

News Release

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Seniors' Advocate Releases Status Report on Recommendations

The Office of the Seniors' Advocate has released the 2022-23 Status Report on Recommendations. This is the first report on the status of recommendations released by this Office and will be an annual feature while there are outstanding recommendations.

To date, 25 recommendations have been issued by the Office of the Seniors' Advocate to various Provincial Government departments and agencies arising from its first report released in 2019 entitled **Long May Your Big Jib Draw** <https://www.seniorsadvocatenl.ca/pdfs/LongMayYourBigJibDrawSettingSail2019.pdf>. Of these recommendations, 44% have been fully implemented, 44% partially implemented, and 12% have had little or no meaningful progress, as of the reporting period.

Some government departments and agencies implemented the recommendations and went even further than expected to enhance programs/services for seniors. These initiatives are highlighted in the report and include, the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development's Age-Friendly Communities Program which continues to expand; most recently collaborating with the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs and the Department of Health and Community Services to develop a common community assessment tool.

For the recommendations that remain outstanding since the 2019 report, these are in varying stages of implementation from underway to no evidence of consideration. Of note, is the recommendation for a significant review of the province's personal care homes and long term care homes. While operational standards for both systems are in draft, the implementation of a full review of both systems is critical and must be a top priority of the Department of Health and Community Services.

It is unfortunate that some of the recommendations have had no action, such as the integration of the cost of driving medicals for those age 75 years and older into the Medical Care Plan. This is a mandatory expense for older drivers and unaffordable for some. If a senior forfeits his/her license, the resulting loss of independence and other associated risks are contrary to the tenants of age-friendly living.

The Seniors' Advocate will continue to monitor progress on the outstanding recommendations until the Office is satisfied that all are appropriately addressed.

Meaningful change can take time; and I accept that recent global challenges may have hindered the implementation of some recommendations. This is unfortunate as some of the problems we see today may have been avoided or on the road to positive change. But the world we live in now is our "new normal" and we must get on with the work. However, progress is happening in many areas and I wish to thank those who have worked to improve the lives of seniors in Newfoundland and Labrador.

- Susan Walsh, NL Seniors Advocate

This report can be found on the Office of the Seniors' Advocate website:
<https://www.seniorsadvocatenl.ca/pdfs/StatusReportOnRecommendations2022-23.pdf>

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