



**Annual Accountability
Report for the Fiscal Year
2008-2009**

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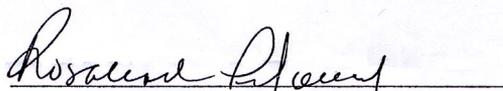
Accountability Statement

This accountability report of the Department of Seniors for the year ended March 31, 2009, is prepared pursuant to the Provincial Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Department of Seniors business plan information for the fiscal year 2008 - 2009. The reporting of outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgements, and opinions by the Department of Seniors management.

We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of the 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 business plan for the year.

Signatures


Minister - Honourable Denise Peterson-Rafuse


Deputy Minister - Rosalind Penfound


CEO - Valerie White

Note: Nova Scotia Department of Seniors

On September 10, 2007, the Department of Seniors was created. The Senior Citizens' Secretariat, the committee of government ministers that coordinates government services and programs for seniors, remains intact and is chaired by Minister Denise Peterson-Rafuse. The committee of ministers is supported by the department led by Deputy Minister Rosalind Penfound.

Message from the Minister

As the new Minister of Seniors, I am pleased to present the 2008-2009 Accountability Report for the Department of Seniors.

The Department is one of a few that serves a less traditional function within the government. Seniors acts as the centre of a hub, reaching out to connect a wide array of programs, policy and services from across the spectrum. It also ensures these are matching the needs of seniors and making them available through one entry point.

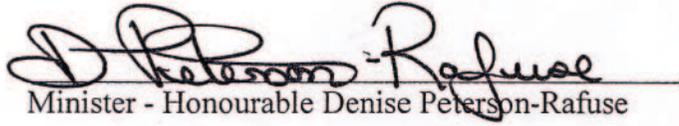
The Report that follows details the functions and value of the Department itself to Nova Scotia seniors. The Department fosters age-friendly communities and seniors' safety, and increases senior abuse awareness. It provides a critical role in service to government by providing seniors with a conduit to communicate and advance their priorities, through the Group of IX Seniors' Organizations and other consultative mechanisms. In partnership with its federal counterpart, the department acts as a liaison between Nova Scotia seniors and their peers in other provinces across the country on shared interests and challenges. It delivers the annual Expo, the Seniors Art and Photo Gallery, and supports other senior-oriented events and programming. This Accountability Report outlines these and a host of other initiatives that are all making substantive, measurable progress against the goals of the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia*.

The Report also touches on the key to the department's value to seniors; cross-government collaboration. As seniors themselves strive to lead healthy, fulfilling and productive lives at work, home, and play in their communities, they are supported in those goals every day by government. Through the Department of Seniors, they can and do access information and support programs from nearly every other department and agency.

Perhaps one of the year's key achievements was passing the one million dollar mark in funding program grants to non-profit organizations. These grants leverage uncountable value in community volunteerism, local donations, and in-kind contributions. They are the starting foundation for a wide array of interesting and innovative opportunities created for, and often driven by, seniors in dozens of Nova Scotia communities each year.

This past year, the Department's first full business cycle since becoming a department, has also been a period of refreshment and reflection. It marked the 20th year of publication for *Programs for Seniors*, a key resource for 70,000 seniors and friends of seniors from all sectors. This year's accomplishments also included the successful planning of the organization's 20th Annual Seniors Plus Expo, which took place in June 2009. Several staff members moved on to new opportunities, while new ones took their places. The Department of Seniors ended the year close to fully staffed once more with a full complement of rich history, experience, fresh ideas and energy that bode well for the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

I look forward to serving in my own role as the Department's leader during the exciting new times that lay ahead.



Minister - Honourable Denise Peterson-Rafuse

Introduction

The content of this accountability report is based on the goals, priorities and outcomes described in the 2008 - 2009 business plan of the Department of Seniors. The report describes the accomplishments and progress the agency has made in meeting those goals and priorities. It is intended to update the public and members of the legislative assembly on the Department's activities.

It is suggested that the Department's 2008 - 2009 business plan and this accountability report be read together in order to provide a full picture of the Department's goals, activities and results. Click here for an electronic link to Department of Seniors website - <http://www.gov.ns.ca/seniors/> then; click *Publications* to find the 2008-2009 Business Plan.

Performance measurement is an important component of the business planning and accountability reporting cycle. Performance measures indicate how well we are meeting our objectives. Because the Department of Seniors is a relatively new Department, created in September 2007, the Department's performance measurement system is still in the early stages of development. The Department is continuing discussions with other smaller agencies in government to determine best practices related to performance measurement. As the system develops, new measures will be identified, existing measures will be improved, and relevant data collection instruments will be developed.

For ease of use and readability, this report is structured around the priorities identified under each of the Department's 6 strategic goals:

- To improve the innovation and collaboration to ensure the diverse needs of seniors are met;
- To increase the age-friendliness of communities and promote active, healthy aging;
- To improve the financial security of seniors, particularly those with low and modest incomes;
- To increase awareness of the value of older workers and the economic benefits of older worker participation in the labour force;
- To enable seniors to live in safe and supportive living environments, free from danger, fear and exploitation;
- To support and promote the important work of volunteers.

