

2025-2026

**STATUS
REPORT
ON**

RECOMMENDATIONS

MAY 2026



Office of the
SENIORS' ADVOCATE
Newfoundland and Labrador

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MESSAGE FROM THE **SENIORS' ADVOCATE**

I am pleased to release the **2025-2026 Status Report on Recommendations**. This is the fifth update on the progress of recommendations made by the Office of the Seniors' Advocate. We remain committed to transparency and accountability by publicly reporting on the action taken to implement my Office's recommendations to improve programs and services for seniors in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Since 2019, and up until March 31, 2026, this Office has made 54 formal recommendations in four reports: **Long May Your Big Jib Draw** (2019), **What Golden Years?** (2023), **An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure** (2025) and **From Review to Action: A Continuum of Care Approach** (2025). This is the first public accounting of progress on recommendations from **An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure** and **From Review to Action: A Continuum of Care Approach**, which were released in April 2025 and June 2025, respectively.



Past status reports designated recommendations to one of four categories: implemented, implemented-ongoing, partially implemented or not implemented. This year we amended the categories by eliminating the implemented-ongoing, as we feel the language is redundant. As well, we expanded the implemented category to include “otherwise resolved” to better address situations where circumstances have changed so that the recommendation is no longer necessary.

Since beginning the annual reporting of status on recommendations of the Office of the Seniors' Advocate, we have seen progress. It is true what gets measured gets managed. The work is far from over, but I am confident that the advocacy of this Office and the efforts of government and other service providers will continue as robustly as ever before.

Susan Walsh, MSW RSW
Seniors' Advocate NL

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world.

Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. – Margaret Mead

MONITORING PROCEDURE

AUTHORITY

The **Seniors' Advocate Act** (the **Act**) provides the Office of the Seniors' Advocate (OSA) with legislative authority to make recommendations to improve any seniors' services that are related to health care, personal care, housing, transportation or finances. Further, by the authority provided under Sections 16.1(e) and 16.2 of the **Act**, the Seniors' Advocate can request information and must be provided with that information if it is in the entity's custody or control.

PROCESS

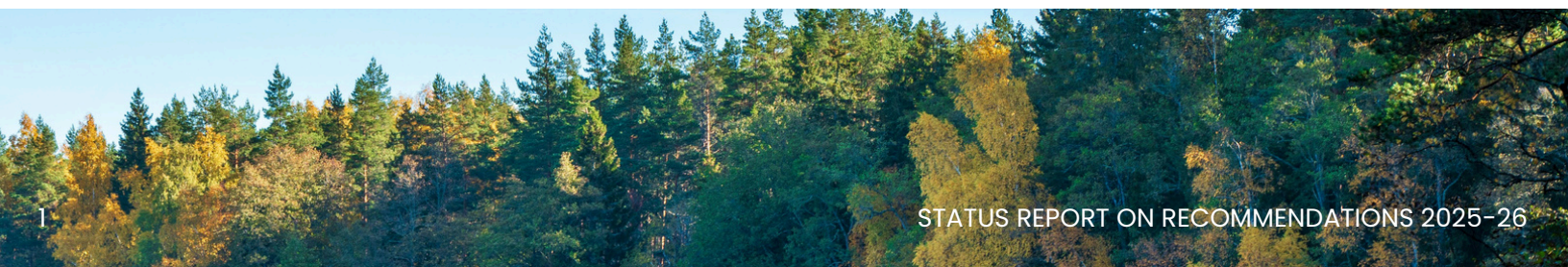
The OSA makes recommendations to improve seniors' services. All recommendations are made after carefully considering input from seniors and families, research, and analysis of best practices.

Recommendations must be implemented in order to effectively improve the delivery of programs and services for seniors, so all recommendations made by the OSA are monitored. To ensure full transparency and accountability, the Seniors' Advocate requests written updates on the progress made in implementing recommendations and publishes the responses annually in a Status Report on Recommendations. Implementing recommendations made by the OSA is an important way for government to publicly demonstrate its responsiveness and commitment to improve the delivery of programs and services for seniors.

The OSA assesses the progress made on each of the recommendations and assigns one of the following three categories: implemented or otherwise resolved, partially implemented, or not implemented.

The OSA is reporting on the progress of recommendations from all reports released between 2019 and 2025. This year's status report will cover the time period of April 1, 2025, up to and including March 31, 2026.

If a recommendation falls under the jurisdiction of more than one entity, the recommendation will remain in the partially completed category until all elements of the recommendation are implemented or otherwise resolved. Updates on each recommendation are requested annually until the Seniors' Advocate is satisfied that the recommendation has been addressed. The results are reported publicly and can be found at: <https://www.seniorsadvocatenl.ca/StatusReports.aspx>



DEFINITIONS

IMPLEMENTED OR OTHERWISE RESOLVED:

The recommendation has been adequately addressed or circumstances have changed so that the recommendation is no longer necessary.

PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED:

There has been some progress but there are still outstanding issues to be addressed to satisfy the recommendation.

NOT IMPLEMENTED:

There has been no substantive progress made at this point on the recommendation.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

BY ENTITY

The table below shows the percentage of recommendations implemented and outstanding, and which entity has responsibility.

2019-2025

Entity	IMPLEMENTED / OTHERWISE RESOLVED	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	NOT IMPLEMENTED	TOTAL	Percentage Implemented	Percentage Outstanding
Department of Finance	3	1 (2023)	0	4	75%	25%
Department of Government Services*	2	0	0	2	100%	0%
Department of Health & Community Services**	7	1 (2023)	1 (2025)	9	78%	22%
Department of Health & Community Services and Department of Seniors***	0	0	1 (2025)	1	0%	100%
Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation	3	0	2 (2025)	5	60%	40%

*Formerly Department of Digital Government and Service NL.

**Some recommendations were formerly under the responsibility of the Department for Children, Seniors and Social Development.

***Currently this initiative is shared between these two Departments.

Entity	IMPLEMENTED / OTHERWISE RESOLVED	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	NOT IMPLEMENTED	TOTAL	Percentage Implemented	Percentage Outstanding
Department of Labrador Affairs ****	1	1 (2023)	0	2	50%	50%
Department of Seniors *****	4	9 (3: 2019) (4: 2023) (2: 2025)	11 (2025)	24	17%	83%
Office of the Seniors' Advocate	7	0	0	7	100%	0%
TOTAL	27	12	15	54	50%	50%

****The Medical Transportation Program was initially the responsibility of the Department of Health and Community Services but was transferred to Labrador Affairs. All recommendations re the MTAP will be attributed to the responsibility of the Department of Labrador Affairs.

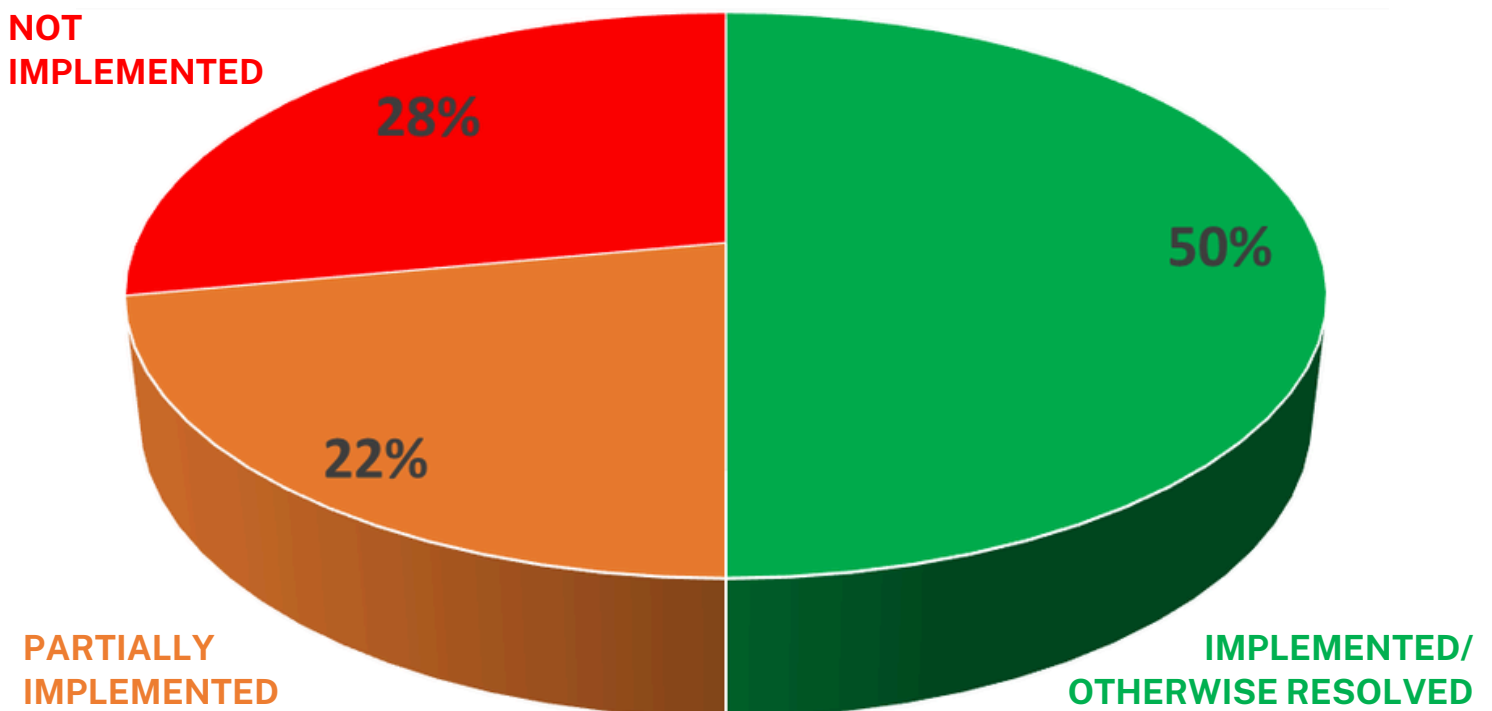
***** Some recommendations were formerly under the responsibility of Departments of Health and Community Services and/or former Children, Seniors and Social Development.



