



# Aging Together — Planning for the Future

## Discussion Guide

### Fall 1999



# Introduction

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## Let's Step into the Future Together

Let's step into the future together. The year is 2020 in Alberta. When you look around what do you see? You will likely see many seniors living active, healthy lives in every community across the province. This picture of 2020 reflects an important demographic trend that is currently changing Alberta's population. The increasing number and proportion of seniors is an "aging population."

To study this trend, in 1998, the Government of Alberta established the Steering Committee for the Government-Wide Study on the Impact of the Aging Population on Government Programs and Services. This fall, the steering committee is launching its Aging Together — Planning for the Future consultations to talk with Albertans about the aging population. These consultations are:

- To promote discussions on the impact of the aging population between generations;
- To encourage individuals, families, communities and all levels of government to think and plan for the aging population;
- To discuss with Albertans a vision to move forward to 2020 and beyond; and,
- To receive input from Albertans about future policy directions for addressing the aging population.

Whether you will be a senior in 2020 or not, these consultations will be of interest to you. The aging population will touch all of our lives in many ways. Young and old, we are all aging together in an aging Alberta. Every generation has a role to play in planning for this future.

Questions to Think About:

When you look around in 2020, what would you like to see? What programs and services will seniors need in 2020? Will the needs and expectations of seniors in 2020 be different from today's seniors?

# The Government of Alberta's Continuing Commitment to Seniors

Alberta is in the forefront in Canada in studying the issues surrounding an aging population. Attention to this trend now and in the coming years will ensure that Alberta is ready to benefit from the many opportunities afforded by an aging population. It will also prepare Alberta for possible challenges. Planning for the years ahead will ensure that the needs of seniors in 2020 are anticipated and met. It will also ensure that programs and services are sustainable and affordable for future generations of seniors and non-seniors.

# The Steering Committee Invites You to Participate in their Consultations

You can get involved in the Aging Together — Planning for the Future consultations in several ways.

- You may wish to participate in a focus group. In October 1999, focus group sessions will be held across the province in the following communities: St. Paul, Vermilion, Camrose, Edmonton, Red Deer, Drumheller, Calgary, Fort McMurray, High Level, High Prairie, Grande Prairie, Edson, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge and Pincher Creek. Appendix I is a schedule listing the date, time and location of each session. Notices, including posters, are being mailed out to key stakeholder groups across the province in mid-September. Watch for posters and newspaper advertisements for information about a focus group in a community near you. Information can also be obtained by calling 1-800-642-3853, or 427-7876 if calling from Edmonton.

- You can also respond to the survey available on pages 25 and 26 of this discussion guide. It can be returned either by fax or mail. Another option is to complete the survey on-line by visiting the internet site at:

[http://www.gov.ab.ca/mcd/seniors/impactaging/  
impactaging.htm](http://www.gov.ab.ca/mcd/seniors/impactaging/impactaging.htm)

- You or a group you are affiliated with are welcome to send your comments in writing to the steering committee, by e-mail, fax or mail.

The addresses and telephone and fax numbers for the Aging Together — Planning for the Future consultations are:

Mailing address:

The Steering Committee for the Government-Wide Study on the  
Impact of the Aging Population  
c/o Seniors Policy and Programs  
Alberta Community Development  
330 Standard Life Centre  
10405 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5J 4R7

Fax number: (780) 427-1689

Telephone: 1-800-642-3853, or 427-7876 if calling from Edmonton

Internet address: <http://www.gov.ab.ca/mcd/seniors/impactaging/impactaging.htm>

E-mail address: [webeditor@mcd.gov.ab.ca](mailto:webeditor@mcd.gov.ab.ca)

If you would like more information about how to get involved in the consultations, or if you would like additional copies of the discussion guide:

- Call 1-800-642-3853, or 427-7876 if calling from Edmonton, or
- Visit the internet site at:

<http://www.gov.ab.ca/mcd/senior/impactaging/impactaging.htm>.

If you have a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD/TDY unit), the toll-free number for information is 1-800-232-7215, or 427-9999 if calling from Edmonton.

If you would like to listen to the guide, it will be available on tape at your local library by the end of September.

Thank you for taking the time to provide your input. Your response would be appreciated by November 30, 1999.

