

Message from the Advocate

Happy Seniors Month!

Every year, we recognize June as “Seniors Month”, a time to celebrate the many contributions seniors made, continue to make, to the social and economic well-being of this province.



Over the last couple of years, we have visited many communities throughout the province and met some incredible seniors...which got us thinking about how we could shine a light on these seniors and reinforce the positive aspects of aging. So, to combat ageist thinking and stereotypes we developed a Seniors' Month Social Media campaign to share the interests, contributions and the many opportunities that come with aging. But we need all of you seniors to submit your picture and a short description about yourself. See page 4 on how to apply.

Our Office has had another busy, productive spring. We are continuing our “Town Hall” sessions this fall; having held 15 (so far) since April, we are learning a lot about the experiences and needs of seniors throughout the province, which helps inform our advocacy work for seniors and senior services. Read all about it in this newsletter.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition and wish you a healthy and happy summer season!

Susan

Susan Walsh
Seniors' Advocate NL

Celebrate Seniors' Month in Newfoundland and Labrador!!

News Release – For Immediate Release

Office of the Seniors' Advocate Newfoundland and Labrador
June 3, 2024

Seniors' Advocate Recognizes Seniors' Month in Newfoundland and Labrador

Every June, Newfoundland and Labrador celebrates seniors. It is a time to acknowledge and recognize how much seniors contribute to their families, neighbours, communities and the province as a whole.

We recognize seniors by showing respect and by valuing the knowledge, wisdom and skills that come from a lifetime of experiences. Seniors are the moving force in Newfoundland and Labrador as community leaders, conscientious voters, workforce members and volunteers.

On June 1, we recognized Intergenerational Day, and we remember that opportunities to fully participate in all aspects of society must never be restricted or limited by a lack of understanding between generations. It is these interpersonal connections that help build stronger communities and families and enhance our well-being. To strengthen ties, we must focus on what is shared rather than the years between us.

To promote positive attitudes during Seniors' Month, the Office of the Seniors' Advocate is conducting a social media campaign to dispel stereotypes about aging and to celebrate the many opportunities that can come with growing older. Please visit our website <https://www.seniorsadvocatenl.ca/SeniorsMonth.aspx> for more information on this campaign and to submit an application.

Quote

"I want to express my sincere appreciation to all seniors throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. We recognize you and all you have done and continue to do for your families and communities. And I would like to especially offer my heartfelt gratitude to the hundreds of seniors who have invited me into your communities and taken the time to meet and tell me about what is important to you as Newfoundland and Labrador seniors."

Susan Walsh
Seniors' Advocate Newfoundland and Labrador

ADVOCACY

ACTIONS

Seniors' Advocate, Susan Walsh, was invited by RTOERO to participate in a three-person panel at the Future of Aging Summit in Toronto. The panel also included Carolyn Cooper, Aged Care Commissioner, New Zealand and Carole Osero-Ageng'o, Global Initiatives Lead and Africa Regional representative, HelpAge International, advocate at the High Court of Kenya. The session was entitled "Why Old Adults Need Advocates" and panelists shared their experiences and how their roles are making a difference.

Newfoundland and Labrador was the second Canadian province/territory to appoint a Seniors' Advocate! At this time there are only three provinces with Seniors' Advocates. Conference attendees considered this province a leader in this area and were extremely interested in learning more about NL's process to create an Office of the Seniors' Advocate.

The Summit brought together experts and thinkers from various sectors, with a common focus: improving later life discussions on finding cross-sectoral solutions that embrace longevity and focus on life quality.



ADVOCACY

ACTIONS

Issue: According to the World Health Organization, ageism is “the stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel), and discrimination (how we act) towards others or oneself based on age” (WHO, 2021). Experiencing ageism can negatively impact a person’s self-worth and well-being and instill a sense of invisibility which can lead to social isolation. Seniors have expressed experiencing ageist actions and words.

OSA Action: On May 23, 2024 the OSA launched a Social Media Campaign to showcase seniors throughout the province, highlighting their interests, community contributions and the many possibilities that come with aging.

Addressing Ageism Through Highlighting Seniors

SUBMIT BY JUNE 14!

