



**Annual Accountability
Report for the Fiscal Year
2009-2010**

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Accountability Statement

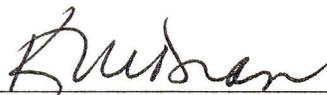
This accountability report of the Department of Seniors for the year ended March 31, 2010 is prepared pursuant to the Provincial Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Department of Seniors business plan information for the fiscal year 2009-2010. 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.

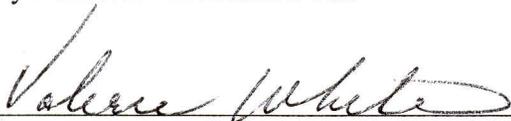
Signatures



Minister - Honourable Denise Peterson-Rafuse



Deputy Minister - Kelliann Dean



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 Kelliann Dean.

Message from the Minister

In the 2009-2010 year, as in the past several years, the work of the Department has been guided by the goals and objectives of the *Strategy for Positive Aging*.

In this fiscal year, we succeeded in our intention to partner with municipalities to help them achieve their own Age-Friendly goals. The crowning success in this goal was the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Department of Seniors and the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities in November 2009. The goal also continues to be supported through ongoing rounds of our Age-Friendly Communities Grants.

The Positive Aging Fund and Senior Safety Grant also continue to leverage excellent community support that is fostering safe, secure communities in which seniors can thrive and participate.

Both the Seniors' Safety Programs that benefit from the grants and the Age-Friendly work are benefiting from new, focused staff support. As part of an internal re-organization, departmental staff changes have resulted in two Community Development Coordinator positions being dedicated to providing support to our grant related initiatives. Community groups' project development and the MOU partnership are also enjoying greater departmental support than ever before as a direct result of the Community Development Coordinators being in place.

Departmental cooperation in corporate initiatives around diversity also continued this year. Within the department, we have maintained this consideration as a touchstone throughout our work. Also, as in past years, the Positive Aging Fund grants are evaluated for a variety of diversity considerations and continue to recognize the value of intergenerational opportunities for both young people and seniors in their communities.

This year's work toward greater volunteering and person-to-person cooperation was supported once again by the successful delivery of the Remarkable Seniors' Awards, and by ensuring that these topics have a key role within planning for the Silver Economy Summit held May 2010. By raising awareness of the opportunities for seniors that lie within community collaboration, and by promoting the power of senior volunteerism, we hope we are setting the groundwork for seniors' needs to be met as the number of seniors continues to dramatically increase in the coming years.

Respectfully submitted,



Denise Peterson-Rafuse,
Minister of Seniors
Chair, Seniors' Secretariat Committee of Cabinet Ministers

Introduction

The content of this accountability report is based on the goals, priorities and outcomes described in the 2009-2010 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 2009-2010 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 2009-2010 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 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 5 permanent employees.

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 2009–2010 Business Plan for the Department of Seniors aligns with the:

- Mandate of the Secretariat as identified in the *Senior Citizens' Secretariat Act* (1989);
- *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 women living 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 support 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 4 Core Business Areas of the Department 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 (F/P/T) 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 \$610,000 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 2009-2010

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

***PRIORITY 1**– Collaborate on joint initiatives and participate in ongoing discussions with Federal/Provincial /Territorial (F/P/T) jurisdictions on seniors’ issues.*

During the 2009-2010 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 - including those that were identified at the 11th meeting of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Ministers Responsible for Seniors held in Edmonton, Alberta on September 8th and 10th, 2009. Examples of F/P/T Working Groups include Safety and Security, Positive Images of Aging, Healthy Aging and Wellness and Financial Security. Department staff have actively participated in all 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 2** – 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.*

In 2009-2010, the focus on moving the *Strategy for Positive Aging* forward was on the organization and hosting of the international Silver Economy Summit held May 2010. The Summit addressed many key goals of the Strategy; most specifically it addressed Goal 8: Employment and Life Transitions. Due to the time and work required for Summit preparation, it was not possible to complete two activities identified in the 2009-2010 business plan under this priority. These activities were to: 1) Hold sessions to explore the impact of demographic change involving the members of the interdepartmental working group tasked with developing the Action Plan for Positive Aging and 2) Engage the Action Plan for Positive Aging Working Group in creating a report to communicate Government progress on implementing the *Strategy for Positive Aging*. Work on these activities has been moved ahead to 2010-2011.