# About the Steering Committee

In June 1999, the Steering Committee completed its first report called *Report A: Review of Current Government Programs and Services*. This report examines the current situation of Alberta seniors, the issues that affect them and the programs and services offered by the provincial government. It outlines a number of short-term issues and makes recommendations as to how these issues could be addressed. The executive summary of *Report A* is contained in Appendix II. A list of Steering Committee members is provided in Appendix III.

*Report A* was released in July 1999 with a request from the Government of Alberta for public feedback on its recommendations. It will form an important part of government's continuing efforts to address the concerns of today's seniors.

# Aging Together — Planning for the Future Consultations

With the completion of *Report A*, the Steering Committee is moving ahead now to the year 2020 and beyond. Aging Together — Planning for the Future consultations invite Albertans of all ages to share their thoughts and ideas on the aging population and its impact. Pages 3 and 4 of this discussion guide list several ways that Albertans can get involved in these consultations.

The consultations will conclude with the “Symposium on Aging, Planning for the Future,” November 18-20, 1999 in Edmonton. This symposium will provide delegates with a forum for discussion and planning about the aging population.

About 175 delegates will be invited to the symposium. About half of the delegates will be individuals, one from each provincial constituency, randomly selected by an independent research company to represent Albertans. Selection is being done to ensure a wide representation of Albertans from all walks of life.

The remaining delegates will be from key stakeholder groups, representing seniors, youth, employers, workers, volunteers and Aboriginal peoples and other ethnic communities. Stakeholders will also come from the health and wellness, safety and security, social agencies, service clubs, learning, financial and business, transportation, housing, municipal government and active living areas.

All input received from Albertans during the consultations will be considered by the Steering Committee in preparing its final report. The Steering Committee will also examine other information, such as the findings of the Alberta Health & Wellness review currently underway to study the long-term care system, and data that is being compiled to develop demographic projections. It will also be looking at profiles of future seniors that are being prepared by Alberta Community Development.

The Steering Committee’s final report, with recommendations, is to be completed by March 2000 and submitted to the Honourable Stan Woloshyn, Minister of Community Development and Minister Responsible for Seniors.

# What Does Research Tell Us About the Aging Population?

Much has been written on the impact of the aging population in Canada. One of the questions being asked is whether the economy will be able to support a large and increasing population of seniors. Another related question looks at the aging labour force and asks whether there will be enough skilled workers to staff programs and services in the future. A wide range of views has been expressed.

- Some see the aging trend in Canada and elsewhere in the western world as an approaching crisis for social and economic programs and services. Issues are raised about rising costs and the ability to sustain programs in the future. Some have also raised the issue of the perceived burden being placed on younger generations to support the large population of seniors. This “crisis” scenario is often criticized as presenting an unrealistic and negative view of the aging population.
- Others state that there is no impending crisis due to the aging trend. They caution, however, that program adjustments are necessary in age-related services and programs to ensure they remain affordable and sustainable over time. The Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), for example, has done an analysis of the impact of the aging population in developed countries, including Canada. They conclude:

“...that the policy implications of aging are manageable — but they need to be managed. That will not happen automatically. There is a need to develop strategies and tools to deal effectively with issues such as aging that have long time horizons and that cross traditional administrative and professional boundaries. There is a need to build public understanding and support for new policy directions. This will not be simple. However, because aging trends are fundamentally positive, the payoff from such strategies should be high. Many policy responses to aging have the rare potential to be win-win.”

Researchers have also proposed many ideas for meeting the challenges of an aging population. Suggestions are made for reforming age-related programs and services such as long-term care and public pensions. In the area of long-term care, it is proposed that the trend from institutional to community-based care be continued to allow seniors to age in place in their communities. It is also recognized that the capacity of individuals, families, communities and other partners to contribute towards the care of seniors needs to be increased. Overall, in the health sector, continued emphasis also needs to be placed on health promotion and injury and disease prevention programs.

Consideration is also given to strengthening the role of private or employer-sponsored pension plans in retirement saving, and providing incentives for individual retirement saving and investment. The importance of individual and family responsibility in preparing for retirement is emphasized as an essential part of meeting future challenges.