STATUS OF ALL RECOMMENDATIONS

Since 2019, the OSA has issued 54 formal recommendations to improve programs and services for seniors. As of March 31, 2026, 50 per cent of the 54 recommendations have been implemented; 22 per cent are underway; and 28 per cent are not implemented.

REPORT	TOTAL	IMPLEMENTED/ OTHERWISE RESOLVED	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	NOT IMPLEMENTED
Long May Your Big Jib Draw (2019)	25	22	3	0
What Golden Years? (2023)	12	5	7	0
An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure (2025)	6	0	0	6
From Review to Action: A Continuum of Care Approach (2025)	11	0	2	9



STATUS OF OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

LONG MAY YOUR BIG JIB DRAW

This chart details the status of the recommendations from the **Long May Your Big Jib Draw** report that remained partially implemented or not implemented in the last **Status of Recommendations 2024-25** report.

For conciseness, the wording of each recommendation has been edited in the chart below. The complete wording of each recommendation can be found in the 2019 Report.

RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTED /OTHERWISE RESOLVED	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	NOT IMPLEMENTED
Expand and enhance the Provincial Home Repair Program.	X		
Monitor implementation of the Provincial Home First Initiative and recommendations from the Provincial Home Support Program Review.		X	
Raise awareness and provide opportunities to access Advance Health Care Directives, Enduring Powers of Attorney, and Wills.		X	
Offer the shingles vaccine free of charge.	X		
Monitor the Provincial Dementia Care Plan.		X	

STATUS OF OUTSTANDING

RECOMMENDATIONS

WHAT GOLDEN YEARS?

This chart outlines the status of the recommendations made by the Office of the Seniors' Advocate in the **What Golden Years?** report which remained partially implemented or not implemented in the last **Status of Recommendations 2024-25** report.

For conciseness, the wording of each recommendation has been edited in the chart below. The complete wording of each recommendation can be found in the 2023 Report.

RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTED /OTHERWISE RESOLVED	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	NOT IMPLEMENTED
Annually index the NL Seniors' Benefit; the benefit amount must not decrease.	X		
Review both the current max. income threshold of \$29,402 for full NL Seniors' Benefit eligibility and the 11.66% phase out rate. Report publicly on the outcome.	X		
Undertake measures to ensure that thresholds for provincial benefits are adjusted to ensure that any increase to federal pension programs are not lost through a "claw back" process.		X	
Revise the financial assessment policy so seniors in receipt of GIS are automatically financially eligible for home support services, with no client contribution.		X	
Revise the financial assessment policy so households with family net income of less than \$29,402 are automatically financially eligible for home support services, with no client contribution.		X	

RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTED /OTHERWISE RESOLVED	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	NOT IMPLEMENTED
Review the financial assessment policy for seniors whose family net income is between \$29,402 and \$42,404, and reduce the current rate of up to 18%.		X	
Review the annual exemption thresholds in the financial assessment policy to the highest income thresholds, considering the substantial income range as it relates to the percentage rate (18%) which income is assessed at.		X	
Ensure that food banks can provide food delivery in circumstances they assess as necessary.		X	
Change the per kilometer allowance reimbursement rate to 40.89 cents per kilometer.		X	



STATUS OF OUTSTANDING

RECOMMENDATIONS

**AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION
IS WORTH A POUND OF CURE**

For conciseness, the wording of each recommendation has been edited in the chart below. The complete wording of each recommendation can be found in the 2025 Report.

RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTED /OTHERWISE RESOLVED	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	NOT IMPLEMENTED
Develop and annually update a senior friendly “How To” guide on preventative practices, programs and services, and how to access them - in print and online.			X
Develop and implement an Education Campaign to guide and facilitate preventative actions with home modifications and assistive devices.			X
Expand access to community-based physiotherapy and occupational therapy assessment, programs and services, as a preventative measure.			X
Expand the NL Prescription Drug Program, 65Plus Plan to cover small assistive devices.			X
Expand, promote, and fund the Home Modification Program to include a preventative approach to program eligibility, including small preventative home modifications, without assessments.			X
Create a zero-interest loan program for homeowners with incomes below \$90,000 to make home modifications.			X

STATUS OF OUTSTANDING

RECOMMENDATIONS

FROM REVIEW TO ACTION: A CONTINUUM OF CARE APPROACH

For conciseness, the wording of each recommendation has been edited in the chart below. The complete wording of each recommendation can be found in the 2025 Report.

RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTED /OTHERWISE RESOLVED	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	NOT IMPLEMENTED
The Department of Seniors will have responsibility and authority for the development, oversight, implementation and operationalization of the continuum of health care for seniors.		X	
Develop, implement and publicly release an Action Plan for the recommendations in the NL LTC and PCH Review and the OSA Report.		X	
Develop Continuum of Care Legislation and regulations.			X
Develop and implement Standards for seniors' services and programs across the continuum based on the Continuum of Care legislative framework.			X
Ensure new Legislation and Standards: are person-centred; include KPIs; meet rights and needs of seniors with disabilities; rent increases no more than 1x/year, no more than ROI and with 4-mo. written notice; comfort allowance increased and indexed; no evictions without transition plans -penalties for infractions; PCHs supply prescribed medications and within 24 hours.			X

RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTED /OTHERWISE RESOLVED	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	NOT IMPLEMENTED
Establish and financially resource a Provincial Caregivers Network.			X
Establish the NL Council for Health Quality and Performance to report to the HOA and immediately develop a public dashboard on the KPIs of the LTC and PCH systems.			X
Report quarterly to the NL Council for Health Quality and Performance on legislated monitoring and compliance under the continuum of care.			X
Ensure that the Continuum of Care legislation require all LTC and PCHs to establish resident and/or family led Resident and Family Councils.			X
Ensure that the Continuum of Care legislation has a strong governance structure for the Resident and Family Councils to ensure they receive necessary supports, including: Zonal Resident and Family Councils and compile reports from each. Zonal Resident and Family Councils will report to NLHS and the NL Council for Health Quality and Performance.			X
Ensure that the Provincial Data Governance will annually provide a report to the OSA of their analysis of the data provided by each Zonal RFC.			X

RECOMMENDATIONS

PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED

LONG MAY YOUR BIG JIB DRAW



The Advocate is closely monitoring the implementation of the Provincial Home First Initiative as well as the recommendations from the Provincial Home Support Program Review.

Response From the Department of Seniors:

The Department of Seniors continues to work with the Department of Health and Community Services and NL Health Services to advance full adoption of a Home First approach. The Department of Seniors is leading the development of a comprehensive communication strategy. In 2025-26 approximately 955 individuals (data available up to January 2026), availed of supports available through Home First. The vast majority of clients were seniors.

The Department of Seniors continues to advance recommendations outlined in the Provincial Home Support Program Review. Of the 25 recommendations 11 have been completed, 11 are substantially completed, 1 is in progress and 2 are not commenced.

A Home Support Worker/Personal Support Worker education curriculum has been developed and shared with educational institutions. Keyin College has been approved to offer the education program. The Department of Seniors, in collaboration with the Department of Jobs, Growth and Rural Development, worked with Keyin College to develop a micro credential course based on the full Home Support Worker/Personal Support Worker Curriculum. Over 1,250 learners have completed the micro credential program.





The Advocate encourages raising awareness and providing affordable opportunities for seniors to access Advance Health Care Directives, Enduring Powers of Attorney, and Wills.

Response From the Department of Seniors:

The Department of Seniors is revising advance care planning and financial planning resources, and a communication plan is under development in consultation with partner organizations. The Dementia Care Action Plan has a related action and continues to work with NL Health Services to implement an awareness campaign on advanced care planning. Advance Care Planning has been added to the DementiafriendlyNL.ca website.



The Advocate will be closely monitoring the development and implementation of a Provincial Dementia Care Plan.

Response From the Department of Seniors:

The Dementia Care Action Plan was released March 2023. This three-year plan has 36 actions in four focus areas that aim to improve awareness of dementia, improve services and support staff professional development and training. The Dementia Action Council, formed to inform development of the plan will remain in place to support implementation.

