

Message from the Advocate

It's hard to believe another Seniors' Month has come and gone. I hope everyone found a moment to celebrate and feel proud of the many contributions seniors make to our communities and province.

This spring has been a busy one! We released two major reports — **An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure** and **From Review to Action: A Continuum of Care Approach**. We also launched two social media campaigns: **Growing Bolder**, aimed at seniors, and **Growing Bolder – Young Eyes on Bold Lives**, an art contest for elementary students — both focused on challenging ageism and celebrating aging.

We continued our outreach with visits to eleven more communities, and public advocacy which you will see in the pages that follow.

I hope you take a moment to enjoy the beauty of a Newfoundland and Labrador summer. Wishing everyone a safe, happy, and sunny summer filled with moments of connection, joy, and time spent with the people you care about most.

Susan

Susan Walsh
Seniors' Advocate NL



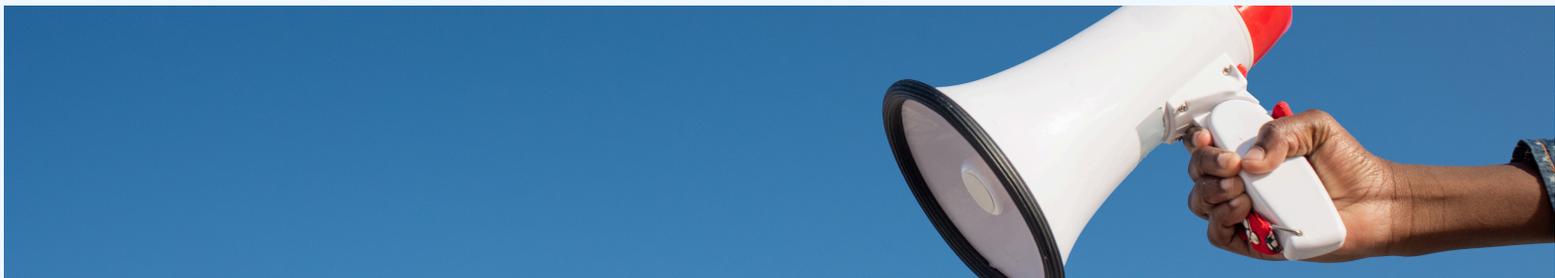
INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Two New Reports!
- On the Road Again!
- Status Report on Recommendations 2024-2025



Advocacy Actions

Issue	OSA Action	Response
Shingles Vaccine	In 2019 the OSA first called for seniors' access to the shingles vaccine. This recommendation was reiterated in the OSA's 2023 and 2025 budget submissions and raised as an issue of concern when the OSA met with government officials. On March 12, 2025, the Department of Health and Community Services announced the shingles vaccine would be offered free to residents aged 65 to 70 and immunocompromised residents over age 70, beginning June 1, 2025. While the OSA was pleased to see the vaccine provided free to some seniors, the OSA continued to advocate that it be provided free of charge to all seniors.	On May 15, government expanded the policy and starting September 1, 2025, the shingles vaccine will be available for no cost to all individuals aged 50 years and over.



Issue	OSA Action	Response
Unclaimed Bodies	When NLHS began publicly posting the names and ages of unclaimed deceased persons in the province, we all learned that most were seniors. In response, the OSA conducted a review to ensure appropriate service was being provided and that these deceased individuals were treated with dignity. Several issues were raised to the leadership of NLHS to ensure the best interest of these individuals are met. The OSA released a statement to the media and continues to monitor the process until all souls are in their rightful resting place. Click Here to View!	NLHS confirmed that: deceased individuals will be returned to their community of origin for burial whenever possible; permanent grave markers with the person's name will be provided; additional social workers are being hired to improve family outreach; and a Questions and Answers section will be added to the NLHS website to better inform the public. Further, the new legislative timelines and processes should prevent similar situations in the future.

