



Accountability Report 2019–20

Seniors



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Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report of the Department of Seniors for the year ended March 31, 2020 is prepared pursuant to the Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Department of Seniors Business Plan for the fiscal year just ended. The reporting of the Department outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by Department of Seniors management.

We acknowledge that this Accountability Report is the responsibility of Department of Seniors management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Department of Seniors 2019-2020 Business Plan.

Department of Seniors

Original signed by Minister

Leo A. Glavine, Minister

Original signed by Deputy Minister

Nancy MacLellan
Deputy Minister

Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present our Accountability Report for 2019-20, reporting a summary of results of our work in addressing government's priority to value, promote and support older adults and their contribution to Nova Scotia. This year, we worked across government and with partners and communities to take important steps in implementing SHIFT: Nova Scotia's Action Plan for an Aging Population. We marked Year 3 of the implementation of the plan, which has more than 50 actions.

The Department of Seniors' Social Innovation Lab continued this year, seeing the second and third cohorts with 34 fellows complete their fellowship programs in 2019-2020. Between both cohorts more than seven prototypes were developed and tested. With a human-centered design approach, the goal is to change the way society views aging by creating policies, programs and services to meet the needs of an aging population. Some of the topic areas included cohousing, intergenerational and cross-cultural connections, and micro-financing. A fourth cohort that began in December has an urban Indigenous focus and we're excited to see what they propose.

We also awarded \$390,000 in support of 30 planning and local projects that lead to more age-friendly and inclusive communities by addressing physical activity, well-being and social isolation among older Nova Scotians. One of the Age-Friendly Communities grants supported the 55+ Games in Antigonish in August where I joined over 700 older athletes as part of the South Shore men's hockey team.

An important part of SHIFT is addressing safety concerns of older adults by promoting education and awareness of senior abuse, crime prevention, and safety and health issues. We have expanded the number of agreements we have across the province for the development of Seniors' Safety Programs in their county from 16 to 18.

Another key achievement was the creation of a free series of modules for Skills Online NS addressing age-friendly workplaces. The series includes information on the benefits of hiring older workers, and how to create inclusive, all-ages friendly work environments where older workers are valued and supported.

There are many more achievements outlined in the pages that follow. I offer my sincere thanks to department and other government staff for their continued dedication to our collective mandate. I also thank our partners and stakeholders for helping us advance important initiatives. By improving services, policies and structures, we will ensure Nova Scotians continue to remain engaged, active and healthy members in their communities. I look forward to continuing this work in the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by Minister

Leo A. Glavine
Minister of Seniors

Financial Results

Financial Table and Variance Explanation (\$ thousands)			
<u>Programs and Services</u>	<u>2019-2020 Estimate</u>	<u>2019-2020 Actuals</u>	<u>2019-2020 Variance</u>
Office of the Deputy Minister	237	126	(111)
General Administration	340	342	2
Age Friendly	761	760	(1)
Safety For Seniors	675	858	183
Policy and Planning	195	242	47
Group of Nine	17	13	(4)
Social Innovation Lab	496	400	(96)
Total - Departmental Expenses	<u>2,721</u>	<u>2,741</u>	<u>20</u>
Ordinary Recoveries	---	---	---
<u>Funded Staff (# of FTEs)</u>			
Department Funded Staff	9.0	9.3	0.3

Measuring Our Performance

Mandate (Dept. of Seniors), & *SHIFT: Nova Scotia's Action Plan for an Aging Population*

The Nova Scotia Department of Seniors, under the mandate of the Minister of Seniors is responsible for the implementation, coordination, monitoring and reporting for *SHIFT: Nova Scotia's Action Plan for An Aging Population*. The vision of *SHIFT* is that: together, Nova Scotians value, support and promote older adults and their contribution to Nova Scotia. Fiscal year 2019-2020 marks year 3 of the implementation of *SHIFT*.