Highlights from 2025-26 include:

- New resources were added to the dementia friendly NL website to increase awareness of young onset dementia, caregiver support, and how to support people living with dementia in the workplace.
- An Age-and Dementia-Friendly Framework has been drafted that includes age friendly and dementia friendly concepts in one easy to use document. This document can be used to assist users (including town council members, community volunteers, not for profit organizations, planners and health professionals) take action to make their communities more age- and dementia inclusive.
- Two best practice dementia-inclusive recreation guides were developed one for personal care homes and one specific for communities/municipalities.
- Inclusive arts, recreation, and intergenerational programming was expanded across the province.
- Funding was provided for Gentle Persuasive Approach training for coaches and staff in long term care and personal care homes.
- The Department of Seniors funded implementation of a Multispeciality INTERdisciplinary Team (MINT) Memory clinic in the Eastern Urban Zone. MINT Memory clinics support timely diagnosis and access to supports.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED

WHAT GOLDEN YEARS?



The Department of Finance in collaboration with all relevant departments, undertake measures to ensure that thresholds for all provincial benefits programs and services are adjusted to ensure that any increase to federal pension programs are realized by seniors and not lost through a “claw back” process.

Response From the Department of Finance:

Annual indexation of the Seniors' Benefit income thresholds will help mitigate the impact of increases to federal pension programs and any resulting decrease to the amount of the Seniors' Benefit. Adjustments to other provincial benefit programs and services will be considered annually during each budget deliberation cycle.



The Department of Health and Community Services revise the Income Based Financial Assessment Policy Manual for Long Term Care & Community Support Services to reflect that seniors in receipt of GIS would be exempt from the financial assessment requirement for access to Home Support Services; they would automatically be financially eligible, and not have any client contribution.

Response From the Department of Seniors:

Government continues to review income thresholds for all programs and services that are income tested.



The Department of Health and Community Services revise the Income Based Financial Assessment Policy Manual for Long Term Care & Community Support Services to reflect that households with a family net income of less than \$29,402, would be exempt from the financial assessment requirement to access Home Support Services; they would automatically be financially eligible, and not have any client contribution.

Response From the Department of Seniors:

Government continues to review income thresholds for all programs and services that are income tested.



The Department of Health and Community Services review the Income Based Financial Assessment Policy Manual for Long Term Care & Community Support Services specifically for seniors whose family net income is between \$29,402 and \$42,404, recognizing that they are also in receipt of some portion of the NL Seniors' Benefit, and reduce the current assess rate of up to 18 per cent.

Response From the Department of Seniors:

Government continues to review income thresholds for all programs and services that are income tested.



The Department of Health and Community Services review the annual exemption thresholds outlined in the Income Based Financial Assessment Policy Manual for Long Term Care & Community Support Services, related to the highest income thresholds (\$42,405 to \$150,000), considering the substantial income range as it relates to the percentage rate (18%) which income is assessed at.

Response From the Department of Seniors:

Government continues to review income thresholds for all programs and services that are income tested.



The Department of Health and Community Services, in collaboration with the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development, immediately implement recommendation 4a of the Rethinking Food Charity in Newfoundland and Labrador: Results, Reflections and Recommendations 2022-23 report to ensure that food banks can provide food delivery in circumstances they assess as necessary.

Response From the Department of Health and Community Services:


The Government of NL continues to prioritize food security and initiatives to reduce poverty in Newfoundland and Labrador and will develop a 10-year Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Government is partnering across Departments and with community organizations to support access to nutritious, culturally relevant food for all residents, and considers recommendations from the Rethinking Food Charity Consultation in this work.

Ongoing supports for seniors include a change to the Seniors' Benefit, which is indexed to inflation, as well as the \$500 annual supplement for seniors living in coastal Labrador to help with the increased costs of food and heating, and the Aging Well at Home Grant, which can provide \$400 annually to support well-being with services like grocery delivery, snow clearing, etc.

Information on community food supports is available from 211, where individuals can access information on community food programs, which may include delivery services. Government also continues to partner with Food First NL to facilitate the Provincial Food Security Working Group under the Vulnerable Populations Working Group, which engages representatives across sectors to inform government on health public policy matters as they relate to equity and inclusion.





The Department of Labrador Affairs change the per kilometer allowance, which is currently set at 20 cents per kilometer, to make it in line with the travel policy offered to government employees (travel in employee owned vehicles), and extended frequently to volunteers members of government committees/ working groups/councils; presently that reimbursement rate is 40.89 cents per kilometer. This recommended rate change should be effective immediately, irrespective of the status of the review of the Medical Transportation Assistance Program.

Response from Department of Labrador Affairs:

The Department of Labrador Affairs acknowledges the recommendation to align the Medical Transportation Assistance Program's (MTAP) private vehicle mileage rate with the reimbursement rate provided to government employees and volunteers.

Effective April 1, 2025, the Department increased MTAP's private vehicle mileage rate from 20 cents to 25 cents per kilometre. While this rate does not match the employee travel reimbursement rate, it represents a significant step forward in enhancing support for patients who must travel long distances to access specialized insured medical services.

