



## Message from the Advocate

So happy to say Spring has Sprung!

This is a wonderful time of year, with the promise of warmer weather, longer days and a colourful landscape.

The winter months saw us meeting with seniors a little closer to the office and being in the office more allowed us to focus on research and writing, like our submission on the upcoming provincial budget. I am also excited to say we will soon release two new reports. Stay tuned to our social media or website for updates or sign up for our email list to receive a copy.

Over the next few months, we will travel the province to meet with seniors. Check the schedule in this newsletter to see if we'll be in your area and consider coming out!

I hope you enjoy our new newsletter format, compliments of our new team member Gabby – read about her in the pages that follow.

*Susan*

**Susan Walsh**  
Seniors' Advocate NL



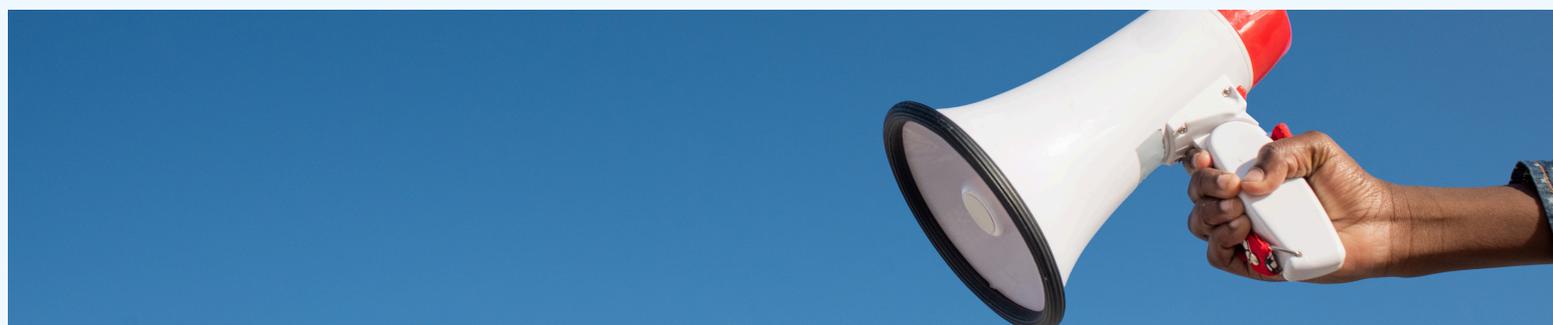
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# Advocacy Actions

Issue	OSA Action	Response
The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) solicited OSA input on the experiences/challenges seniors have when dealing with their TV, Internet, mobile and phone service providers and potential solutions.	The OSA accepted the invitation to participate in a national roundtable discussion about seniors experiences with communications providers, services, etc. on February 28, providing input based on what the OSA has heard from seniors and our research efforts.	The CRTC will be compiling a What We Learned report summarizing the session which will assist in determining their next steps, which might include creating new regulatory policies and obligations.



Issue	OSA Action	Response
Providing the Shingles vaccine (Shingrex) free of charge to seniors.	In 2019 the OSA first called for the shingles vaccine to be provided free of charge. Specifically, the recommendation stated the: <b>shingles vaccine be offered free of charge to low income seniors and others with compromised immune systems.</b> 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 issued a <b>News Release</b> announcing effective June 1, 2025, it will begin offering the shingles vaccine to residents aged 65 to 70 and immunocompromised residents over age 70. The OSA will continue to advocate for all seniors 65 years of age and over to be entitled to this important health service.

## Issue

## OSA Action

## Response

Decision-Making Framework - The Right To Decide

As noted in the OSA's December Newsletter, government is developing a framework to modernize NL's decision-making legislation and policies. Given seniors are the largest group of residents who will be most impacted by this decision-making framework, the OSA noted to government that there was insufficient public education and awareness of this matter for seniors to provide a well-informed response.

The OSA collaborated with an advocate for accessibility to coordinate meetings with organizations working with seniors to educate on how decision-making can be impacted by dementias and disabilities and discuss options to inform seniors in the province.

Government agreed to delay developing the Framework until after conducting a second round of consultations planned for spring 2025. In preparation for that consultative process, the community groups have agreed to work together to develop an information-sheet on the issue and will distribute it broadly making every effort to ensure that every person who wishes to be heard on the matter, does so in an informed manner.

## 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!

03/08



Office of the  
**SENIORS' ADVOCATE**  
Newfoundland and Labrador



## Meet Our Newest Team Member

# Gabrielle Dupont

Gabrielle Dupont, known as Gabby for her love to chat, joined the Office of the Seniors' Advocate in December. With a Master's degree in Health Policy and Equity from York University, her research explored the impacts of long term care on social isolation for older adults. Coupled with her experience working with the Provincial Government, Gabby has a strong background in policy work. She is passionate about advancing mental health supports for older adults, including interventions that promote social connection and wellbeing. She is excited to take on this new role and contribute to initiatives that empower older adults and ensure their voices are heard in policy decisions. Gabby is an active community volunteer and a dedicated dance instructor. In her free time, she enjoys reading, walking with her pup, Harley, and spending time with friends and family.