The shifting demographics of Nova Scotia projects that one in four Nova Scotians will be aged 65 and over by 2030. *SHIFT* pushes all of us to think differently about our changing demographics and to consider the opportunities and benefits that come with an older, more experienced population in a bid to 'embrace the boom' and reap this aging dividend for the long term.

However, the complexity and inter-connectedness of the issues and opportunities in an older population mean that an integrated, evidence-informed, and well-coordinated approach to government policy and planning is needed. In this regard, the Department of Seniors is also leading the effort to actively seek new policy initiatives and ways to improve and augment the plan's objectives for the long term through collaboration, research, and leveraging our partners and stakeholders, including older Nova Scotians, the Federal government, provincial and territorial counterparts, other provincial departments.

Department Accomplishments for 2019-2020

- **The Three (3) main Goals (pillars) of *SHIFT: Nova Scotia's Action Plan for an Aging Population* www.novascotia.ca/shift**

GOAL: Value the social and economic contributions of older adults
With their knowledge and experience, older Nova Scotians help drive our economy and keep our communities going.

GOAL: Promote healthy, active living
With good health, older Nova Scotians can live independently and pursue their goals.

GOAL: Support aging in place, connected to community life
Aging in place means older Nova Scotians can grow older in their homes and stay involved and connected to their communities.

- **Leading, coordinating and collaborative efforts with partners in implementing *SHIFT***

The Minister and Deputy Minister of Seniors have overall responsibility for coordinating and implementing the *SHIFT* action plan, creating an evaluation framework, and reporting annually on progress.

Deputy Ministers and Deputy Heads of other departments and agencies are responsible for reporting their activities related to the *SHIFT* action plan in their annual business plans.

- **Stakeholder engagements to support Age Friendly Communities**

The Department of Seniors' Age Friendly Communities Grant funding program provides funding up to \$25,000 for planning and projects that lead to more age-friendly and inclusive communities. Almost 60 applications were received and \$390,000 awarded in 2019/20 to fund a range of 30 initiatives that advance the goals of *SHIFT*.

- **Partnerships with federal and other jurisdictions to leverage and advance knowledge related to aging populations**

Staff of the Departments of Seniors (DoS) participate on several multi-jurisdictional (Federal-Provincial-Territorial) committees and working groups (e.g. Labour Market Participation of an Aging Workforce Working Group) aimed at facilitating research, advancing and leveraging knowledge and best practice to inform policy and decision making and practices related to an aging population. Over the past two years this has included reports concerning housing, core community supports, and older adults in the labour market. The federal government has also developed a "benefits finder" mostly centered on health benefits for older adults.

Working with Atlantic provinces and Public Health Agency of Canada to develop and plan for launch of our age friendly recognition program.

Evaluating the way forward based on learnings from work completed in partnership with Acadia Centre for Business and Third Sector Enhancement on a 3-year \$30,000 per year funded pilot program "Redefining Retirement" that helped participants find purpose, passion and opportunity as an older adult. The program commenced in 2018, and sessions were held in St. Margaret's Bay, Windsor/West Hants and Yarmouth County.

The Department of Seniors is working with researchers (led by Dalhousie University) to explore the issues facing older LGBTQ+ Nova Scotians concerning housing.

- **Efforts to leverage research and provide policy advice related to aging and our aging population**

The Department of Seniors aligned with the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging for staff (of various provincial departments including Seniors & Health) to participate and benefit from the CLSA Webinar Series session on March 25, 2020 titled "Population norms and prevalence of frailty among middle-aged and older Canadians".

- **Social Innovation Lab/NS Govlab Initiative**

The Department of Seniors' social innovation lab focuses on the complex issues associated with an aging population. Throughout 2019-2020, it offered a fellowship program (which was launched in February 2018) to its second, third, and fourth cohorts.