Employment and retirement issues are explored to ensure there are enough skilled workers in the future. Ideas in these areas include, for example, the promotion of lifelong learning for all workers and more flexible arrangements for work-to-retirement transitions.

Some researchers have explored demographic ideas such as increasing the birth rate or migration rates. Immigration, for example, is often mentioned as an essential source for continued growth in the Canadian labour force. There is some question, however, whether increasing immigration would address the aging trend, in the long term, as immigrants themselves age.

Questions to Think About:

What do you think of these ideas? Do you have other ideas?  
What ideas do you think would be appropriate to the Alberta situation?

# Population Projections for Alberta

Demographers calculate population projections based on assumptions about births, deaths and migration patterns. Projections for Alberta and Canada show the number and proportion of seniors increasing. Several reasons have been given to explain this aging trend, including declining birth rates, increasing life expectancy and the aging of the baby boom generation.

In 1998, in Alberta:

- About 1 in 10 individuals, or 10% of the population was 65 years of age or older.
- There were about 289,000 seniors.
- The fastest growing age categories were 55 to 64 years, and 85 years of age and older.

Alberta has the youngest population of any province in Canada. Its strong economy and low unemployment rates continue to attract young people who are seeking jobs. In-migration to the province from elsewhere in Canada slows the aging trend in Alberta.

The aging trend in Alberta has been in evidence for a number of years but is expected to show a marked increase as the large baby boom generation (those born between 1946 and 1966) start turning 65 years of age beginning in 2011. This increase is expected to peak in 2031.

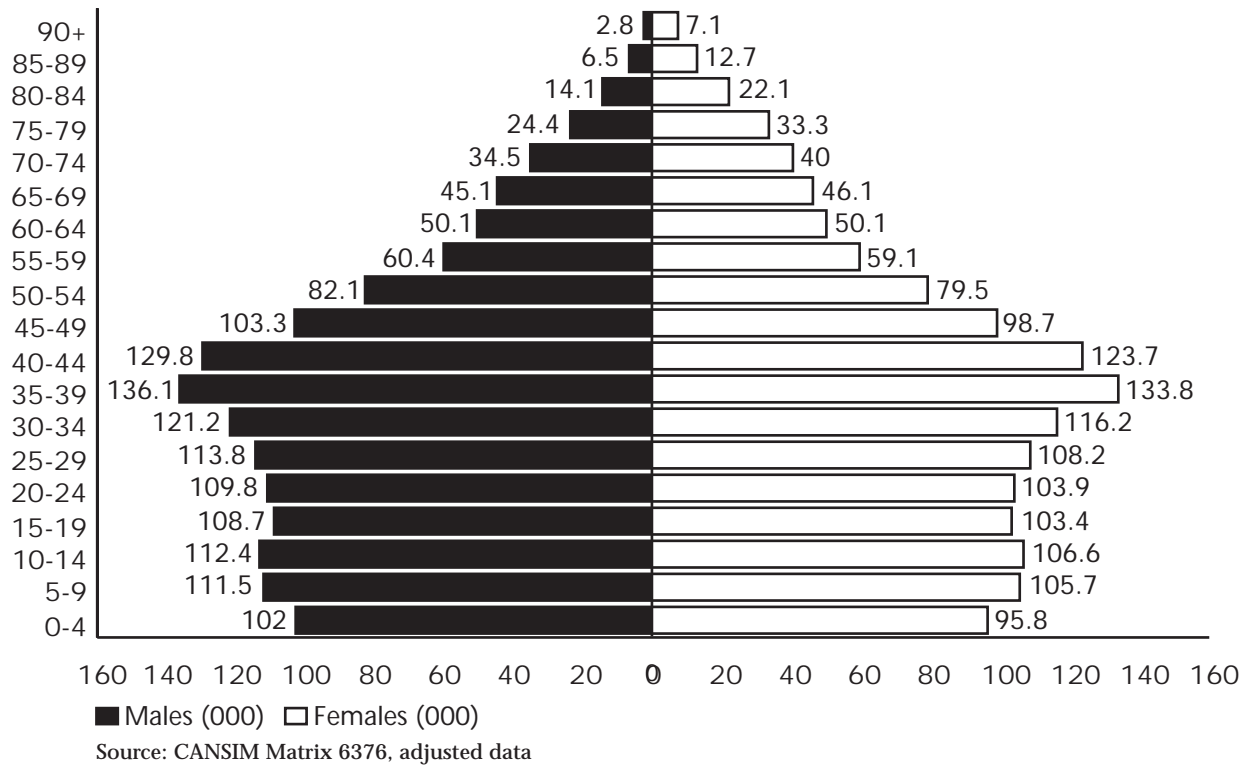
In 2016, in Alberta, it is projected:

- About 14% of the population will be seniors.
- The number of seniors will have almost doubled to 497,000.