Office of the Seniors' Advocate
13 mins

Meet Joy! Join us in celebrating seniors for #SeniorsMonth 🎉

Joy Smith, 82
Bay Roberts, NL

"I enjoy giving back to my community by volunteering at the local food bank and teaching Sunday school at my church!"

Like Comment Share

June is Seniors' Month! In celebration, the Office of the Seniors' Advocate (OSA) asks seniors throughout the province to help us address ageism by showcasing your interests and contributions.

We invite seniors to send us a photo with some information about themselves and the many possibilities that come with aging!

This will be posted on the OSA social media and others will be encouraged to repost. The goal is to break down negative stereotypes, because seniors deserve to be seen and celebrated!

How to apply:

1. Submit application online, by email, or by mail. Application options can be found on our website: <https://www.seniorsadvocate.nl.ca/SeniorsMonth.aspx>
2. Attach photo & written response with your application submissions.

Community organizations and family members can submit an application on behalf of a senior with the senior's signed consent.

Or scan the code!

Office of the SENIORS' ADVOCATE
Newfoundland and Labrador

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From May 23 until June 14, 2024, seniors from throughout the province are invited to share their positive experiences of aging.

Throughout June, the OSA will use the information and pictures provided by the seniors of this province in social media to combat negative stereotypes about aging by celebrating the many active, engaged, and valuable seniors of Newfoundland and Labrador.

To learn more about the campaign and to complete an application, please visit www.seniorsadvocate.nl.ca/SeniorsMonth.aspx

FROM THE SOURCE

SENIORS' OWN WORDS ON FINANCIAL STRUGGLES

The Office of the Seniors' Advocate NL (OSA) addresses systemic issues impacting seniors in the province. A critical area of focus is the cost of living. The OSA has heard from over 1,000 seniors throughout the province in an extensive engagement and survey process. This infographic illustrates some of the key findings to inform policymakers.

SENIORS' PRIORITIES



PRIORITIES ARE INFLUENCED BY INCOME

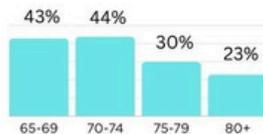
Seniors with **higher incomes** prioritize **access to primary healthcare**



Seniors with **lower incomes** prioritize **cost of living** measures



RURAL SENIORS ARE MORE CONCERNED WITH ADDRESSING COST OF LIVING CHALLENGES COMPARED TO URBAN SENIORS.



MORE SENIORS AGE 65-75 EXPRESSED CONCERN WITH COST OF LIVING THAN OLDER SENIORS AGE 75-80+

INCOME SUFFICIENCY

46%

ALMOST HALF OF SENIORS REPORTING A HOUSEHOLD INCOME UNDER \$60,000 HAVE INSUFFICIENT INCOME.

INCOME THRESHOLD

Analysis of the data in many areas of the survey (e.g., housing, priorities, transportation) showed a trend of financial strain for seniors with household incomes under \$60,000.

SENIORS ARE STRUGGLING FINANCIALLY

33%

ONE-THIRD OF SENIORS CANNOT MEET THEIR FINANCIAL NEEDS

IMPACTS OF INADEQUATE INCOME

40% of seniors struggle to afford food or maintain a healthy diet.

25% face difficulties affording essential items, and 23% cannot cover utility costs.

15% have limited ability to travel or attend social events, with a higher impact on rural seniors and females.

Issue:

Through an extensive survey process in 2023, our Office heard from over 1,000 seniors throughout the province. This revealed that higher income seniors prioritize healthcare access, while lower income seniors focus on cost of living measures. Across all income levels, 33% of seniors were unable to meet their financial needs, leading to difficulties in affording food, essential items, utility costs, and social activities. This was especially true for rural seniors and females. Notably, 46% of seniors with household incomes under \$60,000 reported that they had insufficient income. Further, in analyzing the responses to questions related to transportation, health care and housing, we found that seniors with incomes less than \$60,000 struggled financially. This may represent a threshold of financial security for many seniors in this province.

OSA Action: On May 27, 2024 the OSA released a pictogram, **The Source: Seniors' Own Words On Financial Struggles** illustrating the financial struggles seniors experience.

