- advise on current and emerging issues and opportunities related to the quality of life and well-being of seniors, both now and in the future;
- as needed, undertake activities such as commissioning research, convening expert panels and roundtables, and holding consultative meetings;
- deliver well-balanced advice, taking into account the views of experts, seniors, organizations and groups that provide seniors' programs and services, provincial/territorial advisory bodies on seniors, and other relevant stakeholders and interested parties; and
- ensure a comprehensive and collaborative approach in its examination of the policies, programs and services that have an impact on the lives of seniors by consulting with other federal departments, other levels of government and advisory bodies involved in senior-related efforts.







## *Introduction*

The National Seniors Council (NSC) was created in March 2007 to advise the federal government on matters related to seniors' well-being and quality of life.

In June 2010, responsible Ministers tasked the NSC with studying two priority areas: 1) the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors, and 2) intergenerational relations.

By 2036, nearly one in four Canadians will be a senior.<sup>1</sup> This demographic shift<sup>2</sup> will impact the economy and labour force as the baby boomers<sup>2</sup> begin to retire in great numbers. Research indicates that continued participation in the labour force can provide a sense of purpose and pleasure; an opportunity for social interaction; mental stimulation; and positive health outcomes for many seniors. Indeed, Canadians aged 55 and over currently have the fastest rate of employment growth. However, we also know that there are several barriers and challenges standing in the way of those seniors wanting to remain engaged in the labour force.

The demographic shift is changing the face of our population and will not only impact the balance of different generational cohorts, but will magnify the importance of the way different generations interact with one another. Positive intergenerational relations can serve as a source of social support and lead to the development of broad and diverse social networks<sup>2</sup>, strengthened community capacity<sup>2</sup>, and widespread social cohesion<sup>2</sup>. Thus, the Government of Canada is interested in examining what new or existing strategies and policies could foster optimal intergenerational understanding, goodwill, cooperation, and thus social cohesion as the population ages.

The NSC began consulting stakeholders on its two priorities with a series of five roundtables across Canada between October and November, 2010. The roundtables were concluded with a National Roundtable on February 28, 2011, which brought together subject matter experts on the two priority topics to confirm what was heard during the regional roundtables and to identify any information gaps. In an effort to increase the breadth of the consultation process, the Council conducted its first ever online consultation process in March 2011. Council members also undertook individual consultative meetings with stakeholders within their respective regions between December 2010 and February 2011.

The purpose of the consultation process was to hear directly from seniors, seniors' organizations, academics, research organizations, employers, sector councils, unions and

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada, 2010. Population projections: Canada, the provinces and territories. Medium projection scenario.

<sup>2</sup> Please see definitions on pages 7 and 8.



others in regards to the barriers inhibiting the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors and positive intergenerational relations, and develop ideas for policy solutions that could work to break down these barriers.

This report on ‘what we heard’ provides a general record of the input and feedback collected from stakeholders throughout the consultation process. A final report will be submitted to the Minister of HRSD, the Minister of Health and the Minister of State (Seniors) outlining key concerns and issues, and policy recommendations related to the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors and intergenerational relations.

This report summarizes the views of participants during the NSC consultation process. The views expressed in this report are those of the participants and may not reflect the views of the NSC.



## *Executive Summary*

From October 2010 to March 2011, the National Seniors Council conducted consultations with Canadians on its two priorities through various formats, including regional roundtables, a national roundtable, individual consultative meetings with stakeholders, and an online consultation. In total, the Council consulted 187 stakeholders.

Various themes presented themselves during discussions with stakeholders on both the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors and intergenerational relations. While viewpoints and input from stakeholders were varied, many ideas were shared and themes were repeated throughout each consultation.

### **The Labour Force Participation of Seniors and Near Seniors**

The Council heard that seniors and near seniors should have options in deciding whether and in what capacity they continue working. Many seniors do want to keep working beyond retirement, while others want to retire. Many seniors also have to keep working due to financial requirements, and this cohort of seniors is at particularly high risk of experiencing low job satisfaction, high stress, and lower quality of life.

Seniors and near seniors are not a homogenous group. The choice to remain engaged, re-enter, or exit the labour force is influenced by many factors and varies from one individual to another. Policies and programs that support older workers need to be flexible and able to adapt to individual circumstances.

Older Canadians who wish to remain engaged in, or re-enter the labour force face numerous barriers. Some of these included physically demanding jobs; informal caregiving responsibilities; poor health; poorly adapted physical work environments; rapid technological change; existing mandatory retirement practices; age discrimination in the workplace and ageism; inflexible human resource practices; lack of awareness of available working opportunities and options; and low job satisfaction.

Participants recommended various strategies for addressing the barriers faced by seniors and near seniors. Examples of comprehensive employment aid strategies include:

- job-searching tools, skills-matching, and free tools to help with résumé writing and interview skills;
- support for re-training and transition initiatives to help older workers perform in a different capacity;
- age-friendly work environments;
- technological training and lifelong learning initiatives;
- the abolishment of mandatory retirement at the federal private level;
- raising awareness of employment opportunities, programs and initiatives that exist for older workers;



- the provision of flexible working options and human resource practices;
- employer incentives to adopt strategies to attract and support older workers; and
- widespread positive messaging surrounding the skills, knowledge and experience that seniors and near seniors have to offer.

## **Intergenerational Relations**

The Council heard that Canadian seniors recognize the importance and value of intergenerational relationships. Connections between the generations were said to be mutually beneficial, both on an individual and societal level. Positive intergenerational relationships provide opportunities for social interaction and networking; the development of friendships and expansion of social support systems; improved social capital; and strengthened community capacity. Thus, intergenerational relationships need to be celebrated and supported.

Participants noted that society is facing intergenerational challenges in all sectors, including the family, workplace, and communities. For example, within the family, informal caregiving pressures are increasing as our population ages; grandparents are providing care to grandchildren and receiving little formal support; and immigrant families are experiencing cultural differences amongst the generations.

Within the workplace, tensions can be caused by differences in work life values and work styles. For example, younger generations may place greater importance on flexible work arrangements and work-life balance, which may be seen by older generations as a lack of commitment or willingness to work hard. There is currently poor knowledge transfer between the generations, which can erode corporate memory. Management practices often do not take into account generational differences in the workplace, and there also may be increasing competition for jobs between generations.

Within communities, volunteer organizations experience difficulties engaging younger cohorts, threatening the continuity and quality of many community supports and services. Different generations may hesitate to interact with one another due to fear and misperceptions based on age. Generations are also often segregated from one another due to poor community design, and community decision making often does not include all generations.

As the population ages, the fair distribution of resources between the generations may come into question. The media contribute to these challenges by distorting the state of intergenerational relations and communicating negative messages.

It was recommended that the government encourage different generations to work together in all areas of society and promote understanding and respect amongst each other. This can be done through positive messaging; combating ageist stereotypes; raising awareness; and supporting intergenerational projects, programming and policies that connect the generations.



# *Terminology*

## **Aging in Place**

A process which enables elderly people to grow older in the familiar and comfortable surroundings of their homes while providing them with the assistance necessary to maintain a relatively independent life style.<sup>3</sup>

## **Ageism**

Discrimination on the basis of age that makes assumptions about capacity; removes decision-making process; ignores older person's known wishes; and treats the older adult as a child.<sup>4</sup>

## **Baby Boomers**

A cohort of individuals born during the demographic birth boom between 1946 and 1964.

## **Community Capacity**

Community characteristics affecting its ability to identify, mobilize, and address problems.<sup>5</sup>

## **Demographic Shift**

The changing composition of Canada's population which reflects a shift to an older population with seniors accounting for an ever-increasing proportion of the population.<sup>6</sup>

## **Dependency Ratio**

The total demographic dependency ratio is the ratio of the combined youth population (0 to 19 years) and senior population (65 or older) to the working-age population (20 to 64 years). It is typically expressed as the number of 'dependents' for every 100 'workers'.<sup>7</sup>

## **Near Senior**

An individual between the ages of 55 to 64.

## **Older Worker**

An individual over the age of 55 who is employed or seeking employment.

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<sup>3</sup> Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 1996.

<sup>4</sup> Special Senate Committee on Aging, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> Glanz, K., Rimer, B., Viswanath, K. (2008). *Health Behaviour and Health Education: Theory, Research, and Practice*. 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Jossey-Bass: CA.

<sup>6</sup> Statistics Canada, 2010.

<sup>7</sup> Statistics Canada, 2010.



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## **Quality of Life**

A concept of standard of living that includes material and non-material well-being.<sup>8</sup>

## **Retirement**

Refers to a person who is aged 55 and over, is not in the labour force and receives 50% or more of his or her total income from retirement-like sources. Retirement-like sources include the Old Age Security pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement, benefits from the Canada Pension Plan or the Québec Pension Plan, investment and dividends and retirement pensions, superannuation and annuities.<sup>9</sup>

## **Senior**

An individual aged 65 or over.

## **Social Capital**

Relationships between community members including trust, reciprocity, and civic engagement.<sup>10</sup>

## **Social Cohesion**

Describes the strength and quantity of social connections; social trust; membership and participation in organizations; and social solidarity.<sup>11</sup>

## **Social Marketing**

The application of commercial marketing technologies to the analysis, planning, execution and evaluation of programs designed to influence the voluntary behaviour of target audiences in order to improve their personal welfare and that of their society.<sup>10</sup>

## **Social Networks**

Refers to the web of social relationships that surround individuals. Social support is one of the important functions of social networks.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Statistics Canada, 2010.

<sup>9</sup> Statistics Canada, 2010.

<sup>10</sup> Glanz, K., Rimer, B., Viswanath, K. (2008). Health Behaviour and Health Education: Theory, Research, and Practice. 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Jossey-Bass: CA.

<sup>11</sup> Policy Research Initiative, 2010.



# *Regional Roundtables*

## **Format of the Roundtables**

Five regional roundtables were held across Canada to collect input, insight, and policy recommendations from stakeholders on the two priorities of the NSC. Roundtables consisted of full-day meetings in the following locations:

- Victoria, British Columbia (October 12, 2010)
- Toronto, Ontario (October 14, 2010)
- Calgary, Alberta (October 29, 2010)
- Halifax, Nova Scotia (November 8, 2010)
- Montreal, Quebec (November 10, 2010)

The discussions at each meeting were guided by the following questions.

## **The Labour Force Participation of Seniors and Near Seniors**

1. Do seniors and near seniors want to keep working past the average retirement age?
2. Do employers recognize the value of retaining and re-hiring seniors and near seniors? How can we engage them to adopt appropriate practices to do so?
3. Seniors and near seniors may prefer to remain engaged in the labour force longer than in the past. What strategies/policies are needed to support the seniors and near seniors who wish to remain engaged?

## **Intergenerational Relations**

1. What intergenerational challenges due to the demographic shift might arise within:
  - The family
  - The workplace
  - Communities
  - Society
2. What existing or new strategies and policies would the NSC recommend to encourage positive intergenerational relations?



3. Do you know of specific models that have been successful in meeting this objective (i.e., intergenerational programs or initiatives that have been undertaken within Canada? By other jurisdictions?)

### **Locations/Participants at the Roundtables<sup>12</sup>**

The NSC used the following criteria in the selection of roundtable locations: regional representation, ethnic diversity, presence of Aboriginal seniors, proportion of seniors in the community, and presence of organizations that place a focus on the priority subject matter.

There were between 14 and 25 participants at each roundtable. Participants included a mix of representatives from seniors organizations, provincial and municipal governments, research institutions, student bodies, private companies, sector councils, unions, and other interest groups. The Chair of the NSC facilitated the discussions, co-chaired by two or three Council members. The Minister of State (Seniors) delivered opening and closing remarks at each roundtable. Staff from HRSDC attended all of the roundtables to take notes and to provide logistical and other support.

### **Roundtable Evaluations**

At the end of each session, participants were asked to complete an evaluation of the roundtable to assess whether the session met its objectives and provided an opportunity for all participants to express their thoughts and ideas. Feedback was positive, with 96% of respondents indicating that they had an excellent or good opportunity to fully express their views.

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<sup>12</sup> Please see Annex A - List of Regional Roundtable Participants.





## *The Labour Force Participation of Seniors and Near Seniors*

Many seniors and near seniors reap personal benefits from remaining engaged in or re-entering the labour force and want to work for several reasons, including staying active and engaged in society, attaining social interaction, and maintaining a high quality of life. On the other hand, it should be noted that many seniors remain engaged in the labour force due to financial requirements. This cohort of seniors may be at particularly high risk of experiencing low job satisfaction, high stress, and lower quality of life.

Participants noted that an increasing number of seniors are remaining engaged in the labour force, possibly representing a new societal trend. This is thought to be attributed to the elimination of mandatory retirement practices in the provinces/territories, and increased health and life expectancies. It was also indicated that work often contributes to one's sense of identity; that many people gain personal satisfaction from working and do not want to be defined as 'retired'.

Retirement remains an important option for many people. Some may experience a loss of excitement or interest in their work once they reach a certain age or position in their job. Others may simply prefer retirement over work and want to spend their time pursuing other interests.

Participants held that work and retirement should not be defined by age, stating that the age of 65 traditionally holds significance in Canadian society. The choice to continue working or to retire is individual and based on various factors beyond age, such as the level of enjoyment one receives from their job; the nature of past work experience; mental and physical health status; level of social engagement; and financial requirements among others. For example, a person whose working experience has been stressful may be less likely to continue working beyond retirement. Different cohorts of seniors may also demonstrate different attitudes towards working and retirement. It was hypothesized that younger boomers will generally want to remain engaged in the labour force longer due to the success and prosperity this cohort has achieved in their jobs.

Participants indicated that the meaning of work and type of employment may evolve as an individual ages. Aging is accompanied by physical changes that may not allow continued participation in a job that is physically demanding. For this reason, those who are employed in physically demanding jobs may be more likely to retire from the workforce at a younger age, or to transition to a different type of work that is less physically demanding. Participants also noted that with age, the amount of work people want to do might change. For instance, many older workers wish to work flexible or part-time hours. Many seniors also choose to continue participating in the labour force in a different capacity, rather than stopping work completely. Retirement can represent an opportunity to pursue a new job that offers enjoyment and many older workers see it as a



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time to seek new careers that are less demanding in terms of time and energy and that may involve less responsibility, such as volunteer work.