MTAP is designed as an assistance program, not a full cost-recovery program. Its purpose is to help offset travel-related expenses rather than mirror rates offered to employees or volunteers. The updated mileage rate is consistent with other MTAP assistance levels, including supports provided to patients who must travel by air.

The Department remains committed to ongoing review and improvement of MTAP to ensure that supports continue to evolve in a fair, sustainable, and equitable manner for those who rely on the program for specialized insured medical services.



RECOMMENDATIONS

PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED

FROM REVIEW TO ACTION: A CONTINUUM OF CARE APPROACH



The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador will mandate the new Department of Seniors with the full and independent responsibility and authority for the development, oversight, implementation and operationalization of the continuum of health care for seniors. This will include:

- **Creating a continuum of care vision with an emphasis on people-centeredness within a transparent and accountable system;**
- **Moving all aspects of health care services for seniors—including, but not limited to, home support services, rehabilitative and restorative care, adult day programs, personal care homes and long term care homes and end-of-life care to the new Department of Seniors and requiring NL Health Services as the delivery arm to report to the Department of Seniors for these services;**
- **Creating a Branch within the new department responsible for long term care and personal care home systems and all aspects of these homes including but not limited to licensing, monitoring/oversight, inspections, compliance, accreditation and reporting; and,**
- **Developing and enforcing all relevant legislation, regulations and standards to ensure compliance and accountability.**


Response From the Department of Seniors:

The Department of Seniors provides leadership and direction for the effective and efficient delivery of quality supports and services that promote the health, safety, and well-being of seniors.

The Department of Seniors is responsible for developing, implementing and evaluating policies, programs and services to support healthy aging, adult protection and continuing care services. Under this mandate, the Department of Seniors collaborates with government and community partners on health and social programs, identifies strategic priorities to strengthen the health and community services system, administers the **Adult Protection Act**, and monitors and reports on system performance.

Working closely with NL Health Services the Department leads the development of policy, standards and performance expectations across all service areas for seniors including home support, rehabilitative and restorative care, adult day programs, personal care homes, long term care and palliative and end of life care.

The implementation of new personal care home standards as well as the new long term care home standards (under development), will strengthen monitoring processes by establishing requirements for the collection, reporting, and use of key quality and performance indicators to support continuous quality improvement.

 **The Department of Seniors immediately develop and implement an Action Plan to respond to the recommendations in the Newfoundland and Labrador Long Term Care and Personal Care Home Review and this OSA Report to include an implementation plan outlining priorities, measurable key performance indicators, timelines, and responsibility. This plan must be released publicly.**

Response From the Department of Seniors:

The action plan has been drafted and will be made public on the Department of Seniors website.



RECOMMENDATIONS

NOT IMPLEMENTED

**AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION
IS WORTH A POUND OF CURE**



The Department of Health and Community Services develop and annually update a senior friendly “How To” guide outlining evidence based preventative practices; the programs and services available to assist those that need and or wish to adapt their environment, and information on how to access these programs and services. The material should be available in printed format as well as online.

Response from Department of Seniors:

The Department of Seniors has developed a guide designed to help older adults access and navigate a wide range of programs, services, and benefits available to them, including the Home Modification Program and the Home Repair Program. The guide also includes information to support overall well-being, such as practical tips related to physical and mental health, nutrition, self-care, and respite services. This resource provides seniors with accessible, practical information to support preventative practices, environmental adaptations, and informed decision-making.

The Department of Seniors has developed an Intergenerational Program Guide that aligns with the Provincial Government’s focus on overall wellbeing and the promotion of age- and dementia-friendly communities. This guide supports the creation of inclusive, accessible spaces and programs that encourage seniors to remain active, independent, and engaged in their communities.

[Guide to Programs and Services for Seniors](#)

[Bridging Generations: A Guide to Intergenerational Programs in NL - Seniors](#)





The Department of Health and Community Services develop and implement a Public Education Campaign, informed by the “How To” document, to guide and facilitate the public to take preventative action with home modifications and assistive devices to maintain our health as we age.

Response From the Department of Seniors:

The Guide to Programs and Services and the Intergenerational Guide are available on the Department of Seniors website. In addition, both guides were shared with key community partners.

[Guide to Programs and Services for Seniors](#)

[Bridging Generations: A Guide to Intergenerational Programs in NL - Seniors](#)



The Department of Health and Community Services expand access to community-based physiotherapy and occupational therapy assessment, programs and services, as a preventative measure, in addition to the Home First program where a health issue/accident has already occurred.