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

Staff also continue to participate on issue-specific standing committees of government and non-government agencies. In 2009-2010, representatives of the department participated on approximately 30 committees focused on issues that include: the promotion and development of Age-Friendly communities; senior abuse prevention; seniors and gambling; immigrant seniors

needs and resources; transportation; literacy and lifelong learning; Silver Economy Summit Planning Committee and; falls prevention.

PRIORITY 3 – Engage seniors from diverse communities in order to further advance the 9th Goal, ‘Respecting Diversity’, outlined in the Strategy for Positive Aging.

It was intended in 2009-2010 that the inter-departmental Action Plan for Positive Aging Working Group and seniors would identify priorities and best practices for engaging seniors from diverse groups. However, due to Silver Economy Summit preparation, the inter-departmental working group for the Strategy did not convene regular meetings as explained in Priority 2 above. Therefore, this work was not completed as outlined in the business plan. Work on this activity has been moved ahead to 2010-2011.

PRIORITY 4– 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 2009-2010 year, the Department hosted 8 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 on a range of topics such as the Wait Times website, Securities Commission, drug evaluation and detailing, Seniors Mental Health Network, Youth and Seniors Services with the Office of the Ombudsman, and Palliative Care.

The Department also held 1 Spring and 1 Fall Consultation. The annual Spring and Fall 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 Department also encourages the participation of seniors on standing committees, other special task forces, and through special forums related to advancing the implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging*. During the 2009-2010 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.

The 2009-2010 Business Plan described an Intergenerational Awards nomination process and recognition event that did not take place. This was due to the demands of the Silver Economy Summit. However, the intent to foster intergenerational thinking was satisfied through:

- placing an emphasis and scoring value on intergenerational work as part of the Positive Aging Fund and Senior Safety Grant calls for project proposals and;
- the inclusion of topics, in the Silver Economy Summit program, that touched on the value and features of intergenerational workplaces.

The Intergenerational Awards are expected to be implemented again in the next fiscal year, beginning in September 2010 to coincide with the academic / youth activities year.

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

***PRIORITY 5** – 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, through the Age-Friendly Communities Program.*

In 2009-2010, a full-time Community Development Coordinator position was filled with the Department with the responsibility to manage the Age-Friendly Communities Program (with additional responsibilities for the Positive Aging Program and the Department's Literacy work). A key intent of the Community Development Coordinator role is to ensure links and collaborative work, as well as to generate interest and encourage community support to develop programs. The Coordinator also works to communicate funded projects and promote innovative applications. All projects funded are outlined on the Department's website. This assists proponents to learn from one another.

In 2009-2010, 13 Age-Friendly projects were funded. Municipalities were engaged through the creation of an Age-Friendly Communities Committee. A significant accomplishment of the Committee was the preparation and signing of a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Department of Seniors and the Union of NS Municipalities (UNSM) demonstrating a shared commitment to work together to make Nova Scotia an age-friendly province.

Not undertaken, as indicated, was an evaluation of the results of the program's initial release (2008) and application of lessons learned with the intent to make program modifications if needed. However, the application package was reviewed and plans to modify are in place for early 2010-2011 to coincide with the June 2010 Call for Proposals.

All projects funded are outlined on the Department's website. This assists proponents to learn from one another.

PRIORITY 6 – Provide support non-profit community organizations by creating projects that advance the implementation of the goals and actions outlined in the Strategy for Positive Aging, through the Positive Aging Fund.

In 2009-2010, 47 Positive Aging projects were funded with a focus on health, well-being and community participation of Nova Scotia seniors – as well as encouragement of intergenerational activities.

Not undertaken, as indicated, was an evaluation of the results of the program's initial release (2008) and application of lessons learned with the intent to make program modifications if needed. Further work on this will be undertaken in 2010-2011. However, the program application package was reviewed and minor modifications were made.

All projects funded are outlined on the Department's website. This assists proponents to learn from one another.

PRIORITY 7 – Sponsor and host the annual 50+ Expo and coordinate Seniors' Week Activities.