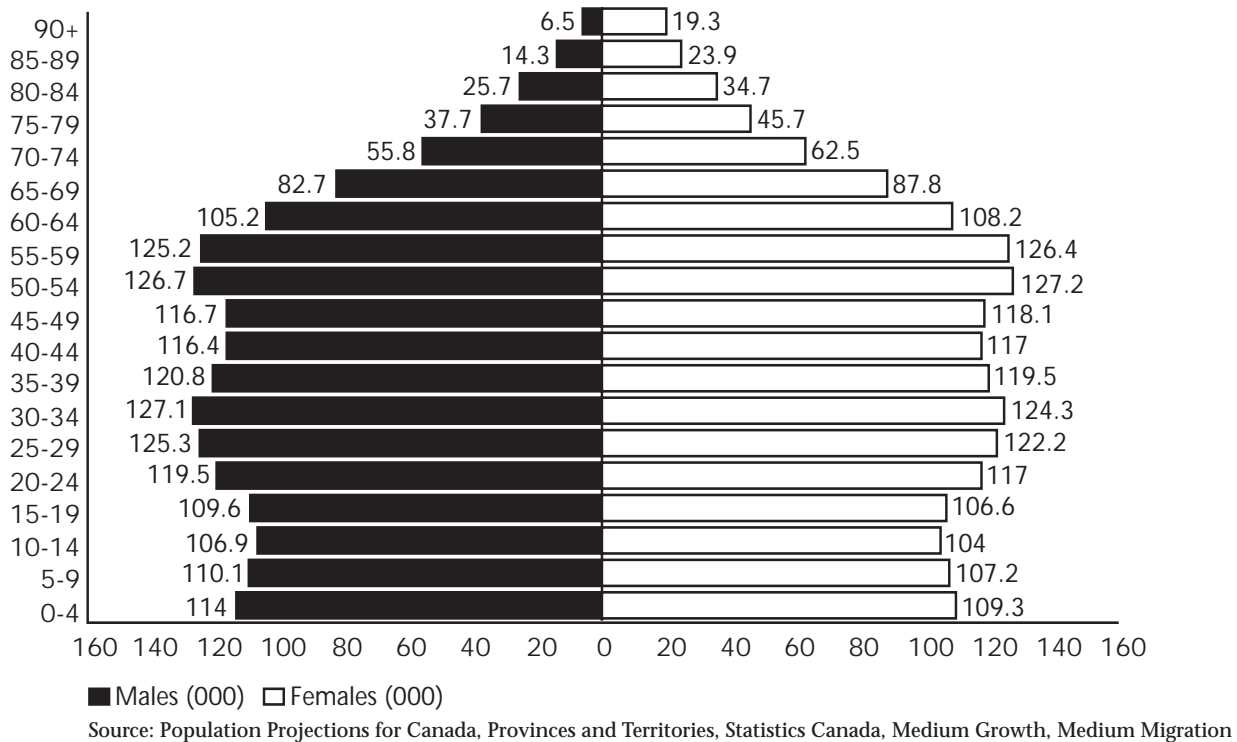
Of note, in 1999, the proportion of seniors in some Alberta communities, such as Lethbridge and Medicine Hat, already exceeds the projection of 14% in 2016. Also, in comparison to the rest of the world, Alberta's estimate of 14% is lower than the current percentages of seniors found today in Saskatchewan, Japan and parts of Europe.

The following age pyramids for Alberta show the impact of the baby boom generation and the increasing number of seniors expected by 2016. The pyramid for 2016 also indicates that there will continue to be more women than men in the senior population in Alberta, particularly among the oldest age categories. The change in the shape of this pyramid reflects the overall growth expected in Alberta's population in the coming years.