Click here to visit the document on our website www.seniorsadvocatenl.ca/pdfs/CostOfLivingData2024.pdf

Media Interviews

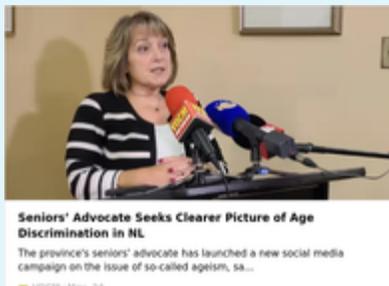
On May 14, 2024 the Seniors' Advocate was a guest on VOXM's The Tim Powers Show. The work of the Office was discussed as well as the impact of the high cost of living on seniors.

Listen here!



The Office received a lot of coverage about it's new Social Media Campaign to Address Ageism

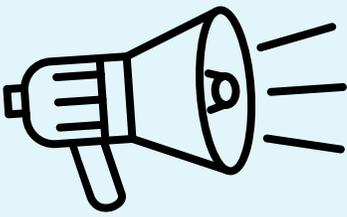
Read here!



Watch here!

<https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/9.4233910>





Town Hall Meetings with the Seniors' Advocate

The Seniors' Advocate is continuing Town Hall Meetings throughout the province to network with seniors, provide an update on our work and to seek input from seniors to inform the advocacy work of the Office of the Seniors' Advocate. We are beginning to develop our Fall schedule. If your organization/group would like to meet with Susan in the Fall of 2024, please call 709-729-6603, 1-833-729-6603 (toll free) or email: seniorsadvocate@seniorsadvocatenl.ca by June 30, 2024.

Sessions are open to the public, unless otherwise noted on the chart. Keep checking our website, social media or contact our office to learn more about upcoming sessions!

Eastern			
Date	Time	Organization	Location
April 4	1:30 pm	Masonic Park	Masonic Park
April 9	1:00 pm	Makinson's 50 Plus Go Getters	Makinson's
April 15	2:00 pm	Toe of the Boot 50+ Club	Lamaline
April 15	7:00 pm	Seniors 50+ Club (<i>members only</i>)	Grand Bank
April 16	10:00 am	Lions Golden Age 50+ Club & Placentia West 50+ Club (<i>members only</i>)	Marystown

Western			
Date	Time	Organization	Location
May 6	1:00 pm	Westport 50+ Club	Westport
May 7	10:00 am	Prime Timers 50+ Club	Hampden
May 7	2:00 pm	Hampton Junction Seniors (<i>members only</i>)	Hampton Junction
May 8	10:00 am	Reidville 50+ Club	Reidville
May 8	2:00 pm	Golden Seabreeze 50+ Club	McIvers
May 9	10:30 am	Golden Sunset 50+ Club & Golden Meadow 50+ Club	Meadows

Northern Peninsula			
Date	Time	Organization	Location
May 28	2:00 pm	Forever Young 50+ Club	St. Lunaire Griquet
May 29	10:00 am	Golden Oldies PS 50+ Club	Port Saunders
May 29	2:00 pm	The PAC 50+ Club & Harbour 50+ Club	Port au Choix
May 30	10:00 am	Straits 50+ Club	Flowers Cove

Labrador			
Date	Time	Organization	Location
June 11	6:30 pm	Two Rivers 50+ Club	Mary's Harbour
June 12	10:00 am	Silver Fox 50+ Club	St. Lewis
June 12	3:00 pm	Blow Me Down 50+ Club	Port Hope Simpson
June 13	2:00 pm	Community Session	Charlottetown

Central			
Date	Time	Organization	Location
Sept 25	10:00 am	Fortune Bay North Shore 50+ Club	Belleoram
Sept 25	2:00 pm	New Haven 50+ Club	Hermitage
Sept 26	1:00 pm	New Triple Seniors Inc.	Milltown, Lions Club

Public Engagement

EASTERN



April 4, 2024, Masonic Park Seniors Club, Mount Pearl



April 9, 2024, Makinson's 50 Plus Go Getters Club



April 15, 2024 Community Centre in Lamaline



April 16, 2024, Marystown Lions Golden Age 50+ Club. The session was also attended by the Area Director and President of Placentia West 50+ Club.