The Department is a sponsor of the 50 + Expo Society. This is an annual event, held each year in June, which involves entertainment and a showcase of products, programs and services for older adults by over 100 exhibitors with over 4,000 attendees.

As part of the 50+ Expo, an independent Committee organizes the selection and presentation of the Remarkable Seniors Awards for leadership, volunteerism, and community service. Six awards were given to remarkable seniors in 2009-2010. Seniors are nominated by interested individuals and community groups.

Proclamation of Seniors' Week was not possible in 2009 because the timing of preparation fell between the new government election period and the formal recognition of the new government. It was not possible to have the new Premier make the proclamation in time. However, the proclamation for Seniors' Week will be made in 2010-2011.

PRIORITY 8 – Prepare and distribute publications to ensure information reaches seniors in a format that is senior friendly, and work to promote initiatives and community connections that support the health, wellbeing and cultural contributions of seniors.

With the publication of 70,000 2010 *Programs for Positive Aging* guides (previously referred to as Programs for Seniors) – 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.

Plans to re-initiate the preparation and distribution of the Department's newsletter, *Seniors' News*, will be moved ahead to the 2010-2011 year. In 2009-2010 year, however, work was done to review this communication tool to ensure it reflects the Department's strategic direction and informs a broader audience. Ways to expand electronic distribution will also be identified in 2010-2011.

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 2009-2010, 11 organizations received funding to provide literacy programs for seniors. 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.

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 2009-2010, 196 pieces were displayed. The number of pieces sold was 11.

The Department also utilized a number of documents, such as *Making Your Printed Health Materials Senior Friendly*, as lenses for determining the senior-friendliness of department communications and policy, as well as encouraged partners and stakeholders to communicate in a senior-friendly format.

Other supporting activities not completed as planned in 2009-2010 were: the coordination of an informative cross-province tour promoting positive aging in order to increase awareness of the Department and other Government activities in partnership with a range of partners; formally supporting activities developing from the Seniors Healthy Active Living Initiative in partnership with Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection and Recreation NS; and providing financial support to the annual Tools for Life Conference. Due to the demands of the preparation for the Silver Economy Summit the cross-province tour did not take place. While the Department did not formally participate in supporting activities stemming from the Seniors Healthy Active Living Initiative, the Department actively supported "healthy living" through funding provided through its Positive Aging and Age-Friendly grants. In terms of the Tools for Life Conference, funding was provided by Department of Community Services and other sources and therefore, was not requested of the Department of Seniors.

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

***PRIORITY 9** – Implement the Nova Scotia Elder Abuse Strategy: Towards Awareness and Prevention with a particular focus on Strategy’s second strategic area – Prevention of Financial Abuse.*

Both strategic actions identified under Priority 9 were completed as expected in 2009-2010. This involved collaborating with the Senior Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee specific to the issue of financial abuse and working with Federal/Provincial/Territorial partners to address initiatives to increase financial literacy of seniors. Please see Strategic Goal 5 – Priority 11 for more specific details.

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 10** – Engage in extensive consultation and planning for the Silver Economy Conference to bring together businesses, 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 ensures 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 acts as the lead on the Silver Economy Conference. Due to the position being vacant from October 2008 to March 2009, the conference which was originally planned for 2009-2010 was 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; 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 – Nova Scotia will be made the first region outside of Europe to receive this distinction.

The Department continued through 2009-2010 to be engaged with partners across Government on the Long-Term Planning Council (led by Assistant Deputy Ministers Committee) until this Council completed its work in 2009-2010. The Council shared 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 11** – Continue to work towards prevention and respond 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*, 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.

