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## **THE NATIONAL SENIORS COUNCIL**



## **LE CONSEIL NATIONAL DES AÎNÉS**

# **Report on the Labour Force Participation of Seniors and Near Seniors, and Intergenerational Relations**

**October 2011**



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## *Foreword*

In June 2010, when the former Minister of State (Seniors), the Honourable Diane Ablonczy, assigned the National Seniors Council its current priorities, the Council was undecided as to whether the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors, and intergenerational relations, two very different and distinct topics, could be examined simultaneously. Upon discussion with stakeholders, it became apparent that the two priorities were indeed linked in many ways.

The results of consultations carried out by the National Seniors Council on its two priorities were summarized in its 'What We Heard' report; submitted to responsible Ministers, the Minister of HRSD; the Minister of Health; and the Minister of State (Seniors), and all participating stakeholders in June 2011. Based on an analysis of the consultation feedback, and taking into consideration the many recommendations made by participants, the Council is pleased to submit this report to responsible Ministers.

Upon examination of the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors, the Council became aware of the intergenerational component of this priority, and the fact that many of the recommendations in this report can be applied to workers of all ages.

The impact of the demographic shift on intergenerational relations was difficult to characterize. Perceived intergenerational challenges in society as a whole were discussed during each of our consultations and the general conclusion was always that all Canadians should embrace the differences between generations in all milieus of society, including the family, workplace and community. Numerous examples of organizational and community-led intergenerational projects, and resulting benefits, were described and the Council based a number of recommendations on this feedback.

Of note, the Council made use for the first time of an online consultation. We hope that this cost-effective mechanism will allow for broader participation by Canadians in the future.

The Council is pleased to submit these recommendations for action to the Government of Canada, in hopes that they present realistic and doable avenues through which the government can continue to support the quality of life and well-being of all Canadians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jean-Guy Soulière".

Jean-Guy Soulière  
Chair  
National Seniors Council





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## *Mandate of the National Seniors Council*

The National Seniors Council shall advise the Government of Canada, through the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and the Minister of Health, on all matters related to the well-being and quality of life of seniors, including the opportunities and challenges arising from a rapidly growing and increasingly diverse aging population. As directed by the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and the Minister of Health, the National Seniors Council shall:

- advise on current and emerging issues and opportunities related to the quality of life and well-being of seniors, both now and in the future;
- as needed, undertake activities such as commissioning research, convening expert panels and roundtables, and holding consultative meetings;
- deliver well-balanced advice, taking into account the views of experts, seniors, organizations and groups that provide seniors' programs and services, provincial/territorial advisory bodies on seniors, and other relevant stakeholders and interested parties; and
- ensure a comprehensive and collaborative approach in its examination of the policies, programs and services that have an impact on the lives of seniors by consulting with other federal departments, other levels of government and advisory bodies involved in senior-related efforts.





## *Introduction*

Canada's population is aging. In 2009, 13.9% of the population was 65 or over. By 2036, it is projected that nearly one in four (23 to 25%) Canadians will be a senior.<sup>1</sup> Due to increases in life expectancy, decreased fertility rates, and the aging of the largest age group, the baby boomers<sup>2</sup>, Canada is experiencing an unprecedented demographic shift<sup>2</sup>.

The demographic shift will impact the economy and labour force as the baby boomers begin to retire in great numbers. As many seniors and near seniors leave the workforce, Canada's elderly dependency ratio<sup>2</sup> will rise, national income tax revenue will decrease, and more and more retirees will have to be supported by relatively fewer workers in the population. This raises questions as to future economic well-being and average living standards of the population as well as concerns for the fiscal health and fiscal environment of government budgets.<sup>3</sup> As more and more Canadians exit the labour force, businesses may also suffer from labour shortages, reduced productivity levels, losses of experienced and skilled employees, and lost corporate memory and organizational leadership talent.

In terms of addressing the challenges brought on by an aging population, older Canadians represent an invaluable resource. The continued participation of seniors and near seniors in the labour force beyond the current average age of retirement<sup>4</sup> may help to mitigate the above mentioned consequences of population aging. Furthermore, research indicates that continued participation in the labour force may offer a variety of benefits to older workers, such as a sense of purpose and pleasure; an opportunity for social interaction; mental stimulation; and positive health outcomes.<sup>5,6</sup> It is known that many seniors and near seniors want, and need, to remain engaged in, or re-enter, the labour force.<sup>7,8</sup> Indeed, Canadians aged 55 and over currently have one of the fastest rates of employment growth. However, it is also known that several barriers and challenges exist to those seniors wanting to remain engaged in the labour force.<sup>9</sup>

Beyond impacts on the economy and labour force, the demographic shift is changing the face of our population, impacting the balance of different generational age groups, and magnifying the importance of the way different generations work, live, support and interact with one another. Positive intergenerational relationships between family members, co-workers, and members of the community, can serve as a source of social

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada, 2010, *Population projections: Canada, the provinces and territories*.

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to Annex A.

<sup>3</sup> Beach, C., 2008, *Canada's Aging Workforce: Participation, Productivity, and Living Standards*, Bank of Canada.

<sup>4</sup> The current average age of retirement is 62.

<sup>5</sup> Glass, T.A., Mendes de Leon, C., Marottoli, R.A., Berkman L.F., 1999, *Population based study of social and productive activities as predictors of survival among elderly Americans*, *BMJ*, 319, 478-483.

<sup>6</sup> Kasl, S.V. & Jones, B.A., 2000, *The impact of job loss and retirement on health*, *Social Epidemiology*, Oxford University Press, 118-136.

<sup>7</sup> Statistics Canada, 2008, *Survey of Older Workers*.

<sup>8</sup> Turcotte, M. & Schellenberg, G., 2007, *A Portrait of Seniors in Canada: 2006*, Minister of Industry, Ottawa.

<sup>9</sup> Expert Panel on Older Workers, *Supporting and Engaging Older Workers in the New Economy*, 2008.



support and lead to the development of broad and diverse social networks<sup>10</sup>, strengthened community capacity<sup>10</sup>, and widespread social cohesion<sup>10</sup>. While the state of intergenerational relationships in Canada is difficult to measure, it is known that various barriers, such as ageism, stand in the way of positive connections, support systems, and relationships between the generations.<sup>11</sup>

The National Seniors Council is pleased to submit to the Government of Canada this report on the Council's 2010-2011 priorities: 1) the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors, and 2) intergenerational relations. The Council acknowledges the important work currently being undertaken by the federal government to support these important priorities. While significant strides have been made, more can be done across all jurisdictions to support those seniors and near seniors who wish to remain engaged in, or re-enter, the labour force, and more can be done to promote positive intergenerational relations across all levels of society.

The objectives of this report are to identify the key challenges and barriers that stand in the way of the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors and positive intergenerational relations, and to suggest options for federal action that may serve to break down barriers and support the well-being of seniors and all Canadians.

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<sup>10</sup> Please refer to Annex A.

<sup>11</sup> Lagacé, M., 2008, *Halte aux stéréotypes et préjugés à l'égard du vieillissement pour re-bâtir les solidarités intergénérationnelles*, Vie et vieillissement, (6) 3, 11-15.



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# *Overview of the Labour Force*

## *Participation of Seniors and Near Seniors*

Older Canadians are increasingly participating in the labour force, and the share of workers aged 55 and above has risen over the past decade. Currently, 36.5% of Canadians 55 years and over are engaged in the labour force, which represents a 0.8% increase over the past year.<sup>12</sup> Among all employed Canadians in 2009, one out of six was an older worker, up from one out of ten in 2000. The share of those aged 55 and above in the labour force (who are working or looking for work) is expected to continue to increase. In fact, by 2036, the proportion of the labour force that will be 55 and over is projected to be 18.7%, as compared to 16% in 2009.<sup>13</sup> There appear to be many factors that influence this increase in participation, including higher education levels, better health, and longer life expectancies. However, inadequate retirement income, higher levels of debt, and the effects of the economic downturn may also be preventing seniors from retiring as early as they wish.

According to a 2008 survey of older workers<sup>14</sup>, three quarters (76%) of workers aged 50 to 59 plan to retire from their current job at or past the age of 60. Of those who are planning to retire from their current job before 60, about half (56%) plan to remain in the workforce, with most (88%) planning to continue working part-time. The primary reasons cited for retiring included financial readiness; layoffs; poor health; and lack of job satisfaction. The primary reasons cited for returning to work post-retirement included social interaction and/or something to do, job satisfaction, and financial need.<sup>15</sup>

For many Canadians, retirement has become a gradual period of transition, with individuals planning to work in some capacity, for at least a few years, after they retire from their primary occupation. There is growing evidence suggesting that workers no longer view retirement as a fixed point in time; instead, they see it as a gradual period of transition from working full time with their existing employer to exploring other employment arrangements and options.<sup>16</sup>

The current unemployment rate for Canadians 55 years and older is 6.4%; lower than the current average unemployment rate of 7.4%.<sup>17</sup> However, seniors and near seniors who become unemployed tend to stay out of the job longer and have a harder time re-entering the work force than other age groups. One contributing factor appears to be older workers' accumulation of firm-specific, industry-specific or occupation-specific skills.