Description of the Department of Seniors

Mandate

The Department of Seniors facilitates the planning, development, and coordination of policies, programs, and services for seniors in partnership with government departments, seniors, and voluntary seniors' groups. The Department uses a variety of methods to consult with seniors and ensure their views are considered by the province in the development of policies, programs, and services. It also serves as a single entry point to the Government of Nova Scotia – providing information on programs and services for seniors and their families and responding to seniors' issues and concerns. The Department leads the implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia and the Elder Abuse Strategy: Towards Awareness and Prevention*.

Structure

The Senior Citizens' Secretariat is a cabinet committee chaired by Nova Scotia's Minister of Seniors. Other ministers of the Secretariat include the Minister of Health, Minister of Health Promotion and Protection, Minister of Community Services, Minister of Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations, Minister of Labour and Workforce Development, and Minister of Justice.

The * Department of Seniors is staffed by a Chief Executive Officer and 4 permanent employees.

* *See note re Nova Scotia Department of Seniors on Page 3.*

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*).

Strategic Goals and Core Business Areas

Goals

The strategic goals outlined in the 2008 – 2009 Business Plan for the Department of Seniors aligns with the:

- Mandate of the Secretariat as identified in the *Senior Citizens' Secretariat Act* (1989);
- Corporate path outlined in *The New Nova Scotia* for 2008 – 2009 (a globally competitive business climate and workforce; healthy active Nova Scotians; accessible services and vibrant communities), in the context of fiscal stability now and into the future;
- Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia, in the context of maximizing opportunities today to mitigate the increasing challenges associated with the aging population.

The 6 strategic goals define the Department's long-term direction. They are challenging but attainable and key to achieving the Department's mission, vision, and mandate.

1. To improve innovation and collaboration to ensure the diverse needs of seniors are met.

Creative thinking, innovative problem solving, and collaboration across departments, governments, and all sectors of society are key to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the policies, programs, and services required to age positively in Nova Scotia. As stated in the Strategy for Positive Aging, "*solutions to meeting the needs of seniors and all Nova Scotians today and in the future do not rest in convenient thinking, they lie in our collective creativity.*"

2. To increase the age-friendliness of communities and promote active, healthy aging.

Age-friendly communities promote positive aging and are guided by the principles of dignity, fairness, participation, respect, safety, self-determination, self-fulfillment, and security. Age-friendly communities provide programs, services, and an infrastructure that enable seniors to access the community's educational, cultural, spiritual, and recreational resources. The broad range of community-based health services, transportation and housing options available in age-friendly communities enable seniors to maximize their independence and pursue active lives that promote good health. Age-friendly communities promote inter-generational programs and activities to eliminate ageism and encourage interdependence between friends, family members, and neighbours.

3. To improve the financial security of seniors, particularly those with low and modest incomes.

Adequate income is a key determinant of health and strongly influences an individual's ability to age positively. Reducing the rate of economic hardship among those who fall below the poverty line (low-income cut-off), many of whom are single women alone, is key. Taking steps to improve taxation and benefit policies to assist low and modest income seniors, and

ensuring baby boomers are financially ready for retirement, is crucial to improving the financial security of seniors today and tomorrow.

4. To increase awareness of the value of older workers and the economic benefits of older worker participation in the labour force.

In an era where jobs will soon out-number workers, there is a significant opportunity to encourage and support workplace policies and practices that enable Nova Scotia companies to become employers of choice and gain a competitive advantage on a national and global scale. Efforts to maximize the skills, contributions and participation of older workers in the labour force will better utilize the ideas, talents and productive capacity of Nova Scotians of all ages and abilities in both paid and unpaid work.

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

Many sectors and community-based organizations have a role to play in developing safe communities and ensuring the safety of seniors. Reducing social isolation, falls among seniors, crime rates, and senior abuse is key. Promoting seniors' safety in an emergency and increasing their knowledge of medications, frauds and scams; and legal documents such as power of attorney and wills is also crucial. When prevention is not enough, providing supports to those who are victimized is paramount.

6. To support and promote the important work of volunteers.

Nova Scotia's ability to mobilize the kind of community support needed to meet the challenges of an aging population will depend on growing and strengthening the voluntary sector. Retiring baby boomers represent a very large pool of highly skilled, capable, and active volunteers and an opportunity exists to strategically influence the volunteer rates of baby boomers in retirement.

Core Business Areas

The Department's strategic goals, associated priorities and core business areas, contributed to the attainment of the Government's corporate priorities in *The New Nova Scotia* for 2008 – 2009 and the mandate of the *Senior Citizens' Secretariat Act* (1989). The 4 Core Business Areas are:

Intergovernmental, Interdepartmental, and Government-Wide Collaboration and Policy Development

The Department promotes collaboration across the Nova Scotia government and between levels of government in identifying and addressing the needs of seniors and leading/contributing to relevant corporate initiatives. This involves advising the Minister of Seniors and other Ministers of the Senior Citizens' Secretariat of the concerns and priorities of seniors, as well as formulating strategies to address the challenges and opportunities presented.