### Age Pyramid, Alberta 1998



### Age Pyramid, Alberta 2016



Estimates beyond 2016 are currently not available for Alberta. The following projections for Canada are suggestive of the expected changes in the senior population at the national level.

In 2041, in Canada, it is projected:

- About 1 in 4 Canadians, or 23% will be 65 years of age or older.
- Since 1993, the number of seniors will have tripled to reach approximately 10 million.
- The fastest growing age category is 85 years and older. This age category will increase five-fold from 300,000 to 1.6 million seniors.

# Life Expectancy in Alberta

“Life expectancy” is a measure of the number of years, on average, a person can expect to live. These measures show that Alberta men and women can expect to live longer lives than previous generations.

- In the 1920s in Alberta, life expectancy at birth for men was about 59 years. For women, it was about 61 years.
- In 1996, men’s life expectancy from birth was 76 years. Women’s life expectancy was 81.3 years. Life expectancies in Alberta are among the highest in Canada and the world.

Estimates of “healthy” life expectancy have been developed to show the number of years of good health individuals can expect in their lives. In Alberta, in 1991, a woman aged 65 years could expect, on average, to live for another 19.7 years. She could also expect that 6.2 of the 19.7 years would be spent in poor health. A man of 65 years could expect to live 16.3 years, with 5.2 of those years spent in poor health.

All indications are that the current life expectancy estimates are probably too low. These estimates are based on today’s death rates, which are only beginning to capture the anticipated impact of healthy living and lifestyle choices on life expectancy in the future. These rates also do not reflect the significant advances expected in areas such as medical science and genetics in the coming years.

# Impact of the Aging Population in Alberta

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## Anticipated Impact in Alberta

The full extent of the impact of the aging population in Alberta is difficult to predict. Many social and economic factors can affect outcomes related to the aging population. Overall, however, it is expected that the impact of the aging population will be gradual over a number of years. It is also anticipated that the impact will be felt more in some sectors such as health care.

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## Things to Consider

Alberta is well positioned to meet the challenges ahead with continued strong growth expected in the economy. Sound fiscal management has eliminated deficits and paid down the net debt, making Alberta the only province without a net debt. Alberta remains committed to introducing reforms to reduce personal taxes, which will put more money in the pockets of Albertans and increase their ability to save for retirement.

Another very positive trend in Alberta is the growing public awareness about the aging population. In recent years, various groups have organized conferences and other activities to discuss and plan around this topic. These activities are a critical part of ensuring Alberta is ready for 2020.

Several trends are anticipated to have a positive impact on programs and services in the coming years. These trends suggest that the seniors of 2020 are going to be different from previous generations of seniors. Their experience of life is unique to their own place and time in history, and the economic and educational opportunities that were available to them.

Preliminary results from Alberta Community Development's work to develop profiles of future seniors are showing that the average level of educational attainment is increasing among both men and women in Alberta. Higher education has the potential for improved career opportunities and earnings. Another trend is the increasing labour force participation of women, which is expected to result in increased access to employment-related private and public pensions. These trends may have a positive impact on the proportion of seniors requiring income supplements in the future.

Every individual's life chances, however, have been different and therefore, it is important to recognize the continuing diversity in the senior population in Alberta. For example, "Gen-Xers," those individuals born between 1960 and 1966, followed the large wave of 'front end' baby boomers into the labour force in the late 1970s and early 1980s during an economic recession in Canada. The challenges faced by some Gen-Xers have included unemployment and underemployment.

Differences among seniors are expected to continue in the following areas: age; income; gender; marital status; ethnic and cultural origins, including Aboriginal ancestry; region, including urban and rural locations; and health status and functional ability. These differences must be considered in developing future programs and services for seniors.

Questions to Think About:

What impact do you think the aging population will have on Alberta by 2020? Will it affect your life or the life of someone in your family? What can you do to prepare for 2020?

What impact do you think the aging population will have on Alberta's labour force? Will the aging population impact on the availability of skilled workers to deliver seniors programs and services in 2020?