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<sup>12</sup> Statistics Canada, June 2011, *Labour Force Information*.

<sup>13</sup> Statistics Canada, 2010, *Perspectives on Labour and Income*.

<sup>14</sup> Statistics Canada, 2008, *Survey of Older Workers*.

<sup>15</sup> Jungwee Park, 2011, *Retirement, health and employment among those 55 plus*, Perspectives on Labour and Income, Statistics Canada.

<sup>16</sup> Karla Thorpe, October 2008, *Harnessing the Power: Recruiting, Engaging, and Retaining Mature Workers*, Conference Board of Canada.

<sup>17</sup> Statistics Canada, June 2011, *Labour Force Information*.



For reasons that are not totally understood, more general skills that could be applied to other jobs also appear to deteriorate as the length of job tenure increases.<sup>18</sup> Other obstacles to re-employment include labour-market rigidities, possible age-related job discrimination, and the shorter remaining career, which may discourage retraining or relocation.<sup>18</sup>

Older unemployed workers also tend to face adjustment costs that are much higher than those their younger counterparts face in the form of long-term unemployment and wage losses. Older displaced workers who manage to find new jobs lose about 40% of their earnings relative to their earnings in their previous jobs, significantly more than do those aged under 45. Older workers rarely succeed in matching their previous earnings upon re-employment, nor do their earnings grow appreciably in subsequent years. For these reasons, many older workers choose to retire early rather than accept a lower-paying job.<sup>18</sup>

### **Impacts of Population Aging**

As Canada's population ages, an increasing number of Canadians will leave the paid labour force. Despite recent increases in the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors, an overall decline in participation will still take place as the population ages. This may result in labour shortages, particularly in high-skilled<sup>19</sup> occupations, such as management positions and jobs in the healthcare sector, and labour surpluses in low-skilled<sup>19</sup> occupations.

Since the 1960's, strong labour force growth has supported Canada's rising economic potential. As the share of the population aged 50 and over increases and the large baby boom age group retires, labour force growth will slow. Between 2009 and 2018, annual labour force growth is projected to be 0.8%; half the 1.7% recorded in the previous 10 years. The output of a smaller workforce may result in reduced productivity and slower growth in national Gross Domestic Product (GDP).<sup>20</sup> Finally, a smaller workforce will result in a smaller income tax base and, therefore, reduced tax revenue. Given the anticipated decline in workforce growth, increasing the labour force participation rate of older workers could serve to reduce the overall economic impact of demographic change by delaying workforce shrinkage and taking full advantage of existing expertise and leadership.<sup>21</sup>

Most employers identify the aging of their workforce as a concern. Employers appear to be aware of the possible negative consequences that would be associated with labour shortages, such as drops in revenue; greater costs in employee wages, production and benefits; lower productivity levels; and increased pressures to undertake succession

<sup>18</sup> Ross Finnie & David Gray, February 2011, *Labour-Force Participation of Older Displaced Workers in Canada: Should I Stay or Should I Go?*, Institute for Research on Public Policy Study No. 15.

<sup>19</sup> Please refer to Annex A.

<sup>20</sup> Fougère et al., 2005, *Population Aging, High-Skilled Immigrants and Productivity*, Industry Canada Ottawa, Ontario.

<sup>21</sup> Frank Denton & Byron Spencer., 2009, *Population Aging, Older Workers, and Canada's Labour Force*, Canadian Public Policy, 35(4), pp. 481-492.



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planning and leadership programs.<sup>22</sup> However, few employers focus their human resource practices directly on the mature worker segment. Many organizations assume that the benefits, policies, and strategies they have in place for the entire workforce will also be effective for recruiting, retaining, and engaging older workers.<sup>23</sup>

### **Benefits and Barriers to Labour Force Participation**

As was presented in the Council's 2010 examination of volunteering among seniors and positive and active aging, seniors themselves, and society in general, benefit from active aging, which for many includes continued engagement in the labour force. For seniors, an active lifestyle can prolong independence, extend participation in the community and society, and help manage chronic illness and prevent poor health. Some additional associated benefits of employment include increased income; increased mentoring and knowledge transfer to younger generations in the labour force; and retention of technical skills, leadership talent, and corporate memory.

Unfortunately, many barriers exist that can prevent seniors and near seniors from participating in the labour force. These include poorly adapted physical work environments; poor health; informal caregiving responsibilities; mandatory retirement practices; misperceptions and negative attitudes towards older workers (ageism); outdated and inflexible human resource practices; lack of awareness of available job opportunities and working options; lack of appropriate skills, education and access to training needed to update skills or transition to a new job; and low job satisfaction. Seniors and near seniors may also encounter barriers and challenges based on socio-economic status, gender, culture and ethnicity that may become exacerbated as they age. Immigrant seniors may face greater barriers due to the language and limited immigrant specific supports and may face unique financial and health issues. Also, Aboriginal seniors face distinct financial, health, housing, and geographical challenges which may hinder active aging. Responding to these issues will, therefore, involve a range of different approaches that address both the barriers and the incentives for employment.

### **Opportunities for Policy Action**

While there are significant economic challenges associated with demographic change, an aging workforce provides an opportunity to review a number of labour market, social security and tax policies with an eye to supporting flexibility of life-course work and retirement patterns based on workers' range of choices and circumstances.<sup>24</sup> Population

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<sup>22</sup> The Conference Board of Canada, 2006, *Too Few People, Too Little Time: The Employer Challenge of an Aging Workforce*, Executive Action.

<sup>23</sup> Karla Thorpe, October 2008, *Harnessing the Power: Recruiting, Engaging, and Retaining Mature Workers*, Conference Board of Canada.

<sup>24</sup> Beach, C., 2008, *Canada's Aging Workforce: Participation, Productivity, and Living Standards*. Bank of Canada.



aging further presents an opportunity to harness the experience and skills of older workers and expand job opportunities for mature workers.<sup>25</sup>

Indeed, a number of policy changes have taken place at the federal level to support continued labour force participation and lower barriers for seniors who wish to remain in the labour market. In its 2011 Speech from the Throne, the Government of Canada committed to removing barriers for older workers who want to continue their careers. Budget 2011 announced a commitment to change the federal rules to eliminate mandatory retirement age for federally regulated employees, unless there is a bona fide occupational requirement, in order to give these older workers the option of remaining in the workforce. Changes to the Canadian Pension Plan (CPP) are also being implemented over the next 5 years that will provide contributors with more flexibility and enable Canadians to make decisions that are right for them as they transition from work to retirement. These changes include the elimination of the ‘Work Cessation Test’, which will allow individuals to receive a pension without having to temporarily stop work or reduce earnings; an increase in benefits to those who delay receipt of their pensions; and adjustments that allow beneficiaries under the age of 70 with earnings to contribute to CPP and increase their benefits.

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<sup>25</sup> Public Policy Forum, February 2011, *Canada’s Aging Workforce: A National Conference on Maximizing Employment Opportunities for Mature Workers, Summary Report*.



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# *Overview of Intergenerational Relations*

Social cohesion and social capital describe the characteristics of a society that represent the strength and number of social connections and relationships between community members including trust, reciprocity, and civic engagement. These connections between individuals are important as they encourage membership and participation in community organizations and serve to build social solidarity, mutual dependence, understanding, and cooperation; values that unite all Canadians and characterize Canadian society.<sup>26</sup> More specifically, intergenerational relations describe solidarity between generations; something that is built when Canadians of all ages engage, recognize and respect individuals of all generations.<sup>27</sup>

Intergenerational relationships in Canada are difficult to measure due to their complexity and breadth, extending throughout all milieus of society. While limited research in this area exists, various indicators have been applied to characterize the state of intergenerational relations, and challenges, within Canadian society.

## **Intergenerational Relations within the Family**

Examinations of intergenerational relationships within the family tend to focus on informal caregiving relationships. Although the link between generations remains fundamental to the family, evidence suggests it is less focused on obligations than in the past, such as giving basic care to elderly parents or taking care of grandchildren on a regular basis. Today relationships between grandparents and grandchildren are more negotiated, reflecting an increasing desire for autonomy and to maintain a ‘good distance’. The stability of these relationships can also be affected by increasing changes in family structures due to divorces and new pairings.<sup>28</sup> With increases in institutionalized care over the last few decades, it is also no longer expected that families should provide informal care to older relatives. Indeed, many feel that the state should be responsible for providing primary care, such as help with daily tasks of living, to elderly relatives.<sup>29</sup> These shifts in family values and structures may result in intergenerational tensions when older and younger generations hold different perspectives and expectations in terms of the role of the family.

Despite shifts in attitudes towards the provision of informal care to aging relatives, population aging may increase the need for families to provide informal care to a growing number of seniors, while at the same time placing financial, emotional and physical stress

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<sup>26</sup> Stuart N. Soroka, Richard Johnston, and Keith Banting, 2006, *Ties that Bind? Social Cohesion and Diversity in Canada in Belonging? Diversity, Recognition and Shared Citizenship in Canada*, ed. Keith Banting, Thomas Courchene and F. Leslie Seidle, Institute for Research on Public Policy, Montréal, p. 25.