The Department also produces information materials, such as the *Nova Scotia Seniors' Statistical Profile*, to assist government partners in policy and programming. Participation in the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Ministers Responsible for Seniors Forum is also a focus.

Stakeholder Consultation and Collaboration

The Department promotes quality and evidence-based decision making in the development of aging-related policies and plans through consultation and collaboration with various government and non-government stakeholders. Its staff consults extensively with seniors and seniors' groups in order to inform its research and policy work.

Planning and Coordinating Programs and Services

The Department collaborates with various government and non-government stakeholders to develop senior-friendly programs and coordinate service delivery. It also develops and implements new or emerging seniors' programs, as required. It involves seniors in organizing and supporting initiatives such as the 50+ Expo, implementation of the *Nova Scotia Elder Abuse Strategy: Towards Awareness and Prevention*, Seniors' Art and Photo Gallery, and Seniors' Literacy and Learning Programs, to name a few.

Following the launch of two new grant programs in February 2008 - the Positive Aging Fund and Age-Friendly Communities Program, the Department launched the Senior Safety Grant in October 2008 to support Seniors' Safety Programs across the province. These programs will be ongoing and will provide over \$700,000 each year to non-profit organizations, municipalities working on age-friendly improvements and seniors' safety programming in their communities across the province.

Communications and Information Sharing

The Department informs and educates on aging issues, programs and services for seniors, and the *Strategy for Positive Aging*. It promotes the contributions made by seniors to family and community life and works to ensure information produced is useful, of high quality, and easily-accessible for seniors, their families, and those who work with seniors. The Department uses a variety of methods to create awareness about its role and the services it provides.

As Nova Scotia's population continues to age, the Department expects public demands for information to increase. In anticipation, the Department works to continually enhance its ability to provide consistent and regular information to seniors, stakeholders, and the general public.

Progress and Accomplishments 2008-2009

Strategic Goal 1: To improve innovation and collaboration to ensure the diverse needs of seniors are met.

PRIORITY – Collaborate on joint initiatives and participate in ongoing discussions with federal/provincial /territorial jurisdictions on seniors’ issues.

The 11th meeting of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Ministers Responsible for Seniors planned for Prince Edward Island, fall, 2008 was not held due to a federal election call. The 11th meeting of the F/P/T Ministers responsible for Seniors is therefore scheduled for fall, 2009 and will be discussed in the 2009 – 2010 Accountability Report. During the 2008 – 2009 year, the CEO of the Department of Seniors continued to serve as Provincial/Territorial Co-Chair on the F/P/T Committee of Officials to oversee the work of F/P/T Working Groups which have continued their work on various priorities that were identified at the 10th meeting of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Ministers Responsible for Seniors. Examples of F/P/T Working Groups include the Safety and Security and Positive Images of Aging; Department staff have actively participated in both groups. Ongoing consultation and work with F/P/T colleagues is key to the Department’s ability to remain current about issues that impact our aging demographic.

PRIORITY – Collaborate on joint initiatives, provide informed contributions, and support the work of initiatives led by other provincial government departments that undertake work which impacts seniors, supports community development, and responds to demographic change.

A scenario planning session was held with the Action Plan for Positive Aging Working Group (the interdepartmental working group tasked with developing the Action Plan for Positive Aging) in June 2008. Scenario planning is a method for learning about the future by understanding the nature and impact of the most uncertain and important driving forces affecting our world. Most widely used as a strategic management tool, the method is gaining popularity for facilitating other types of group discussion about a common future.

The Department’s Corporate Strategist provides advice and consultation with respect to implementing the Strategy’s 9 goals and 190 societal actions, guiding the work of the Action Plan for Positive Aging Working Group and developing the Action Plan for Positive Aging – the Action Plan is a report to communicate Government progress on implementing the *Strategy for Positive Aging*. Because the Corporate Strategist position was vacant from October, 2008 – February, 2009, the Action Plan for Positive Aging report has not been completed. A high level overview of accomplishments to date regarding the *Strategy’s* goals and actions will be completed for fall 2009 and a full detailed report will be completed by May, 2010.

The Department's ongoing involvement with interdepartmental committees and F/P/T Working Groups as well as engaging in consultation with stakeholders at both the community and academic levels ensures that staff are well positioned to scan and review national and international research and innovations related to a wide range of aging issues.

Staff actively participates in educational and networking opportunities that enable the Department to maintain its expertise in aging issues, learn about innovative solutions, and develop local, national and international partnerships.

Staff continues to participate on issue-specific standing committees of government and non-government agencies. In 2008-2009, representatives of the department participated on 38 committees focused on issues that include: long-term fiscal planning, community development, volunteerism, senior abuse prevention, transportation, older workers, caregiving, women/work/care, literacy and lifelong learning, and falls prevention.