April 15, 2024, Seniors 50+ Club, Grand Bank

On May 23, 2024 the Seniors' Advocate presented to lawyers with the Department of Justice and Public Safety on the role of the Office as outlined in the **Seniors Advocate Act** and many advocacy actions and recommendations of the Office.

Public Engagement

WESTERN



May 6, 2024 Westport 50+ Club



May 7, 2024 Prime Timers 50+ Club, Hampden



May 7, 2024, Hampton Junction Seniors' Club



May 8, 2024, Reidville 50+ Club.



May 8, 2024, Golden Seabreeze 50+ Club in McIvers



May 9, 2024, Golden Meadow 50+ Club, Meadows

Public Engagement

NORTHERN PENINSULA



May 28, 2024, Forever Young 50+ Club
St. Lunaire-Griquet



May 29, 2024, Golden Oldies Port Saunders 50+ Club.



May 29, 2024 Port au Choix 50+ Club and Hawke's Bay



May 30, 2024, Straits 50+ Club, Flower's Cove

Age Friendly Communities and Businesses

On March 21, 2024 the **Telegram** published an article written by Juanita Rossiter which highlighted age-friendly communities and age-friendly businesses.

The article featured the advocacy efforts of Leo Bonnell, who will be a familiar name for many of you. Leo has been a tireless promoter of the age-friendly philosophy for many years. Through Leo's efforts and his colleagues and partners with Random Age-Friendly Communities, Clarenville has become *the* model for age-friendly living.

To read the article and learn more about the age-friendly concept and Clarenville's success, visit: <https://www.saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/lifestyles/pay-attention-to-the-needs-of-people-born-in-another-generation-there-are-plenty-of-ways-to-make-businesses-more-age-friendly-100950041/>



Leo Bonnell with a group of Age-Friendly Business owners and some members of the Random Age-Friendly Communities Board attended a luncheon to showcase the initiative to N.L. Seniors Advocate, Susan Walsh (front row, third from left) during her visit to Clarenville.

Meet the Student



Hayley is a Master of Social Work Student at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick. She is currently completing a 3-month practicum with our Office as part of her degree requirements.

Prior to returning to school in 2023, Hayley worked as a Social Worker in both rural and urban areas of Newfoundland, across child welfare, housing, and homelessness sectors. She became familiar with many experiences of seniors in this province, particularly as they related to housing barriers and insecurity.

Since starting her practicum with the Office of the Seniors' Advocate in April, Hayley has provided leadership to the recent launch of the Addressing Ageism Through Highlighting Seniors Social Media Campaign, as well as contributed to various research projects and systemic advocacy activities.

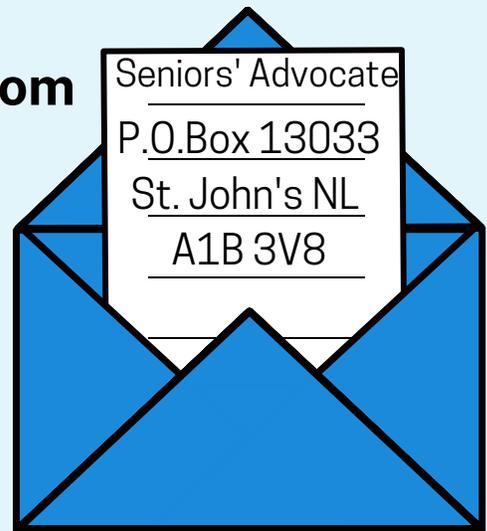
When not studying, she can often be found spending time with family and friends, exploring nature, enjoying iced coffee from a local café, or volunteering at her church. Hayley is excited to be learning more about advocacy and systemic issues impacting seniors in Newfoundland and Labrador and looks forward to bringing this knowledge back into her career as a Social Worker in this province.



Our Team

Susan Walsh, Seniors' Advocate
Tanya Billard, Advocacy Consultant
Pamela Dawe, Advocacy Consultant
Arlene Mullins, Office Administrator

To receive updates and information from the Office of the Seniors' Advocate, contact us to be added to our email list.



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