<sup>27</sup> Glanz, K., Rimer, B., Viswanath, K., 2008, *Health Behaviour and Health Education: Theory, Research, and Practice*. 4th Ed. Jossey-Bass: CA.

<sup>28</sup> Lagacé, M., 2008, *Halte aux stéréotypes et préjugés à l'égard du vieillissement pour re-bâtir les solidarités intergénérationnelles, Vie et vieillissement*, (6) 3, 11-15.

<sup>29</sup> Olazabal, J. Ignace, 2010, *Intergenerational Relations in Aging Societies: Emerging Topics in Canada*, Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, 8: 1, 105-107.



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on middle generations who will have to provide care and support to both younger and older family members.<sup>30</sup>

### **Intergenerational Relations within the Workplace**

Evidence of intergenerational challenges also exists in the workplace. A 2009 National Survey on Generations in the Workplace revealed some sharp differences in how the generations perceive each other, many of which mirror popular, and often negative, generational stereotypes based on perceptions, rather than reality.<sup>31</sup> Research shows that negative stereotypes, including those that suggest older workers are less productive and skilled; more resistant to change and new technologies; more difficult to train; and take more sick leave, can not only cause tensions between generations, but can cause older workers to believe these things about themselves, to question their skills and abilities, and make them more apt to leave the workforce earlier.<sup>32</sup>

While evidence suggests that different generations possess differing work styles and work-life values, it has also been shown that managing generational differences and similarities in the workplace can optimize organizational performance and improve work environments.<sup>32</sup> Studies suggest that multi-generational workplaces can benefit from management-level training and employee workshops to eliminate age-related bias and to train managers on how to mitigate intergenerational conflict.<sup>33</sup>

### **Intergenerational Relations within Society**

In Western culture, aging is often associated with decline, dependence and frailty.<sup>33</sup> Seniors are often perceived as being a social and economic burden, rather than an asset to society. These inaccurate perceptions about aging often lead to discrimination, and as a result, seniors' abilities, needs or interests may be overlooked when considering the provision and delivery of community services. Ageist stereotypes may also affect the physical and mental health of seniors by limiting fulfillment of their human needs. Indirectly, ageism may lead to seniors conforming to social expectations about how they are supposed to feel and behave, potentially restricting their activities and engagement in their communities. Ageist attitudes, perceptions and stereotypes act as a significant barrier to intergenerational solidarity within Canadian society.<sup>33</sup>

Population aging further impacts intergenerational relationships as it raises fundamental questions about how resources are shared between generations. Concerns may include fairness and sustainability of pay-as-you-go programs, which may disproportionately

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<sup>30</sup> Saraceno, C., 2010, *Social Inequities in Facing Old-Age Dependency: A Bi-Generational Perspective*. Journal of European Social Policy, 20, 32-44.

<sup>31</sup> Tim Krywulak & Martha Roberts, November 2009, *Winning the "Generation Wars": Making Most of Generational Differences and Similarities in the Workplace*, The Conference Board of Canada.

<sup>32</sup> Lagacé, M., 2008, *Halte aux stéréotypes et préjugés à l'égard du vieillissement pour re-bâtir les solidarités intergénérationnelles, Vie et vieillissement*, (6) 3, 11-15.

<sup>33</sup> Rena Shimoni, Doug Scotney, Megan Cohoe-Kenney, Amy Maginley, *Facilitating the Retention and/or Re-Entry of Mature Workers in the Workplace: A Mature Worker Study*, Bow Valley College, n.d.



burden younger generations; disagreement over whether seniors have already “pre-paid” or should continue to pay for services; and potential pressure to devote more public resources to seniors, as they account for growing number of Canadians. Indeed, various polls suggest that many Canadians believe an aging population will be a burden to Canadian society.<sup>34, 35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Canadian Medical Association, August 2010, Ipsos Reid Poll.

<sup>35</sup> Royal Bank of Canada, February 2010, Ipsos Reid Poll.





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## *Suggestions for Action*

From October 2010 to March 2011, the National Seniors Council held various consultations with stakeholders from across Canada, including seniors; representatives of seniors organizations; academic experts; research organizations; employers; sector councils; unions; and others,<sup>36</sup> to listen their perspectives on the two priorities. Throughout this process the Council heard about the barriers inhibiting the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors and positive intergenerational relations, and various ideas for policy solutions that could work to break down these barriers. From the information collected during this consultation process, the Council developed the following suggestions for federal government action.

### **Enabling Labour Force Participation**

While the Council heard that many older workers wish, or need, to remain engaged in, or re-enter, the labour force beyond the average age of retirement, it was also heard that many seniors and near seniors are not able to stay active in the labour force due to the existence of various barriers. It was determined that a focus should be placed on removing disincentives and developing supports that encourage continued labour force participation while allowing flexibility to address individual needs and responsibilities. A range of strategies were proposed in order to address barriers and support those seniors and near seniors who wish to engage in the labour force.

It is important to note that participants cautioned against the development employment supports geared only towards seniors and near seniors. Various other age groups, including youth, experience challenges obtaining meaningful employment, and it was therefore recommended that job-matching programming should be made available to all Canadians.

### **Employment Programs**

Seniors and near seniors need to have access to appropriate tools in order to seek meaningful employment matched to individual skill sets. Participants suggested that a national job database, such as Service Canada's *Job Bank*, coupled with an online service to match older workers and employers based on individual skills, interests, and needs, would represent an effective tool. Employment programs should also include job search assistance that encourages workers to look outside their previous industry and occupation. This would enable many older workers who might otherwise leave the labour force to earn acceptable wages and gain new occupational and industry experience.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Please refer to Annex C for a full list of participating stakeholders.

<sup>37</sup> Ross Finnie & David Gray, February 2011, *Labour-Force Participation of Older Displaced Workers in Canada: Should I Stay or Should I Go?*, Institute for Research on Public Policy Study No. 15.



There currently exist various exemplary programs and initiatives both within Canada and abroad that serve to help older workers find meaningful employment.

The *Targeted Initiative for Older Workers* is a federal provincial/territorial cost shared initiative that provides employment assistance services and employability improvement activities to unemployed older workers in cities and towns that have a population of 250,000 or less; and are experiencing ongoing high unemployment; and/or have a high reliance on a single industry affected by downsizing or closures.

With funding from the Government of Canada, the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce has developed a pilot project called *ThirdQuarter*. This program features a unique job-search website that serves to help employers find experienced employees who are 50-plus and want to delay or change their retirement by engaging in the workforce. The program is unique in its emphasis on employee skills and values, rather than occupations, to ensure a better match between individual and employer needs. This skills-based approach seems to be successful as firms are reporting being matched with qualified candidates. An online approach to connecting older workers and firms also seems to be effective, as over 2500 individuals and more than 1200 firms are currently registered in the program. Since its inception in May 2010, more than 900 jobs have been posted, and 46% of these postings have resulted in someone being hired.<sup>38</sup>

The Government of Canada recently announced the future launch of an approach that will gather critical information and make it available through its *Working in Canada* website so that Canadians have a clearer picture of who in Canada is hiring and what skills they will need to have, or train for. This initiative is based on the premise that better information will help Canadians find jobs and make the right learning and career choices.

Finally, on the international front, the Government of Australia has developed a package of programs to support the labour market participation of mature workers through its Experience+ initiative. Among other supports, the programs feature free and accessible employment planning and résumé appraisal services for workers aged 45 and over, as well as job transition support for mature workers in the construction and manufacturing sectors who are looking to bridge into less physically demanding jobs.<sup>39</sup>

## **Lifelong Learning and Re-training**

Participants identified continuous learning as an important means of updating skills to maintain performance, as well as a way of developing the knowledge and competencies that can be applied to a new job. Re-training is especially important for those who are not physically able to continue working in their current capacity, and those who are employed in physically demanding jobs. However, successful re-training and career

<sup>38</sup> Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, 2011, Report to the National Seniors Council: Findings from ThirdQuarter Older Worker and Business Surveys (unpublished document).

<sup>39</sup> Public Policy Forum, February 2011, *Canada's Aging Workforce: A National Conference on Maximizing Employment Opportunities for Mature Workers, Summary Report*.



transition programs are associated with such high costs that many employers and employment agencies struggle to provide these services, forcing older employees to absorb the costs of their continued education and training.

The Council heard that training programs need to be accessible, relevant and applicable to real job requirements. Good examples include job-shadowing, co-op, or mentoring programs that allow workers to develop practical experience on the job. While participants agreed that seniors and near seniors should be able to engage in the learning or training program of their choice, it was cautioned that programs should be designed to complement the skills shortages that will be seen in the labour market.

Finally, participants noted that re-training is not always a requirement in order to remain engaged in the labour force or begin on a new career path. Many seniors and near seniors are highly knowledgeable and experienced and possess developed skills that are transferable across occupations. Training initiatives can be costly and do not always offer maximal benefit to the student. They therefore need to be targeted towards individuals and sectors or professions that require them, and need to have clear objectives that are matched to the skills required by the respective profession. Participants warned that aimless training without an end goal of meaningful employment is a waste of resources.