PRIORITY – Lend support to community-based seniors' organizations, promote the continued growth of Nova Scotia's seniors' networks and intergenerational programs, encourage the participation of seniors in the work of the department, and seek their advice on policy issues.

During the 2008 – 2009 year the Department hosted 9 meetings of the Group of IX Seniors' Advisory Council of Nova Scotia (these meetings feature guest speakers and briefings on topics of concern to seniors). The meetings involved presentations from other government Departments such as Conserve Nova Scotia on the Energuide rebate program and the Department of Health on the implementation of years 4 – 10 of the *Continuing Care Strategy* and the status of Adult Day Programs in Nova Scotia. Presentations were delivered about the Seniors Pharmacare program, hospice and palliative care and the role of the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia.

The Department also held 1 Spring and 1 Fall Consultation. The Consultations, held in Dartmouth, bring together approximately 70 representatives of seniors' groups and people who work with seniors for a full day of information sharing. A wide-range of topics were discussed and organizations had the opportunity to update Department staff and others about their activities and discuss emerging issues.

The *Strategy for Positive Aging* highlights the importance of expanding opportunities for inter-generational interaction to increase the knowledge and understanding between generations, reduce misconceptions and fears, and foster a culture of caring. An event to award and recognize intergenerational involvement and achievement will be held again in 2009-2010.

The Department encourages the participation of seniors on standing committees, other special task forces, and through special forums related to advancing implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging*. During the 2008 – 2009 year, the Department participated in Mini People's Schools events sponsored by Community Links. Mini People's Schools encourage older Nova Scotians to become involved in their communities by engaging them to identify issues of interest

and explore ways to take community action. The Department has provided information about the *Strategy for Positive Aging*, to People's Schools attendees in order to encourage the involvement of seniors in community-based initiatives.

In addition, through its grant initiatives such as the Positive Aging Fund and Age-Friendly Communities Program, the Department promotes the active engagement of seniors in the planning and delivery of programs to meet their needs. The innovative initiatives which have been funded to date provide opportunities and the potential for seniors to increase their knowledge and share information, participate in public policy consultations and identify solutions to seniors' issues.

Strategic Goal 2: To increase the age-friendliness of communities and promote active, healthy aging.

PRIORITY – Implement the Age-Friendly Communities Program to provide support to municipal governments for creating a range of services, infrastructure, and built environments that ensure seniors are able to lead healthy, active, injury-free lives in their own communities.

2 Full-Time Employee (FTE) positions (Community Development Officers) were created to manage the delivery of the Department's 4 grant initiatives, one of which is the Age-Friendly Communities Program. By the end of the 2008 – 2009 fiscal year, these positions were not yet filled. As a result, 2 of the 3 key strategic goals identified under this priority have not yet been met, these include: evaluating the results the program's initial release (February 2008) and applying lessons learned by making program modifications as needed and; engaging municipalities in exploring options and long-term strategies for improving the age-friendliness of Nova Scotia communities. These goals will be addressed in the 2009 – 2010 fiscal year.

A second call for proposals for the Age-Friendly Communities Program was issued in November 2008 and 17 grants were awarded. The Department therefore met its 3rd strategic goal which involved promoting innovative applications and communicating funded projects. This grant initiative continues to support municipalities to develop age-friendly initiatives which respond to the needs of our aging demographic.

PRIORITY – Implement the Positive Aging Fund to support non-profit community organizations in creating projects that advance the implementation of the goals and actions outlined in the *Strategy for Positive Aging*.

Since the 2 Community Development Officer positions were not filled in the 2008 – 2009 fiscal year, 1 of 2 strategic goals identified under this priority has not yet been filled - this involved evaluating the results the program's initial release (February 2008) and applying lessons learned by making program modifications as needed. Forty-two (42) Positive Aging Fund projects were awarded from the second call for proposals issued in October, 2008, therefore, the other strategic

goal, which involved communicating funded projects and promoting innovative applications, was met.

PRIORITY – Sponsor the annual 50+ Expo and coordinate Seniors Week Activities.

All strategic goals identified under this priority were met. The Department is a sponsor of the 50 Plus Expo Society. This is an annual event which involves entertainment and a showcase of products, programs and services for older adults by over 100 exhibitors – there were over 400 attendees.

Seniors' Week was proclaimed during the third week of June and the Department coordinated Seniors' Week activities and encouraged province-wide participation. An independent Committee organizes the selection and presentation of the Remarkable Seniors Awards for leadership, volunteerism, and community service; 2 awards were given to remarkable seniors in each category. Seniors are nominated by interested individuals and community groups.

PRIORITY – Prepare and distribute publications including: *Programs for Seniors*, *Seniors' News*, and the *Directory of Seniors' Organizations*

With the publication of 70,000 2009 *Programs for Seniors* guide – a publication that has earned a solid reputation as a reliable and informative resource for seniors, their families, and people who work with seniors – the quality and distribution levels have been maintained. Primary distribution points are public libraries, pharmacies, clubs, councils, and seniors' organizations, and family physicians.

