

NEWS FOR SENIORS

(From the desk of *Seniors Forum*)

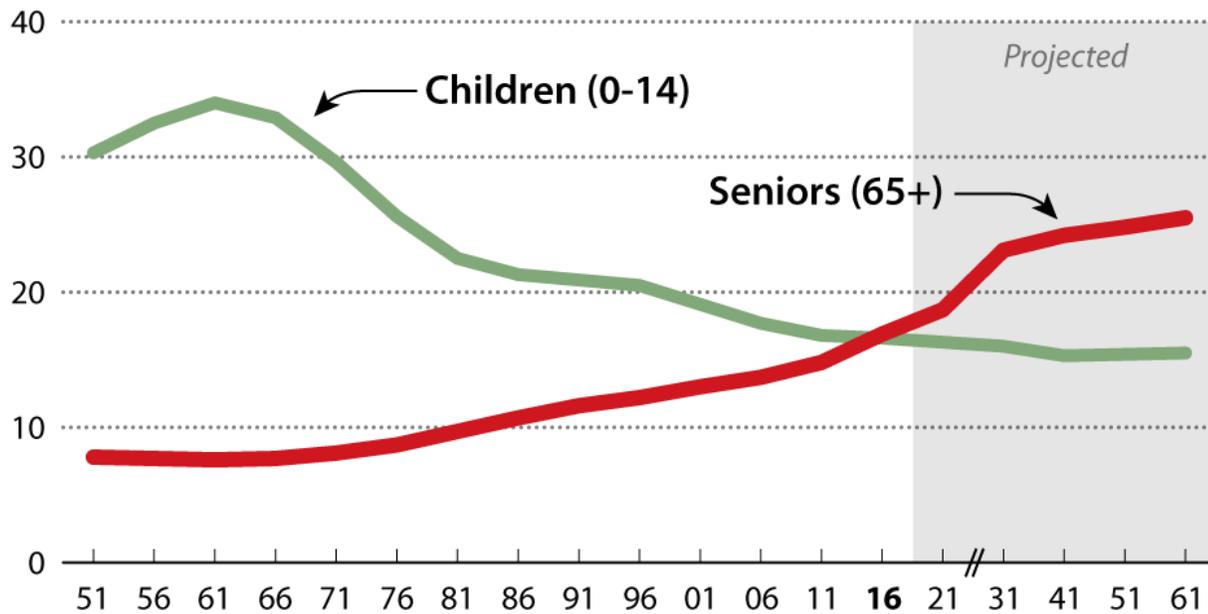
SENIORS POPULATION IN CANADA

Canada is currently undergoing a significant demographic shift. Canadians age 65 and over represent 17% of the country's population and is expected to increase by approximately 25% by 2036. The pressures caused by a growing seniors' population is compounded by the fact that Canada's seniors are living longer, with multiple chronic conditions that require complex care.

MORE SENIORS THAN CHILDREN

In 2016, for the first time, the share of seniors (16.9%) exceeded the share of children (16.6%).

PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL POPULATION



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

THE CANADIAN PRESS

SUPPORT SENIORS. PETITION TO PARLIAMENT

Date: April 16, 2018. OCSCO News

This March 2018, ISNA member Dr. Ghazy Mujahid supported by MP Iqra Khalid, Shaukat Rizvi and few others initiated petition E-1566 to call upon the Government of Canada to appoint a Minister or a Special Advisor on Seniors Affairs to the Prime Minister. More than 5000 signatures, much higher than the required numbers (500) of signatures for the petition to be debated in Parliament.

Ghazy and others sponsors' (all members of ISNA) petition explains that seniors are Canada's fastest growing cohort and that by 2036, seniors will represent one-quarter of the country's population yet they are not represented in government.

NEW FEDERAL CABINET MINISTER APPOINTED FOR SENIORS

July 18, 2018

This morning, the federal government made a strong commitment to seniors by appointing Filomena Tassi as the new minister for seniors.



For years Filomena Tassi, a chaplain before entering politics, made time to listen to older members of the community. Now, as the new federal minister for seniors, she will not only be hearing what they have to say but serving as their voice on the national stage.

The Hamilton MP said she decided to leave her six-year career as a corporate lawyer after having children, and upon completing a master's degree in religious education she became a chaplain at a Catholic high school. She said all of her work experiences, while vastly different, have given her the opportunity to serve. The 56-year-old with a proud Italian heritage heads up a new ministry that has been revived in the final stretch of Justin Trudeau's mandate after existing under the previous Conservative government.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SENIORS.