Many provinces currently offer training supports via federal Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDAs) and Labour Market Agreements (LMAs) with provinces and territories. Through LMDAs, the Government of Canada invests \$1.95 billion annually in programs for unemployed Canadians. This funding enables provinces and territories to design, deliver and manage skills and employment programs primarily for those who are eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits. LMAs provide funding for provincial and territorial labour market programs and services, particularly for low-skilled workers and unemployed persons who are not eligible for EI benefits. The Government of Canada also offers a Lifelong Learning Plan that allows individuals to withdraw amounts from RRSPs to finance training or education.

The Public Service Commission in Nova Scotia has developed a unique *Diversity Talent Pool* that is aimed at increasing the representation of members of designated groups within the workforce. The Pool consists of résumés of pre-screened, qualified candidates in the designated groups that are seeking casual, short-term positions in the provincial government. Short-term placements provide members of the Pool with the opportunity to gain valuable work experience and upgrade their skill sets. Participants recommended that a program such as this be developed on a national scale and geared towards seniors and near seniors.

### **Age-Friendly Workplaces**

The overall work environment, including human resource practices; employer and co-worker attitudes and behaviours; and physical working conditions, impact older workers' level of job satisfaction, and thus, their work-retirement decisions. In particular,



the flexibility of human resource practices appears to weigh heavily on these decisions. A recent survey of older workers conducted by Statistics Canada found that around two thirds of older workers would be willing to continue working if they were offered a flexible work arrangement.<sup>40</sup> Flexible working options include examples such as compressed work weeks; phased retirement; teleworking options; and self-funded leave programs.<sup>41</sup> Participants indicated that these options allow older workers to remain engaged in meaningful employment while providing flexibility to pursue other interests, activities, or responsibilities outside of work. They may also serve as a means to retain informal caregivers as they provide the opportunity to effectively balance care obligations and time at work.<sup>42</sup> Ideally, care leave should take into account the episodic nature of illnesses, deterioration or improvement in health condition or changes in the availability of formal care. Using leave on a part-time basis, or returning to work part-time might also be helpful to accommodate the changing needs of caregivers. Other forms of flexible work might be more suitable for caregivers who need to vary their hours on a weekly basis or who do not want to cut down on their working hours but need to work flexibly.<sup>43</sup>

Aside from human resource practices, many participants indicated that discrimination against older workers is a barrier to employment that persists. Incorrect perceptions regarding the productivity, motivation or trainability of older workers can prevent employers from investing in older workers. Similarly, these unfounded stereotypes can cause older workers to lose confidence in their own skills and knowledge, or in the benefits of investing in the training that is required to maintain or enhance their future employment prospects.<sup>44</sup> Participants therefore recommended that corporate initiatives be developed that focus on encouraging multi-generational understanding, integration and cooperation within the workplace. This could be achieved through education and awareness of differences and how managers and employees can best address these differences. It was also indicated that there is a role for human resource teams in terms of encouraging good intergenerational working relationships in the workforce.

Finally, poor physical design and layout of the work environment were identified as barriers to the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors. Inaccessible and poorly adapted workspaces can inhibit seniors' ability to perform their job. Age-friendly work environments and practices include such things as accessible washrooms; adequate workspace lighting; materials available in large print; large screen computer monitors; telephones with amplified audio systems; ergonomic workspaces; anti-fatigue flooring; sit-stand workstations; health check-ups at work; and employee stress level evaluations.

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<sup>40</sup> Statistics Canada, 2008, *Survey of Older Workers*.

<sup>41</sup> Public Policy Forum, February 2011, *Canada's Aging Workforce: A National Conference on Maximizing Employment Opportunities for Mature Workers, Summary Report*.

<sup>42</sup> Colombo, F. et al., 2011, *Help Wanted? Providing and Paying for Long-Term Care*, OECD Health Policy Studies, OECD Publishing.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>44</sup> Expert Panel on Older Workers, 2008, *Supporting and Engaging Older Workers in the New Economy*.



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Measures such as these have been shown to reduce health-related absences, increase employee satisfaction, and may also work to prevent early retirement.<sup>45, 46</sup>

## **Engaging Employers**

Employers have the power to address many of the barriers and challenges that older workers face. Examples of initiatives some employers have adopted include the modification of corporate human resource practices to allow for flexible working arrangements; the implementation of phased retirement schemes; and the provision of specialized training or mentoring programs. While survey data suggests that organizations are concerned about their aging workforce, most have not yet targeted specific programs and policies to their mature workers.<sup>47, 48</sup>

In order to enable employers to adopt initiatives for their older workers, participants indicated that they need to be provided with information and resources that relay what successful strategies exist to retain and recruit older workers, and how they can be implemented. It was indicated that governments could be responsible for identifying best-practices and creative low-cost strategies, and for communicating how successful programs can be adopted by all Canadian employers.

## **A Workforce Aging Strategy**

The Council believes that a comprehensive and coordinated policy strategy, similar to that recently devised by the Government of Alberta, would represent an optimal way to tackle the diverse challenges faced by those seniors and near seniors who wish to participate in the labour force. Alberta's action plan is one geared towards engaging all partners, including employers, industry leaders, training providers, and individual workers, to develop supports for hiring and retaining mature workers.<sup>49</sup> The action plan is built around four goals, including engaging employers, supporting mature workers, promoting active aging, and promoting a supportive policy environment. The action plan further acknowledges that retirement is a social value that has to be respected; that there is little research evidence dictating what strategies are effective in supporting, retaining, and recruiting mature workers; and that policy and program planning needs to benefit a multi-generational and diverse workforce.

The plan sets out to achieve its goals through several identified priority actions, including the development of tools to support succession planning, recruitment, development and retention of older workers, and age-friendly work environments; strategies to raise

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<sup>45</sup> Réseau FADOQ, 2010, *Enjeux et bonnes pratiques pour favoriser la rétention et la réintégration des travailleurs d'expérience au marché de l'emploi*.

<sup>46</sup> Rena Shimoni, Doug Scotney, Megan Cohoe-Kenney, Amy Maginley, *Facilitating the Retention and/or Re-Entry of Mature Workers in the Workplace: A Mature Worker Study*, Bow Valley College, n.d.

<sup>47</sup> Karla Thorpe, October 2008, *Harnessing the Power: Recruiting, Engaging, and Retaining Mature Workers*, Conference Board of Canada.

<sup>48</sup> Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, 2011, *Report to the National Seniors Council: Findings from ThirdQuarter Older Worker and Business Surveys* (unpublished document).

<sup>49</sup> Government of Alberta, 2011, *Engaging the Mature Worker: An Action Plan for Alberta*.



awareness of the need to develop mature worker strategies and share best practices; provision of employment and career services to mature workers; work with partners to raise public awareness of programs geared towards mature workers; and raising awareness of the value and importance of lifelong learning.

### Suggestion for Action

#### **The Government could develop and implement a comprehensive workforce aging strategy.**

A workforce aging strategy could include the following initiatives:

- Build on the successes of exemplary programs that serve to help older workers find meaningful employment, and seek means of achieving long-term sustainability of these initiatives. For example, consideration could be given to expanding the *ThirdQuarter* pilot program which provides an online service to help employers and experienced employees who are 50-plus find each other.
- Establish a working group or centre of expertise that works to identify labour and skill shortages and proactively seeks seniors and near seniors from developed pools to address shortages. This initiative could be modeled off of the *Diversity Talent Pool* developed by the Public Service Commission in Nova Scotia.
- Explore a range of career transition, training and mentorship supports for older workers.
- Engage employers through the development of a compendium of successful recruitment and retention strategies, such as training programs and flexible human resource practices, and resources for employers.<sup>50</sup>
- Develop an Age-Friendly Workplaces<sup>51</sup> initiative featuring partnerships between all levels of government and employers to provide information and planning support, as well as recognition, for employers to adopt age-friendly workplace measures.

## Supporting Participation in Volunteer Work

Throughout its consultations, the Council heard that volunteer work needs to be valued and considered in discussions of the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors. Similar to paid employment, volunteer work offers the opportunity to remain active and

<sup>50</sup> This could be accomplished with the help of partners such as the *Workplace Institute*, a private organization that serves as a source of research, best practices, programs and services dedicated to unleashing the full potential of older workers. It is also the creator of the *Best Employer Awards for 50 Plus Canadians*, which recognizes organizations who are adopting strategies that harness the talent, skills, and experience of mature employees.