Due to limited human resources during the 2008 – 2009 year the content of the *Seniors' News* newsletter will be reviewed in the 2009 – 2010 year to ensure it reflects the Department's strategic direction and informs a broader audience. Ways to expand electronic distribution will also be identified.

Other supporting activities involved the Department's ongoing work with Department of Labour and Workforce Development's Skills and Learning Branch, to address the literacy skills of seniors through the *Seniors' Literacy and Learning Program* initiated in 2005 – 2006. The goal of the grant is to continue to foster partnerships between seniors' organizations and community-based learning organizations in the delivery of specially tailored, senior-friendly, literacy and learning programs. In 2008 – 2009, 11 organizations received funding to provide literacy programs for seniors and 163 to 195 seniors in total participated through the initiative. All programs focused on health related learning activities using the resource, "*A Health Literacy Manual for Older Adults*", developed and published by the Department of Seniors.

The Department does not currently have funding for a Seniors' Literacy Coordinator, rather, it is intended that 1 of the 2 FTE's, hired in the 2009 – 2010 year, will manage this grant program; management will involve ongoing support and evaluation of the projects funded.

In addition, the Department continues to coordinate and promote the Seniors' Art and Photo Gallery. With the assistance of senior volunteers, the Department provides artists and photographers from across the province with an opportunity to display and sell their works. All proceeds from the paintings and photographs sold go directly to the artist or photographer. In 2008 – 2009, approximately 249 pieces were displayed. The number of pieces sold was 13, with a total value of \$1,625.00.

Strategic Goal 3: To improve the financial security of seniors, particularly those with low and modest incomes.

PRIORITY – Implement the *Nova Scotia Elder Abuse Strategy: Towards Awareness and Prevention* with a focus on aspects of the Strategy that address financial abuse.

For a full description of actions identified to address the prevention of financial abuse, see the second strategic area in the *Strategy* – Prevention of Financial Abuse. While it was the original intention to initiate another awareness campaign focused on the prevention of financial abuse during the 2007 – 2008 year, staffing did not permit work to be completed in this area. It was determined that work related to the implementation of the *Elder Abuse Strategy*, including the initiation of an awareness campaign, would be completed by 1 of 2 Community Development Officers, who were not hired until after the 2008 – 2009 fiscal year. Despite a formal awareness campaign, the Department continues to provide information and resources about the prevention of senior abuse. Work with the Senior Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee tasked with overseeing the implementation of the *Strategy*, will occur in the 2009 – 2010, led by 1 of 2 Community Development Officers, and will be reported on in the 2009 – 2010 Accountability Report.

The Department of Seniors views the prevention of senior abuse as a key priority and continues to work with F/P/T colleagues to address the issue of senior abuse, as such, the Department participated in the planning of the F/P/T Forum on Financial Abuse of Seniors (held June, 2008).

The new F/P/T Officials Responsible for Seniors Working Group – Financial Security, continues to work on various initiatives and projects to accurately assess the ability of current pension programs to meet the needs of seniors and subsequently position itself to make recommendations on pension reform.

Strategic Goal 4: To increase awareness of the value of older workers and the economic benefits of older worker participation in the labour force.

PRIORITY – Host the Silver Economy Conference to bring together the business sector, the voluntary and higher learning sectors, and all levels of government to learn about a wide range of opportunities that are emerging with demographic change in Nova Scotia and around the world.

By playing a key role in this event, the Department will ensure the conference agenda advances the societal actions identified under the Employment and Life Transitions Goal in the *Strategy for Positive Aging*. The Department's Corporate Strategist is the lead on the Silver Economy Conference. Due to the position being vacant from October, 2008 – February, 2009 the conference, originally planned for 2009 – 2010, will be held in May, 2010.

The Silver Economy Summit will engage government and non-government partners in planning and executing a conference which will: inform Nova Scotia businesses about the baby boomer market and the opportunities for new products/services related to demographic changes that are taking place on a global scale and; emphasize *global competitiveness* by featuring international speakers and through the announcement of a formal relationship between the Province of Nova Scotia and the Silver Economy Network of European Regions – making Nova Scotia the first region outside of Europe to receive this distinction.

The Department continues to be engaged with partners across Government, on the Long-Term Planning Council (led by Assistant Deputy Ministers Committee) intended to share information on future trends and projections to better respond to coming challenges and opportunities.

Strategic Goal 5: To enable seniors to live in safe and supportive living environments, free from danger, fear, and exploitation.

PRIORITY – Continue to build momentum in preventing and responding to abuse of older adults by leading the implementation of the *Nova Scotia Elder Abuse Strategy: Towards Awareness and Prevention*.