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## Developing Future Policy Directions for Alberta

Work is already underway to study the long-term care system in Alberta. The Government of Alberta, however, recognizes that a broad policy framework is needed to provide a solid basis for future planning, coordination and priority setting related to the aging population. This framework will support the development each year of the Government of Alberta Strategic Business Plan for Seniors.

# The Steering Committee's Vision and Guiding Principles for an Aging Alberta

## Vision Statement

“Our vision for an aging society is one where Albertans have a sense of pride in healthy aging; and, which allows them to live independently in a safe and supportive environment.”

## Guiding Principles

### 1. Responsibilities

- Individuals, supported by families, have the primary responsibility for meeting their basic needs
- Communities provide the necessary supports to individuals and families to encourage the participation and inclusion of older persons in their communities
- In addition to their leadership role of ensuring the safety and protection of all citizens, governments provide adequate support to those unable to provide for their own basic needs

### 2. Healthy Aging

- Supports the full, active participation and integration of older Albertans in their communities and province
- Encourages older Albertans to share their knowledge, skills, values and life experiences for the betterment of their communities
- Recognizes older Albertans as active, capable and self-reliant members of their communities
- Provides programs and services that assist older Albertans in maintaining their physical, mental, emotional health and well being while remaining in their communities

### 3. Independence

- Supports the dignity of older Albertans and encourages respect by ensuring that older Albertans have the right to be in control of decisions affecting their lives
- Supports effective communication with older Albertans by providing necessary information on programs and services to allow informed decision making
- Supports the provision of adequate income to cover basic needs to allow older Albertans to participate in their community and province
- Encourages the development of living environments that are safe and adaptable to changing needs and that reflect personal preferences

#### 4. Role of Government

- Government encourages Albertans to plan and prepare for retirement and old age
- Government encourages Albertans to remain healthy through the promotion of health and the prevention of illness, injury and disease throughout their lifetime
- Government is collaborative and coordinated across provincial government departments, with other levels of government, and with key stakeholders
- Government should be cost effective and sustainable over time
- Government facilitates the development of care options to allow older Albertans to remain in their communities

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## 2020: What's Your Vision?

The vision and guiding principles paint a positive picture of an aging Alberta. The future is a place where most seniors are living active, healthy and independent lives. They are able to pursue their interests and dreams, and contribute to the lives of their communities. Their opinions, skills and experience are valued and sought out. They know that if they need help, a supportive community is there to assist with their needs.

Questions to Think About:

Does the Steering Committee's vision and guiding principles describe the future you would like to see for yourself, your family and your community in Alberta?

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## Achieving the Vision

"Visioning" is about an imagined place we hope to be in the future. It's about our dreams and aspirations for tomorrow's society. The challenge is finding ways to achieve this future.

Two important interrelated ideas are held within the Steering Committee's vision: Healthy Aging and Supportive Communities. These ideas are seen as key to successfully addressing the impact of the aging population in Alberta. Healthy aging is fully realized in a supportive community.

# Healthy Aging

The term “health” is understood in Alberta to include every facet of an individual’s life. It is defined in its broadest sense to mean physical, mental and social well-being. It is the ability to realize hopes and dreams and satisfy needs.

Most seniors today are living full and active lives to an advanced age. Research is showing, however, that the years of good health can be extended or improved upon. The World Health Organization (1999) reports that “many chronic diseases which reduce functional capacity are the result of an unhealthy lifestyle.”

“Healthy aging” recognizes that healthy lifestyle choices throughout life result in better health in one’s senior years. It reduces the likelihood that seniors will suffer from chronic diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and cancer, and improves their quality of life and ability to live independently. Healthy aging is about ‘adding years to life and life to years.’ The good news is that it is never too late to make positive changes in one’s life. An additional bonus for everyone will be lower costs in Alberta’s health care system in the future.

The World Health Organization (1999) has identified the following lifestyle choices as being part of “active” or healthy aging:

- Participating in family and community life
- Eating a balanced, healthy diet
- Maintaining adequate physical activity
- Avoiding smoking
- Avoiding excessive alcohol consumption.

Alberta Health & Wellness recognizes the importance of healthy aging in an aging population, and has placed increasing emphasis on health protection and promotion programs, as well as community-based services. These services include home care, personal and technical supports, assisted living, day programs and respite care. These programs and services are part of the broad range of formal supports found in supportive communities.

