

Statement of Mandate 2015–2016



Seniors

Department of Seniors
Statement of Mandate 2015-2016

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1) Message from the Minister and Deputy Minister

The Department of Seniors is pleased to present its Statement of Mandate for 2015-16.

The work described in this year's Statement of Mandate brings together the key outcomes of both the government's goals for the province and the ongoing fulfillment of the goals of the Strategy for Positive Aging.

Figures released by Statistics Canada show that Nova Scotia has the oldest population per capita and our population of seniors will continue to grow for the next 20 years. These demographic changes highlight the importance of consulting with seniors and senior-serving organizations and advancing seniors issues at local, provincial and federal levels.

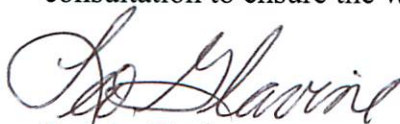
The Department of Seniors is pleased with its new partnership with the 211 telephone referral service. This service promotes positive aging by ensuring older Nova Scotians have quick and easy 24 hour access to programs and services that they need to live well in their later years and contribute to their communities.

We will continue to encourage our municipal partners across the province to adopt *Age Friendly* policies, services and structures related to seniors' physical and social environment. In 2015-16, we plan to officially launch the *Age Friendly* website and will be developing *Age-Friendly* tools to provide municipalities with the resources they need.

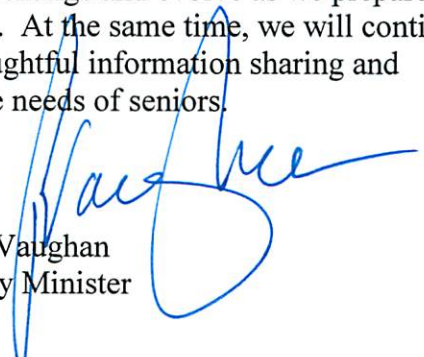
The Department will achieve government's strategic priorities by making investments in our communities so that seniors, people with disabilities and those in need get the services and care they require. Project funding provided to municipalities and not-for-profit organizations leverage community support and volunteer efforts which multiply the impact of the grants far beyond their face value. This year, we will initiate an evaluation planning process to maximize our investments in the future.

In 2015-16, the Department will continue to play a role to support the development of Nova Scotia's strategy to care for people with dementia and their families. We will also continue working closely alongside other government departments and other jurisdictions to raise and address issues facing seniors, such as fraud and abuse prevention.

The Department of Seniors resolves to continuously learn, change and evolve as we prepare to meet the challenges associated with an aging demographic. At the same time, we will continue to engage with seniors and other stakeholders through thoughtful information sharing and consultation to ensure the work is responsive to the diverse needs of seniors.



Leo A. Glavine
Minister



Peter Vaughan
Deputy Minister

2) Department Mission and Vision

Mission

The Nova Scotia Department of Seniors is responsible for providing leadership on issues related to aging to support the independence and well-being of older adults by:

- facilitating and promoting a coordinated approach within government on all matters related to seniors in the Province;
 - engaging stakeholders and creating partnership across sectors to work together to meet the needs of seniors;
 - providing research analysis and policy advice on seniors' issues; and
 - focusing our work on asset-based community development
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Vision

Nova Scotia is an inclusive society of caring communities that supports the well-being of seniors and values their contributions (Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia, 2005, pg.25).

3) Strategic Outcomes

The following strategic measures are employed by the Department to assess performance:

- A. Stakeholder engagement (with seniors, senior-serving organizations, non-governmental organizations, all levels of government, academia, private sector, etc.)
 - A.1. Seniors, seniors' organizations and senior-serving agencies have opportunities to provide advice on public policy issues.
 - A.2. Increased collaboration with government departments and non-government organizations in the exploration and development of policy, programs and services that address the needs of seniors.
 - A.3. Increased profile among provincial government peers about the Department's role and function, and how we can benefit their planning efforts that relate to older Nova Scotians.
- B. Age-Friendly Communities
 - B.1. Increased AFC planning, implementation, and evaluation activities

4) Government Priorities

Nova Scotia's population is aging rapidly with approximately 1,000 Nova Scotians turning 65 years of age each month. Nova Scotia has the highest proportion of seniors in the country at 18.3%. The Government of Nova Scotia recognizes the demographic pressure this places on the province and has identified the following key priority:

Demographics:

Goal: *Increase net interprovincial in-migration and international immigration levels; enhance wellness & health initiatives; enhance workforce participation of youth, older workers and marginalized communities; and enhance communities and social well-being.*

This demographic goal is aligned with the strategic directions identified in the Department of Seniors guiding document the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia*. The *Strategy for Positive Aging* is a comprehensive guide which can be used by government, community and business to plan for an aging population. It is also aligned with the *Age Friendly Communities* work of the Department originally introduced by the World Health Organization (WHO). The goal of *Age Friendly Communities* is to incorporate age friendly practices into policies, services, planning, and ensure the meaningful involvement of older adults in building healthy vibrant communities for all ages.