The desire and ability to continue participating in the labour force are highly dependent upon labour sector and job type. Some occupations, such as judges and doctors, encourage the participation of older workers, while others practice mandatory retirement. Discussions surrounding the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors therefore need to be held in the context of the different labour sectors. As shortages are predicted to occur in skilled labour sectors, efforts should be focused on recruiting and retaining skilled seniors and near seniors.

## **Seniors and Near Seniors Should Have Options**

An overarching theme highlighted throughout the discussions was that seniors and near seniors want options made available to them in terms of when, how and in what capacity they can retire, continue working, or re-enter the labour force. For example, many seniors may wish to return to school or begin a new career that offers enjoyment and flexible working arrangements. Others may want to pursue interests, such as starting up their own business or engaging in volunteer work within the community. Finally, some people may choose to retire and enjoy a leisurely lifestyle. Population aging should represent an opportunity, rather than a challenge, for various employment and retirement options to be offered to seniors and near seniors.

The ability to choose from various work options increases the likelihood that engagement in the labour force will contribute to quality of life, rather than diminish it. However, the reality is that many do not have the luxury of choice due to various factors, such as poor health, caregiving responsibilities, disability, exhaustion, outdated skills, or financial need. Participants emphasized the importance of distinguishing between those that have to continue working and those that choose to continue working, as their experiences, needs, and preferences are very different. In this context, participants highlighted the challenges faced by vulnerable groups, such as women, those with health issues or disabilities, and immigrant populations.

## **Improving Financial Security<sup>13</sup>**

There was a widely held view that Canadians should be able to choose when they retire and be able to live out the rest of life with dignity, without having to worry about

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<sup>13</sup> In July 2008, the General Income Supplement earnings exemption was increased from \$500 to \$3,500. In 2009, changes to the CPP were recommended by federal, provincial and territorial (F/P/T) Ministers of Finance, as part of the regular review of the CPP, conducted every three years. The changes recognize that Canadians are living longer and healthier lives, thus creating greater opportunities for employment later in life. The changes are intended to enhance flexibility, by providing CPP contributors with more options to enable them to make decisions that are right for them as they make the transition from work to retirement. These changes will be implemented gradually from 2011 to 2016.



finances. Unfortunately, for many seniors (some participants argued *most* seniors) continuing to work is, and will be, a requirement due to financial need<sup>14</sup>. People are living longer after retirement and many do not have sufficient savings and/or pension income to maintain their standards of living throughout their retirement years. It was indicated that the Canadian Pension Plan, Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement do not provide sufficient income on which to live. Many Canadians also have not invested in Registered Retirement Savings Plans and/or do not have a private pension plan<sup>15</sup>. Particular concern was expressed regarding the availability of work options for those who have low incomes and/or no employer pension income. The boomers were identified as a cohort that is particularly vulnerable due to their high rates of consumerism and delayed parenthood, resulting in many having to support children later in life.

Many participants felt that changes to both private and public pensions are necessary as they were established in an era when life expectancy was much lower than it is today, and may not be sustainable given the increase in longevity in the population<sup>16</sup>.

Suggestions for pension reform included the improved indexing of pensions to increases in the cost of living<sup>17</sup>; the implementation of a system that allows private pensions to be easily transferred and recognized inter-provincially; the establishment of regulations surrounding the use of employee pension funds by private employers in order to protect employees; the elimination of claw-backs and deductions applied to those who collect income from more than one pension plan; and the implementation of further changes to the Canada Pension Plan, as it is a universal plan. Another suggestion was the development of an additional federal pension plan that would allow anyone to contribute, regardless of employment status<sup>18</sup>.

Public education campaigns were also suggested as a means of educating Canadians regarding personal financial management and retirement planning. It was noted that some

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<sup>14</sup> Shifts from defined benefit to defined contribution plans provide for less financial certainty in retirement. Evidence suggests that private retirement income will be increasingly dependent on individually-managed defined contribution plans and discretionary savings (RRSPs, Tax Free Savings Plans, etc.). Decreasing Registered Pension Plan coverage means that younger cohorts may experience a significant reduction in their standard of living upon retirement.

<sup>15</sup> Of all taxfilers in 2008, 25.7% were RRSP contributors (Statistics Canada, 2010). In 2009, the number of Registered Pension Plan members as a percentage of the labour force was 32.6% (Statistics Canada, 2011).

<sup>16</sup> The CPP is on a solid financial footing as evidenced by the Chief Actuary of Canada's 25<sup>th</sup> Actuarial Report.

<sup>17</sup> The Canadian Pension Plan is indexed annually to the Consumer Price Index and the Old Age Security is indexed quarterly as published by Statistics Canada.

<sup>18</sup> Ministers of Finance expressed their support for such a scheme at their December 2010 meeting.



companies have workshops on retirement for their older workers and that this strategy should be adopted by all employers.

## **Participating in Volunteer Work**

While the subject of unpaid, volunteer work was not discussed in great detail at the regional roundtables, it was noted that seniors take part in a vast amount of volunteer work each year<sup>19</sup>. Volunteering offers the opportunity to remain active and engaged in society and provides an avenue to contribute skills and abilities. Participants indicated that volunteer work needs to be valued and considered in discussions of the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors.

It was indicated that workers in the voluntary sector face many of the same barriers and challenges as workers in the paid labour force. Therefore, policy action should also be targeted towards volunteer organizations. Initiatives to engage older workers in the non-profit sector, such as tax credits for volunteers, were suggested. It was also recommended that funding be put in place to hire and train more program coordinators in the non-profit sector to ensure volunteers are being utilized to their full potential.

## **An Aboriginal Perspective**

Participants indicated that work and retirement are concepts that are understood differently within Aboriginal cultures. Aboriginal seniors do not retire, but rather begin new types of work as elders, which include facilitating tradition, culture, and spirituality within the community.

Labour force statistics often do not apply to Aboriginal populations as standard survey methods are not successful in obtaining sufficient data from these groups. It was recommended that further efforts be made to investigate the situations and experiences of Aboriginal peoples in the labour force.

## **A Rural Perspective**

Rural considerations were raised during some roundtables; most notably in Halifax.

The displacement of older workers was identified as a problem in rural areas. Most rural businesses are small and are made up of few employees, many of which possess highly specified skills, while lacking other more general skills. This, along with the fact that there are fewer jobs in rural areas, can make the re-integration of rural older workers into another job very difficult, time consuming and costly due to training and new skill

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<sup>19</sup> In 2007, 36% of seniors 65 years and older volunteered and those who did gave an average of 218 hours annually (*Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians: Highlights from the 2007 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating*, Statistics Canada).



development requirements. Many displaced rural older workers are forced to re-locate in order to find employment.

Access to viable means of transportation was also identified as a barrier to labour force participation for many seniors and near seniors in rural areas.

## **Enabling Labour Force Participation**

Many seniors and near seniors are not able to stay active in the labour force because of the existence of a variety of barriers. Addressing the barriers and challenges faced by low-income seniors is of particular concern as this cohort has to keep working to ensure financial security.

### **Developing Awareness of Options**

Participants noted that often seniors and near seniors are simply unaware of what employment and retirement options are available to them. Efforts therefore need to be made to highlight opportunities for employment beyond retirement, including unpaid volunteer work, civic engagement, and entrepreneurship. Awareness needs to be raised surrounding the programs and initiatives that exist for older workers through improved dissemination of comprehensive information on the availability of work opportunities and options for seniors and near seniors. It was suggested that orientation programs that include counselling services be implemented to help seniors and near seniors find out what is available to them and provide direction to those who do not know where or how to pursue their next form of employment. These programs could be administered online, but should also include mail and telephone options since many seniors do not have access to the Internet. It was also noted that education and awareness of options is priority for all cohorts of the workforce in order to encourage younger cohorts to begin planning for their future as an older worker.

### **Recognition of Skills, Knowledge, and Experience**

Older Canadians represent an important source of skills, knowledge and experience within the workforce. The corporate memory possessed by older workers, especially within workplaces where policies and procedures are not documented, is invaluable. The loss of knowledge that is experienced when an older worker leaves the workforce can have a significant negative impact on business. Participants agreed that an exodus of the seniors cohort would be detrimental to many Canadian industries and labour sectors, such as the healthcare sector, and would thus impact all Canadians.

Participants indicated that some employers recognize and value the experience of their older workers, while others do not. Employers present at the roundtable identified their older workers as the most skilled, efficient, and reliable of their workforce. However, it was also acknowledged that most employers fail to actively hire or retain older workers.



It was further indicated that some employers actively encourage the retirement of older workers.

Participants suggested that a national conversation be held on the value of older workers. This could be used to engage all Canadians, employers and the media, and represent an opportunity to build widespread recognition of the skills, knowledge, and experience that seniors and near seniors have to offer.

### **Avoiding Detachment and Unemployment/Facilitating Employment**

Research shows that the longer one is detached from the labour force as a senior or near senior, the more difficult it is to re-enter<sup>20</sup>. Therefore, it was suggested that both the government and private sector adopt policy initiatives to encourage the continued attachment of seniors and near seniors to the labour force. Participants indicated that retaining seniors and near seniors is easier for employers than the recruitment and re-hiring of new employees. As such, a focus should be placed on re-training and lifelong learning initiatives and other means of encouraging continued engagement.

Unemployment rates for older workers have recently increased, indicating that there is a growing group of seniors and near seniors that are actively looking for work. It was suggested that research efforts be employed to determine what factors are contributing to this increase in unemployment. Programs should also be put into place to offer free services to unemployed seniors such as résumé writing<sup>21</sup> and assessment of prior skills and knowledge. The provision of job-matching and transitioning programs/services that help older workers find or change jobs based on their skill sets; the implementation of a co-op program for older workers to allow them to try different jobs and decide if they want to begin a new career in a different area of work; and the administration of training grants to those who are transitioning from one job to another were also recommended. Another suggestion was the development of a fee-for-service program for those individuals willing to pay for employment services or aids. This would require minimal funding from the government and could be a self-sustaining program. Finally, it was suggested that support models and education programs currently targeted towards youth cohorts and persons with disabilities be adapted and applied to the seniors cohort.

Existing job placement services can successfully aid seniors and near seniors find employment, but these services need to place an increased focus on finding meaningful work for their clients. Current programs that match employee skills and interests with employers are often unsuccessful in matching older workers with jobs that appropriately employ their skills, interests and experience.

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<sup>20</sup> Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2008. *Older Workers in the Canadian Economy*.

<sup>21</sup> Many provinces and territories currently provide such supports through Labour Market Development Agreements and Labour Market Agreements.





Even among seniors and near seniors who are highly skilled, qualified, and educated, a lack of access to information about employment opportunities was seen as a barrier to labour force participation. Seniors and near seniors need to have access to appropriate tools in order to seek meaningful employment matched to their skill sets. It was suggested that a national database be developed to target markets for various age groups and skill sets. This database could be coupled with a program, or ‘dating service’, to match older workers and employers based on skills, interests, and needs. It was also recommended that a program be created which would link retired individuals seeking employment, allowing them to develop support networks among peers and share information about employment opportunities. It was suggested that central locations be made available, such as libraries, for seniors and near seniors to congregate in order to learn about job opportunities within the community. This would provide easy access to employment information in a comfortable setting.

Self-employment was seen as an effective way to engage seniors and near seniors. Suggestions included the distribution of grants in order to aid seniors and near seniors to start up their own business; the development of training programs to teach seniors and near seniors how to start up a business; and the adaptation of current general initiatives for entrepreneurs to the seniors cohort.

Participants indicated that there are many immigrants who come to Canada as seniors or near seniors who experience great challenges in obtaining meaningful employment. Many are educated and skilled, but still face multiple barriers to workforce entry. Due to these difficulties, many turn towards self-employment as a solution. The particular circumstances and challenges that immigrant seniors and near seniors face was not discussed in detail and requires further study and discussion.

Finally, participants cautioned against developing employment services catered only towards seniors and near seniors to avoid the possibility of stigmatization of older individuals. All age cohorts, including youth, experience challenges obtaining meaningful employment and job-matching programming should be made available to everyone.

### **Provision of Lifelong Learning and Re-training Programs**

Throughout the roundtable discussions, an emphasis was placed on the importance of lifelong learning and re-training. Participants identified continuous learning as an important means of updating skills to maintain performance, as well as a way of developing the knowledge and competencies that can be applied to a new job.

Participants indicated that employers need to be involved in training initiatives to ensure they are successful. However, successful re-training programs and career changes are associated with such high costs that many employers and employment agencies struggle to provide these services. Employers often fail to recognize resulting benefits, such as employee retention, and are thus hesitant to develop training opportunities for their older workers. Funding, perhaps in the form of training grants, is needed for employers and



agencies to be able to offer re-training to their employees and clients<sup>22</sup>. There was also support for the development of a ‘best practice’ guide or compendium of successful training and re-training programs for older workers, which could then be translated into a job-matching program.

Training programs need to be accessible, relevant and applicable to real job requirements. Good examples include job-shadowing or mentoring programs that allow workers to develop practical experience on the job. While participants agreed that seniors and near seniors should be able to engage in the learning or training program of their choice, it was cautioned that programs should be designed to complement the skills shortages that will be seen in the labour market. Finally, it was noted that lifelong learning and re-training initiatives should include people of all ages, not just seniors and near seniors.

Participants talked about the difficulty seniors and near seniors can experience in entering the formal education system. Not only is it expensive, but there is a societal notion that post-secondary education is meant for younger cohorts. Older students can feel stigmatized and unwelcome in a classroom full of younger students, and universities largely cater their programming to younger cohorts. Participants suggested that education programs be made more accessible to seniors and near seniors. This should include information that clearly outlines what knowledge, skills and competencies will be developed through each learning program; specialized programs that follow adapted curricula; and paper registration systems for those who are uncomfortable using the Internet. Participants indicated that many seniors and near seniors learn through applied, ‘hands on’ methods and would benefit from being grouped with peers, perhaps in a separate facility, to enhance comfort and learning support. It was also recommended that tuition waivers be implemented for seniors across Canada, and that funding for lifelong learning initiatives be provided through a form of Registered Education Savings Plan adapted for seniors and near seniors. Finally, it was noted that training initiatives geared towards older adults need to be careful not to perpetuate negative stereotypes that assume older adults are difficult to re-train.