Questions to Think About:

How do you define “healthy aging”? What can each of us do to live a healthy lifestyle?

How can we promote healthy aging in Alberta? What prevents some Albertans from leading healthy lifestyles?

What can individuals, families and communities do to support healthy aging? What should all levels of government do? How can the private sector, public sector, community groups and volunteer organizations and professional groups get together to help in this area?

# Supportive Communities

“Community” can be defined in many ways, from a community of interest to a geographic community that is based on neighbourhood, municipal or regional boundaries. In an aging Alberta, “supportive communities” are where seniors live independent lives, participate and have their needs met.

Supportive communities are defined by their helping relationships. Each of us, regardless of age, depends on others in our lives for care and support. We also offer many supports to others. Seniors, as with other age groups, can be givers and receivers of support. Seniors help their families in many ways, from giving emotional and financial support to caring for grandchildren, spouses and other family members.

The interdependence between individuals is an essential part of family and community life. Understanding, cooperation and respect between generations are the ties that hold supportive communities together.

Questions to Think About:

How do you think the aging population will impact intergenerational relations in the future? How can we ensure continuing cooperation and respect between generations in Alberta?

# Independence Achieved in Supportive Communities

“Independence” is about freedom of choice and the ability to make decisions about how to live one’s life. For seniors, independence is realized in several ways. It begins with personal planning for one’s senior years to ensure basic needs are met. Another important part is making healthy lifestyle choices to maintain health and functional ability.

Safe and secure living environments are also important to seniors’ independence and community participation. Home adaptations, for example, can ensure safe living environments that meet the changing abilities of seniors as they age. In the community, safety and security may involve policing strategies. Urban planning could include consideration of traffic signs and pedestrian walkways, curb design or public transportation access.

Independence also comes with knowing that help is available in the community when and if it is needed. **Both informal and formal supports are essential for independent living.** To be effective, informal and formal supports must be integrated and coordinated at the community level.

“Informal support” is provided in the home or community by family, friends, neighbours or volunteers. This help comes in many forms, from social visits and emotional support to help with shopping, personal care and household maintenance.

Several issues have been identified regarding informal support. The “burden of care” and the “costs of care giving” are raised, particularly for women, who tend to be the primary caregivers in Canada. Some caregivers, for example, may experience reduced career opportunities, lost earnings and reduced pension benefits due to their care giving, which in turn may impact on their ability to achieve independence during their senior years.

Another issue is the changing family and the availability of family caregivers in the future. Some adult children may be unwilling or unable to care for their aging parents. Adult children, for example, may be employed or seniors themselves with health problems. They may not live in the same community as their parents.

The formal system is seen to support and complement the informal system, and includes support to informal caregivers. While care giving can be rewarding and help to bind the generations together, it can also be stressful at times. Community-based services can provide relief to caregivers and time for them to attend to their own lives.

Seniors, especially older seniors, who have health problems or functional disabilities or are single, childless or widowed and living alone may need to rely on community-based services to maintain their independence.

“Formal support” includes the range of health and social services provided by the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. It can include programs and services in areas such as income support, housing, public transportation, health care, learning and recreation and leisure.

Questions to Think About:

What sort of things do you want to do during your senior years? How do you want to live your life?

What responsibility should individuals and families have in preparing for their senior years? What can individuals do to achieve independence, including financial independence?

What programs and services will seniors need in 2020 in areas such as recreation and leisure, income support, housing, public transportation and health care? Are there any other areas where services may be required? What needs to be done to create safer communities for seniors? What is needed to allow seniors to remain living in their communities?

How can the private sector, public sector, community groups and volunteer organizations and professional groups get together to provide these programs and services?

# Community Participation Promoted in Supportive Communities

Strong, supportive communities are built upon the strengths, capacities and active participation of all community members, including seniors. For communities, seniors are a growing resource for the future. Seniors have a lifetime of experiences and knowledge to bring to their families and communities. The first step to participation is dispelling myths about the aging process. Seniors need to be seen as the capable, active and self-reliant citizens they are.