The following activities were undertaken in the 2009-2010 year:

- Continued collaboration with Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T), national and provincial partners, through ongoing participation on the F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Seniors' Safety and Security Working Group – with a particular focus on financial abuse. Through the F/P/T Safety and Security Working Group, a series of 8 informative brochures were developed on a range of issues related to financial literacy and safety and security - intended for broad dissemination in 2010-2011.
- Continued collaboration with the Senior Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee. The Committee met twice in 2009-2010 but it is their plan to begin meeting quarterly in 2010-2011. A number of sub-committees were formed under the Committee to focus on: Department of Seniors Abuse Line, Senior Abuse Prevention Toolkit, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, and identifying new types of senior abuse awareness presentations including a specific focus on financial abuse.
- Continuing to consult and collaborate with various departments, agencies/organizations and other partners who have expertise and interest in issues surrounding senior abuse. For example, the Department collaborated with a number of partners including the RCMP, Halifax Regional Police, Bank of Canada and other provincial departments, on the Partners Against Fraud initiative in 2009-2010. The Department also participated on the committee to develop a new legal information workbook for seniors and their families entitled, "It's in Your Hands" produced by the Legal Information Society of NS which will be released in 2010-2011.

The following activities were not undertaken as planned in 2009-2010:

- In 2009-2010, the Department did not formally coordinate and support province-wide activities to recognize World Elder Abuse Awareness Day as it has done in its past, however, the Department did distribute F/P/T materials to promote the day to all 15 funded Seniors' Safety Programs in the province to be used in their local events. In past years, the Department awarded small grants in the amount of \$250 to non-profit community organizations to deliver senior abuse awareness activities. This practice, however, will resume in 2010-2011.

- The Department did not expand the implementation of the senior abuse education and awareness campaign to increase awareness and promote use of the Senior Abuse Line as planned for 2009-2010 in terms of placing more public advertisements on radio, metro buses etc. The Department, instead, focused on providing as many community presentations as possible. Statistics from the Department's Senior Abuse Line indicate 47% of calls are related to financial abuse. Therefore, the Department tries to ensure a focus on financial abuse in its materials and presentations.
- Supporting the further development of two pilot senior abuse prevention community networks and exploring the development of other new networks was not undertaken. The Senior Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee determined in November 2009 that the development of new networks may not be the best route to proceed. Rather, they advised that a focus on ensuring senior safety representation on existing inter-disciplinary committees in communities may be more beneficial. This will be further explored in 2010-2011.

PRIORITY 12 – Support existing and expand Seniors' Safety Programs in partnership with the Department of Justice through the Senior Safety Grant.

The Senior Safety Grant – a joint initiative of the Departments of Seniors and Justice was released in October 2008. In 2009-2010, 9 existing programs were supported and 6 new programs were funded resulting in dedicated programs being located in communities where they did not previously exist such as Yarmouth and New Waterford.

Also in 2009-2010, the Department worked to strengthen links between Seniors' Safety Programs and Government's senior abuse prevention and crime prevention strategies. It was not possible to expand these linkages to the Department's other work in the area of emergency preparedness as indicated but this will be looked at in 2010-2011. A pivotal piece in strengthening linkages was securing a Community Development Coordinator position responsible for the Seniors' Safety Programs and work related to the *Nova Scotia Elder Abuse Strategy* in 2009- 2010. A key intent of the Community Development Coordinator role is to ensure links and collaborative work, as well as to generate interest and encourage community support to develop programs. An example of this is the creation of a guide, in conjunction with existing programs and the RCMP, to assist community groups to start and expand Seniors' Safety Programs.

Another important piece of work in 2009-2010 was supporting the professional development of Senior Safety Coordinators across the province. Senior Safety Coordinators were brought together from across the province for a two day session. The first day centred on work specific to senior abuse and included participation in a national teleconference related to the topic. The second day involved participation in the Canadian Bar Association Conference which focussed on topics such as elder law, senior abuse, power of attorney, and adult protection.

Not undertaken as indicated was an evaluation of the results of the program's initial release (October 2008) and application of lessons learned with the intent to make program modifications if needed. Further work on this will be undertaken in 2010-2011. However, the application package was reviewed and was completely revamped.

All projects funded are outlined on the Department's website. This assists proponents to learn from one another.

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

***PRIORITY 13** – 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.*

It was intended in 2009-2010 that support would be provided to volunteer and stakeholder organizations by developing models for community engagement and hosting events that gauge community interest and open dialogue about the potential for Time Banking programs. Again, due to the focus on the Silver Economy Summit this was not completed. However, the Summit (when held in May 2010) will provide an excellent forum for the discussion and promotion of the Time Banking concept. A focus on Time Banking and its possibilities will resume in 2010-2011.