The *Nova Scotia Elder Abuse Strategy: Towards Awareness and Prevention*, government, released in 2005, provides government, community partners and seniors with a solid framework to guide Nova Scotia's response to senior abuse. The strategy includes four strategic areas: Education and Awareness; Prevention of Financial Abuse; Community Based Networks and; Resources and Supports. Each strategic area encompasses numerous actions which aim to prevent and address senior abuse. Although the Department did not have a Full-Time Employee in place during the 2008 – 2009 year to lead the implementation of the strategy focusing on the four key strategic areas, the Department of Seniors continued to be actively involved in the promotion of key activities to forward the work of senior abuse prevention in Nova Scotia. The following activities were undertaken, or will be undertaken in the 2009-2010 year:

- Continued collaborate with our Federal/Provincial/Territorial, national and provincial partners, through ongoing participation on the F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Seniors' Safety and Security Working Group.
- The Department continues to consult and collaborate with various departments, agencies/organizations and other partners who have expertise and interest in issues surrounding senior abuse.

- The Department released the Senior Safety Grant in October, 2008 – a joint initiative with the Department of Justice. Seniors’ Safety Programs, for which the grant is intended, address the 4th strategic area of the *Elder Abuse Strategy* by providing ‘Resources and Supports’ that respond to senior abuse.
- The Department coordinated and supported province-wide activities to recognize Nova Scotia’s 4th annual Senior Abuse Awareness Day and the 3rd World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15th 2008. The Department awarded 12 Senior Abuse Community Awareness Activity Contribution grants in the amount of \$250.00 to non-profit community organizations to deliver senior abuse awareness activities.
- Continue implementing the senior abuse education and awareness campaign to increase awareness and promote use of the Senior Abuse Support Line – *to be undertaken in 2009 – 2010.
- Assess the development of the two pilot senior abuse prevention community networks and evaluate the development of an appropriate community-based model to respond to senior abuse – *to be undertaken in 2009 – 2010.

PRIORITY – Implement the Safety for Seniors Program in partnership with the Department of Justice.

The key strategic actions identified under this priority were met. The Senior Safety Grant – a joint initiative of the Departments of Seniors and Justice was released in October, 2008. All 9 of the 11 existing Seniors’ Safety Programs that applied and 4 new programs were awarded grants. The development of the Senior Safety Grant Policy which guided the subsequent development of the grant application helped determine a strategy for expanding Seniors’ Safety Programs into communities where they currently do not exist. The Senior Safety Grant addresses each of the following strategic goals:

- Strengthens links between seniors’ safety programming and Government’s senior abuse prevention and crime prevention strategies;
- Supports the professional development of Seniors’ Safety Coordinators across the province;
- Provides financial support to existing Seniors’ Safety Programs

The Department has continued to work on activities which have evolved out of the collaborative relationships built through the department’s participation in two international Seniors and Emergency Preparedness Conferences (the second conference was held in Nova Scotia in March 2008). During the 2008 – 2009 year, the Emergency Preparedness Committee began work to develop a Train the Trainer program to train seniors to deliver emergency preparedness training to other seniors; those seniors would then deliver sessions in their respective communities in order to build capacity for communities to respond appropriately in times of disaster.

Strategic Goal 6: To support and promote the important work of volunteers.

PRIORITY – Increase awareness of the time banking concept and engage community partners in dialogue about its potential for creating supportive communities by attracting volunteers, increasing intergenerational interactions, supporting a seniors-helping-seniors approach, and valuing the assets and contributions of marginalized groups.

The Time Banking approach to volunteerism creates supportive communities by creating innovative ways to increase social connectivity among seniors and grow volunteerism in Nova Scotia. With the Department's Corporate Strategist now in place, the strategic action to: provide support to volunteers and stakeholder organizations in developing models for community engagement and hosting events that gauge community interest and open dialogue about the potential for Time Banking programs will now be addressed in the 2009 – 2010 year.

The Department will also explore participation on the Volunteerism Intergovernmental Coordinating Committee led by the Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection to support volunteerism as a corporate priority. In addition, as outlined in the 2007 – 2008 Accountability Report, the Department funded and supported a time banking demonstration project in Mahone Bay, Neil's Harbour and Scotts Bay, in 2007 – 2008; the results previously expected in 2008 – 2009, will now be reported on in the 2009 – 2010 Accountability Report.

Human Resource Strategy

The Human Resources staff from the Department of Health carries out the human resources functions on behalf of the Department of Seniors. In 2008 – 2009, the Department had 5 funded Full-Time Employees (FTE's). It is anticipated that additional staff will be required to fulfill the development of the Department.

The Department is committed to providing learning experiences to university students from a variety of disciplines including Family Studies and Gerontology, Public Administration and Public Relations, as opportunity permits.

Specific Human Resource goals met by the Department in 2008 – 2009 include:

- Provided mentorship to new staff both informally and formally through assigned mentors (as the Department experienced significant changes in staff in 2008 – 2009);
- Maintained organizational effectiveness by being strategic about staffing responsibilities in relation to delivering numerous projects and initiatives; this maximizes efforts and results;
- Maintained representation on the Diversity Roundtable Committee to increase awareness about diversity issues; this committee promotes inclusiveness as a model of government led initiatives;
- Maintained representation on the joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee and the Healthy Wellness Committee;
- Maintained representation on the French-Language Service Coordinator Committee to continue to build the Department's capacity to deliver services in French.