Training initiatives are seen as particularly important for immigrant seniors and near seniors. Many seniors in ethno-cultural communities are not able to speak either French or English, and while they want, or need, to work, they do not possess the necessary language skills to do so. Language training designed specifically for seniors who would like to learn one of Canada’s official languages was recommended as a way of addressing this need.

Finally, participants noted that re-training is not always a requirement in order to remain engaged in the labour force or begin on a new career path. Many seniors and near seniors are highly knowledgeable and experienced and possess developed skills that are

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<sup>22</sup> Many provinces and territories currently provide such supports through Labour Market Development Agreements and Labour Market Agreements.





transferable across occupations. Training initiatives can be costly and do not always offer maximal benefit to the student. They therefore need to be targeted towards individuals and sectors or professions that require them, and need to have clear objectives that are matched to the skills required by the respective profession. Participants warned that aimless training without an end goal of employment is a waste of resources.

## **Mentoring**

Participants acknowledged that certain labour sectors requiring physically demanding work may not be suitable for seniors, as, for example, is the case of acute care nurses who need to be able to lift patients on and off of stretchers on a regular basis. If a nurse is not physically able to meet this job requirement, then patient safety is jeopardized. Due to the physical demands associated with some jobs, many seniors and near seniors may need to transition to a new area of work or take on different responsibilities within their jobs.

Participants suggested that re-training initiatives are particularly important for those seniors who are not physically able to continue working in their current capacity. These physically demanding sectors should offer mentoring positions to their older employees to allow seniors and near seniors to continue working in a different capacity. A mentoring position would work to keep the senior or near senior meaningfully employed, while passing their knowledge and experience along to younger co-workers. Participants noted that in this area, technology could be put to good use and mentoring activities/initiatives could be conducted over the Internet.

## **Offering Flexible Options**

Participants indicated that a flexible work environment can encourage seniors and near seniors to remain engaged in the labour force. In fact, it was hypothesized that the boomers will re-define the meaning of work and will demand flexible work options. Many older workers would like to choose their hours and place of work, and be able to work on a part-time or remote basis. These options allow older workers to remain engaged in meaningful employment while providing flexibility to pursue other interests, activities, or responsibilities outside of work. Many examples of employers having success with this approach were given during the roundtables.

While some employers are interested in engaging older workers through flexible work options, others need to be educated on this concept. In some forms of employment, such as in retail and office environments, flexible working arrangements may be easily adopted. Examples of flexible programming included the implementation of job-sharing initiatives, such as employing students in the summer and seniors in the winter, and allowing employees to take sabbaticals or extended vacation leave. However, the Council also heard that many employers are resistant to offering flexible working arrangements to their employees. These employers prefer work schedules that are structured and regular. It was suggested that a program be put into place to educate employers on the value of



offering flexible work arrangements to their older employees. Another recommendation was the establishment of tax incentives for employers who adopt flexible work policies.

Participants noted that many flexible work arrangements, such as parental leave, already exist for other segments of the population. It was suggested that similar programs be applied to the older demographic. This could take on the form of a government funded sabbatical for older workers, or elder care leave.

There was general recognition that it is not only older workers who want flexible work arrangements, but employees of all ages and life stages. Any flexible work arrangements that are made available to seniors and near seniors should also be made available to other age cohorts.

### **Continuation of Benefits and Medical Coverage**

A barrier faced by many older workers to working reduced or part-time hours is the discontinuation of health benefits and medical coverage based on age, or discontinuation during short-term, contract work. The cancellation of employee assistance and wellness programs at the age of 65 was seen as discriminatory.

It was recommended that the government legislate the coverage of individuals over 65 by insurance companies. It was further suggested that employers be supported by the government to offer health benefits for part-time employees. It was also noted that people over the age of 65 have different expense profiles and would benefit from a different configuration of employee benefits. It was therefore suggested that benefits for older workers be modified to include coverage for such things as counselling services and caregiver supports. Modified health insurance schemes for seniors in the labour force could also be implemented by employers in cooperation with employees. For example, employers could give employees the option of taking a pay decrease in exchange for a more comprehensive benefits program. It was also recommended that tax incentives be put into place for employers that offer extended health and benefit plans, or disability programs to their older workers.

### **Expanding Caregiver Supports**

Participants indicated that many older workers are unable to continue working full-time due to informal caregiving responsibilities. It was recommended that expanded caregiver supports be put into place, such as income replacement<sup>23</sup> or job protections in order to allow both flexibility and opportunity for those who wish to remain engaged in the labour force while, or after, taking care of a dependant. It was suggested that healthcare

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<sup>23</sup> A Compassionate Care Benefit exists as an Employment Insurance benefit paid to Canadians who have to be away from work temporarily to provide care or support to a family member who is gravely ill and who has a significant risk of death within 26 weeks. A maximum of six weeks of compassionate care benefits may be paid to eligible people.



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resources be used to this end as replacement costs for informal caregiving have been estimated to be in the billions of dollars.<sup>24</sup>

### **Developing Age-Friendly Work Environments**

Poor physical design and layout of the work environment were identified as barriers to the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors. Inaccessible and poorly adapted workspaces can inhibit seniors' ability to perform their job. Age-friendly work environments include such things as accessible washrooms, adequate workspace lighting, and the availability of print materials in large font. Recommendations included the uptake of the Age-Friendly Communities Initiative<sup>25</sup> among businesses, as this program contains many ideas and suggestions that could be applied to the work environment.

### **Technological Change**

Participants identified technological skill level as a barrier to the labour force participation of many seniors and near seniors. Technology changes at such a fast rate that constant learning and adaptation are required to keep up with many job requirements. There is an expectation that seniors and near seniors possess technological skills and knowledge, but participants indicated that many do not.

Rapid changes in technology make it difficult for some seniors and near seniors to keep up with current skill and knowledge requirements when trying to find a new job, and may contribute to difficulties in re-entering the labour force after a period of unemployment.

Some participants contradicted this idea, indicating that high technological skills are required for a minority of jobs and thus should not affect the ability of seniors and near seniors to remain engaged in, or re-enter the labour force.

### **Combating Ageism**

Age stereotyping negatively impacts the work environment. Employers and workers often internalize negative stereotypes based on age, leading to the false beliefs that older workers are more difficult to re-train and that they are less capable and valuable than younger workers. These unfounded beliefs can encourage older workers to withdraw from the workforce. Employers may also avoid hiring seniors and near seniors and offer

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<sup>24</sup> In 2008, the cost of replacing those caregivers who provided care to seniors was estimated to be as high as \$25 billion annually (Hollander, M., Liu, G., Chappell, N. *Who Cares and How Much? The Imputed Economic Contribution to the Canadian Healthcare System of Middle-Aged and Older Unpaid Caregivers Providing Care to the Elderly. Healthcare Quarterly, 12(2) 2009*).

<sup>25</sup> The Age-Friendly Communities Initiative is lead by the Public Health Agency of Canada in partnership with other federal, provincial, territorial and non-government bodies. The project seeks to engage older Canadians by ensuring policies, services, and structures related to the physical and social environment support and enable older people to 'age actively'.



little support to their older workers simply based on unfounded assumptions of decreased competency.

The appropriate framing of messages surrounding the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors is therefore important to avoid propagating these stereotypes. Seniors need to be identified as valued participants, rather than as a cohort that needs help to remain engaged in the labour force. It was suggested that anti-ageism policies be implemented and enforced within organizations and that discrimination on the basis of age be examined by the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

### **Abolishing Mandatory Retirement<sup>26</sup>**

Within federally regulated private industries, mandatory retirement remains a protected form of age discrimination that forces employees to retire when reaching the normal age of retirement for individuals in similar positions. Some unions support the practice of mandatory retirement based on the principle that it works to diminish job competition between older and younger workers. Roundtable participants indicated that the position held by these unions may be unfounded. It was recommended that mandatory retirement be abolished at the federal level in order to allow those workers within federally regulated private professions to continue working past the normal age of retirement.

### **Supporting Employers**

Participants indicated that much of the responsibility for engaging seniors and near seniors lies with employers as they have the power to address many of the barriers and challenges that older workers face. Examples include the modification of corporate human resource practices to eliminate mandatory retirement; the implementation of phased retirement schemes; the provision of specialized training programs, and the negotiation of flexible work arrangements. A simple offer of continued employment options post-retirement may be all that is needed to retain an older worker; the problem is that many employers do not consider presenting these options to employees. Participants hypothesized that employers will eventually be forced to become competitive in offering options to older workers as more seniors and near seniors retire and labour shortages are experienced. But employers need to begin engaging in succession planning now and actively mentor younger employees to develop the skills that will be lost when the older cohort retires.

Few employers have taken action in preparation for the demographic shift and the resulting skills shortages that are predicted to occur as the boomers begin to retire. Many

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<sup>26</sup> All provinces have amended their provincial human rights code to end the practice of mandatory retirement, but with some exceptions, usually related to *bona fide* occupational requirements; New Brunswick has one other exception that allows companies to enforce mandatory retirement under the terms or conditions of a retirement or pension plan created in good faith. Mandatory retirement was banned in the federal public sector in 1986.



do not realize the impacts that the demographic shift will have on their workforce and a minority of businesses engage in succession planning. Many employers focus their action on the short term. These businesses are currently preoccupied with cost reduction in the face of a fragile economic recovery. The focus of private industry is largely productivity and profit, which means that while many employers do value their older workers, the well-being of their employees is not always a priority.

Participants indicated that most employers do not seek opportunities to retain or re-engage seniors and near seniors in the labour force. Many organizational cultures do not recognize the importance of a diverse workforce; are not under enough pressure to adapt human resource practices; and have difficulty preparing for shortages that may not be seen for many years. Many employers do not offer training programs to their older workers and some have actively encouraged older workers to leave the workforce in order to allow an influx of younger cohorts with updated training and skills. Since older workers are often the highest paid within a workforce, businesses may also encourage retirement in order to reduce costs. It was noted that employers will not likely change their practices until real shortages are detected, making it difficult to encourage employers to proactively adopt practices geared towards older workers. In the future, employers may need to re-hire seniors and near seniors in order to maintain productivity levels.

If employers are expected to implement initiatives and strategies for seniors and near seniors they need to be supported by the government, both through funding and education. It was recommended that incentives, such as tax benefits, cost sharing initiatives or grants that provide earmarked funding for training or professional development, be offered to employers who actively recruit and retain older workers. Another suggestion was the elimination of Employment Insurance payments for workers over the age of 65. The provision of incentives was identified as particularly important for small businesses, which often do not possess the resources required to offer additional programming to their employees.

Participants indicated that many employers do in fact want to improve working conditions for their older workers, but do not know how. Employers need to be provided with information and resources that relay what programs are available and how they can be implemented. Such information could be provided through an Internet portal and could include creative, low-cost strategies to support older workers. Governments should be responsible for identifying best-practices and for communicating how successful programs can be adopted by all Canadian employers.

It was suggested that an education strategy be directed towards employers to help them understand the benefits of retaining older workers and the strategies they can implement to retain their older workers. This could take the form of a training program for employers demonstrating promising human resource practices, such as offering flexible work options. Many employers do adopt innovative practices targeted at recruitment, such as maintaining a pool of retirees that they can call upon in the future, implementing



mentoring programs, and developing an age-friendly work culture. It was suggested that these examples be used to educate employers who have not yet adopted such initiatives.

It was also recommended that a national awards program be developed to recognize and publicize successful employer programs for seniors and near seniors in the labour force<sup>27</sup>. Finally, it was suggested that the negative consequences businesses have felt in the past due to the implementation of early retirement schemes should be documented and publicized to employers.

Participants felt that many human resource practices are outdated, cater to a younger workforce, and are ill-adapted to an older workforce. Human resource practices need to be reformed to acknowledge and support the characteristics and needs of older workers as well as seniors and near seniors who are seeking employment.

Participants indicated that employer incentives need to be adapted to specific industries and sectors. While some sectors will experience shortages, others will experience surpluses. Shortages are predicted to occur in highly skilled sectors, such as healthcare, and employment and re-training efforts should be targeted to these areas.

The experiences of older workers also vary according to sector. Participants indicated that awareness campaigns, training and education must be adapted for individual sectors. Thus, sector councils<sup>28</sup> were seen as potential gateways in terms of disseminating information regarding best practices, awareness, etc., to employers within their respective sector.

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<sup>27</sup> Several non-government organizations currently recognize best employers of seniors and near seniors.

- AARP International recognizes employers worldwide for their commitment to an age-diverse workforce with the Best Employers for Workers Over 50 Award.
- Workplace Institute is a Canadian organization that recognizes employers with their Best Employers Awards for 50-Plus Canadians.
- Canada's Top 100 Employers recognizes top employers for Canadians over 40.

<sup>28</sup> Sector councils are national consensus-based partnerships between business, labour and education stakeholders in economic sectors, that identify and address human resources and skills issues in a collective, collaborative and sustained manner.





## *Intergenerational Relations*

Throughout the regional roundtables the Council heard that Canadian seniors recognize the importance of intergenerational relationships within our society. Intergenerational relationships strengthen the social fabric of our families, communities and workplaces. Participants held that a balanced society is made up of people from all generations and walks of life, indicating that each generation has something to contribute. For example, a multi-generational workforce benefits from the contribution of varied skills and ensures the transmission of knowledge and experience from older to younger employees.

A healthy society was described as a society in which all people are interconnected and have relationships with individuals from all different groups and age cohorts. It was indicated that positive intergenerational relationships offer:

- opportunities for social interaction and networking;
- the development of friendships and social support systems;
- a bi-directional exchange of knowledge and understanding;
- enjoyment;
- improved social capital<sup>29</sup>; and
- the development of connections between the generations that are mutually beneficial.