The Department retained representation on the committee list for the Volunteerism Intergovernmental Coordinating Committee led by the Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection to support volunteerism.

Time banking demonstration projects in Mahone Bay, Neil's Harbour and Scotts Bay will be reported on in the 2010-2011 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 2009-2010, the Department had 6 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 2009 – 2010 include:

- Provided mentorship to new staff and continued to provide formal leadership development through the PSC and core competency development opportunities;
- Supported diversity related training requests and increased staff awareness of diversity issues by ensuring representation on the Diversity Roundtable Committee. This committee promotes inclusiveness as a model of government led initiatives;
- Ensured the Department has an Occupational Health and Safety representative;
- Ensured continued representation on the Healthy Wellness Committee, led by the Department of Health. This committee promotes: a supportive workplace culture, healthy lifestyle practices and; adherence to occupational health and safety standards (DOH Healthy Workplace Committee Framework & Action Plan, March 2009);
- Supported staff to attend French language courses to enhance the Department's capacity to deliver services in French.

The following will be explored in 2010-2011 with the Department at its full staff capacity:

- Determine organizational effectiveness strategies to maximize efforts and results;
- The development of an employee recognition program;
- Formally assigned mentors to new staff;
- Explore the benefits of having a Career Starts intern join the Department, possibly to work in the areas of policy development and evaluation.

Additional Significant Accomplishments 2009–2010

In November 2009, the Ministers of Seniors' Secretariat reconvened a regular meeting schedule. It is the Ministers' intent to meet regularly through the year. The Minister of Seniors as the Chair of this committee, which was established in 1980 by an Act of the Nova Scotia legislature, works with her colleagues to ensure that this Cabinet committee (the only such Cabinet Committee in Canada) is dedicated to the well-being of Nova Scotia seniors. The Committee ensures horizontal management of seniors issues across government.

Financial Results

In 2009–2010, the Nova Scotia Department of Seniors had an approved budget allocation of \$1,957,000. Actual 2009–2010 expenditures totaled \$1,902,632.

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

Budget Context Chart **Nova Scotia Department of Seniors**

	2008-2009 Estimate	2008-2009 Actual	2009-2010 Estimate	2009-2010 Actual
	\$ Thousands	\$ Thousands	\$ Thousands	\$ Thousands
Program Expenses	1,442.8	1,275.6	1,305.0	1,436.4
Salaries and Benefits	684.2	417.4	652.0	466.2
Total Operating Costs	2,127.0	1,693	1,957.0	1,902.6
Funded Staff (FTE's)	10.00	5.32	9.00	6.22

Variance Analysis

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

Performance Measures

As discussed, the Department will engage in a comprehensive review of its performance measurement system in the 2010-2011 fiscal year. Special policy agencies within government have recognized the challenges associated with developing robust measures to accurately assess the social impact of their work. As such, initiatives aimed to develop sound performance measurements were realized in the 2008-2009 fiscal year. Following this work, it was the Department of Seniors' intention to develop new measures in 2009-2010; however, the Department was not fully staffed with positions responsible for policy and program development. The Department will therefore revise its performance measurement system in the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

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

The Department of Seniors engages in a formal evaluation process to assess the ability of the Department to lead satisfactory consultative processes with the *Group of IX Seniors' Advisory Council of Nova Scotia* and with seniors and Nova Scotia's Seniors' Networks at the Spring and Fall consultations. The *Group of IX* 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 members of the *Group of IX* and through evaluation forms distributed to participants at the Spring and Fall Consultations.

Where are we now?

The *Group of IX* reports being satisfied with the opportunities to provide advice on public policy issues. For the 2009-2010 year, 9 (64%) reported a 'high' level of satisfaction, 4 (29%) reported a 'medium' level of satisfaction and 1 member (7%) reported a 'low' level of satisfaction.

In the 2008-2009 Accountability Report, it was outlined that a revised measure to assess the level of stakeholder satisfaction with the Department's Spring and Fall Consultation would be developed for the Fall 2009 Consultation; however, this new measure was not developed. Instead, for the 2009-2010 year we used the previous measure which is based upon responses to the statement, "I had adequate opportunity to provide input, share information and discuss issues" (to assess level of engagement). Respondents indicated their level of agreement from '1-Strongly Disagree' to '5-Strongly Agree'. At the Fall 2009 Consultation, of 58 possible responses, 47 (81%) rated their level of agreement with that statement as, 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree'.