Additional Significant Accomplishments 2008 – 2009

There were no other significant accomplishments for the 2008 – 2009 year.

Financial Results

In 2008 – 2009, the Nova Scotia Department of Seniors had an approved budget allocation of \$2,127,000. Actual 2008 – 2009 expenditures totaled \$1,693,000.

The following table provides a breakdown of estimates versus actual expenditures of the Department of Seniors.

Budget Context Chart Nova Scotia Department of Seniors

	2007-2008 Estimate	2007-2008 Forecast	2008-2009 Estimate	2008 – 2009 Actual
	\$ Thousands	\$ Thousands	\$ Thousands	\$ Thousands
Program Expenses	718	1,090	1,442.8	1,275.6
Salaries and Benefits	568.4	536	684.2	417.4
Total Operating Costs	1,286.0	1,626	2,127	1,693
Funded Staff (FTE's)	7.8	7.39	10.0	5.32

Variance Analysis

The primary variance between the actual and the estimate is vacancy management and savings in operating costs.

Performance Measures

The Department of Seniors has continued working with a number of other smaller agencies and departments to examine its performance measurement system and improve its measures related to its collaborative work and mandate to effect long term social change. Changes are being made to improve the integrity of the performance measurement system of the Department of Seniors. New measures will be added that pertain to the Department's new grant programs.

Performance Measure: Number of collaborative initiatives, projects and publications of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Ministers Responsible for Seniors Forum.

As outlined in the 2007 – 2008 Accountability Report, this measure was discontinued. A new measure was developed in 2009 – 2010 to track the 'Number and type of initiatives the Department's staff provides consultation and policy advice on'. 'Initiatives' includes initiatives, projects and publications, but rather than tracking a specific number as a benchmark, it speaks more directly to the Department's capacity to provide advice and consultation. The revised measure also does not limit the measure to work with F/P/T colleagues.

Performance Measure: Measure Related to the Completion of the *Positive Aging Action Plan*

The Action Plan for Positive Aging Committee is an interdepartmental working group tasked with overseeing the implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia*. The Positive Aging Action Plan is a comprehensive report, which is to be developed, outlining the progress that has been made with respect to implementing the *Strategy's* (9) goals and (190) societal actions. It was intended in 2007 – 2008 that a number of measures would be developed related to the Positive Aging Action Plan. However in 2008 it was decided that prior to the development of specific performance measures related to Action Plan, a Scenario Planning process would be utilized to assist the Action Plan for Positive Aging Committee to identify priorities related to the Strategy's implementation.

A Scenario Planning session was held in June 2008. A summary document related to the Strategy's implementation will be completed by fall 2009 and a detailed report will be developed and distributed to government and other stakeholders at the *Silver Economy Conference* in May 2010. Relevant performance measures related to the Strategy's implementation will be assessed during the 2009 – 2010 year.

Performance Measure: Consultations with Seniors and Nova Scotia's Seniors' Networks.

Between the 2007 – 2008 Accountably Report and this current report for 2008 – 2009, the Performance Measure from 2007 – 2008 to measure the *Satisfaction Level of Group of IX Seniors' Organizations* was edited to evaluate more broadly the ability of the Department to lead

satisfactory consultative process with the Group of IX as well as other *Seniors and Nova Scotia's Seniors' Networks*. The progress is outlined below.

The Group of IX Seniors' Organizations is an advisory committee to the Department which, through its membership represents over 100,000 Nova Scotia seniors.

What does this measure tell us?

It tells us to what degree our stakeholders are satisfied with the opportunities they have to provide advice on policy issues. High rates of satisfaction would indicate these stakeholders feel they have such opportunities. This measure is based on self-reports through a survey administered to the Group of IX members.

Where are we now?

The Group of IX Seniors' Organizations generally reports being satisfied with the opportunities to provide advice on public policy issues. For the 2008 – 2009 year (73%) reported a 'high' level of satisfaction, (27%) reported a 'medium' level of satisfaction and (0) members (0%) reported a 'low' level of satisfaction

Where do we want to be?

The target for this measure is to increase the Group of IX members' rating of "high overall satisfaction" with opportunities to provide advice, to 70% in 2008-2009; this target was therefore exceeded at 73%.

In order to assess the broader measure of consulting with Seniors and Nova Scotia's Seniors' Networks, it was outlined in the 2007-2008 Accountability Report that a measure to assess the level of stakeholder satisfaction with the Department's Fall and Spring consultations would be developed during the 2008-2009 year. Due to limited human resources during the 2008 – 2009 year, the level of stakeholder satisfaction will actually be measured at the Fall Consultation 2009 and therefore reported in the 2009 – 2010 Accountability Report.

Performance Measure: Number and type of standing committees the department participates in.

As outlined in the 2007 – 2008 Accountability Report, this measure was discontinued. As previously noted, a new measure was developed in 2009 – 2010 to track the 'Number and type of initiatives the Department's staff provides consultation and policy advice on'. 'Initiatives' includes initiatives, projects and publications (most often completed through committee work). This revised measure speaks more directly to the Department's capacity to provide advice and consultation which, ultimately, is a more accurate measure of the Department's ability to impact policy.