The second and third cohorts with 34 fellows comprised of public servants, academics, private sector and passionate citizens began and completed their fellowship programs in 2019-2020. The second cohort was comprised of 4 teams while the third cohort was comprised of 3 teams. Between both cohorts more than 7 prototypes were developed and tested. Some of the topic areas included cohousing, intergenerational and cross-cultural connections, and micro-financing. Cohort 4 had an urban Indigenous focus and began in December 2019. Another accomplishment during 2019-2020 for NS GovLab was the collaboration between cohort 2 and 3 fellows on a prototype that saw a collaborative design studio done with NSCAD students and residents of Northwood. The progress and completion of cohorts 3 and 4 have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Expansion and strengthening (to more communities) the Senior Safety Program**

We presently have 18 multi-year funding agreements across the province for the development of Seniors' Safety Programs in their county, (Guysborough and Inverness counties) were funded in 2019-2020. All 18 programs were awarded \$25,000 each for a total of \$450,000 in 2019-20.

- **Cultural competency training activities for government employees regarding ageism**

Cultural competence is included as both content and outcome of the PSC's Diversity and Inclusion training. The PSC also provides department/business unit training, and in the last couple years, the PSC did group training with multiple departments and business units. This helps deliver one of our *SHIFT* goals to improve on how we work with diverse Seniors communities. Intercultural & Diversity proficiency is part of the Competency dictionary and is assessed as a requirement for several posted career opportunities, including many Executive Leadership and Management Opportunities.

- **Deliver a Community-based transportation strategy and solution for Nova Scotia**

The Action Plan was developed and received funding (\$2.4M) in 2018-19. This initiative especially benefits rural Nova Scotians, older adults, those living in poverty, persons with disabilities and youth who currently lack access to transportation.

A multi-department structure was created and has been expanded to 14 providers across the province to enhance community transportation. Improving access to community transportation supports Nova Scotians in all aspects of their lives: from accessing jobs, education and recreation opportunities to health care services. This strengthens our communities and our economy.

- **Housing: Home Repair program assistance to Older Adults**

Close to 1000 seniors have been assisted by Housing Nova Scotia's home repair programs.

- **Implementation of *SHIFT*: Stages of Progress & Moving Forward (*SHIFT 2.0*)**

The government is committed to implementing the specific actions of *SHIFT* in fiscal years 2017/18 through 2020/21 and beyond. Progressively understanding the diversity of older Nova Scotians and building on their strengths will help make Nova Scotia a better place for all of us.

In early 2019 we released a *SHIFT* 18-month progress report based primarily on lead department submissions from Spring 2018.

In winter 2019 we consulted with stakeholders to prepare and submit a "*SHIFT* Moving Forward" Memorandum to Executive Council outlining a series of actions to follow *SHIFT: An Action Plan for an Aging Population*.

Supplemental Information and Appendices

Key/Interesting Facts about our Work

FACT: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Florida have the oldest populations among all states, provinces and territories in North America.

“We have to stop looking at aging as a problem to be solved and see it as the opportunity it is.”

SHIFT

Appendix A: Public Interest and Wrongdoing Act

Annual Report under Section 18 of the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act*

The Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act was proclaimed into law on December 20, 2011.

The Act provides for government employees to be able to come forward if they reasonably believe that a wrongdoing has been committed or is about to be committed and they are acting in good faith.

The Act also protects employees who do disclose from reprisals, by enabling them to lay a complaint of reprisal with the Labor Board.

A Wrongdoing for the purposes of the Act is:

- a) a contravention of provincial or federal laws or regulations
- b) a misuse or gross mismanagement of public funds or assets
- c) an act or omission that creates an imminent risk of a substantial and specific danger to the life, health or safety of persons or the environment, or
- d) directing or counselling someone to commit a wrongdoing

The following is a summary of disclosures received by the Department of Seniors

Information Required under Section 18 of the Act	Fiscal Year 2019-2020
The number of disclosures received	No disclosures were received by the department in 2019-2020.
The number of findings of wrongdoing	n/a
Details of each wrongdoing (insert separate row for each wrongdoing)	n/a
Recommendations and actions taken on each wrongdoing (insert separate row for each wrongdoing)	n/a