Where do we want to be?

The target for this measure was to increase the *Group of IX* members' rating of "high overall satisfaction" with opportunities to provide advice, to 80% in 2009-2010; as previously noted the result for the 2009-2010 year is 64% 'high' level of satisfaction, therefore the Department fell short of its target for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. Respondents had the opportunity to note areas for improvement and these will be taken into consideration for the 2010-2011 year.

The Department's ability to engage seniors and those working with senior-serving organizations is reflected in the (81%) level of agreement among attendees at the Fall 2009 Consultation that they have adequate opportunity to provide input, share information and discuss issues. This is a positive indicator of success regarding participants' level of engagement at the Spring and Fall Consultations.

Performance Measure: Number and type of initiatives the Department's staff provides consultation and policy advice on

What does this measure tell us?

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 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 is a more accurate measure of the Department's ability to impact policy.

Where are we now?

The target for this measure was estimated at 40 initiatives per year based on 4 employees each providing advice and consultation on approximately 10 key initiatives. The actual result for 2009-2010 was 25 key initiatives.

Where do we want to be?

As discussed, the Department will engage in a comprehensive review and revision of its performance measurement system in the 2010-2011 fiscal year. Given this context, the Department will not reassess the target for this measure at this time.

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 is intended to inform us how senior-friendly the Department's communications vehicles are (e.g. readability, layout and design).

Where we are now?

It is recognized by the Department that these measures need work in order to ensure consistency of collection and relevancy of reporting results.

Where do we want to be?

The Department's Communications Advisor will participate in the review of the existing measures and identify changes/further development during 2010–2011.

Progress on Measures related to Communication with Seniors and Nova Scotia's Seniors' Networks:**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 departments, stakeholders and community members).

Where we are now?

Number of speaking engagements/events the Department participated in:

The number of speaking engagements in 2009-2010 was 52.

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 each year.

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 only available from October 31st, 2009 to March 31st, 2010. The total number of visits was 16, 477. On average this would be 3,295 per month or 39,540 a year.

Where do we want to be?

Number of visits to the Department's website:

Our target by 2010-2011 is 80,000 visits per year.

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 the focus on the Silver Economy Summit, there were no publications of the *Seniors' News* newsletter during the 2009-2010 year. In 2010-2011, the Department's Communications Advisor will work to re-establish regular publications of the newsletter and explore other vehicles of communication.

Where do we want to be?

Number of Seniors' News newsletters distributed:

Distribution (number of *Seniors' News*) will be examined in 2010-2011 as part of the work to re-establish the newsletter in a format that makes sense for the Department's current communications goals.

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 2009-2010, there were 2,922 calls to the Department's *Seniors' Information Line*. This number reflects only those calls recorded by administrative staff directly responsible for answering the toll-free line, it does not include calls received by other staff.

Where do we want to be?

Number of calls on the Seniors' Information Line:

By 2009-2010, the Department indicated an ultimate target of 3500 calls per year. The Department continues to promote the toll-free line. Our target is to increase the number of calls to the Department's *Seniors' Information Line* each year to provide ongoing support to more seniors.

Performance 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. Prior to the development of specific performance measures related to the Positive Aging Action Plan, a Scenario Planning process was held in June 2008 to assist the Action Plan for Positive Aging Committee to identify priorities related to the *Strategy's* implementation.

It was intended that a summary document related to the *Strategy's* implementation would be completed by Fall 2009 and a detailed report would be developed and distributed to government and other stakeholders at the *Silver Economy Conference* in May 2010. The development of this summary document would require input from various Departments and community-based organizations; the process would need to be comprehensive and strategic. Although the summary document was not released in 2009-2010, work in this area will be a priority in 2010-2011. In addition, it is expected that relevant performance measures related to the *Strategy's* implementation will be developed in the 2010-2011 year.

Conclusion

The Department continues to work with seniors through information sharing and consultative processes. It is the Department's goal that by facilitating the planning, development, and coordination of policies, programs, and services for and with 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*).