Issue

OSA Action

Response

Newfoundland and Labrador Long Term Care and Personal Care Home Review

There was growing concern from the community and the OSA that government had not provided an implementation plan to address the recommendations from the **Newfoundland and Labrador Long-Term Care and Personal Care Home Review**. In response, the OSA quickly pivoted to provide recommendations to government on how to ensure the systemic changes needed to improve the LTC & PCH systems advance. The report titled **From Review to Action: A Continuum of Care Approach** was released on May 15, 2025. It includes 11 recommendations focused on creating an accountable, coordinated seniors' care system. A key recommendation calls for the newly established Department of Seniors to be given full authority and responsibility for services to seniors, spanning from home support to palliative care.

The OSA awaits a formal response on the report.

Issue

OSA Action

Response

Health Care in the Coast of Bays Area

On May 21 and 22, the Advocate held community sessions in the Coast of Bays area, specifically Milltown, Hermitage and Belleoram. These sessions were attended by many people from the surrounding communities as well. Access to health care was their number one concern. Issues raised included: inappropriate charges for drivers' medicals; challenges with accessing the services of the Family Care Team: lack of hostel space for clients/patients of Central Health Zone; health care professionals only allowing one or two medical issues to be discussed during visits. The Advocate wrote NL Health Services seeking clarification and resolutions of these issues.

NL Health Services responded with explanations and, in some instances, a commitment to rectify the issue(s). The OSA had some additional follow-up questions and is awaiting a response. When the Advocate is satisfied that the issues are being addressed or have been highlighted for appropriate action, she will be providing the relevant 50+ Clubs with NL Health Services' responses for them to circulate to their membership.

Addressing Ageism

In June, the OSA focused on addressing ageism and promoting respect for older adults.

On June 15, the OSA marked World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, raising awareness about the impact of elder abuse and its ties to ageism.

[Click Here to Read the OSA's News Release](#)

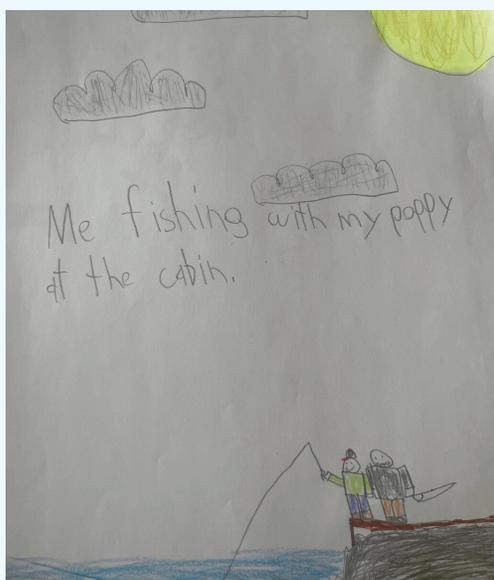


JUNE 15, 2025

WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

During Seniors' Month, the OSA led two campaigns: **Growing Bolder**, a social media initiative celebrating seniors who defy ageist stereotypes, and a Youth Art Contest entitled **Growing Bolder - Young Eyes on Bold Lives**, where elementary students created art showing what they love or appreciate about an older adult in their life.

[Click Here to Read More!](#)



The Seniors' Advocate was the keynote speaker for the Psychologists and Retirement Section, at the Canadian Psychological Association's National Convention held in St. John's. She delivered a talk titled "Ageism as a Canadian Issue," which outlined the impacts of ageism on seniors and what we must do to change this.



Town Hall Meetings with the Advocate



The Seniors' Advocate regularly meets with organizations/groups.

If you would like to arrange a session with the Seniors' Advocate:



1-833-729-6603



seniorsadvocate@seniorsadvocatenl.ca

The schedule books up quickly, so be sure to reach out as soon as possible!

04/11



Office of the
SENIORS' ADVOCATE
Newfoundland and Labrador

Recommendation Reports



An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure

On April 16, 2025, the OSA released a report titled **An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure**. This report explores the types of modifications and assistive devices that seniors need to age safely and comfortably at home. It includes six recommendations to government aimed at improving supports for aging in place. Key recommendations include developing a senior-friendly “How-To” guide, expanding the Prescription Drug Program (65Plus Plan) to cover assistive devices, and broadening the Home Modification Program to take a more preventative approach. This includes offering small home modifications without the need for an assessment and providing no-cost loans to seniors who do not qualify for the existing program but wish to make preventative changes to their homes.