Positive intergenerational relations can help to develop healthy and supportive social networks. These networks are important within Canadian society and the capacity to build them should be enhanced and encouraged. Intergenerational relations need to be celebrated and supported.

Different generations have lived through different experiences and life events. These experiences shape attitudes and values, which can differ between the generations. For example, younger generations have had different experiences with the use of technology than older generations. Participants noted the importance of understanding the motivations behind the attitudes and actions of other generations and encouraging respect for all generations by building relationships between them.

Some participants cautioned against using generational labels to characterize individuals based on age. In defining generations and associating characteristics to them, false perceptions and stereotypes can be built. It was noted that many tensions that exist within society are not due to generational differences, and some participants felt that a certain amount of tension between the generations is a normal phenomenon that has always existed. These individuals held that the state of intergenerational relations in Canada does not need to be addressed.

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<sup>29</sup> Please see definitions on page 8.



## **Intergenerational Challenges**

Many participants felt that intergenerational tensions do exist and saw a need to identify the cause of these tensions and determine what systems could be put in place to address them. It was felt that there is a general lack of communication between older and younger generations in society today, leading to the development of unfounded perceptions and stereotypes, and a lack of understanding and respect for one another. Many people have internalized stereotypes and have developed a fear of other generations as a result. Bridges need to be built between generations in order to allow for the deconstruction of stereotypes.

Some participants indicated that intergenerational tensions are generally not evident within Canadian society, but rather represent an issue that is driven primarily by theory. The study of intergenerational relationships is an emerging field of interest in Canada, but research in this field is relatively new and is less developed in Canada than in the U.S.

### **Intergenerational Challenges within the Family**

Participants described the importance of having older generations share their knowledge and life experiences with younger generations so that children may come to understand their history and develop a respect and appreciation of the life experiences of older people. Today, many children grow up without having a relationship with a grandparent and miss out on this experience.

In recent years, there has been a shift in the definition and structure of the family. People are having children much later in life, resulting in a greater age spread within the family unit. People have also become more mobile, often living great distances away from other family members. As a result of these changes and shifts, the community now provides a greater number of social support services, many of which used to be provided within the family. For example, the healthcare system now provides more long-term care services for seniors and many private care institutions exist for this purpose.

### **Informal Caregiving**

Participants acknowledged that the aging population will increase informal caregiving requirements, impacting all generations. It will also impact the ability of families to balance pressures to remain in the labour market while providing care and assistance to family members.

Informal caregiving can serve as a means of formulating positive and rewarding relationships; however, it can also be associated with high levels of stress, financial burden, and intergenerational tensions within the family, especially when there is a lack of available supports.





Many people expect that their families will provide care to them as they age. Participants indicated that this is a misguided assumption as the caregiver generation is aging and may not be able, or willing, to provide the care that is expected of them. In fact, many family members choose not to provide informal care to their loved ones and do not consider this a family responsibility as care can be sought through other means, such as through the healthcare system.

Informal caregivers need support in order to uphold with their caregiving responsibilities. Presently, supports for caregivers are scarce and are often difficult to access, especially in rural areas. Without appropriate supports and resources, including income support, caregivers can become overwhelmed and are at higher risk of developing stress related illnesses. Participants indicated that caring for one's parent is just as important as caring for a child, but that this is not recognized or acknowledged through formal supports. More supports need to be put into place to help those who want to provide care to their family members.

It was suggested that financial supports be made available to aid informal caregivers. It was also recommended that an initiative be put in place to help caregivers easily identify resources that can help them provide care, and that public supports such as those that exist for child care be made available to informal caregivers of seniors.

## **Grandparenting**

Seniors are not only care receivers, but are care providers as well. Some seniors in Canada are full-time and primary caregivers of grandchildren. In many instances grandparents willingly take on the responsibility of care for their grandchildren, but in some instances parents take advantage of this relationship and grandparents feel obligated to take on these responsibilities.

Providing full-time care to a child requires time and financial resources that can lead to exhaustion, burn out, and financial instability. There are currently no formal supports offered to grandparents caring for their grandchildren. There are also no laws in Canada giving rights to grandparents.<sup>30</sup>

It was recommended that intervention programs, such as help lines and other networks, and support teams that include advocates and specialists who can help grandparents navigate the legal system, be developed. Good intergenerational models for the support and education of grandparenting relationships exist in the U.S. and it was suggested that these models be adopted in Canada. Finally, participants indicated that child care policies

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<sup>30</sup> Four provinces, Quebec, British Columbia, Alberta and New Brunswick, as well as Yukon, have legislation specifically providing for grandparent access. Other provincial legislation as well as the federal Divorce Act allow for access applications by people other than parents without explicitly mentioning grandparents.



are increasingly important for seniors, as publicly funded child care can reduce the burden placed on grandparents who are primary caregivers of their grandchildren.

### **Immigrant Families**

Many immigrant seniors face particular challenges mitigating intergenerational relationships within the family. Immigrants who come to Canada and have children who then integrate into Canadian society and culture can experience conflicting cultural values between generations. For example, in many cultures, it is expected that family members will care for elderly relatives. Immigrant parents and grandparents may expect to be cared for by their children and grandchildren, or expect to share a household with their adult children. Younger generations within these families may reject these expectations, causing tension and conflict within the family.

The Council heard about seniors who are sponsored to come to Canada and work within their families as full-time caregivers for grandchildren. These seniors can spend many years in Canada without integrating into society because they remain isolated in the home. They can encounter difficulties navigating public services and benefiting from society as they may not learn English or French, or understand Canadian culture. These circumstances become especially significant when an immigrant senior is being abused by family members and does not have the ability to seek help from authorities.

### **Intergenerational Transfers of Wealth**

Participants noted that within the next 10 years, it is estimated there will be the largest transfer of wealth from one generation to another. Participants indicated that this transfer of wealth may increase intergenerational tensions between boomers and their children, tensions which may express themselves in the form of financial elder abuse.

### **Intergenerational Challenges within the Workforce**

As the workforce ages, certain intergenerational challenges may be magnified.

### **Generational Differences**

Different generations have different work styles and behaviours, values, needs, and goals. Moreover, training, knowledge, experience, and education are vastly different from one generation to the next. These differences can lead to conflict between generations in the workforce. For example, differing attitudes towards pensions and benefits can alter union and government decision-making and cause disparities between generations. It was recommended that corporate initiatives be developed that focus on encouraging multi-generational understanding, integration and cooperation within the workplace. This could be achieved through education and awareness of differences and how managers and employees can best address these differences. It was also indicated that there is a role for



human resource teams in terms of encouraging good intergenerational working relationships in the workforce.

Intergenerational exchanges and mentoring can also work to encourage respect and understanding in the workplace. Exchanges foster intergenerational learning that employ the value and skills that each generation has to offer. For example, older generations may be more comfortable practicing face to face, verbal communication, while younger generations may be more comfortable communicating using technology, such as by e-mail. Both forms of communication are important in today's labour force, and having each generation teach the other how to communicate effectively via different means will offer mutual benefit and positive interaction.

### **Knowledge Transfer**

Participants identified knowledge transfer between generations as an issue within the workforce. Older workers possess a great deal of valuable knowledge and experience that is often lost when they exit the workforce, leaving a gap in skills and knowledge. Effective communication and knowledge exchange is an important practice within the workplace as it holds benefits for the employer as well as intergenerational relations among employees. It was suggested that mentoring programs, as well as intergenerational communication and skill-building should be incorporated into all corporate policy.

### **Competition for Jobs**

Participants talked about younger generations encountering difficulties finding full-time employment due to the great number of boomers who have not yet left the labour force. While labour force shortages are predicted to occur, participants felt that an aging workforce may cause increased competition between the young and old for employment in certain sectors, such as the education sector.

### **Intergenerational Challenges within the Community**

An important function of community is to act as a support system to all its members. Generations building relationships with one another and helping one another was identified as an important characteristic of a community.

### **Generational Segregation**

The physical design of communities often segregates youth and seniors from each other. When we segment ourselves, we lose the ability to help and learn from one another. Locating long-term care facilities and housing for seniors on the outskirts of cities, and dividing community services and interest clubs based on age can prevent the generations from coming into contact with one another. Systemic practices and regulations can also act as barriers to the interaction of different generations. For example, child protection laws can make it difficult for adults to enter schools and interact with youth.



Shared site programming within communities and schools was suggested as a means of bringing different generations together and facilitating interaction. For example, schools can be expanded to cater to the learning needs of both children and seniors. Seniors can aid in various aspects of children's education, while youth can help teach seniors various skills such as using computers and the Internet. These types of initiatives can also serve a dual purpose of efficiently utilizing existing infrastructure. Intergenerational policies within communities can also be implemented to ensure that generations live together and truly share community spaces and services.

### **Community Organizations and Services**

Many community organizations provide beneficial and cost-effective services based on volunteer resources. Many of these organizations also experience difficulties recruiting younger generations as volunteers. Without an increase in human resources, these organizations will face challenges in providing services to the community. These organizations need to determine effective strategies to recruit younger generations. It was recommended that funding be provided to organizations that adopt intergenerational programming or services to ensure sustainability of their services.

### **Community Decision-Making**

Participants indicated that collective, intergenerational community decision making needs to take place to ensure that communities effectively support the regular interaction of all generations while supporting the needs of all age cohorts. These principles need to be made explicit and should be incorporated into strategic planning and annual reporting.

### **Age-Friendly Communities**

Age-Friendly Communities<sup>31</sup> benefit not only seniors, but everyone within a community, and therefore it was recommended that all communities adopt age-friendly policies. These policies should ideally benefit everyone, and not just specific cohorts. This focus would allow all cohorts to truly work together to achieve vibrant communities for all.

### **Developing Intergenerational Consciousness**

Participants noted the importance of developing intergenerational consciousness within communities and neighbourhoods. Suggested initiatives included educating service industries regarding the specific issues facing seniors and how their service delivery can be appropriately adapted to meet the needs of all age cohorts. Community members of all ages can also be brought together through community projects, such as those that are

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<sup>31</sup> The Age-Friendly Communities Initiative is led by the Public Health Agency of Canada in partnership with other federal, provincial, territorial and non-government bodies. The project seeks to engage older Canadians by ensuring policies, services, and structures related to the physical and social environment support and enable older people to 'age actively'.



carried out by Habitat for Humanity. These projects allow the generations to come together to achieve a common good. Participants also felt that special efforts should be made to connect isolated ethno-cultural communities with one another. This could be achieved through the establishment of an ethno-cultural committee.

## **Intergenerational Challenges within Society**

As the population ages we will have more generations living together and caring for one another than ever before. Participants indicated that specific resources and supports may need to be put into place in order to accommodate this new dynamic.

### **Resource Allocation**

The aging of the population will result in the re-allocation of resources across generations. For example, more public resources may need to be allocated to provide care and support, creating the possibility of objections, and feelings of inequity, from younger tax paying generations. An aging population will also increase the dependency ratio<sup>32</sup>, meaning there will be fewer working-age individuals to support an increased proportion of non-workers in the population, such as children and non-working seniors. The changes in the distribution of finite public resources may result in tensions between the generations; however, it was also noted that having resources benefit one generation will benefit all generations. For example, home care and caregiving resources benefit older generations receiving care, but also benefit the younger generations caring for their older relatives.

Some participants said that this type of intergenerational tension is not apparent within society and that it can be avoided by dispelling myths surrounding seniors' use of resources. It was noted that the government has a role in encouraging different generations to work together and to understand that each doesn't have to give something up to benefit the other.

### **Models of Care**

The looming demographic shift is raising questions about models of care for seniors. Participants indicated that current models of care are not sufficient to serve a growing population of seniors and that work needs to be done to improve these. For example, younger generations may be stretched for resources to provide both informal and formal care to older generations. It was indicated that younger generations need to be engaged in care strategies to prepare for the growing number of people that will need these services.

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<sup>32</sup> Please see definitions on page 7.



## **Role of the Media**

The media plays a large role in perpetuating negative stereotypes as people often adopt perceptions of other generations based upon what they see in the media. It was noted that the media can distort the state of intergenerational relations and it was recommended that the media be used instead to shed a positive light on intergenerational relationships and to communicate to all of society their value<sup>33</sup>. It was suggested that initiatives be put into place to change negative perceptions and demonstrate that seniors are an active and vital part of every community.

## **Immigrant Seniors**

Many immigrant seniors can struggle with Canadian culture and attitudes towards aging. In many cultures, seniors are highly valued and respected as leaders due to their wisdom and experience. Differences in cultural views and practices surrounding aging can cause immigrant seniors to feel isolated, abandoned and abused.

Long-term care facilities are often maladapted to the needs of immigrant seniors and do not take into account cultural differences and language barriers. It was recommended that services be made more accessible for immigrant seniors.

## **Encouraging Positive Intergenerational Relations**

### **Intergenerational Projects, Programming, and Policy**

Intergenerational projects, programming and policy were identified as means of facilitating positive intergenerational interactions and relations. These initiatives foster opportunities for positive interaction among the generations. This interaction can change the way aging and different generational cohorts are perceived, dissolving ageist stereotypes and negative attitudes. The goal of intergenerational programming is the development of a mutual respect and understanding between the generations. Participants indicated that there is a need to make a conscious effort to develop opportunities for intergenerational projects, programming, and policy.

Intergenerational programming can result in various positive side effects, such as community capacity building, the development of social support networks, projects that work to establish community resources, and the development of vibrant and inclusive communities. Many examples of successful intergenerational projects and initiatives were given by participants. They included:

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<sup>33</sup> In December 2010, a ‘Spotlight on Images of Aging’ symposium was held in Montréal to engage discussion on the challenges and opportunities associated with images of aging in society, and exchange suggestions for overcoming ageist beliefs and attitudes.