<sup>51</sup> This could be based off of, or as part of, the *Age-Friendly Communities Initiative* led by the Public Health Agency of Canada in partnership with other federal, provincial, territorial and non-government bodies, which seeks to engage older Canadians by ensuring policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environment support and enable older people to 'age actively'.



engaged in society and to both contribute and gain skills and experience.<sup>52</sup> In addition to the skills that can be acquired, there are other benefits to volunteering that facilitate positive and active aging. Volunteering can serve to deepen social networks, improve access to information and support, and reduce the likelihood of social isolation. Volunteering is also linked to improved quality of life, increased physical activity, and lower mortality rates. It enhances life satisfaction and well-being, contributes to self confidence and personal growth, and provides a sense of purpose by providing individuals with the opportunity to contribute to their communities and to society.<sup>53</sup>

Participants indicated that workers in the voluntary sector face many of the same barriers as workers in the paid labour force, in addition to other sector-specific challenges due to limited capacity for human resource management, outdated organizational structures and procedures, and the existence occupations that do not interest younger generations of seniors. It was recommended that supports be put in place to recruit and train volunteer coordinators who can match potential volunteers and employers with jobs that interest them and utilize their skills.

Volunteer coordinators work to recruit, train and support volunteers. They also assist in adapting volunteer work to the needs of the individual volunteers and match potential volunteers with the appropriate placement. To do their job effectively, volunteer coordinators require specific training and education. Unfortunately, many volunteer organizations do not have the financial or human resources capacity to either hire a volunteer coordinator or to provide this individual with the required support. Volunteer coordinators should be viewed as a critical business function for organizations so they can continue to recruit, retain and train the volunteers they need to achieve their organizational goals and mandate.

### Suggestion for Action

#### **The Government could develop supports for senior volunteers.**

- Develop and disseminate good business management practices among the not-for-profit sector to attract new and near seniors to a volunteering experience that meets their aspirations as well as the evolving needs of the not-for-profit sector more generally.
- Provide support for capacity-building strategies, such as the hiring and training of volunteer coordinators, to help not-or-profit organizations to improve their ability to engage and develop new recruits.

<sup>52</sup> Michael Hall, David Lasby, Steven Ayer, William David Gibbons, 2009, *Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians: Highlights from the 2007 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating*, Statistics Canada.

<sup>53</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada, *Volunteering as a Vehicle for Social Support and Life Satisfaction*, 2005.



## Supporting Informal Caregivers

Informal caregiving is prevalent among older workers aged 50 to 65. According to the General Social Survey conducted in 2007, more than a third of workers reported that they had provided care to a family member or friend in the last 12 months (41% of women, 31% of men) while close to half indicated that they had ever been informal caregivers.<sup>54</sup> While caregiving is not a new phenomenon, the circumstances under which families are expected to provide care have changed over the last 30 years. Along with the aging of the population, an increase in the incidence of disability, more women in the workforce, and the emergence of smaller, less traditional, more dispersed families, coupled with a trend toward de-institutionalization, it is anticipated that the demand for family caregivers will increase in the future. Given future demographic cost pressures facing long-term care systems, a continuation of informal caring roles will also become increasingly important.<sup>55</sup> While informal caregiving can serve as a means of formulating positive and rewarding relationships, it can also be associated with high levels of stress, financial burden, and intergenerational tensions within the family, especially when there is a lack of available supports and resources.

The Council heard that many older workers are unable to continue working full-time due to informal caregiving responsibilities.<sup>56</sup> It was acknowledged that the aging population will increase informal caregiving requirements, impacting all generations. An aging population will also impact the ability of families to balance pressures to remain in the labour market while providing care and assistance to family members, causing many working caregivers to reduce work hours or leave the workforce completely.<sup>57</sup> While knowledge about best-practice policies remains fairly limited in this area, policies which reduce the dual pressure from work and care for employed caregivers might improve their employability, making informal care a viable option for more potential caregivers.<sup>58</sup>

Currently, the federal government provides financial supports to caregivers in the form of the *Compassionate Care Benefit*<sup>59</sup> and the new *Family Caregiver Tax Credit*<sup>60</sup> announced in Budget 2011. However, continuing to seek ways to support and maintain the supply of family care appears to be a win-win-win approach: for the care recipient, as they prefer care from family members; for caregivers who are in need of supports; and for public systems.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> General Social Survey, 2007, Statistics Canada.

<sup>55</sup> Colombo, F. et al., 2011, *Help Wanted? Providing and Paying for Long-Term Care*, OECD Health Policy Studies, OECD Publishing.

<sup>56</sup> Meredith Lilly, Audrey Laporte, Peter Coyte, 2011, *Labour Market Work and Home Care's Unpaid Caregivers: A Systematic Review of Labour Force Participation Rates, Predictors of Labour Market Withdrawal, and Hours of Work*, University of Toronto.

<sup>57</sup> Colombo, F. et al., 2011, *Help Wanted? Providing and Paying for Long-Term Care*, OECD Health Policy Studies, OECD Publishing.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Compassionate care benefits are Employment Insurance (EI) benefits paid to people who have to be away from work temporarily to provide care or support to a family member who is gravely ill and who has a significant risk of death within six months.

<sup>60</sup> The Family Caregiver Tax Credit is a 15-per-cent non-refundable credit on an amount of \$2,000 that will provide tax relief to caregivers of all types of infirm dependent relatives including, for the first time, spouses, common-law partners and minor children.

<sup>61</sup> Colombo, F. et al., 2011, *Help Wanted? Providing and Paying for Long-Term Care*, OECD Health Policy Studies, OECD Publishing.



### Suggestion for Action

**The Government could develop policy solutions to support the provision of informal care.**

- Undertake further research to identify challenges facing informal caregivers and their families, to identify best practices and how to disseminate them.

## Encouraging Positive Intergenerational Relationships

Throughout its consultations the Council heard about the importance of intergenerational relationships within our society. Participants held that a balanced society is made up of people from all generations and walks of life, indicating that each generation has something to contribute. For example, a multi-generational workforce benefits from the contribution of varied skills and ensures the transmission of knowledge and experience from older to younger employees, and vice versa.

Intergenerational relationships strengthen the social fabric of our families, communities and workplaces. Connections between the generations were said to be mutually beneficial, both on an individual and societal level. Positive intergenerational relationships provide opportunities for social interaction and networking; the development of friendships and expansion of social support systems; improved social capital; and strengthened community capacity. Thus, intergenerational relationships need to be celebrated and supported.

### Suggestion for Action

**The Government could integrate the importance of intergenerational relationships into the celebration of both *National Seniors Day*<sup>62</sup> and *National Child Day*.<sup>63</sup>**

- Existing observances could serve as a means of raising social awareness through the accompaniment of meaningful government action, such as an intergenerational policy commitment, or a national event that brings the generations together.

During consultations, many participants expressed that intergenerational challenges do exist within all milieus of Canadian society, including the family, workplace, and community. Concerns were raised in terms of fair public resource allocation among the generations in the face of an increasing dependency ratio; models of care for seniors both within and outside of the family; differences in social and work-life values and expectations between generations; physical segregation of generations within

<sup>62</sup> National Seniors Day, celebrated every year on October 1<sup>st</sup>, was established to recognize the significant and continuing contributions that seniors make to the economic and social fabric of society.

<sup>63</sup> National Child Day, celebrated every year on November 20<sup>th</sup>, serves to pay tribute to Canada's commitment to children outlined in the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and *A Canada Fit for Children*; promote children's initiatives across the country; and encourage child-related organizations to raise awareness of child rights.



communities; and the ability of organizations, and community supports and services to effectively meet the needs of all generations. Other participants indicated that intergenerational tensions are generally not evident within Canadian society, but rather represent an issue that is driven primarily by theory.

As the population ages we will have more generations living together and caring for one another than ever before. Participants indicated that specific resources and supports may need to be put into place in order to accommodate this new dynamic, and saw a need to characterize possible intergenerational challenges and determine what measures could be put in place to address them. It was suggested that research initiatives be undertaken to project the population characteristics of future decades and that recommendations be based on these datasets rather than on current population characteristics, which will not effectively apply to the future population.

*“Attaining a better social balance between generations is, and will long remain, one of the most important challenges facing OECD countries....Countries should analyse the intergenerational distribution of public and private spending, and its impact over time on the distribution of incomes and assets.”*

-OECD Social Affairs Ministers, 2005

### Suggestion for Action

**As the Government moves forward in assessing and addressing the impact of an aging population, analysis of intergenerational challenges and opportunities should be an integral part of this work.**

- The aging of the population in Canada is underway and will have a wide range of impacts over the next 40 years. Canada should identify challenges and opportunities with respect to intergenerational relations in order to address any challenges early and to take full advantage of potential opportunities.
- Positive intergenerational relations will be increasingly important and should therefore be considered in all assessments conducted by the Government on issues raised by population aging.

## Supporting Intergenerational Projects

Intergenerational projects were identified as means of facilitating positive intergenerational interactions and relations. These initiatives foster opportunities for positive interaction among the generations, which can change the way aging and different age groups are perceived, dissolving ageist stereotypes and negative attitudes. The goal of intergenerational projects is the development of a mutual respect and understanding between the generations. Participants therefore indicated that there is a need to make a



conscious effort to develop opportunities for intergenerational projects, programming, and policy.

