



Promoting Wellness Preserving Health

A Provincial Action Plan for seniors and caregivers
living on Prince Edward Island

Spring 2021 Progress Report



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BACKGROUND

The Implementation Council, a diverse group of community members, representatives from Health PEI and several government departments was established in October 2019. Co-chaired by a community volunteer and a representative from the Departments of Health and Wellness or Social Development and Housing, the Council reports to the Ministers of Health and Wellness and Social Development and Housing, Deputy Ministers of the respective departments and the CEO of Health PEI.

The group monitors progress on recommendations from the Action Plan and initiates task team groups to provide leadership on recommendations which require support.

ACTIONS TO DATE:

- The Implementation Council developed a three-year work plan to guide the initiation of task teams.
- The Council suspended its spring meetings as the pandemic response required a shift in priorities. Then, in accordance with public health guidance, the Implementation Council moved to virtual meetings in the summer.
- As it monitors the progress of the Action Plan the Council gathers information on activities related to specific recommendations, the impact and outcomes for seniors and shares insights with program and service planners. Last fall the Council received updates on recommendations related to seniors housing, age-friendly communities, seniors' health service planning, and primary care planning. The Council also received updates on 211 and the work of the PEI Seniors' Secretariat.
- **Accessing Information Navigating Systems Task Team** was established. Led by David Webster, this group of community members and government representatives is working on the following recommendation: *Support Island seniors and their caregivers in accessing information and navigating the health system.*
- **Enhancing Social Connectedness of Seniors Task Team** was established. Led by Dr. Olive Bryanton, this group of community members and government representatives is working on the following recommendation: *Explore innovative initiatives to enhance social connectedness for seniors.*

ACTIONS TO COME – SPRING/SUMMER 2021:

- Continue to monitor the progress of recommendations from the Action Plan with a focus on health promotion for older adults, dementia awareness and training.
- Progress reports from the two task teams and identification of next steps.
- Implementation of a Supporting Caregivers Task Team.

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SPOTLIGHT ON: Housing

Recommendations from the Action Plan: *Explore innovating housing options for seniors in the context of the PEI Housing Action Plan*

Invest in new seniors housing units, as announced in the 2018/19 Budget Address

PEI's Housing Action Plan (2018-2023) was developed by a team of housing experts, clients and informed by an extensive engagement process. Since 2018, government committed to creating 1,000 units (achieved in 2019) followed by a further commitment to develop 1,200 affordable housing units across PEI. The approach is threefold:

- **Mobile rental vouchers:** Individuals who are renting units which are suitable for their needs, but which are not affordable may be eligible for a mobile rental voucher, which provides funding support for housing. To date, approximately 500 vouchers have been created.
- **The Affordable Housing Development Program:** allows the government works with private developers to incentivize building affordable housing units. In these mixed housing developments, 50-100% of units may be leased back.
- **Government owned units:** for families, individuals and seniors on the social housing registry, where tenants rent is based on income.

Seniors' Housing

Currently, government owns 1,154 seniors units and has an additional 82 senior units in progress. Rent for these units is based on 25% of the tenant's income.

In addition, there are renovation programs that older adults can access to prepare their current home to enable them to age in place, including:

- Seniors Home Renovation Program
- Seniors Safe at Home – which supports home renovations to increase the accessibility, safety and ease of current dwellings (example renovations might include removing a tub to install a more accessible shower, installing grab bars, etc)
- PEI Home Renovation Program

Read about new housing developments: [Additional social housing coming for Island seniors](#)

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SPOTLIGHT ON: Long Term Care

Recommendation from the Action Plan:

Review long-term care financial assessment policies to provide for an equitable balance between the senior's cost of long-term care while recognizing the needs of partners who continue to live in the community

Effective February 2020 changes were made to the long-term care subsidy assessment process following a review of these policies. The change now permits a spouse whose partner is living in a long-term care home to keep either half of their family income or a new minimum amount of \$22,133. This change increased the amount of funds available to spouses living in the community.

Learn more

[Island families will benefit from long-term care subsidy changes](#)



For more information on the Action Plan see:

[Seniors Health and Wellness Action Plan | Government of Prince Edward Island](#)



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