- initiatives to connect seniors and youth over the Internet;
- shared site programming that offered child care and long term care within the same facility;
- tutoring programs in schools featuring seniors helping children to improve their reading skills;
- the mobilization of youth resources in the community to help seniors with various household tasks;
- knowledge exchanges, such as seniors teaching music to youth and youth teaching online banking and e-mail tools to seniors;
- intergenerational training and education that teaches about the past experiences of older generations, or programs to teach grandparents caring for grandchildren about services and programs that are available for youth;
- mentoring programs that match an individual with an older mentor;
- team projects, such as young and old coming together to write and perform a play;
- projects for the benefit of the community, such as the development of a community garden or walking paths;
- intergenerational dialogues, such as holding an intergenerational forum at a community centre in order to discuss various community or social issues; and
- activities based on shared interests, such as the arts.

### **Characteristics of Good Intergenerational Projects, Programming and Policy**

Participants indicated that intergenerational programming needs to be identified as a social responsibility and should involve all members of a community. While there are broad shifts and changes in values and conduct across the generations, it was also noted that there are universal values and interests that can serve to unite the generations. The values of social interaction and support, and community participation and action, crosscut all generations and should be used as linkages. Interests such as culture, arts, sports, and social change are also shared by members of each generation and can be used to form a basis for intergenerational interaction. Intergenerational relations should be encouraged throughout the spectrum of all ages, and not just between seniors and youth.

Intergenerational programming needs to be well designed to achieve desired results. Projects need to build upon the similarities between generations and be developmentally appropriate and interesting for all parties involved. They should also focus on engaging boomers and other generations by catering to their interests and skills. Intergenerational programming should start young and involve school age children in order to develop positive perceptions of aging from a young age. Finally, project outcomes and results need to be measurable.

### **Coordination and Organization of Intergenerational Projects**

A multitude of intergenerational projects are taking place and have occurred in communities across the country; however, these projects are often conducted in isolation from one another on a small, short-term basis. Participants recommended the





development of a central database or inventory of intergenerational projects that includes resources and toolkits available for public use. Educational webinars were also suggested to connect communities, universities, organizations, and governments for the purposes of teaching and information-sharing on project design and successes. Technologies such as Webinars and Skype can be used to share best practices. These types of initiatives would allow people to see what is happening elsewhere and adopt similar strategies within their own communities and organizations. It would also allow an opportunity to coordinate activities and allow for efficient and continuous intergenerational programming across the country.

Participants emphasized that good leadership and organization are required to successfully implement intergenerational projects in a community. Other resources are also often needed, such as funding and access to transportation. Many small communities and rural areas often lack sufficient transportation and health service infrastructure to support community involvement by youth and seniors.

## **Supporting Research and Evaluation**

Intergenerational projects are difficult to evaluate using quantitative methods. In other words, it can be difficult to measure the benefits received from participating in an intergenerational project on a numeric scale. It can also take years for these benefits to become apparent. For this reason, there has been little evaluation of the effectiveness of intergenerational projects and programming and standard evaluation methods or criteria have not been established. While effective practices have been outlined, it is difficult to measure the highly qualitative successes of intergenerational projects. Research grants are often difficult to receive on the basis of these evaluation challenges.

Investments in intergenerational research and evaluation were recommended. It was also recommended that linkages be made between universities and community organizations in order to help communities apply for funding and appropriately evaluate projects and initiatives. Finally, it was recommended that evaluation criteria for intergenerational projects be developed and include qualitative, rather than quantitative, measures.

## **Fear and Lack of Trust**

Encouraging interaction between the generations can be a challenge due to perceived stereotypes, fear and a lack of trust of one another. However, it was also indicated that once engaged, positive outcomes are often easily achieved. Particular challenges are faced by isolated seniors who are hesitant to step outside of their comfort zone to take part in new activities with people they do not know. Another identified barrier was the hesitancy of schools and parents to allow adults to interact with children in a school setting, and increased protections due to safety concerns.





## **Engaging Aboriginal and Immigrant Populations**

It was noted that certain cultures inherently place great importance on positive intergenerational relations, such as Aboriginal populations. Within these communities it is more common to have grandparents acting as primary caregivers to grandchildren. Elders are highly respected for their wisdom and take on active roles mentoring youth. Practices within these communities have been successful and should be communicated and replicated within other communities.

On the other hand, engaging Aboriginal and immigrant populations in intergenerational projects and programs can be a challenge in some communities. Participants suggested the development of materials in various languages in order to encourage participation.

## **Community Development**

Participants indicated that the development of intergenerational support networks is something best achieved at the community level. Community resources therefore need to be available in order to mobilize the capacity for generations to support one another. It was suggested that community capacity building initiatives be put in place to provide communities with the tools to develop, implement, and sustain their own intergenerational programs. This was identified as especially important for rural communities as members tend to live larger distances away from one another. The development of community networks within all elements of society will consequently engage individuals in positive intergenerational relations.

## **Placing the Onus on All Generations**

Often the onus is placed on older generations to initiate relationships with younger cohorts. While it can be difficult to engage younger generations in intergenerational programs, participants indicated that many youth are engaged within their communities and are interested in volunteering their time to interact with seniors. Engaging youth is often simply a matter of asking them to participate. It was recommended that initiatives be put in place to encourage youth to engage older generations, such as coordinating high school students to approach seniors clubs within the community to participate in joint activities together.

## **Fostering Awareness and Education**

Intergenerational relationships affect everyone, yet their importance is somewhat unrecognized by the general population. It was felt that everyone should learn how to respond to intergenerational conflict within various contexts and that widespread education needs to take place to develop a common understanding of intergenerational relationships. It was suggested that intergenerational education be integrated into all service industry training and made a part of required job competencies.



Participants recommended that intergenerational education efforts be geared towards businesses, service industries, healthcare and commercial enterprises, as these are important points of contact within the community and make up a fundamental part of the community experience. The service industry needs to be made aware that different age groups have different needs and should adapt to meet these needs. It was also recommended that businesses and organizations in the service industry adapt their services and policies to an age-friendly framework<sup>34</sup>.

Many health professionals may not be trained in gerontology practices and therefore do not fully understand how to effectively treat and care for seniors. Gerontology training programs are also experiencing difficulties recruiting students and interns. Participants indicated that gerontological concepts be integrated into all health professional curriculums to ensure practitioners have an understanding of the aging process. Training may help to improve the quality of patient and care provider relations.

Participants indicated that educational programming in schools needs to adopt a life course perspective and incorporate intergenerational components in order to begin instilling respect and an understanding of all generations at a young age. Children need to understand the aging process in order to dispel negative attitudes about aging. It was recommended that the topic of aging be built into various aspects of education curricula. Schools should also be encouraged to organize an intergenerational or grandparents day to honour and recognize these important relationships.

Participants suggested that a National Grandparents Day be established in coordination with Grandparents Day in the U.S. in order to gain media attention and raise social awareness of the importance of intergenerational relationships. A National Grandparents Day should be accompanied by meaningful action, such as an intergenerational policy commitment or funding initiative.

## **Combating Ageism**

Ageism was raised during discussions on both priorities examined by the Council. In general, our population holds a negative view of aging, and participants felt that this attitude needs to change. Our society sees aging as a negative progression associated with fears of loss of independence, illness, death and dying. Media outlets, such as television commercials, openly portray aging in a negative light, offending many older Canadians and leading to the development of negative stereotypes associated with age. Simply defining the aging population, and its consequences, as a problem also reinforces ageist attitudes.

Participants indicated that intergenerational projects, programming and policy should be designed in ways that do not promote ageism. Our society has a tendency to perceive

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<sup>34</sup> Please refer to footnote number 31 Age-Friendly Communities on page 30.



seniors as dependent and in need of support. In fact, seniors are active contributors to society and want to be engaged in all stages of an intergenerational program, including development and implementation. Participants felt that a focus should be placed on working *with* seniors rather than *for* seniors.

All individuals in society should be regarded as equal regardless of age. Education and social marketing<sup>35</sup> strategies are needed in order to raise awareness of the value of seniors to society. Negative narratives in the media need to be replaced with messages about the skills, knowledge and experience that seniors have to offer within the workplace and society. A campaign, based on a successful model, such as ParticipACTION<sup>36</sup>, should be implemented to educate the public and dispel myths related to aging. It should also focus on the value of seniors, and not solely on what they have accomplished in their past. Some participants recommended that the term ‘senior’ be changed to a more positive word, such as ‘mentor’. Others argued that negative associations with the term ‘senior’ should be addressed. It was also indicated that there may be a role for human rights commissions in combating ageism. Finally, participants hypothesized that Boomers may re-define the concept of aging as they age and refuse to accept and internalize negative stereotypes about the aging process.

Social marketing campaigns could be used to portray aging in a positive light; however they should also portray balanced and realistic messages. These campaigns need to be careful not to perpetuate stereotypes, even if they are positive. Education strategies should be geared towards the general public, but also towards seniors themselves as they tend to internalize negative stereotypes. Strategies can include the publication of seniors success stories, or a peer support and education program. Another recommendation to combat ageism included the implementation of awards that recognize and publicize the contributions of individual seniors to the community<sup>37</sup>.

Finally, participants indicated that Canada is a diverse country made up of a myriad of different cultures and ethnicities. Canadians should capitalize on this and learn from the teachings of other cultures that hold their elders in high regard and respect the knowledge and experience of their seniors.

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<sup>35</sup> Please see definitions on page 8.

<sup>36</sup> ParticipACTION is a national not-for-profit organization that provides leadership in communications, capacity building and knowledge exchange to encourage increased physical activity among Canadians.

<sup>37</sup> The Prime Minister’s Volunteer Awards were announced in January 2011 to recognize Canadians who devote their time, energy and resources to make a difference in the lives of others. The awards include a national award to recognize lifelong achievement.



## Supporting Multi-Generational Households

Many Canadians wish to age in place rather than re-locate to a care facility. Therefore, as the population ages, multi-generational households may become increasingly common. In order to care for aging parents or adult children, many people have to accommodate their houses through costly renovations. For example, Quebec offers support for intergenerational housing, and it was suggested that similar national programming be put into place<sup>38</sup>. An example of such programming could include a home renovation tax credit. It was also recommended that building codes be modified to accommodate an aging population. For example, doorways that are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs, re-enforced bathroom walls that can be fitted with supports, etc.

### *Important Messages*

An important message conveyed was that seniors and near seniors should not be seen as one age category or considered all the same. The choice to remain engaged, re-enter, or retire from the labour force is influenced by many factors that differ from one individual to another. Participants indicated that the terms ‘senior’ and ‘near senior’ are too broad and capture various cohorts that have different characteristics, values and attitudes towards work. It was suggested that discussions of the senior and near senior populations identify distinct age groups, as an older worker who is 50 may have a much different perspective than one who is over 65.

Participants also noted that further discussions should apply both gender and ethno-cultural lenses. A focus needs to be placed on the specific experiences and circumstances of immigrant and Aboriginal populations, as they were not examined in detail during the roundtable discussions.

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<sup>38</sup> A 1998 amendment to Quebec’s *Act respecting land use planning and development* enables municipalities, if they so wish, to grant building permits for intergenerational homes or for the addition of separate dwellings to existing single-family homes. Nearly 65% of all municipalities in Québec have since adjusted their zoning by-laws accordingly in certain residential neighbourhoods.



## *The Role of the Federal Government*

Roundtable participants clearly defined several principles the government should consider in developing and implementing policy action on the two priorities. The objective of the government should not be to push Canadians to work beyond the average age of retirement. Rather, a focus should be placed on removing disincentives to the continued participation of seniors and near seniors in the labour force. Supports need to be put in place to allow individuals to stay in the labour force if they wish, while allowing flexibility to address individual responsibilities.

The federal government is an example to employers and should demonstrate leadership by providing programs and initiatives for federal employees, and moving towards the elimination of mandatory retirement at the federal private level.

Participants felt an intergenerational strategy needs to be adopted at a national level and guidelines established to inform programs and policies across the country.

Finally, participants cautioned that recommendations based on today's population data will be outdated as early as 2036, when a quarter of the population will be over the age of 65. It was suggested that research initiatives be funded which would look at population characteristics in future decades and that recommendations be based on these datasets rather than on current population characteristics.

### **Policy Development**

Participants stressed that policy development and action is required now in order to address the future challenges that the demographic shift will bring.

Seniors issues are not isolated from issues that affect other segments of the population. For example, an aging demographic may put pressures on the availability of services and programs for youth, and Canadians of all ages are contributors to the Canada Pension Plan. A recurring recommendation was that policies should be holistic and take into account the interaction of issues faced by all generations rather than focusing on one segment of the population in isolation.

Instead of focusing on the consequences of seniors and near seniors leaving the labour force, attention should be drawn to the positive aspects of keeping seniors and near seniors engaged, such as the retention of corporate memory and application of developed skills and knowledge. Policies and funding initiatives must also be flexible to support the varied needs and circumstances of older Canadians.

Participants indicated that a national policy on aging needs to be put into place in order to ensure comprehensive and collaborative programs for seniors across jurisdictions. Funding for programs needs to be linked and coordinated so that government support



takes on a holistic approach. Policies need to be diverse and flexible in order to support a diverse aging population. Addressing the challenges brought on by population aging will require cooperation between all levels of government and a coordination of policies and programs.

### **Targeted Initiative for Older Workers**

The Targeted Initiative for Older Workers (TIOW)<sup>39</sup> was identified as a good program; however participants offered suggestions for improvement. Many conditions and regulations attached to TIOW funding can make it difficult to access. Recommendations included expanding community eligibility criteria<sup>40</sup> and expansion of funding requirements to include a broader age range.

### **New Horizons for Seniors Program**

Participants commented that the New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP)<sup>41</sup> is an excellent program that has funded many innovative and successful intergenerational community projects. NHSP is a federal government program that provides funding to many not-for-profit organizations to support projects involving seniors and their communities, many of which involve intergenerational components. While participants agreed that this type of funding is good and should continue to increase, it was indicated that funding is not sufficient to sustain projects. Participants recommended the expansion of the program to include transitional and prolonged funding to ensure sustainability of projects. It was also suggested that more links be made with provincial bodies to better coordinate projects and organizations and ensure more widespread and comprehensive programming.

Communities are in need of initiatives that are broad, continuous, and linked to other initiatives. It was recommended that NHSP develop a supporting or leadership role that could link initiatives. Project summaries and successes should be made available to the public in order that communities and organizations may learn from these successes and develop intergenerational projects amongst themselves.