The *New Horizons for Seniors Program* (NHSP) is a federal program that supports projects led or inspired by seniors who make a difference in the lives of others and in their communities. The NHSP provides funding to many not-for-profit organizations to support projects involving seniors and their communities, many of which involve intergenerational components. Consultation participants described the NHSP as an excellent program that has funded many innovative and successful intergenerational community projects.

While the Council heard positive feedback about this government program, some ideas for its improvement were offered. Most notably, it was indicated that communities are in need of projects that are broad, continuous, and linked to other initiatives. It was therefore recommended that the NHSP develop a supporting or leadership role that could link initiatives. In carrying out this role, project summaries and successes could be made available to the public so that communities and organizations may learn from these successes and adopt their own initiatives, or link to existing intergenerational projects.

#### Suggestion for Action

**The Government could place more emphasis on supporting intergenerational community projects through the New Horizons for Seniors Program.**

- The NHSP could showcase successful intergenerational projects to inspire and scale up similar projects in other communities.
- The NHSP could engage a greater variety of client groups, such as employers, in an effort to support intergenerational projects in a larger variety of settings.

## Developing Supportive and Effective Policy

Consultation participants clearly defined various principles the government should consider in developing and implementing policy action on the two examined priorities. In order to be effective, it was indicated that policies need to be flexible, holistic and take into consideration the possible impacts on other age groups of the population. It was also stressed that policy action is required now in order to address the future challenges that the demographic shift will bring.

It is well known that seniors and near seniors are not a homogenous group, but are rather a diverse group that have varied needs and circumstances. Policies and programs that support older workers therefore need to be flexible and able to adapt to individual circumstances, and must allow individuals to make their own work or retirement choices in the light of their own health, aspirations, financial status and family situations.



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Throughout the consultations, it was stressed that addressing the challenges brought on by population aging will require cooperation between all levels of government and a coordination of policies and programs to ensure comprehensive and collaborative programs for seniors across all jurisdictions. It was indicated that programs and policy therefore needs to be linked and coordinated so that government support takes on a holistic approach.

Finally, seniors issues are not isolated from issues that affect other segments of the population. For example, an aging demographic may put pressures on younger generations to provide informal care to older relatives. Therefore, all policies should take into account the interaction of issues faced by all generations rather than focusing in on one segment of the population in isolation.

**Suggestion for Action**

**Work collaboratively with all levels of government, stakeholders and relevant partners to develop integrated, coordinated and comprehensive policy that supports all Canadians in response to the challenges of population aging.**



## *Conclusion*

The National Seniors Council's pan-Canadian consultations provided a valuable opportunity to engage many Canadians and discuss various challenges and possible solutions in relation to two important priorities: the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors, and intergenerational relations. By opening a dialogue and engaging a cross-section of stakeholders, it is our intention to raise awareness of these priorities and ensure they remain important public policy goals in Canada.

The Council acknowledges the important work of the Government of Canada has already undertaken to support the labour force participation of seniors and near seniors and intergenerational relations. While positive strides are being made, there is more work to be done in terms of understanding the complex challenges and barriers that exist and striving to address these to the benefit and well-being of all Canadians. The Council believes the suggestions for action outlined in this report, implemented with key partners and stakeholders, will initiate positive change.

Finally, the National Seniors Council recognizes that population aging may bring about new opportunities and challenges that will impact all Canadians. We believe that in recognizing the knowledge, skills and experience possessed by seniors and near seniors; working together to break down barriers to active participation in society; and encouraging positive relationships and social connectedness, Canadians can work together to overcome challenges and capitalize on opportunities to the benefit of all generations.





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## ***Annex A - Glossary of Terms***

### **Ageism**

Discrimination on the basis of age that makes assumptions about capacity; removes decision-making process; ignores older person's known wishes; and treats the older adult as a child.<sup>64</sup>

### **Baby Boomers/Baby boom generation**

A age group of individuals born during the demographic birth boom between 1946 and 1964.

### **Community Capacity**

Community characteristics affecting its ability to identify, mobilize, and address problems.<sup>65</sup>

### **Demographic Shift**

The changing composition of Canada's population which reflects a shift to an older population with seniors accounting for an ever-increasing proportion of the population.<sup>66</sup>

### **Dependency Ratio**

The total demographic dependency ratio is the ratio of the combined youth population (0 to 19 years) and senior population (65 or older) to the working-age population (20 to 64 years). It is typically expressed as the number of 'dependents' for every 100 'workers'.<sup>67</sup> In 2009, there were 4.7 persons aged 20-64 for every senior. By 2050, it is projected there will only be 2.5.

### **High-skilled Occupation**

Management occupations and occupations usually requiring university or college education.

### **Labour Force Participation Rate**

The labour force participation rate for a particular group (age, sex, marital status, geographic area, etc.) is the total labour force in that group, expressed as a percentage of the total population, in that particular group.<sup>68</sup>

### **Low-skilled Occupation**

Occupations usually requiring secondary school or on-the-job training.

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<sup>64</sup> Special Senate Committee on Aging, 2009.

<sup>65</sup> Glanz, K., Rimer, B., Viswanath, K., 2008, *Health Behaviour and Health Education: Theory, Research, and Practice*. 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Jossey-Bass: CA.

<sup>66</sup> Statistics Canada, 2010.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*



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**Near Senior**

An individual between the ages of 55 to 64.

**Older Worker**

An individual over the age of 55 who is employed or seeking employment.

**Quality of Life**

A concept of standard of living that includes material and non-material well-being.<sup>69</sup>

**Retirement**

Refers to a person who is aged 55 and over, is not in the labour force and receives 50% or more of his or her total income from retirement-like sources. Retirement-like sources include the Old Age Security pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement, benefits from the Canada Pension Plan or the Québec Pension Plan, investment and dividends and retirement pensions, superannuation and annuities.<sup>70</sup>

**Senior**

An individual aged 65 or over.

**Social Capital**

Relationships between community members including trust, reciprocity, and civic engagement.<sup>71</sup>

**Social Cohesion**

Describes the strength and quantity of social connections; social trust; membership and participation in organizations; and social solidarity.<sup>72</sup>

**Social Networks**

Refers to the web of social relationships that surround individuals. Social support is one of the important functions of social networks.<sup>73</sup>

**Unemployment Rate**

Proportion of the Labour force aged 15 and over (and for youths, aged 15 to 24 years) who did not have a job during the reference period.<sup>74</sup> The labour force consists of people who are currently employed and people who are unemployed but were available to work in the reference period and had looked for work in the past four weeks. The unemployment rate is a traditional measure of the economy. Unemployed people tend to experience more health problems.

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<sup>69</sup> Glanz, K., Rimer, B., Viswanath, K., 2008, *Health Behaviour and Health Education: Theory, Research, and Practice*. 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Jossey-Bass: CA.

<sup>70</sup> Statistics Canada, 2010.

<sup>71</sup> Glanz, K., Rimer, B., Viswanath, K., 2008, *Health Behaviour and Health Education: Theory, Research, and Practice*. 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Jossey-Bass: CA.

<sup>72</sup> Policy Research Initiative, 2010

<sup>73</sup> Glanz, K., Rimer, B., Viswanath, K., 2008, *Health Behaviour and Health Education: Theory, Research, and Practice*. 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Jossey-Bass: CA.

<sup>74</sup> Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (special tabulations).



## ***Annex B - Summary of Suggestions for Action***

The Council offers the following suggestions for consideration by the Government of Canada:

### **Enabling Labour Force Participation**

- Develop and implement a comprehensive workforce aging strategy.

### **Supporting Participation in Volunteer Work**

- Develop supports for senior volunteers.

### **Supporting Informal Caregivers**

- Develop a national caregiving strategy that employs policy solutions to support the provision of informal care.

### **Encouraging Positive Intergenerational Relationships**

- Integrate the importance of intergenerational relationships into the celebration of both *National Seniors Day* and *National Child Day*.
- Conduct a comprehensive analysis of the intergenerational challenges and opportunities that Canada will face over the next 40 years due to population aging.

### **Supporting Intergenerational Projects**

- Place more emphasis on supporting intergenerational community projects through the *New Horizons for Seniors Program*.

### **Developing Supportive and Effective Policy**

- Work collaboratively with all levels of government, stakeholders and relevant partners to develop integrated, coordinated and comprehensive policy that supports all Canadians in response to the challenges of population aging.





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## *Annex C - List of Consultation Participants*

### *Regional Roundtable Participants*

*VICTORIA, British Columbia - October 12, 2010*

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**TORONTO, Ontario - October 14, 2010**

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***CALGARY, Alberta - October 29, 2010***

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Barbara Biggs, MSW, RSW  
Community Social Worker - Seniors Services  
Community & Neighbourhood Services  
The City of Calgary

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Laurie Lyckman  
Member  
Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta

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Andrew Dale  
Executive Director  
Golden Circle Senior Resource Centre

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Rob Miyashiro  
Executive Director  
Lethbridge Senior Citizens Organization

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Elizabeth Descamp  
Director  
Older Adults Program  
Calgary Family Services Society

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Pam Olive  
Manager of Human Resources Calgary  
PCL Constructors Inc.