Performance Measure: Communication with Seniors and Nova Scotia's Seniors' Networks

Specific measures included: number of speaking engagements; number of visits to the Department's website; number of *Seniors' News* distributed and; number of calls received on the Seniors Information Line – the Department's toll-free line.

What does this measure tell us?

This measure informs us how senior-friendly the Department's communications vehicles are (e.g. readability, layout and design).

Where we are now?

The Department did not have a continuous full-time communications staff person support this year until January 2009. At that time, the department's Communications Advisor began to review and revise the communication tools and work on producing some up to date materials that would pay dividends into the next fiscal year.

An example of this was finishing the work of changing the visual Identity Program of the department from Seniors' Secretariat to Department of Seniors. This entailed making extensive updates to the department website, including an URL change (www.gov.ns.ca/scs became www.gov.ns.ca/seniors), a new brochure, new departmental business/contact cards, the purchase of new publicity items to promote the toll-free info line and other services and associate these long-established tools with the new departmental identity. This work also included new photography and a revised brochure for the Seniors Art and Photo Gallery.

As the baby boomer generation ages and retires in greater numbers, it is expected that the departmental website will play a bigger role in the departmental communications toolkit than it has in the past. This year, we launched a review and revision process to bring the department's website in line with the standards and look of other provincial government website resources and to lay a foundation for significantly heavier use by more technically sophisticated users. This work included an accessibility audit to evaluate the readability and other accessibility features of the site.

Throughout this period, the Communications Advisor also supported the Minister and CEO with speaking notes, presentation materials, media analysis, and other routine items, and participated in the final stages of pre-press publication activities and distribution planning for the 2009 Programs for Seniors.

Where do we want to be?

As indicated in the 2007 – 2008 Accountability Report, the Department's Communications Advisor will review the existing measures and identify changes/further development during 2009 – 2010.

Progress on Measures

Performance Measure: Speaking Engagements

What does this measure tell us?

This measure speaks to the Department's capacity to deliver key messages, on a range of topics and issues related to population aging, in order to inform its partners (other government Department's, stakeholders and community members).

Where we are now?

Number of speaking engagements/events the Department participated in:

The number of speaking engagements during 2008 – 2009 totalled 44; this was below the Department's target due to limited human resources.

Where do we want to be?

Number of speaking engagements/events the Department participated in:

Our goal is to maintain a target of participating in 75 speaking engagements/events for the year.

Performance Measure: Number of Visits to the Department's Website

What does this measure tell us?

This measure tells us how many members of the public seek information about programs, services and initiatives for seniors, and specifically how many choose to access this information via the internet.

Where we are now?

Number of visits to the Department's website:

Data was available from April 1, 2008 to August 2, 2008. The total number of visits was 21,136. On average this would be 4227 per month.

Where do we want to be?

Number of visits to the Department's website:

Visits to the website increased substantially from 2006 – 2007 at 58,593 to an estimated 102,840 in 2007 – 2008. Our target is 100,000 visits per year.

Performance Measure: Number of Seniors' News newsletters Distributed

What does this measure tell us?

This measure speaks to the Department's ability to remain current about the issues that impact seniors' lives and communicate information about these issues to the senior population.

Where we are now?***Number of Seniors' News newsletters distributed:***

Due to limited human resources, there were no publications of the *Seniors' News* newsletter during the 2008 – 2009 year. The Department's Communications Advisor is currently working to re-establish regular publications of the newsletter.

Where do we want to be?***Number of Seniors' News newsletters distributed:***

As previously noted, the Department's Communication Advisor began work to develop a communications strategy aimed at improving the Department's current communication mechanisms and tools, this includes publishing the *Seniors' News* newsletter as fewer copies were published during 2008 – 2009 due to limited human resources. As noted in the 2007 – 2008 Accountability report, efforts will be made in 2009 – 2010 to promote an on-line version of the newsletter and track its usage.

Performance Measure: Number of Calls on the Seniors' Information Line**What does this measure tell us?**

This measure tells us how many members of the public, particularly seniors, their family members, caregivers and care providers, seek information about programs and services for seniors. This helps inform us about which programs and services are most critical to seniors.

Where we are now?***Number of calls on the Seniors' Information Line:***

In 2008 - 2009, there were 2,796 calls to the Department's *Seniors' Information Line*. This number reflects only those calls actually recorded. It is important to note that this total does not include the senior calls managed by the office.

Where do we want to be?***Number of calls on the Seniors' Information Line:***

Our target is to increase the number of calls to the Department's *Seniors' Information Line* each year.

This concludes the Department of Seniors 2008 – 2009 Accountability Report. The Department continues to work with seniors through information sharing and consultative processes with community members, stakeholders, and government departments. It is the Department's goal that by facilitating the planning, development, and coordination of policies, programs, and services for seniors; it can assist Nova Scotia to realize its vision, that, "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*).