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<sup>39</sup> The Targeted Initiative for Older Workers is a federal provincial/territorial cost shared initiative that provides employment assistance services and employability improvement activities to assist unemployed workers aged 55 to 64 with their return to work. In some circumstances, unemployed workers aged 50 to 54 or 65 and over and still in the labour market may also participate.

<sup>40</sup> While provinces and territories are responsible for determining where a project will be delivered, as well as the design and delivery of the project, any city or town with a population of 250,000 or less that is experiencing ongoing high unemployment and/or has been significantly affected by a downsizing or closure in a single industry is eligible.

<sup>41</sup> The New Horizons for Seniors Program is a federal Grants and Contributions program that supports projects led or inspired by seniors who make a difference in the lives of others and in their communities.



## *Individual Meetings of Council Members*

The Council felt that some groups of stakeholders, specifically sector councils, employers, and unions, were not sufficiently represented during the regional roundtables. The Chair and members of the Council thus decided to undertake individual meetings within their respective regions in order to fill any information gaps that the regional roundtables may not have covered. Members of the Council individually<sup>42</sup> met with a total of 30 stakeholders throughout December 2010 to February 2011.

For the most part, information gathered during Council member meetings echoed what was heard from stakeholders at the regional roundtables. However, there were some distinctive and interesting perspectives raised that were not emphasized during the roundtables.

### **The Labour Force Participation of Seniors and Near Seniors**

Many seniors do want to keep working beyond retirement. However, some participants indicated that there is only a small percentage of workers who want to continue working beyond retirement, while there is a growing percentage that has to work due to financial need. This was deemed especially true for those employed in low-skilled jobs.

### **Entrepreneurship**

Contrary to what was heard during the regional roundtables, some participants warned against encouraging entrepreneurship among older workers as this is a high risk undertaking that often leads to bankruptcy and debt.

### **Quality of Work Life**

Quality of work life and job satisfaction were identified as important predictors of older worker retention. If employees feel they are treated and compensated fairly they are more likely to be satisfied with their work life. Increased levels of worker satisfaction are correlated with increased worker retention. Unfortunately, quality of work life is often not emphasized by employers and too many people spend their lives in jobs they do not enjoy, while also having experienced work intensification, lay-offs, increased work pressures, and wage freezes that do not keep up with levels of inflation.

Due to the current economic circumstances and global competition, employers are increasingly trying to accomplish more with less, which means employees are often stretched and not appropriately compensated for increased workloads. Under these conditions, the quality of working life suffers. Current policy initiatives, such as the

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<sup>42</sup> Please see Annex B - List of Council Members' Individual Meeting Participants.





deregulation of the use of temporary worker agencies, are also contributing to negative work life environments. When an employer uses a temporary worker agency to hire workers, they are not held responsible for providing job security or benefits of any type, thus decreasing worker satisfaction.

### **Support for Job Transitions**

The federal Labour Market Development Agreements<sup>43</sup> with provinces and territories provide some financial assistance for employees facing job transitions, however the costs of a successful transition exceed what is provided through these programs and largely fall on the individual.

Increased supports are needed to facilitate job transitions and should include training in areas such as basic reading and writing skills, exam writing, résumé writing, and computer skills. It was recommended that a work sharing program be implemented to support successful job transitions. Extended Employment Insurance supports for job transitions were also recommended. Finally, it was indicated that if supports are offered, employees will take advantage of them and will do their part to remain engaged in the labour force.

### **Employment Aids**

The Public Service Commission in Nova Scotia has developed a Diversity Talent Pool that is aimed at increasing the representation of members of designated groups within the workforce. The Pool consists of résumés of pre-screened, qualified candidates in the designated groups that are seeking casual, short-term positions in the provincial government. Short-term placements provide members of the Pool with the opportunity to gain valuable work experience and upgrade their skill sets. It was recommended that a program such as this be developed on a national scale and geared towards seniors and near seniors.

### **Skills Shortages**

In order to address skills shortages, there needs to be an understanding of where and in which occupations the shortages will occur. Once this is understood, policy action can

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<sup>43</sup> Through Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDAs), the Government of Canada invests \$1.95 billion annually in provincial and territorial programs for unemployed Canadians. LMDAs enable provinces and territories to design, deliver and manage skills and employment programs primarily for those who are eligible for Employment Insurance benefits.

LMDAs are complemented by Labour Market Agreements (LMAs), which provide funding for provincial and territorial labour market programs and services, particularly for low-skilled workers and unemployed persons who are not eligible for EI benefits.





take place to help address shortages. It was recommended that better labour market information be made available to identify shortages and compile the most up to date data.

### **Mandatory Retirement**

Some stakeholders were opposed to the elimination of mandatory retirement, and were concerned about the effect it would have on pension eligibility criteria. It was indicated that the elimination of mandatory retirement benefits only a small proportion of workers, many of who are professionals. It was suggested that mandatory retirement laws simply build in exceptions for certain professional classes.

### **Employment Insurance**

Participants indicated that older workers should be exempt from paying Employment Insurance premiums.

### **Prior Learning Assessment**

Prior learning assessment is a tool that is used to assess a worker's skills and experience. Many employers are unaware of this tool and was recommended that educational institutions partner with industry in an effort to articulate and standardize competencies related to prior learning or experience, such as knowledge gained through a course or the skills acquired through a previous job or activity.

### **Access to Transportation**

It was recommended that governments allow for easier access to various forms of transportation for seniors who are engaged in the labour force, especially if they have to work during irregular times, such as at night.

### **Combating Ageism**

One example of a strategy to educate employers included hiring gerontologists to visit corporations and sensitize them to the myths and facts surrounding the aging process and the true value of older workers.

### **The Non-profit Sector**

It was hypothesized that the non-profit sector will be called upon to play an increasingly important role in providing services to seniors. More and more provincial governments are placing the onus of various services onto community-based non-profit organizations, and many of these organizations, such as those that support chronic health conditions, are already struggling in terms of staff and resources.



There are perceptions that in the non-profit sector, jobs are of poor quality, when in reality many jobs within this sector require highly developed management skills and talent. There is also a need for training programs for employees within this sector. It was recommended that large and small non-profit organizations partner and collaborate with each other to share resources and teach one another. It was suggested that the government work with managers and volunteers to identify occupational standards within the sector. This would help volunteer coordinators to be more effective in their work.

## **The Healthcare Sector**

Within the healthcare sector, challenges are already being experienced in terms of managing the volume of demands for care. This is only expected to get worse as the population continues to age and care demands increase, highlighting the need for a national planning framework for human resources in this sector.

Nurses and primary care physicians are retiring and are not being replaced at a fast enough rate. There are currently more nurses over the age of 50 than under 30. In the nursing sector, efforts are being made to retain older nurses; however this is a difficult task as nursing is a physically demanding and often inflexible job that includes working during variable shifts, including night shifts. Even senior nurses are often not permitted to choose their work hours and complete the same daily tasks as they have throughout their entire career, which includes heavy lifting and carrying. Nurses have also experienced past lay-offs and cut-backs which have decreased feelings of loyalty to the employer.

In order to attract and retain more nurses, it was suggested that more flexible options be offered, such as allowing nurses to choose their work shifts or implementing an “80:20” model wherein the nurse participates in one day of teaching or research for every four days of regular care duties. It was also suggested that more nurses, regardless of whether they have a Doctorate of Philosophy, be recruited to teach nursing students in universities and colleges. In order to retain physicians, it was suggested that older surgeons who may not be interested in continuing working in their current capacity be provided the option to act as general practitioners instead.

## **Intergenerational Relations**

### **Intergenerational Challenges within the Workplace**

Intergenerational tensions may arise due to the increasing unemployment rates of younger workers, as well as the decreased availability of stable, full-time employment for younger workers. Employers are also increasingly denying younger generations pension plans and implementing tiered wage structures, both of which increase intergenerational inequities in the workforce.



## **Intergenerational Challenges within Society**

In Eastern provinces, younger generations are increasingly leaving to find employment elsewhere in Canada, exacerbating pre-existing demographic imbalances in this region.

## **An Important Link Between the Two Priorities**

Some participants expressed concern about the impacts the increased labour force participation of seniors and near seniors could have on society's capacity to provide informal care to loved ones. As more people remain engaged in the labour force longer, there will be an increased need for formal caregivers.





## *National Roundtable*

The National Seniors Council's national roundtable was held in Ottawa on February 28, 2011. Eighteen stakeholders<sup>44</sup> representing various organizations, such as academic institutions, municipalities, union organizations, sector councils, seniors organizations, and others participated. The purpose of the national roundtable was to bring together various expert stakeholders in order to discuss the priorities from a national perspective, confirm regional input, and identify any information gaps apparent in the findings from the regional roundtables.

For the most part, information gathered during the national roundtable echoed what was heard from stakeholders at the regional roundtables. However, there were some distinctive and interesting perspectives raised that were not emphasized regionally.

### **Ageism**

As heard throughout most of the regional roundtables, ageism was identified as a major issue linked to both priorities of the NSC. Participants indicated a need to initiate a societal and cultural shift towards intolerance of ageism, similar to the shifts that have occurred around racism and sexism. It was also suggested the Council consider ageism as a future priority for its work.

### **The Labour Force Participation of Seniors and Near Seniors**

While projections of the labour force participation of seniors indicate gradual increases in engagement, participants identified conflicting factors that might impinge upon the ability of seniors and near seniors to continue working. As the population ages, caregiving responsibilities will increase, resulting in an increasing number of adults withdrawing from the workforce in order to care for an elderly relative. Secondly, it is predicted that the pace of change in industry and information technology is not likely to slacken and an increasing number of older adults will possess outdated skills and knowledge.

### **Improving Working Conditions**

In order to encourage the continued labour force participation of seniors and near seniors, working conditions will need to improve. Current wage growth has been stagnant across Canada and employment growth has been occurring in low-skilled sectors. Working conditions will have to be made more attractive to encourage people to stay longer.

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<sup>44</sup> Please see Annex C - List of National Roundtable Participants.



## **Improving Connections Between Employers and Employees**

Participants noted that there is often a disconnect between the different levels within an organization, namely between senior management, staff, and human resources staff. This can result in a lack of awareness of various supports and programs available to employees, such as an existing corporate lifelong learning strategy. Many organizations are also unaware of the skill sets and profiles of their own employees. Participants identified integrated talent management as a possible solution to this issue as it functions to identify competency profiles within a workforce, so that the organization may work to fill knowledge or skill gaps. This strategy could also function to match mentors with mentees within the workplace based on complementary skill sets.

### **Supporting Employers**

While not a widely held view, the Council did hear that employer incentives would not work to encourage the active engagement of seniors and near seniors. Employers will always hire and retain workers based on skills, qualifications and abilities, regardless of age. Therefore, incentives offered on the basis of age of an employee would not be an effective strategy.

### **The Non-Profit Sector**

The non-profit sector is facing unique challenges in terms of population aging and employee resources. Currently, this sector is made up primarily of employees aged over 50 and under 30, with few employees in the middle range who possess the experience to take on the responsibilities of older leaders once they exit the workforce. Many non-profit organizations also function through traditional structures that do not appeal to younger generations. In order to attract younger cohorts, this sector will have to adapt organizational practices to accommodate the interest of younger generations. Participants indicated that strategies do exist to address these issues, however they are not adequately disseminated and non-profit organizations often do not have the time or resources to devote to their implementation.

## **Intergenerational Relations**

### **Adopting an Intergenerational Lens to Social Policy**

There is a need to move away from discourse involving only seniors. An intergenerational discourse or life-course perspective needs to be applied to the Council's priorities. Participants indicated that the concept of an aging society tends to be equated with seniors, when in reality an aging society affects people of all ages and cohorts. Aging is a fluid process that occurs throughout a lifetime, not a specified and isolated life stage. The importance of expanding policy strategies for seniors to include all generations was stressed, as everyone can benefit from labour force and intergenerational policy initiatives, such as improved flexibility and training within the workforce.



Lifelong learning was identified as an important concept that needs to be emphasized throughout the working life as it benefits people of all ages, not just older adults. It was also indicated that training throughout a career can help to plan and facilitate transitions later in life.

### **Considering the Health Impacts of Increased Community Engagement**

Whether remaining in the paid labour force, in a volunteer position, or participating in an intergenerational project, there are positive health outcomes associated with remaining socially active and engaged in society. Considering increasing stresses on healthcare resources, participants noted the importance of looking at the Council's priorities from a health perspective. The impact of policy action surrounding the labour force participation of seniors and intergenerational relations would include improved health outcomes, and thus reduced reliance on healthcare dollars.

### **Looking for International Best Practices**

Participants indicated that promising practices regarding intergenerational programming, projects, and policy can be found internationally. The U.S. has played a leadership role in the field of intergenerational relations. Various national demonstration projects in addition to thousands of community projects have been conducted across the country (e.g. Experience Corps<sup>45</sup>). In the U.S., centres established for intergenerational research have also provided leadership in terms of policy.

Japan has experienced population aging at a more accelerated rate than Canada. It has had more experience dealing with the associated challenges and has already implemented measures to address them. For example, corporations such as Toyota have adopted age-friendly environments for their older workers that include various adaptations, such as larger computer screens.

### **Intergenerational Projects, Programming, and Policy**

Participants noted the value of reverse mentoring opportunities, where younger generations mentor older ones in various situations. Often younger generations are not valued for their unique knowledge and experience. Older generations can learn from younger generations in many instances, therefore mentoring need not always involve older individuals leading the young.

Participants recommended the development of a national intergenerational program based on Canadian values and principles, much like the country's approach to diversity and social inclusion. Such a program could be tailored to different ethno-cultural and

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<sup>45</sup> Experience Corps is a national program within the United States that engages people over the age of 55 as tutors and mentors to students in their communities.



socio-economic groups and help raise awareness of intergenerational projects by publishing success stories and innovative initiatives. The program could also include a knowledge component through the establishment of a centre of excellence on intergenerational programming. This could include a knowledge development and dissemination function, a research and evaluation component, and the appointment of granting councils for intergenerational projects.