In 2015/16, the Department will support the provincial demographic goal of enhancing wellness and health initiatives and enhancing communities and social well-being by focusing its efforts on three strategic priorities:

Strategic Goals:

1. “To increase the age-friendliness of communities and promote active, healthy living.”

Broad, collaborative and creative approaches are required to address the challenges and embrace the opportunities associated with an aging population. A significant thrust of the Department’s work is focused on the development of *Age Friendly Communities (AFC)* across Nova Scotia. AFC helps support community efforts to enhance policies, services, and settings relating to the social and physical environment to be accessible to, and inclusive of, persons of all ages and ability levels. The Department works with municipalities and enables them to make changes in a range of areas (e.g., creating affordable housing and transportation options, infrastructure, healthcare, etc.). This work also includes a focus on the workplace that values and supports older workers as well as recognizing the importance of the older consumer for business. An outcome of this approach is to support Nova Scotians to live and age well in their communities.

The *Age Friendly Communities Program* increases municipalities and communities’ capacity to conduct Age Friendly planning, implementation and evaluation. *Age Friendly Communities* benefits older adults, as well as Nova Scotians of all ages, through improved health, increased independence, greater social and physical interactions and overall well-being.

In 2015-16, the Department will advance the Age Friendly Communities Program by:

- a) Providing support to municipalities and communities so that they are better able to understand and implement Age Friendly Communities:
 - Officially launching the Age-Friendly web-site and developing Age –Friendly tools
 - Creating a recognition program
 - Creating an evaluation framework
- b) Providing funding to support two main streams:
 - 1) AFC Strategic Planning and Development: Funding is available to municipalities to help communities conduct assessments and implement a coordinated approach to development of plans, policies, programs and resources that help communities become more age friendly. Communities identify priorities, establish concrete plans of action and commit to reporting publicly on the action plan outcomes.
 - 2) AFC Projects: Funding is available for projects that support a community’s identified priorities – projects that create or adapt structures and services to be accessible to, and inclusive of, seniors and people of all ages with varying needs and capacities in order to promote age-friendly environments and healthy active aging.

The Department will also support community projects through the *The Positive Aging Fund*. This program supports non-profit community organizations' efforts to develop programs and services that advance the health, well-being and community participation of seniors. Community organizations can receive grants of up to \$10,000, covering up to 100% of their project costs.

2. "To enable seniors to live in safe and supportive living environments, free from danger, fear and exploitation."

The Department is working to help ensure that older Nova Scotians live in safety and security through its support of Seniors Safety programs and initiatives that enhance education and awareness of senior abuse. The *Senior Safety Grant program*, a joint initiative with the Department of Justice, supports non-profit organizations to develop or enhance Seniors' Safety Programs. The program supports community collaboration and increases their capacity to address seniors' safety and security in a holistic way. This grant helps to advance age-friendly communities by supporting Nova Scotians as they age through community-based programs. The grant also advances Nova Scotia's *Elder Abuse Strategy: Towards Awareness and Prevention* by providing resources and supports that respond to senior abuse.

Activities include:

- Monitoring the transition of the Department of Seniors Safety information line to the 211 phone service. It is anticipated that the 211 service will provide seniors with increased capacity to handle safety and security issues.
- Providing funding through the Seniors Safety Grant Program to enhance existing Seniors' Safety Programs and expand programs to areas of Nova Scotia where programs do not currently exist. These programs address safety concerns of seniors by promoting education and awareness of senior abuse, crime prevention and safety and health issues. Grant money is made available to eligible programs annually to a maximum of \$20,000.
- The Department supports and participates in World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) on June 15th of each year. To commemorate this day, the Nova Scotia government declares a Proclamation and the Department offers small contributions to non-profit community groups who would like to host WEAAD sessions. Each year the Department supports 10-15 groups who access these contributions in order to offer innovative and interesting sessions to raise awareness of the issue in their communities.
- The Department is a collaborating partner and funder of the *Healing Approaches to Senior Abuse: The Fundy Network (HASA Network)* project. The HASA Network is a collaboration between seniors, government, Seniors' Safety Programs, Restorative Justice Agencies, police, academics, and the legal profession in a region of the province from West Hants through the Valley and around the Tri-County region. The goal of the Network is to develop a restorative based approach to seniors' safety and response to

senior abuse cases. The Network has been engaged in a variety of educational opportunities to build capacity of the members to work in a restorative way and develop a shared understanding of what the program will look like.

- The Department is heavily involved in the submission of a proposal, in partnership with the Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (CNPEA~RCPMTA), to New Horizons for Seniors under their Pan-Canadian Elder Abuse funding initiative. The focus of the proposed project is to increase knowledge exchange across Canada among service providers and seniors organizations. The objective is to share best practices in awareness, prevention and intervention of senior abuse to improve responses across the country. The project will entail multiple local gatherings and sharing cafes as well as online sharing cafes. CNPEA~RCPMTA will also create an on-line knowledge exchange hub that will connect people and provide people with access to information.

3. “To improve innovation and collaboration to ensure the diverse needs of seniors are met.”