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Elinore Frederickson  
Educator  
Older Workers Program  
Yukon College

---

Lori Paine  
Executive Director  
Seniors Resource Society

---

Dr. Sandra P. Hirst  
Associate Professor  
Faculty of Nursing  
University of Calgary

---

Carolyn Small Legs  
Director of Health Secretariat  
Treaty 7 Management Corporation

---

Dianna Jossa  
Manager of Senior Services  
Veiner Centre

---

Lauren Webber  
President  
Students' Union  
University of Calgary

---

Jocelyn Kabatoff  
Leisure Learning Officer  
Bow Valley College

---

Luanne Whitmarsh, RSW  
Chief Executive Officer  
Kerby Centre

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Dr. Sheree T. Kwong See  
Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning)  
Faculty of Arts  
University of Alberta

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**National Seniors Council Representatives**

Canon Derwyn Shea, Patricia Edge, Patricia Humenny and Jean-Guy Soulière



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**HALIFAX, Nova Scotia - November 8, 2010**

Wendy Aird  
Director of Programs  
Department of Seniors  
Government of Nova Scotia

Ron Kelly  
Seniors United Network

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Tim Andrew  
President  
Third Age Center

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Conrad LeBlanc  
Director General  
New Brunswick Senior Citizens' Federation

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Barbara Burnett  
Executive Director  
Atlantic Institute for Aging Care

---

Robert LeBlanc  
President  
New Brunswick Senior Citizens' Federation

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Cecile Cassista  
Executive Director  
The Coalition for Seniors and Nursing Home  
Residents' Rights

---

Cathy Lively  
VP Programs  
CARP - A New Vision of Aging for Canada

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Janice Clarke  
Advisor  
Senior and Healthy Aging Secretariat  
Department of Social Development  
Government of New Brunswick

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Della Longmere  
Women's Place Resource Centre

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Adélarde Cormier  
Association acadienne et francophone des aînées  
et aînés du Nouveau-Brunswick

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Faye Martin  
Director of Policy and Seniors  
Department of Community Services  
Seniors and Labour  
Government of Prince Edward Island

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Pamela Fancey  
Associate Director  
Nova Scotia Centre on Aging

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Lynn McDonagh Hughes  
Manager Operations  
Nova Scotia Tourism Human Resource Council  
Tourism Sector Council

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Mélina Gallant  
President  
Les Francophones de l'âge d'or de l'Île-du-  
Prince-Édouard

---

Faizal Nanji  
Director Corporate Strategy and Policy  
Department of Seniors  
Government of Nova Scotia

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Trudy Higgins  
Executive Director  
Home Support Services

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Ross Osborne  
Provincial Advocacy Officer  
Federal Superannuates National Association

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Ted Hobson  
Vice Chair  
Mahone Bay Centre Society

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Ron Robichaud  
Executive Director  
Acadia Centre for Social & Business  
Entrepreneurship  
Acadia University



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**HALIFAX, Nova Scotia - November 8, 2010** (cont'd)

Robert J. Rogers  
President  
Newfoundland and Labrador Pensioners and Senior  
Citizen 50 + Federation

Paul Tufts  
President and Genealogy Committee  
The Association des Acadiens-Métis Souriquois

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Penelope Rowe  
Chief Executive Officer  
Community Services Council

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Valerie White (Co-Chair)  
Chief Executive Officer  
Department of Seniors  
Government of Nova Scotia

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Chris Saulnier  
President  
Student Council Office  
Dalhousie University

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Dolly Williams  
President  
East Preston Senior Club

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Terry Smith  
President  
Community Links / Rep. Canadian Pensioners  
Concerned

**National Seniors Council Representatives**  
Jean-Guy Soulière , Joan Tufts and Beverly Weeks



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**MONTREAL, Québec - November 10, 2010**

Lucy Barylak, MSW  
Chief of Administrative Program  
Centre de santé et de services sociaux Cavendish

Jean-Luc Racine  
Director General  
Fédération des aînés et des aînés francophones du  
Canada

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Vanessa Bévilacqua  
Advisor  
Fédération de l'âge d'or du Québec

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Pierre Riley  
Director General  
Fédération des centres d'actions bénévoles du  
Québec

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Pierre Fortier  
Réseau d'information des aînés du Québec

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Huguette Robert  
Coordinator  
Centre Berthiaume-Du Tremblay

---

Marie-Hélène Gascon  
Forum des citoyens aînés de Montréal

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Caroline Sauriole  
Director General  
Petits frères des pauvres

---

Catherine Geoffroy  
President  
Association québécoise de gérontologie

---

Nirth Sarab  
Student  
McGill University

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Benita Goldin  
Coordinator of Community Relations  
Cummings Jewish Centre for Seniors

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Cynthia Weston  
Professor  
Department of Educational and Counselling  
Psychology  
McGill University

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Clémence Racine  
Director General  
La Maison des Grands-Parents de Villeray

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Janet Yip  
Student  
McGill University

**National Seniors Council Representatives**  
Daphne Nahmiash, Cécile Plourde and Jean-Guy Soulière



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## *Council Members' Individual Meeting Participants*

Dr. Jane Barratt Secretary General International Federation on Ageing	Mathias Hartpence Director of International Policy, Skills and Immigration The Canadian Chamber of Commerce
David Boisclair Research Director Institutes for Research on Public Policy	Esther Hockenstein, MSW Social Worker
Mel Cappe President Institutes for Research on Public Policy	Michael Hockenstein Program Coordinator Vanier Cégep
Dr. Phillip Cooper, M.B., F.R.C.S., D.R.C.O.G., L.M.C.C. General Surgeon Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority	Joe Anne Hunter, MSW, BSW Gerontological Credentials Clinical Therapist Private Practitioner
Les Crosbie Former Vice President CFCF-TV	Kathryn Jarrett-Ekholm Director Division of Aging and Seniors Public Health Agency of Canada
Louis Daigle Program Coordinator Berlitz	Barbara Jaworski Chief Executive Officer Workplace Institute
Connie Delahanty Older Worker Centretown Community Health Centre	Terry Kaufman Former Director General Centre local de services communautaires (CLSC) Notre-Dame-de-Grâce
Hubert d'Entremont Site Manager Digby General Hospital South West Nova District Health Authority	Bonnie Kennedy Executive Director Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment
Dr. Linda Duxbury Professor Sprott School of Business Carleton University	Dr. Gary Kenyon Chair of Gerontology St. Thomas University
Sarah Fortin Research Director/Associate Editor, Policy Options Institutes for Research on Public Policy	Charles Keple Active Participant Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism and Seniors Education Centre Past President, Rotary Club of Regina



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Dr. Frédéric Lesemann  
Professor  
Centre urbanisation culture société  
Institut national de la recherche scientifique

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Carol Anne MacKenzie  
Program Administration Officer  
Service Nova Scotia  
Government of Nova Scotia

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Peter MacKenzie  
Retired Social Worker  
Department of Community Services  
Government of Nova Scotia

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Austin Malone  
Older Worker

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Eileen Malone  
Retired Registered Nurse  
Former member of National Advisory  
Council on Aging

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Rosella Melanson  
Executive Director  
Advisory Council for the Status of Women

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Tanya Nixon  
Vice President  
Community Health  
South West Nova District Health Authority

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Ruth Pelletier  
Administrative Assistant to Development  
Consultant  
Community Services  
Queen Elizabeth Health Complex

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Louise Plouffe  
Manager  
Division of Aging and Seniors  
Public Health Agency of Canada

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Bob Price  
Chief Executive Officer  
Integrity Home Care Moncton  
President  
New Brunswick Home Support Association

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Laurell Ritchie  
National Representative  
Canadian Auto Workers

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David Robertson  
Director  
Work Organization & Training Department  
Canadian Auto Workers

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Gordon Rутten  
Mayor of Martensville  
Retired School Principal

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Candace Skrapek  
President  
Saskatoon Council on Aging

---

Paul Swinwood  
President and CEO  
Information and Communications Technology Council

---

Karla Thorpe  
Associate Director  
Conference Board of Canada

---

Lynne Toupin  
Executive Director  
HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector

---

Brian Trainor  
Retired Police Officer

---

Michael Villeneuve, RN MSc  
Scholar in Residence  
Canadian Nurses Association

---

Douglas Watt  
Associate Director  
Conference Board of Canada

---

Jodi Ybarra  
Site Manager  
District Nurse Practitioner Program Manager  
South West Nova District Health Authority

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## *National Roundtable Participants*

*OTTAWA, Ontario – February 28, 2011*

Charles Beach  
Professor  
Department of Economics  
Queen's University

Bernie Sheehan  
Director  
Human Resources  
Bow Valley College

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Eileen Clarke  
Urban Vice-President  
Mayor, Town of Gladstone

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Dr. Atlanta Sloane-Seale  
Professor and Director  
Continuing Education  
University of Manitoba

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Andrew Jackson  
Director  
Social and Economic Policy  
Canadian Labour Congress

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Jennifer Stevens  
Health Care Research & Advocacy Officer  
Congress of National Seniors Organizations

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Valerie Kuehne  
Editorial Board  
Journal of Intergenerational Relationships

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Sherri Torjman  
Vice-President  
Caledon Institute of Social Policy

---

Dr. Martine Lagacé  
Associate Professor  
Department of Communication  
University of Ottawa

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Lynne Toupin  
Executive Director  
HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector

---

Bruce MacDonald  
President and CEO  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada

---

Michael Veall  
Professor  
Department of Economics  
McMaster University

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Jane MacDonald  
Vice President  
Public Affairs and Community Engagement  
Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) Canada

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Michael Villeneuve, RN, MSc  
Scholar in Residence  
Canadian Nurses Association

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Steve McLellan  
Chief Executive Officer  
ThirdQuarter  
Saskatchewan Chambers of Commerce

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Frances E. White, MEd, HRMC, CHRP  
President  
Human Resource Association of New Brunswick  
Canadian Council of Human Resources  
Associations

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Marie Ormandy  
President  
MCO Business Group Inc.