### **Informal Caregiving**

Participants suggested a number of options in terms of caregiver supports. These included flexible options with respect to employment and the implementation of an elder care drop out provision in the Canada Pension Plan. Participants indicated that caregiving should represent a major priority focus of the government as it will affect an increasingly large proportion of people as the population ages.

### **Policy Action**

Policy action needs to involve strong partnerships between private sector organizations and government. It was noted that initiatives for older workers and those that encourage positive intergenerational relations cannot rely solely on government for long-term, sustainable funding.

### **There Is No Silver Bullet**

Government responses to the Council's priorities will have to be varied in order to sufficiently address the issues of concern.





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## *Online Consultation*

To increase the range and breadth of the consultation process, a targeted online consultation was launched on March 21, 2011. Consistent with established departmental policies, the consultation was terminated on March 29, 2011 because of the federal election call. The online consultation used the same consultation questions as the regional roundtables<sup>46</sup> and a total of 33 stakeholders<sup>47</sup> responded.

For the most part, information gathered during the online consultation reflected that heard from stakeholders during the roundtables and individual meetings with Council members. However, there were some distinctive and interesting perspectives raised.

### **The Labour Force Participation of Seniors and Near Seniors**

As was heard throughout the roundtables, participants indicated that seniors' and near seniors' preferences in terms continued labour force participation are dependent upon personal circumstance and experience, labour sector, and job type. The majority of seniors and near seniors would prefer to retire with a decent pension and remain active, though not necessarily in the labour force. Examples of activities cited include engaging in volunteer work or caring for an older parent.

#### **Encouraging Labour Force Participation**

It was suggested that tax incentives be put into place for those older workers who decide to continue working or return to work beyond the average retirement age.

#### **Caution Surrounding Changes to CPP and Pension Schemes**

Pension changes that encourage individuals to remain engaged in the labour force longer must not actively discourage those who would like to retire from retiring. For example, some private pensions employ averaging formulas that penalize individuals if they decide to work part-time rather than full-time for the last five years of their working life. These pension schemes should be reviewed and adapted<sup>48</sup>.

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<sup>46</sup> Please see consultation questions on page 9.

<sup>47</sup> Please see Annex D - List of Online Consultation Participants

<sup>48</sup> The CPP will be fully actuarially neutral in 2016. The 'Work Cessation Test', which forces employees to stop working for a period of time before collecting CPP benefits will be abolished on January 1, 2012.



## **Gender Considerations**

When examining the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors it is important to consider gender, as women are most often charged with caregiving duties that can prevent them from entering the labour force.

## **Volunteer Work**

Participants indicated that there can be a lack of respect for those individuals who choose to do volunteer work. Sometimes it is not recognized that these individuals are highly skilled, capable, and knowledgeable due to their past experience within the workforce.

## **Encouraging Positive Intergenerational Relations**

Recommendations in terms of the allocation of public resources were put forward as a means of reducing tension between the generations. For example, it was recommended that changes to the CPP be implemented so that retired individuals are less likely to require financial aid or support from younger cohorts. Improvements to home care programs were recommended as means of decreasing the need for younger generations to provide care to their older relatives. Finally, the implementation of a national pharmacare program was recommended as a means of controlling increased healthcare costs that are perceived to be a result of the aging population. Participants recommended looking towards international examples of pharmacare programs, such as those in New Zealand and Australia.

## **Caregiving Responsibilities**

The challenge of balancing caregiving responsibilities, work, and in some cases school, will be felt by an increasing number of younger individuals as the population ages and caregiving needs increase. In the face of projected increased caregiving demands, participants stressed the importance of having a supportive and functional healthcare system in place. The government of Manitoba was identified as having an exemplary home care program.

## **The Rights of Grandparents**

Participants indicated that the increase in divorce and separation in today's society has resulted in many grandparents losing contact with their grandchildren. It was argued that grandparents represent an important support to grandchildren within the family structure and recommended that the access rights of grandparents be legislated in the event of divorce or separation.



## **Elder Abuse**

Some adult children may feel entitled to an inheritance, or to access their aging parents' money and assets. This may lead to various forms of elder abuse, such as abuse of the Power of Attorney, inappropriate use of joint bank accounts, and manipulation to change ownership of assets.





## *Conclusion*

As the population ages, it is important that we all work together to ensure that seniors and near seniors can remain engaged and continue working as long as they wish. It is also important that we work to maintain our social fabric and support systems through the development and maintenance of positive intergenerational relations within our communities and society.

The 2010-2011 NSC consultations engaged various stakeholders across Canada and provided an opportunity to probe the topics of the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors and intergenerational relations. They represented a valuable opportunity for the Council to hear directly from seniors and seniors' organizations on these important subjects. The consultations also served to gather ideas for the development of recommendations that could be provided to the Government of Canada. The objective of this report has been to provide participants with a summary of 'what we heard'. It is not aimed at making policy recommendations.

Based on the ideas and suggestions heard throughout the consultation process, the Council will prepare a report to the Ministers responsible for the NSC. This report will contain advice to the Government of Canada concerning the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors and intergenerational relations, taking into account feasibility, costs, and jurisdictional considerations.





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# *Annex A*

## *List of Regional Roundtable Participants*

*VICTORIA, British Columbia - October 12, 2010*

Julian Benedict  
Program Coordinator  
Seniors Program  
Simon Fraser University

Dr. Jolie Mayer-Smith  
Associate Professor and Chair Science Education  
University of British Columbia

---

Judy Brownoff  
Councillor and CRD Director  
District of Saanich

---

Theresa Mayoh  
President and Director  
Older Worker Programming  
Ethos Career Management Group

---

Silas Brownsey  
Executive Director  
Seniors' Healthy Living Secretariat  
Ministry of Health  
Government of British Columbia

---

Steve Meikle  
Manager  
Community Services  
District of Saanich

---

Dr. Elaine Gallagher  
Director  
Centre on Aging  
University of Victoria

---

Carol Mooring  
Member  
Prince George Council of Seniors

---

David Hurford  
Director of Public Relations + Member Services  
BC Care Providers Association

---

Dr. Kate Oakley  
Consultant  
Oakley Consulting

---

Dennis Lait  
Executive Director  
Ladysmith Resources Centre Association

---

Dorothy Orr  
Board Chair  
Seniors Serving Seniors

---

Rhonda Latreille, BA, MBA, CSA  
President  
Canadian Academy of Senior Advisors Inc.

---

Levi Sampson  
Director and President  
Business Development Manager  
Harmac Pulp Operations

---

Marilyn Loveless  
Councillor  
Town of Sidney

---

Russ J. St. Eloi, BGS  
Director  
Federation of Retired Union Members

---

Sharon MacKenzie, B.A., M.Ed.  
Executive Director  
i2i Intergenerational Society

---

Barry Thomas  
Regional Representative for British  
ColumbiaCARP - A New Vision of Aging for  
Canada

---

Sylvia MacLeay  
President  
Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of  
British Columbia

---

Dr. Holly A. Tuokko, RPsych  
Director  
Centre on Aging, University of Victoria

---

**National Seniors Council Representatives**  
Patricia Edge, Dr. Doo Ho Shin and Jean-Guy Soulière



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**TORONTO, Ontario - October 14, 2010**

Shari Angle  
Director  
Human Resources  
Adecco Group

Sandra Kerr  
Director, Programs for 50 Plus  
The Chang School of Continuing Education  
Ryerson University

---

Susan Bosak  
Chair  
Legacy Project

---

Clarence Lochhead  
Executive Director  
Vanier Institute of the Family

---

Betty Cornelius  
Director  
CANGRANDS National Kinship Support

---

Doug Macpherson  
Vice President  
Congress of Union Retirees of Canada

---

Ken Cunningham  
United Senior Citizen's of Ontario Inc.

---

Sue McMahon  
Executive Director  
Toronto Intergenerational Partnerships  
Danforth Collegiate and Technical Institute

---

Mary Devine  
Certified Human Resources Professional and  
Chair  
School of Continuing Education and Corporate  
Training  
Centennial College

---

Michael Nicin  
Government Relations and Policy Development  
Officer  
CARP A New Vision of Aging for Canada

---

Susan Eng  
Vice President Advocacy  
CARP A New Vision of Aging for Canada

---

Monita Persaud  
GTA Multi-Cultural Coordinator  
Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse

---

Elizabeth Esteves  
Ontario Seniors Secretariat  
Ministry of Tourism and Culture

---

Brian Puppa  
Director of Programs  
Legacy Project

---

Tania Grimmer, Master's Candidate  
Social Work  
Trellis Mental Health and Developmental Services  
Clinic, Wilfrid Laurier University

---

Dr. Carolyn Rosenthal  
Professor Emeritus  
Sociology and Gerontology  
McMaster University

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Mary Hynes  
Director  
Older Women's Network

---

Ilham Tamari  
Senior Manager, Community Programs  
Centre for Education & Training

---

Teri Kay, MSW, RSW  
Executive Director  
The Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder  
Abuse

---

Mary Beth Valentine  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Ontario Seniors Secretariat  
Ministry of Tourism and Culture

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**National Seniors Council Representatives**  
Canon Derwyn Shea, Stanley Hrabarchuk and Jean-Guy Soulière





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***CALGARY, Alberta - October 29, 2010***

Lisa Barrett  
Research & Policy Analyst  
Seniors Policy & Planning  
Alberta Seniors & Community Supports

Roger E. Laing  
Executive Director  
Seniors Association of Greater Edmonton

---

Barbara Biggs, MSW, RSW  
Community Social Worker - Seniors Services  
Community & Neighbourhood Services  
The City of Calgary

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Laurie Lyckman  
Member  
Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta

---

Andrew Dale  
Executive Director  
Golden Circle Senior Resource Centre

---

Rob Miyashiro  
Executive Director  
Lethbridge Senior Citizens Organization

---

Elizabeth Descamp  
Director  
Older Adults Program  
Calgary Family Services Society

---

Pam Olive  
Manager of Human Resources Calgary  
PCL Constructors Inc.

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Elinore Frederickson  
Educator  
Older Workers Program  
Yukon College

---

Lori Paine  
Executive Director  
Seniors Resource Society

---

Dr. Sandra P. Hirst  
Associate Professor  
Faculty of Nursing  
University of Calgary

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Carolyn Small Legs  
Director of Health Secretariat  
Treaty 7 Management Corporation

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Dianna Jossa  
Manager of Senior Services  
Veiner Centre

---

Lauren Webber  
President  
Students' Union  
University of Calgary

---

Jocelyn Kabatoff  
Leisure Learning Officer  
Bow Valley College

---

Luanne Whitmarsh, RSW  
Chief Executive Officer  
Kerby Centre

---

Dr. Sheree T. Kwong See  
Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning)  
Faculty of Arts  
University of Alberta

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**National Seniors Council Representatives**

Canon Derwyn Shea, Patricia Edge, Patricia Humenny and Jean-Guy Soulière



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**HALIFAX, Nova Scotia - November 8, 2010**

Wendy Aird  
Director of Programs  
Department of Seniors  
Government of Nova Scotia

Ron Kelly  
Seniors United Network

---

Tim Andrew  
President  
Third Age Center

---

Conrad LeBlanc  
Director General  
New Brunswick Senior Citizens' Federation

---

Barbara Burnett  
Executive Director  
Atlantic Institute for Aging Care

---

Robert LeBlanc  
President  
New Brunswick Senior Citizens' Federation

---

Cecile Cassista  
Executive Director  
The Coalition for Seniors and Nursing Home  
Residents' Rights

---

Cathy Lively  
VP Programs  
CARP - A New Vision of Aging for Canada

---

Janice Clarke  
Advisor  
Senior and Healthy Aging Secretariat  
Department of Social Development  
Government of New Brunswick

---

Della Longmere  
Women's Place Resource Centre

---

Adélard Cormier  
Association acadienne et francophone des aînées  
et aînés du Nouveau-Brunswick

---

Faye Martin  
Director of Policy and Seniors  
Department of Community Services  
Seniors and Labour  
Government of Prince Edward Island

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Pamela Fancey  
Associate Director  
Nova Scotia Centre on Aging

---

Lynn McDonagh Hughes  
Manager Operations  
Nova Scotia Tourism Human Resource Council  
Tourism Sector Council

---

Mélina Gallant  
President  
Les Francophones de l'âge d'or de l'Île-du-  
Prince-Édouard

---

Faizal Nanji  
Director Corporate Strategy and Policy  
Department of Seniors  
Government of Nova Scotia

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Trudy Higgins  
Executive Director  
Home Support Services

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Ross Osborne  
Provincial Advocacy Officer  
Federal Superannuates National Association

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Ted Hobson  
Vice Chair  
Mahone Bay Centre Society

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Ron Robichaud  
Executive Director  
Acadia Centre for Social & Business  
Entrepreneurship  
Acadia University



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***HALIFAX, Nova Scotia - November 8, 2010 (cont'd)***

Robert J. Rogers  
President  
Newfoundland and Labrador Pensioners and Senior  
Citizen 50 + Federation

Paul Tufts  
President and Genealogy Committee  
The Association des Acadiens-Métis Souriquois

---

Penelope Rowe  
Chief Executive Officer  
Community Services Council

---

Valerie White (Co-Chair)  
Chief Executive Officer  
Department of Seniors  
Government of Nova Scotia

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Chris Saulnier  
President  
Student Council Office  
Dalhousie University

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Dolly Williams  
President  
East Preston Senior Club

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Terry Smith  
President  
Community Links / Rep. Canadian Pensioners  
Concerned

**National Seniors Council Representatives**  
Jean-Guy Soulière , Joan Tufts and Beverly Weeks



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**MONTREAL, Québec - November 10, 2010**

Lucy Barylak, MSW  
Chief of Administrative Program  
Centre de santé et de services sociaux Cavendish

Jean-Luc Racine  
Director General  
Fédération des aînés et des aînés francophones  
du Canada

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Vanessa Bévilacqua  
Advisor  
Fédération de l'âge d'or du Québec

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Pierre Riley  
Director General  
Fédération des centres d'actions bénévoles du  
Québec

---

Pierre Fortier  
Réseau d'information des aînés du Québec

---

Huguette Robert  
Coordinator  
Centre Berthiaume-Du Tremblay

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Marie-Hélène Gascon  
Forum des citoyens aînés de Montréal