The Department advances this goal through its membership on the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Ministers Responsible for Seniors. At this table, the Department represents Nova Scotia and collaborates on joint initiatives and participates in ongoing discussions with federal/provincial/territorial jurisdictions on seniors’ issues. The Department is an active participant on several sub-committees of the F/P/T Committee of Officials including:

- a) The Care Giver Readiness working group which will explore ways to increase caregiver readiness for current and future Canadian caregivers. The purpose of this work will be to reduce the stress and burnout of caregivers and provide caregivers with tools and resources to increase their planning capacity.
- b) The Social Isolation/Social Innovation working group which will provide seniors, senior organizations, small businesses and NGO’s with the most recent information on social isolation and social innovation to help prepare proposals for funding applications addressing this issue. The objective is to increase the number of projects addressing social isolation.

5. Budget Context

Department of Seniors			
Estimated Budget Expenditures			
	<i>2014- 2015 Estimate</i>	<i>2014-2015 Forecast</i>	<i>2015- 2016 Estimate</i>
	<i>\$Thousands</i>	<i>\$Thousands</i>	<i>\$Thousands</i>
Net Program Expenses	\$1,862	\$1,729.1	\$1,496
Program Expenses - Gross Current	\$1,077.8	\$1,212.5	\$868.3
Salaries and Benefits	\$784.2	\$ 566.6	\$627.7
Funded Staff (FTEs)	9.00	6.90	7.00

6. Performance Measures

The following performance measures have been identified because they are integral to advancing the work of the Department as well as government's priorities. The Department of Seniors engages in active consultation processes with seniors, provides policy advice to government and community stakeholders. When citizens are consulted and can easily access information relevant to their needs, and government and community stakeholders benefit from policy advice pertaining to seniors issues – a supportive age-friendly environment is created in which citizens can realize positive health outcomes as they age. The following strategic measures are employed by the Department to assess performance: A) Stakeholder engagement (with seniors, senior-serving organizations, non-governmental organizations, all levels of government, academia, private sector, etc.); B) Age-Friendly Communities. The Department has engaged a consultant to initiate the development of an evaluation framework for its work. The grant funding structure and process is subject to change pending the findings from the evaluation process. In addition, the performance measures below may be subject to change following the completion of this work.

A. Stakeholder Engagement (with seniors, senior-serving organizations, non-governmental organizations, all levels of government, academia, private sector, etc.)

Outcome	Measure	Data	Target 2015-16	Strategies to Achieve Target
Operational Measures:				
A.1. Seniors, seniors' organizations and senior-serving agencies have opportunities to provide advice on public policy issues.	Satisfaction level of seniors' organizations with information provided by the department on the policies, programs, and services available to seniors and the mechanisms in place for bringing issues of concern to the attention of the Nova Scotia government.	An evaluation form will be used to assess the Group of IX's (<i>advisory committee to the department comprised of seniors' organizations from across the province</i>) satisfaction (low, med, high) with the opportunity to provide advice on public policy issues.	Result for 2011-2012: 50% high satisfaction, and 50% medium satisfaction. Target for 2013-2014: 75% High Satisfaction Target for 2014-2015: 70% high satisfaction Result: Target met Target for 2015-2016: 70% satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to consult on a regular basis with the <i>Group of IX</i>, seniors, and senior serving organizations on key issues that impact the lives of seniors.
Operational Measures:				
A.2. Increased collaboration with government departments and non-government organizations in the exploration and development of policy, programs and services that address the needs of seniors. A.3. Increased profile among provincial government peers about the Department's role and function, and how we can benefit their planning efforts that relate to older Nova Scotians.	Number and type of initiatives the Department's staff provides consultation and policy advice on	Information collected from staff	Result for 2010-2011: 25 key initiatives Result for 2011-2012: 40 key initiatives. Result for 2013-2014: 26 key initiatives Target 2014-2015: 40 initiatives. Target 2015-16: 30 initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a high level of involvement with the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) working groups which engage in extensive work throughout the year on various initiatives identified as a priority by the F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Seniors. Maintain a strong presence on outside stakeholder committees that engage in the development of initiatives that impact seniors. Maintain a high level of involvement on interdepartmental committees in order to provide advice on the development of policies, programs and services that impact seniors.

B. Age-Friendly Communities

Outcome	Measure	Data	Target 2015-16	Strategies to Achieve Target
Strategic/Outcome Based Measures:				
B.1. Increased AFC planning, implementation, and evaluation activities	Number of local governments* engaged in becoming age-friendly communities	Base Year 2010-2011: 6 local governments	Result 2013-2014: 13 local governments Target 2014-2015: 13 local governments** Target 2015-2016: increase of 2-4 local governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote initiative in communities across the province through in-person visits and presentations at various public speaking opportunities • Develop supporting tools and resources • Revise the Department's website

* Local government: defined as towns, cities, regional and rural municipalities as well as First Nations band/tribal councils

** New communities are not likely to be introduced this year as the focus of the Department has been on developing tools and resources (and website) to support existing and new communities.