Response From the Department of Health and Community Services and the Department of Seniors:

Response from the Department of Health and Community Services: To support access to physiotherapy and occupational therapy services in NL, Government recently signed a formal agreement with the Government of Nova Scotia to purchase 10 Physiotherapy Program seats and eight Occupational Therapy Program seats at Dalhousie University. A similar informal arrangement has been in place for more than 30 years. Clinical Physiotherapists are also eligible for the Come Home Incentive, a program which offers providers incentives for return-in-service agreements.

Response from the Department of Seniors: The Department of Seniors is exploring options within the community, including existing programs, service models, and potential partnerships, to help inform future planning.



The Department of Health and Community Services expand the NL Prescription Drug Program, 65Plus Plan to cover small assistive devices.

Response From the Department of Health and Community Services:

The Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP) provides financial assistance for the purchase of eligible prescription medications; however, the Special Assistance Program, as delivered by NL Health Services, provides basic medical supplies and equipment to help individuals in the community with their daily living needs. This program covers medical supplies; oxygen and related equipment; orthotics; and mobility and support equipment. Individuals can apply directly to the Special Assistance Program by contacting their local NL Health Services office.



Newfoundland and Labrador Housing expand, promote, and fund the Home Modification Program to include a preventative approach to program eligibility, including that small preventative home modifications, such as grab bars, anti-slip tape, and handrails, are funded without the requirement for an assessment by a health professional.

Response From the Department of Housing:

NLHC accepts this recommendation and are currently working on program changes to reflect this recommendation.



Newfoundland and Labrador Housing create a new zero-interest loan program for homeowners with an annual income below \$90,000 to make home modifications to promote aging well at home.

Response From the Department of Housing:


As noted above, in 2023-24, NLHC commenced a detailed review of its Home Repair Programs to ensure they were meeting the current and emerging needs of clients. As a result, on August 29, 2025, NLHC expanded the eligibility of its homeowner support programs to help more families afford necessary maintenance and upgrades to their homes. The income eligibility thresholds were increased in several programs, including a \$5,000 increase to \$51,500 for the Home Modification Program to make accessibility changes to their homes, such as the inclusion of ramps or accessible showers.

Any further changes or expansion of NLHC programs, including assessing modifications or changes to loan options, will be considered in future evaluations and reviews.

RECOMMENDATIONS

NOT IMPLEMENTED

FROM REVIEW TO ACTION: A CONTINUUM OF CARE APPROACH



The Department of Seniors in conjunction with the Department of Justice and Public Safety develop Continuum of Care Legislation and associated regulations which will: a) set the legislative standards for all programs within the continuum, b) provide authority for oversight of the continuum and consequences for non-compliance, and c) outline roles and responsibilities of all relevant entities including but not limited to government, NL Health Services, owner/operators and agencies.

Response From the Department of Seniors:

The development of Continuing Care Legislation is under consideration.



The Department of Seniors develop and implement Operational Standards for seniors' services and programs across the continuum including home supports, long term care, and personal care homes based on the Continuum of Care legislative framework.

Response From the Department of Seniors:

Personal Care Home Operational Standards have been released with a phased implementation as outlined above. A draft of the Home Support Agency Operational Standards are undergoing final review. The Long Term Care Operational Standards are also under review.



The Department of Seniors ensure that the new Continuum of Care Legislation and accompanying Operational Standards for long term care and personal care homes include:

- **That all homes must adopt and implement, with associated training, a formalized model of care that shifts from the traditional institutional and task oriented approaches to person-centered, relationship-focused holistic care.**
- **Encompass Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that promote proactive care, rehabilitation and timely access to allied health services.**
- **That the rights and needs of seniors with disabilities are met.**
- **That rental rates not increase more than once a year, increases can be no more than the rate of inflation and residents must receive a 4 month written notice prior to incurring the new rate.**
- **The comfort allowance increase to a minimum of \$360 per month and be indexed to inflation annually to enable seniors to purchase personal effects, pay their telephone and television bills, and engage in community activities.**
- **Evictions are not permitted until a transition plan is developed and operationalized, or financial penalties will be incurred.**
- **Personal care homes must supply prescribed medications to residents immediately and within no longer than 24 hours of the medication being prescribed.**

Response From the Department of Seniors:

The Department of Seniors has begun a phased implementation of the revised Personal Care Home Operational Standards, which are scheduled to be fully in effect by fall 2026. These new standards address many of the Seniors' Advocate's recommendations, including:

Resident voice and engagement

- Requiring personal care homes to support resident and family participation through resident councils and other formal feedback mechanisms.
- Ensuring residents have clear avenues to raise concerns, provide feedback, and participate meaningfully in quality improvement activities.

Monitoring and oversight

- Strengthening monitoring processes compliance protocols.
- Enhancing expectations for the follow-up investigation of complaints and incidents.