## Meet Our Student

# Ignacia Diaz

Ignacia is currently completing a three-month work placement with the OSA as part of her Master of Applied Psychological Sciences degree at Memorial University. Before going back to school, she worked as a research assistant where she developed experience in data analysis and report writing. She is passionate about creating systemic change with a focus on mental health. During her time with the OSA, she has been learning about the unique needs of seniors, with a focus on supporting their ability to age well in their communities. She has also contributed to various projects—stay tuned for our upcoming report on aging well at home. Originally from Chile, Ignacia moved to Newfoundland in 2016 with her husband, their three children, dog, and cat. When she's not working, she enjoys taking on creative projects, with her latest endeavor being a knitted skirt.





## Public Engagement



On January 28 the Seniors' Advocate presented to the NL Chapter of the Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP).



On February 27, the Seniors' Advocate joined the BC Seniors' Advocate, Dan Levitt, for a number of meetings with national experts leading research and best practice policy and programs for seniors in the areas of housing, emergency rooms, health care, home support and caregiving. Meetings included the National Institute on Ageing, Seniors Emergency Medical Centre (ER) at University Health Network, Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Caregiving, and Unity Health Toronto to learn more about supporting seniors with complex needs to secure housing.



As well, both Advocates presented to the Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP) and participated in a panel to discuss ageism and its impact on access to health care.

# Public Engagement



- In February, the Advocate met with Yvette Coffey, President of the Registered Nurses Union to discuss seniors' care in the health care continuum and the important roles that nurses fulfill in that care.
- The Seniors' Advocate met with the United Church Women's League on March 10 in St. John's to discuss the role of the OSA and matters impacting seniors. It was a great discussion. Thanks to the United Church Women's League for hosting!
- On March 13 the Seniors' Advocate met with the Sisters of Mercy Wisdom Circle Two: Diversity and Inclusion. It was an important dialogue about issues impacting seniors in the province.
- On March 25, the Seniors' Advocate met with Memorial University Faculty of Nursing, Caring for the Older Adults classes to discuss seniors' health, aging-related challenges, and the important role of nurses as advocates for their patients.
- The Seniors' Advocate also met with the Templeton Women's Institute on March 24 for an engaging discussion about key issues affecting seniors and the office's role in addressing them.

# Media Interviews

On February 6, the Advocate was interviewed by various media outlets on government's release of the Long Term Care and Personal Care Home Review. [Click Here to View Report](#)

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### Seniors' Advocate Hopes to See Changes Soon from Long Term Care Report

The province's Seniors' Advocate says the long-awaited review of long-term care and personal care homes, relea...

VOCM / Feb 6



### Residents of long-term care need quality of life improvements across the board, new report finds | CBC...

Newfoundland and Labrador has released a long-awaited report on improvements needed in long-term care and personal care homes, which says officials need to prioritize improving the quality of life of residents.

CBC / Feb 6

# Budget Submission

Having had some success from our submission to government's budget development last year, in January we provided a submission to inform the upcoming budget for 2025/26. [Click here to see more!](#)

Some of the recommendations include:

- Release and fund the promised Poverty Reduction Plan for Seniors and index the NL Seniors' Benefit;
- Include funding to prioritize seniors to access a health care provider including allowing nurse practitioners to bill the healthcare system;
- Funding home support recommendations outlined in the OSA "What Golden Years?" report, including making it free for seniors with low incomes and less costly for everyone; and
- Improve the financial cut offs for government programs, including the home repair and home modification programs.

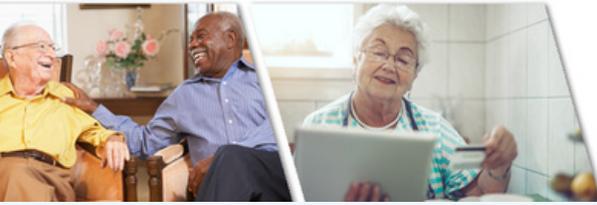


## BUDGET 2025

## SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

07/08





# Public Town Hall Meetings with the Seniors' Advocate

Date	Time	Organization	Location
May 1	2:00 PM	Island Harbour 50+ Club	Hearts Delight - Islington
May 8		Alderwood Retirement Centre (residents only)	Witless Bay
May 8	1:00 PM	Bauline to Bay Bulls 50+ Club Inc.	Witless Bay
May 12	11:00 AM	Trepassey 50+ Friendship Club	Trepassey
May 14	1:30 PM	Yesterday's Youth 50+ Club	St. Mary's
May 21	10:00 AM	Belleoram Fortune Bay North Shore 50+ Club	Belleoram
May 21	2:00 PM	New Haven 50+ Club	Hermitage
May 22	1:30 PM	New Triple Seniors Inc.	Milltown
June 4	11:00 AM	Cow Head Friendly 50+ Club	Cow Head
June 5		Catholic Women's League (members only)	Corner Brook
June 5	12:30 PM	Corner Brook Rotary Club	Corner Brook

Sessions are open to the public, unless otherwise noted on the chart.

## 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
- **Rose AuCoin**, Program and Policy Development Specialist
- **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.