An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure



April 2025

From Review to Action: A Continuum of Care Approach

On May 15, 2025, the Office of the Seniors' Advocate released a report titled **From Review to Action: A Continuum of Care Approach**. This report was not planned. It was completed in response to the overwhelming concern from the community, and our Office, that government was not providing an implementation plan for the **Newfoundland and Labrador Long Term Care and Personal Care Home Review**. This concern was further heightened when the Auditor General released its' review of the Personal Care Home system (**Personal Care Homes – Independent Auditor's Report**). The OSA's report puts forward 11 recommendations, starting with giving the newly developed Department of Seniors authority and responsibility for services to seniors from home support to palliative care. It provides government the structure to ensure that the system does respond to the numerous outstanding recommendations for improvements to long term care and personal care homes and is accountable to quality seniors care in the province.

Office of the
SENIORS' ADVOCATE
Newfoundland and Labrador



From Review to Action: A CONTINUUM OF CARE APPROACH

MAY 15, 2025

05/11

Status Report

2024–2025 Status Report on Recommendations

On June 19, 2025, the Office of the Seniors' Advocate (OSA) released its **2024–2025 Status Report on Recommendations**. This fourth annual report reflects the OSA's continued commitment to publicly report on the progress of outstanding recommendations. Covering the period from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025, the report notes that while government has made progress, much of it relates to recommendations first made in 2019. The majority of the outstanding recommendations outlined in this report come from the **What Golden Years?** report released in November 2023 and focus on two key areas:

- 1) **Helping seniors with cost of living challenges.** NL seniors have the lowest median income in the country. Further, NL seniors have the highest usage of the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), an indicator of poverty, at 44 per cent provincially versus 32 per cent nationally. Poverty is even more pronounced when you look at regional data, with seniors in Central and Western NL receiving GIS at a rate of 59 and 54 per cent respectively.
- 2) **Alleviating the financial stress seniors are experiencing trying to pay for home support services.** The majority of provinces and territories in Canada provide home support to seniors free of charge. Unfortunately, Newfoundland and Labrador is not one of those provinces. Every senior, regardless of their income, must pay some or all of the cost of their home support. Many simply cannot, and try to do without, resulting in poorer health outcomes and potentially earlier admission to out-of-home care.



Media Interviews

With the release of two OSA reports, the response to the Auditor General's report on Personal Care Homes, and the launch of two social media campaigns, the Seniors' Advocate has been very busy over the past few months discussing the issues with media outlets in an effort to make the public aware of the issues and our advocacy work.

Listen Here

[Click Here for CBC On the Go: AG Report](#)

[Click Here for VOXM Open Line: AG Report](#)

[Click Here for Release of An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure – P.1](#)

[Click Here for Release of An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure – P.2](#)

[Click Here for NTV: An Ounce of Prevention](#)

[Click Here for CBC: An Ounce of Prevention](#)

[Click Here for VOXM Open Line: An Ounce of Prevention](#)



[Click Here for CBC: Seniors' Month](#)

[Click Here for Release of From Review to Action: A Continuum of Care Approach](#)

[Click Here for CBC: From Review to Action](#)

[Click Here for NTV: From Review to Action](#)

[Click Here for VOXM Open Line: From Review to Action](#)

[Click Here for VOXM Open Line: From Review to Action](#)

[Click Here for VOXM Open Line: Status of Recommendations 2024-2025](#)



Media Interviews

Read Here



K-12 students in NL are invited to create a poster for Seniors Month

The campaign is called "Growing Bolder" an...
bayfm.ca



Seniors Advocate says seniors are paying for services yet receiving little value

Susan Walsh says a new report provides a clear road map of the steps to be taken to ensure that recommendations...

100.1 BayFM



Seniors Advocate says cost main barrier for modifications to age at...

The province's Seniors' Advocate released a report yesterday, titled "An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure."

bayfm.ca



Seniors' Advocate and NAPE Respond to Scathing Personal Care Homes Audit

The province's Seniors' Advocate says it's hard to say whether staffing and training are contributing to some ...

VOCM / Apr 2



Seniors' Advocate Believes Government Can Take Swift Action to Implement Some Recommendations in Latest...