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### **National Seniors Council Representatives**

Patricia Edge, Daphne Nahmiash, Stanley Hrabarchuk, Joan Tufts and Jean-Guy Soulière



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### *Online Consultation Participants \**

Sherry Baker  
Executive Director  
BC Association of Community Response  
Networks

Roger H. Nesbitt  
President  
New Brunswick Society of Retired Teachers

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Adèle Girard  
Director General  
Conseil québécois des ressources humaines en  
tourisme

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Jean Pignal  
Chief  
Special Surveys Division  
Statistics Canada

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Morris Jesion  
Executive Director  
Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizen's  
Organizations

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Pierre Schweda  
Executive Director  
Regina Seniors Citizens Centre

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Dr. Gail Joe

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Brian Trainor  
Retired Police Officer

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Pat Kerwin  
President  
Congress of Union Retirees of Canada

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Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay  
Professor  
Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)

\* This list includes only those who provided their personal information. Thirty-three participants responded to the online consultation in total.



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## ***Annex D - Members of the National Seniors Council***

### **Jean-Guy Soulière Chair**



After a successful career with the federal public service, Jean-Guy Soulière was the Executive Director of the Federal Superannuates National Association (FSNA) for over 12 years. He is the former Chair and Spokesperson for the Congress of National Seniors' Organizations since 2002 and is a member of the Public Service Pension Advisory Committee. He holds a degree from the University of Ottawa and is fluently bilingual.

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### **Patricia Eve Edge**



Ms. Edge was appointed by the Government of British Columbia in 1996 as a Senior Citizen Counsellor and is still serving in this capacity with the Ladysmith Resources Centre Association. Ms. Edge has worked with numerous organizations and served on various committees representing seniors in the town of Ladysmith and its surrounding area, including the Ladysmith Resources Centre Association, the Ladysmith RCMP Community Policing Station, the Ladysmith Senior Centre Society and the Ladysmith Health Care Auxiliary. Ladysmith is a small town of 8,500 one hour north of Victoria along the eastern coast of Vancouver Island. Ms. Edge has also won a number of awards celebrating her significant commitment to the community, including Volunteer of the Year, RCMP Community Policing (1997-1998), the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal (2002) and the Ladysmith Citizen of the Year for Volunteerism (2006).

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### **Stanley Hrabarchuk**



Following Mr. Stanley Hrabarchuk retirement from the Government of Canada in 1991, Mr. Hrabarchuk became a member of the National Association of Federal Retirees (FSNA). He was appointed to the position of National President of FSNA in 2009 and in 2010, became the Immediate National Past President. For nearly 20 years, Mr. Hrabarchuk has worked on a number of committees to help further the work of FSNA through the development of membership programs and marketing and recruitment strategies. He was also instrumental in establishing a Manitoba Committee of Seniors to represent seniors' interests across the province. His demonstrated leadership skills and extensive experience supporting seniors' issues are an excellent addition to the Council.



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### **Patricia Humenny**



Patricia Humenny of Clavet, Saskatchewan, has had a very rich and diverse career with positions in both small business, government, social services and the private sector. She has also served in executive positions for a number of community and service organizations, such as the Canadian Association of the Mentally Handicapped. Ms. Humenny's educational background includes nursing, accounting, sociology, economics and business law. Her nursing training and various other positions have given Ms. Humenny the opportunity to be involved with seniors on many levels throughout her career. In 2005, she was awarded the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal in recognition of her contributions to her community and the province of Saskatchewan.

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### **Leonie Napa Duffy**



Leonie Napa Duffy has been very active in Coral Harbour, Nunavut, working as a teaching assistant, a teacher and a nurse's aide. She is also a long-time hotel owner and manager, as well as a church pastor. Mrs. Duffy has been elected to office on numerous occasions, and is currently serving as a member of the Keewatin Business Development Centre. She holds many awards, including Fellow of the Arctic Institute of North America (1999), a Governor General Commemorative Medal (1992), and an award from the Hamlet Council of Coral Harbour (1995).

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### **Dr. Doo Ho Shin**



Dr. Doo Ho Shin of Vancouver, British Columbia, an active partner in BC Bio Medical Laboratory for over 30 years, was a practicing as a general pathologist in Fraser Health (largely at Surrey Memorial Hospital). Fraser Health serves a population of 1.46 million people, approximately 1/3 of the total population of British Columbia. Dr. Shin has served on various hospital committees, including Infection Control and Physician Credentials. He has been actively involved in community work including arts, education and seniors issues in the metro Vancouver area.

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### **Beverly Weeks**



Beverly Weeks of Harvey, New Brunswick, is the founder of Harvey Outreach for Seniors, an organization developed to meet the needs of seniors. She is also a founding and lifetime member of the New Brunswick Home Support Association. Ms. Weeks has served on many committees and has conducted research projects in the field of seniors' issues. She is a founding and continuing member of the Third Age Centre housed at St. Thomas University, Fredericton, New Brunswick. She was the New Brunswick representative on the Board of the Canadian Association for Community Care. Some of her awards include the Marion Stevenson Award for outstanding contribution to Community Care and the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for her work on seniors' issues.



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The Council would like to recognize and thank the following former members of the Council, whose hard work and insight contributed greatly to the development of this report.

**Daphne Nahmiash**



Dr. Daphne Nahmiash, PhD, of Montréal, Quebec, is an active member of and former Chair of the McGill Centre for Studies in Aging Education Committee. She is presently the chairperson of the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG) Community Committee on Elder Abuse. She was an Adjunct Professor in Gerontology and Social Services at Université Laval and McGill University. She has recently retired from her position as Director of Professional Services of CLSC NDG and as Commissioner of Complaints and Quality of Services at the Centre de santé et de services sociaux Cavendish in Montréal. Dr. Nahmiash has been working in the field of seniors' health and social services for the past 45 years. She has been part of many committees, including at the Quebec Health and Social Services Ministry where she produced government reports on senior abuse, neglect and services to seniors. Some of her awards include Women of the Year 2005–2006, awarded by the Montréal Council of Women for initiatives to improve the quality of life of seniors.

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**Cécile Plourde**



Cécile Plourde of Montréal, Quebec, has been the president of the Fédération de l'âge d'or du Québec (FADOQ)—Mouvement des aînés du Québec for the Montréal region since 2000. The FADOQ is the largest seniors' group in Quebec and is made up of 280,000 members. Ms. Plourde, a graduate of Université Laval, worked in the health profession for 40 years as a registered nurse. Ms. Plourde has been active in her community for many years and has served on many committees, including the Table de concertation des aînés de l'Île de Montréal and the regional selection committees for the Engagés dans l'action pour les aînés du Québec and New Horizons grant programs. Ms. Plourde has also been a member of the family committee at the Conférence régionale des élus de Montréal since 2005.

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**The Reverend  
Canon  
Derwyn Shea**



The Reverend Canon Derwyn Shea of Toronto, Ontario, is the Rector of St. Hilda's Anglican Church and Chairman and CEO of St. Hilda's Towers, one of the largest single stand alone residential care facilities in Ontario. He was Priest-in-Charge for 28 years at St. Clement (Riverdale) Parish. He established a number of local initiatives geared towards youth and low-income seniors. Reverend Shea was appointed Canon for the Diocese of Toronto by the Anglican Church in 2002. He is a former Toronto City and Metro Councillor, as well as a former Ontario Member of Provincial Parliament. He has served on numerous boards, chairs, and commissions, including the Children's Aid Society, the Mayor's Committee on Race Relations and the Police Commission. He was the former Chairman of the O'Keefe Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto and President of the Canadian National Exhibition. He was awarded the 125th Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada Medal for Community Service as a result of his work and advocacy.



### **Joan Tufts**



Joan Tufts of Saulnierville, Nova Scotia, is a retired nurse who is currently an Addiction Services Counsellor with a special emphasis on nicotine addiction. Ms. Tufts has served in a variety of roles involving seniors and home care. She is currently a voluntary Director on the Mental Health Foundation Board of Nova Scotia and sits on that board and the Clare Community Health Board. Ms. Tufts won the 2005 Inspiring Lives Award from the Mental Health Foundation Board of Nova Scotia.