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Caroline Sauriole  
Director General  
Petits frères des pauvres

---

Catherine Geoffroy  
President  
Association québécoise de gérontologie

---

Nirth Sarab  
Student  
McGill University

---

Benita Goldin  
Coordinator of Community Relations  
Cummings Jewish Centre for Seniors

---

Cynthia Weston  
Professor  
Department of Educational and Counselling  
Psychology  
McGill University

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Clémence Racine  
Director General  
La Maison des Grands-Parents de Villeray

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Janet Yip  
Student  
McGill University

**National Seniors Council Representatives**  
Daphne Nahmiash, Cécile Plourde and Jean-Guy Soulière



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## ***Annex B***

### ***List Council Members' Individual Meeting Participants***

Dr. Jane Barratt  
Secretary General  
International Federation on Ageing

---

David Boisclair  
Research Director  
Institutes for Research on Public Policy

---

Mel Cappe  
President  
Institutes for Research on Public Policy

---

Dr. Phillip Cooper  
Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority

---

Les Crosbie  
Former Vice President  
CFCF-TV

---

Louis Daigle  
Program Coordinator  
Berlitz

---

Connie Delahanty  
Older Worker  
Centretown Community Health Centre

---

Hubert d'Entremont  
Site Manager  
Digby General Hospital  
South West District Health Authority

---

Dr. Linda Duxbury  
Professor  
Sprott School of Business  
Carleton University

---

Sarah Fortin  
Research Director/Associate Editor, Policy  
Options  
Institutes for Research on Public Policy

---

Mathias Hartpence  
Director of International Policy, Skills and Immigration  
The Canadian Chamber of Commerce

---

Esther Hockenstein, MSW  
Social Worker

---

Michael Hockenstein  
Program Coordinator  
Vanier Cégep

---

Joe Anne Hunter, MSW, BSW  
Gerontological Credentials  
Clinical Therapist  
Private Practitioner

---

Kathryn Jarrett-Ekholm  
Director  
Division of Aging and Seniors  
Public Health Agency of Canada

---

Barbara Jaworski  
Chief Executive Officer  
Workplace Institute

---

Terry Kaufman  
Former Director General  
Centre local de services communautaires (CLSC)  
Notre-Dame-de-Grâce

---

Bonnie Kennedy  
Executive Director  
Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment

---

Dr. Gary Kenyon  
Chair of Gerontology  
St. Thomas University

---

Charles Keple  
Active Participant  
Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism and Seniors  
Education Centre  
Past President, Rotary Club of Regina

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**List Council Members' Individual Meeting Participants (cont'd)**

Dr. Frédéric Lesemann  
Professor  
Centre urbanisation culture société  
Institut national de la recherche scientifique

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Carol Anne MacKenzie  
Program Administration Officer  
Service Nova Scotia  
Government of Nova Scotia

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Peter MacKenzie  
Retired Social Worker  
Department of Community Services  
Government of Nova Scotia

---

Austin Malone  
Older Worker

---

Eileen Malone  
Retired Registered Nurse  
Former member of National Advisory  
Council on Aging

---

Rosella Melanson  
Executive Director  
Advisory Council for the Status of Women

---

Tanya Nixon  
Vice President  
Community Health  
South West District Health Authority

---

Ruth Pelletier  
Administrative Assistant to Development  
Consultant  
Community Services  
Queen Elizabeth Health Complex

---

Louise Plouffe  
Manager  
Division of Aging and Seniors  
Public Health Agency of Canada

---

Bob Price  
Chief Executive Officer  
Integrity Home Care Moncton  
President  
New Brunswick Home Support Association

---

Laurell Ritchie  
National Representative  
Canadian Auto Workers

---

David Robertson  
Director  
Work Organization & Training Department  
Canadian Auto Workers

---

Gordon Rutten  
Mayor of Martensville  
Retired School Principal

---

Candace Skrapek  
President  
Saskatoon Council on Aging

---

Paul Swinwood  
President and CEO  
Information and Communications Technology Council

---

Karla Thorpe  
Associate Director  
Conference Board of Canada

---

Lynne Toupin  
Executive Director  
HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector

---

Brian Trainor  
Retired Police Officer

---

Michael Villeneuve, RN MSc  
Scholar in Residence  
Canadian Nurses Association

---

Douglas Watt  
Associate Director  
Conference Board of Canada

---

Jodi Ybarra  
Site Manager  
District Nurse Practitioner Program Manager  
South West Health District Authority

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# *Annex C*

## *List of National Roundtable Participants*

*OTTAWA, Ontario – February 28, 2011*

Charles Beach  
Professor  
Department of Economics  
Queen's University

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Bernie Sheehan  
Director  
Human Resources  
Bow Valley College

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Eileen Clarke  
Urban Vice-President  
Mayor, Town of Gladstone

---

Dr. Atlanta Sloane-Seale  
Professor and Director  
Continuing Education  
University of Manitoba

---

Andrew Jackson  
Director  
Social and Economic Policy  
Canadian Labour Congress

---

Jennifer Stevens  
Health Care Research & Advocacy Officer  
Congress of National Seniors Organizations

---

Valerie Kuehne  
Editorial Board  
Journal of Intergenerational Relationships

---

Sherri Torjman  
Vice-President  
Caledon Institute of Social Policy

---

Dr. Martine Lagacé  
Associate Professor  
Department of Communication  
University of Ottawa

---

Lynne Toupin  
Executive Director  
HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector

---

Bruce MacDonald  
President and CEO  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada

---

Michael Veall  
Professor  
Department of Economics  
McMaster University

---

Jane MacDonald  
Vice President  
Public Affairs and Community Engagement  
Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) Canada

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Michael Villeneuve, RN, MSc  
Scholar in Residence  
Canadian Nurses Association

---

Steve McLellan  
Chief Executive Officer  
ThirdQuarter  
Saskatchewan Chambers of Commerce

---

Frances E. White, MEd, HRMC, CHRP  
President  
Human Resource Association of New Brunswick  
Canadian Council of Human Resources  
Associations

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Marie Ormandy  
President  
MCO Business Group Inc.

**National Seniors Council Representatives**  
Patricia Edge, Daphne Nahmiash, Stanley Hrabarchuk, Joan Tufts and Jean-Guy Soulière







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## *Annex D*

### *List of Online Consultation Participants\**

Sherry Baker  
Executive Director  
BC Association of Community Response  
Networks

Jean Pignal  
Chief  
Special Surveys Division  
Statistics Canada

---

Adèle Girard  
Director General  
Conseil québécois des ressources humaines en  
tourisme

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Pierre Schweda  
Executive Director  
Regina Seniors Citizens Centre

---

Morris Jesion  
Executive Director  
Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizen's  
Organizations

---

Brian Trainor  
Retired Police Officer

---

Dr. Gail Joe

---

Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay  
Professor  
Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)

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Pat Kerwin  
President  
Congress of Union Retirees of Canada

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Roger H. Nesbitt  
President  
New Brunswick Society of Retired Teachers

\* This list includes only those who provided their personal information. Thirty-three participants responded to the online consultation in total.





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## ***Annex E***

### ***Members of the National Seniors Council***

#### **Jean-Guy Soulière** **Chair**



After a successful career with the federal public service, Jean-Guy Soulière was the Executive Director of the Federal Superannuates National Association (FSNA) for over 12 years. He is the former Chair and Spokesperson for the Congress of National Seniors' Organizations since 2002 and is a member of the Public Service Pension Advisory Committee. He holds a degree from the University of Ottawa and is fluently bilingual.

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#### **Patricia Eve Edge**



Ms. Edge was appointed by the Government of British Columbia in 1996 as a Senior Citizen Counsellor and is still serving in this capacity with the Ladysmith Resources Centre Association. Ms. Edge has worked with numerous organizations and served on various committees representing seniors in the town of Ladysmith and its surrounding area, including the Ladysmith Resources Centre Association, the Ladysmith RCMP Community Policing Station, the Ladysmith Senior Centre Society and the Ladysmith Health Care Auxiliary. Ladysmith is a small town of 8,500 one hour north of Victoria along the eastern coast of Vancouver Island. Ms. Edge has also won a number of awards celebrating her significant commitment to the community, including Volunteer of the Year, RCMP Community Policing (1997-1998), the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal (2002) and the Ladysmith Citizen of the Year for Volunteerism (2006).

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#### **Stanley** **Hrabarchuk**



Following Mr. Stanley Hrabarchuk retirement from the Government of Canada in 1991, Mr. Hrabarchuk became a member of the National Association of Federal Retirees (FSNA). He was appointed to the position of National President of FSNA in 2009 and in 2010, became the Immediate National Past President. For nearly 20 years, Mr. Hrabarchuk has worked on a number of committees to help further the work of FSNA through the development of membership programs and marketing and recruitment strategies. He was also instrumental in establishing a Manitoba Committee of Seniors to represent seniors' interests across the province. His demonstrated leadership skills and extensive experience supporting seniors' issues are an excellent addition to the Council.



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### **Patricia Humenny**



Patricia Humenny of Clavet, Saskatchewan, has had a very rich and diverse career with positions in both small business, government, social services and the private sector. She has also served in executive positions for a number of community and service organizations, such as the Canadian Association of the Mentally Handicapped. Ms. Humenny's educational background includes nursing, accounting, sociology, economics and business law. Her nursing training and various other positions have given Ms. Humenny the opportunity to be involved with seniors on many levels throughout her career. In 2005, she was awarded the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal in recognition of her contributions to her community and the province of Saskatchewan.

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### **Daphne Nahmiash**



Dr. Daphne Nahmiash, PhD, of Montréal, Quebec, is an active member of and former Chair of the McGill Centre for Studies in Aging Education Committee. She is presently the chairperson of the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG) Community Committee on Elder Abuse. She was an Adjunct Professor in Gerontology and Social Services at Université Laval and McGill University. She has recently retired from her position as Director of Professional Services of CLSC NDG and as Commissioner of Complaints and Quality of Services at the Centre de santé et de services sociaux Cavendish in Montréal. Dr. Nahmiash has been working in the field of seniors' health and social services for the past 45 years. She has been part of many committees, including at the Quebec Health and Social Services Ministry where she produced government reports on senior abuse, neglect and services to seniors. Some of her awards include Women of the Year 2005–2006, awarded by the Montréal Council of Women for initiatives to improve the quality of life of seniors.

---

### **Leonie Napa Duffy**



Leonie Napa Duffy has been very active in Coral Harbour, Nunavut, working as a teaching assistant, a teacher and a nurse's aide. She is also a long-time hotel owner and manager, as well as a church pastor. Mrs. Duffy has been elected to office on numerous occasions, and is currently serving as a member of the Keewatin Business Development Centre. She holds many awards, including Fellow of the Arctic Institute of North America (1999), a Governor General Commemorative Medal (1992), and an award from the Hamlet Council of Coral Harbour (1995).



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### **Cécile Plourde**



Cécile Plourde of Montréal, Quebec, has been the president of the Fédération de l'âge d'or du Québec (FADOQ)—Mouvement des aînés du Québec for the Montréal region since 2000. The FADOQ is the largest seniors' group in Quebec and is made up of 280,000 members. Ms. Plourde, a graduate of Université Laval, worked in the health profession for 40 years as a registered nurse. Ms. Plourde has been active in her community for many years and has served on many committees, including the Table de concertation des aînés de l'Île de Montréal and the regional selection committees for the Engagés dans l'action pour les aînés du Québec and New Horizons grant programs. Ms. Plourde has also been a member of the family committee at the Conférence régionale des élus de Montréal since 2005.

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### **The Reverend Canon Derwyn Shea**



The Reverend Canon Derwyn Shea of Toronto, Ontario, is the Rector of St. Hilda's Anglican Church and Chairman and CEO of St. Hilda's Towers, one of the largest single stand alone residential care facilities in Ontario. He was Priest-in-Charge for 28 years at St. Clement (Riverdale) Parish. He established a number of local initiatives geared towards youth and low-income seniors. Reverend Shea was appointed Canon for the Diocese of Toronto by the Anglican Church in 2002. He is a former Toronto City and Metro Councillor, as well as a former Ontario Member of Provincial Parliament. He has served on numerous boards, chairs, and commissions, including the Children's Aid Society, the Mayor's Committee on Race Relations and the Police Commission. He was the former Chairman of the O'Keefe Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto and President of the Canadian National Exhibition. He was awarded the 125th Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada Medal for Community Service as a result of his work and advocacy.

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### **Dr. Doo Ho Shin**



Dr. Doo Ho Shin of Vancouver, British Columbia, an active partner in BC Bio Medical Laboratory for over 30 years, was a practicing as a general pathologist in Fraser Health (largely at Surrey Memorial Hospital). Fraser Health serves a population of 1.46 million people, approximately 1/3 of the total population of British Columbia. Dr. Shin has served on various hospital committees, including Infection Control and Physician Credentials. He has been actively involved in community work including arts, education and seniors issues in the metro Vancouver area.



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### **Joan Tufts**



Joan Tufts of Saulnierville, Nova Scotia, is a retired nurse who is currently an Addiction Services Counsellor with a special emphasis on nicotine addiction. Ms. Tufts has served in a variety of roles involving seniors and home care. She is currently a voluntary Director on the Mental Health Foundation Board of Nova Scotia and sits on that board and the Clare Community Health Board. Ms. Tufts won the 2005 Inspiring Lives Award from the Mental Health Foundation Board of Nova Scotia.

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### **Beverly Weeks**



Beverly Weeks of Harvey, New Brunswick, is the founder of Harvey Outreach for Seniors, an organization developed to meet the needs of seniors. She is also a founding and lifetime member of the New Brunswick Home Support Association. Ms. Weeks has served on many committees and has conducted research projects in the field of seniors' issues. She is a founding and continuing member of the Third Age Centre housed at St. Thomas University, Fredericton, New Brunswick. She was the New Brunswick representative on the Board of the Canadian Association for Community Care. Some of her awards include the Marion Stevenson Award for outstanding contribution to Community Care and the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for her work on seniors' issues.