Seniors' Advocate Susan Walsh believes there are several recommendations in her latest report that government ...

VOCM / May 16



Seniors' advocate, NAPE say they aren't surprised by findings in AG report on personal care homes | CBC News

Newfoundland and Labrador's seniors' advocate and the president of NAPE say they aren't surprised by the harrowing findings in the auditor general's latest report, which highlights concerns of the deaths of...

CBC / Apr 2



Seniors Advocate not surprised by AG's scathing report on personal care homes

BayFM is Your Hometown Sound!

100.1 BayFM



Seniors' Advocate to launch Seniors' Month Campaign

Seniors' Advocate for Newfoundland and Labrador, Susan Walsh, will be at Goulds Elementary this morning at 10:15 a.m. to launch this year's Seniors' Month Campaign - Growing Bolder.

NTV



'The system is broken': NL Seniors' Advocate frustrated with lack of action on long-term care...

Susan Walsh's May 15 report calls for Department of Seniors to be in charge of all seniors issues, improvement of long-term care homes

My Atlantic News - May 20



West Coast seniors among poorest in NL

NL's population of seniors aged 65 and older will increase by about 30 percent by the year 2032.

100.1 BayFM



New Campaign Prompts Students to Highlight Value of Seniors in the Community

The Seniors' Advocate has launched a new campaign aimed at curbing ageism and highlighting the role of seniors...

VOCM - May 19

08/11

Connecting with Communities

This spring, the Office of the Seniors' Advocate has been travelling throughout the province, meeting with seniors in Heart's Delight-Islington, Witless Bay, Bay Bulls, Trepassey, St. Mary's, Belleoram, Hermitage-Sandyville, Milltown, Cow Head, Benoit's Cove, Rocky Harbour, St. John's and Corner Brook. These community sessions and town hall meetings provided valuable opportunities to hear directly from seniors, caregivers, and community members about the issues that matter most to them.



Rocky Harbour



Trepassey



Corner Brook



Witless Bay



Hermitage- Sandyville



Belleoram



Benoit's Cove



Bay Bulls



St. Mary's



Heart's Delight-Islington



Milltown

Public Engagement



- Throughout April and May, the OSA continued connecting with community groups and stakeholders throughout the province.
- On April 8, the office attended The Encore Summit hosted by Connections for Seniors, bringing together industry, professionals, and policymakers to discuss older workforce issues like employment, upskilling, and retention.
- On April 10, the OSA presented at the Law Society's Lunch and Learn on the amendments to the Family Violence Protection Act which give seniors protection to remove people from their home.
- On April 25, the office met with the Memorial University Pensioners' Association for an engaging session with lots of thoughtful questions from members attending in-person and online.
- On May 6, the OSA met with the Canadian Mental Health Association–NL to discuss current and potential programming for seniors and explore community partnerships.

Public Engagement

- June was a busy month of outreach and engagement for the OSA. On June 5, the office presented to the Corner Brook Rotary Club, highlighting issues impacting seniors on the West Coast as identified in the 2024 Seniors' Report.
- On June 12, the OSA met with the NL Housing and Homelessness Network (NLHHN) and Navigators and Networks (NAVNET) to share information about the role of the office and discuss key issues affecting seniors from their perspective.
- On June 24, the office participated in the Seniors On the Go event at Memorial University's Botanical Gardens – a wonderful opportunity to connect with seniors and community members. That same day, the OSA met with representatives from Age-Friendly programs in Placentia to discuss the challenges and successes of supporting seniors in rural communities.
- On June 25, the OSA met with the March of Dimes to learn more about their After Stroke program and how it can support seniors and their families in Newfoundland and Labrador.



Stay Connected



Seniors Advocate NL



@SrsAdvocateNL



(709) 729-6603
Toll-Free: 1-833-729-6603



seniorsadvocate@seniorsadvocatenl.ca

Our Team

- **Susan Walsh**, Seniors' Advocate
- **Pamela Dawe**, Systemic Advocacy Consultant
- **Gabrielle Dupont**, Systemic 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. If you prefer printed copies of our reports, let us know, and we will mail them to you.



Office of the
SENIORS' ADVOCATE
Newfoundland and Labrador