Pam Damoff, M.P.

Oakville North-Burlington

(extract from mail to Shaukat Rizvi Program Coordinator)

In regards to the Canada Health Transfer (CHT), Starting in 2017-18, Canada Health Transfer (CHT) cash is set to grow in line with a three-year moving average of nominal Gross Domestic Product, with funding guaranteed to increase by at least 3 per cent per year.

Since taking office the government has restored the eligibility age for Old Age Security back to 65, after the previous government changed the age of eligibility to 67. This change has kept 100,000 seniors out of poverty. Aside from restoring the age of eligibility to 65, the government has introduced the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) top-up. This program has helped and continues to help 900,000 vulnerable seniors across Canada with up to an additional \$947/year. This top-up alone has helped to lift 13,000 vulnerable seniors – 12,000 of them senior women – out of poverty.

This government is also committed to other measures that will benefit seniors—such as developing a poverty reduction strategy to help low income Canadians of all ages, providing more funding for affordable housing and seniors facilities, and providing more generous and flexible leave for caregivers.

Through this budget, the government is investing \$20 million over five years, starting in 2018-19, and \$4 million per year ongoing to support community-based projects that address the challenges of dementia. We know that more than 400,000 Canadian seniors live with dementia, including Alzheimer's disease. Women are disproportionately affected, making up two-thirds of this population and the government is taking action to provide more support to those senior and their families affected by investing in community organizations that can create tailored community specific programming.

In addition to these commitments, the federal government, over the next 10 years has committed to supporting better home care, including critical home care infrastructure requirements, as well as mental health initiatives, with new funding of \$4.2 billion for Ontario alone through the new Canadian Health Accord.

NEARLY HALF OF CANADIANS COUNT ON INHERITANCE FOR RETIREMENT —

WILL THEY ACTUALLY GET ANY MONEY?

Almost half of Canadian investors expect to receive an inheritance, and many are counting on that money to help them in retirement.

Without a will, family squabbles are threat to inheritance

A whopping 50 per cent of Canadians don't have a will and no instructions on how to divide their inheritance, according to a recent TD Bank survey. And 28 per cent of those without one are boomers.

“Older Canadians are risking family conflict down the road when loved ones are left without instructions on how to distribute assets; which is a common issue since most Canadians (88 per cent) have at least one sibling,” the bank noted.

IS CANADA'S HEALTH-CARE SYSTEM READY FOR OUR RAPIDLY GREYING

POPULATION?

Global News-2016 census from Statistics Canada

There were 770,780 Canadians over the age of 85 in 2016. This cohort increased nearly four times as fast as the entire population between 2011 and 2016.

“We need to accelerate the pace of change in our health-care systems to build up those services in the home and in the community so people can live dignified lives in their older years,” said Danielle Martin, a family physician and a vice-president at Women’s College Hospital in Toronto. Martin says our health-care system is “very hospital-centric” and Canadians are traditionally “big users of emergency departments.” She says our health-care dollars need to be spent on improving home care and community-based services for seniors. “If we continue to build our system around hospitals, long-term care facilities and other institutions, it will be expensive and it won’t be respectful of the clear choices that people want to make about the way they want to age.”

A report from the Conference Board of Canada (CBC) estimates that 2.4 million Canadians over 65 and will require continuing care support, both paid and unpaid, by 2026. By 2046, that number will reach nearly 3.3 million.

To meet this increase the overall demand for nurses to provide continuing care to seniors in home, community, and facility living settings is projected to increase from just under 64,000 full-time jobs to 142,000 full-time jobs by 2035 — an annual growth rate of 3.4 per cent.

Martin said governments at all levels need to focus on improving care at home which includes everything from outfitting residences with assistance devices to help with cooking or access to virtual care programs monitored by health care professionals. “Our home-care system needs to be flexible to the needs of the individual, and we need to have ways of evaluating what people’s needs are and also acknowledging that those needs can change over time,” she said.

Susan McDaniel, a Canada research chair in global population and life course at the University of Lethbridge, says we need to be focusing on those 85 and over. Chronic care, home care, and increasing access to pharmaceuticals are three pillars policymakers need to be focusing on, says McDaniel. Investments in these areas will also reduce overcrowding at hospitals by removing people who don’t necessarily need around-the-clock support.