Quality and performance indicators

- Establishing requirements for the collection and reporting of key quality and performance indicators, such as incidents, complaints, medication errors, and falls.
- Setting expectations for using performance data to inform continuous quality improvement.

Affordability and financial transparency

- Clarifying requirements for admission agreements and financial practices.
- Setting limitations around the timing and frequency of rate increases.

The Department of Seniors is developing a performance management framework for the Personal Care Home Program that will include the collection, reporting, and analysis of key indicators related to quality, safety, and system performance.


As work progresses on future legislative and policy initiatives, the Department will take into consideration the elements identified, alongside stakeholder feedback, operational realities, and evidence informed best practices.

 **The Department of Seniors establish and financially resource a Provincial Caregivers Network to provide emotional support, program and service information, and navigation to any caregiver of a person receiving services in the continuum of care.**

Response From the Department of Seniors:

The department is currently reviewing best and promising practices in caregiver support, identifying needs, and current gaps to develop a plan to support needs of caregivers in the province.






The Department of Health and Community Services establish the NL Council for Health Quality and Performance which reports to the House of Assembly, as recommended in the Health Accord, immediately and make its first action the development of a publicly available dashboard on the KPIs of the long term care and personal care home systems including, but not limited to, staffing complement, incident reports, inspections and compliance status on each long term care and personal care home in the province.

Response From the Department of Seniors:

The Department of Seniors collects data from NL Health Services including data related to long term care and personal care homes. This data is used to inform policy and program development and monitor service delivery.

The reportable incident process for long term care and personal care home was strengthened through the introduction of clear reporting timelines, a standardized provincial incident reporting form, and a defined departmental process for review, care home in the province, follow-up, and closure.

The Department of Seniors is developing a performance management framework for the Personal Care Home Program that will guide the systematic collection, reporting, and analysis of quality, safety, and system performance indicators. The Department of Seniors is engaged with partners across government to enhance public reporting of personal care home compliance and licensure status.



The Department of Seniors and NL Health Services report on their legislated monitoring and compliance activities of each service under the continuum of care quarterly to the NL Council for Health Quality and Performance.

Response From the Department of Seniors:

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The reportable incident process for long term care and personal care home was strengthened through the introduction of clear reporting timelines, a standardized provincial incident reporting form, and a defined departmental process for review, care home in the province, follow-up, and closure.

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The Department of Seniors ensure that the Continuum of Care legislation require all long term care and personal care homes to establish resident and/or family led Resident and Family Councils.

Response From the Department of Seniors:

The review of Long-Term Care and Personal Care Homes Programs identified a need to strengthen the role of Resident and Family Councils in long term care. Revised policies and guidelines are under development to support their effective use across all homes, and expectations will be reinforced in the revised long term care operational standards.



The Department of Seniors ensure that the Continuum of Care legislation must outline a strong governance structure for the Resident and Family Councils to ensure they receive the supports necessary to operate and their concerns are addressed. This will include:

- **The creation of Zonal Resident and Family Councils, which will support the Resident and Family Councils and compile reports from each.**
- **The Zonal Resident and Family Councils will report to NL Health Services and to the NL Council for Health Quality and Performance, through the Provincial Data Governance.**

Response From the Department of Seniors:

As noted above, the review of Long-Term Care and Personal Care Homes Programs identified a need to strengthen the role of Resident and Family Councils in long term care. Revised Operational Standards will outline expectations to improve the effectiveness of Resident and Family Councils.



The Department of Health and Community Services ensure that the Provincial Data Governance will annually provide a report to the OSA of their analysis of the data provided by each of the Zonal Resident and Family Councils.

Response From the Department of Seniors:

The review of Long-Term Care and Personal Care Homes Programs identified a need to strengthen the role of Resident and Family Councils in long term care. Revised policies and guidelines are under development to support their effective use across all homes, and expectations will be reinforced in the revised long term care operational standards.

CONCLUSION

Each recommendation made by the Office of the Seniors' Advocate is well researched, informed by best practices, and given thorough consideration from the perspective of implementation, cost, and success in meeting the outstanding needs of seniors in Newfoundland and Labrador. It is imperative therefore that all entities in receipt of a recommendation from the OSA promptly act to implement or resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the Seniors' Advocate, so that seniors' programs and services are improved.

We remain optimistic that this coming year will see progress on our recommendations, especially those from our newest reports **An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure** and **From Review to Action: A Continuum of Care Approach**.

Anticipated growth estimates predict that by 2034, Newfoundland and Labrador seniors aged 65 years and older will be 27.8 per cent and 7.6 per cent will be aged 80 years and over. It is critically important to improve seniors' wellbeing and access to the programs and services required to age well in the right place, before this increased demand is realized. There is no time to waste.





Office of the
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