For seniors, having the opportunity to participate in their communities in a variety of roles (for example, as worker, volunteer, advisor, advocate) reduces isolation, increases social interaction and allows them to have input into the decisions affecting their lives. Community participation connects them with others in their communities and links them to resources and information. Ultimately, it enhances their ability to take responsibility for their futures, and to achieve healthy aging and independence.

Questions to Think About:

How would you define a “supportive community”? What role can each of us play in building stronger supportive communities for seniors (including individuals, families, communities and all levels of government)?

How can society tap into what seniors have to offer to their communities?

# Continuing the Talk

The Aging Together — Planning for the Future **consultations are seen** as a beginning for the talk that must continue with Albertans over the next 15 to 20 years. **The consultations will provide the groundwork for future planning of programs and services in an aging Alberta. It is also recognized that further study may be needed in specific program and service areas in the future. These studies would require further consultations with Albertans.**

Questions to Think About:

What ideas do you have for continuing the talk with Albertans on the aging population in the coming years?

## Other Reading of Interest

The Steering Committee's first report titled ***Report A: Review of Current Government Programs and Services*** provides information on current seniors and the programs and services available to them. Another document of interest is the "Government of Alberta Strategic Business Plan for Seniors, 1999-2000 to 2001-2002." The strategic business plan is updated on an annual basis, with work expected to begin soon on the next version that will include planning to 2003. These documents can be obtained by calling the Alberta Seniors Information line at 1-800-642-3853, or 427-7876 if calling from Edmonton, or by visiting the Internet site at:

<http://www.gov.ab.ca/mcd/seniors/impactaging/impactaging.htm>

# Survey

## For The Aging Together — Planning for the Future Consultations, Fall 1999

As part of their Aging Together — Planning for the Future consultations, the Steering Committee for the Government-Wide Study on the Impact of the Aging Population on Government Programs and Services is inviting Albertans to complete this survey. The survey asks Albertans for their priorities for action in the areas of the aging population and its impact, healthy aging and supportive communities.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your input is important. We would appreciate receiving your survey by December 31, 1999. If you are writing your answers below, please cut the survey out of the discussion guide and return it by fax or mail. The fax number and mailing address are on page 4 of this discussion guide. You are welcome to attach additional pages if you feel you need more space to write your responses.

1. Your age:

\_\_\_\_\_ under 33 years                      \_\_\_\_\_ 65 to 75 years  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 33 to 53 years                      \_\_\_\_\_ over 75 years  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 54 to 64 years

2. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ male \_\_\_\_\_ female

3. Where do you live in Alberta: \_\_\_\_\_

4. What do you think needs to be done to ensure that Alberta successfully meets the opportunities and challenges of an aging population in the next 15 to 20 years? Please list what you see as the three priorities in this area and indicate how responsibility for each could be shared (e.g., among individuals, families, communities or governments).

1) \_\_\_\_\_

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2) \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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5. What do you think needs to be done to encourage and promote healthy aging in Alberta? Please list what you see as the three priorities in this area and indicate how responsibility for each could be shared (e.g., among individuals, families, communities or governments).

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_  
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3) \_\_\_\_\_  
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6. What do you think needs to be done to encourage and promote the development of supportive communities in Alberta? Please list what you see as the three priorities in this area and indicate how responsibility for each could be shared (e.g., among individuals, families, communities or governments).

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
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2) \_\_\_\_\_  
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3) \_\_\_\_\_  
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7. Do you have any other comments or suggestions that you would like to make about the impact of the aging population on programs and services?

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# Appendices

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## Appendix I — List of Focus Group Sessions Across Alberta

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## Appendix II — Executive Summary, *Report A: Review of Current Government Programs and Services*

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## Appendix III — List of Steering Committee Members

# Appendix I

## List of Focus Group Sessions Across Alberta

Date	Name of Community	Time	Meeting Location
October 4	St. Paul	7:00 – 9:30 p.m.	Regional High School 4701 – 44 Street
October 5	Vermilion	2:00 – 4:30 p.m.	Vermilion College 5707 – 47 Ave. W.
October 6	Camrose	2:00 – 4:30 p.m.	Norseman Inn 6505 – 48 Ave.
October 7	Edmonton	2:00 – 4:30 p.m.	Delta Edmonton South 4404 Calgary Trail
		7:00 – 9:30 p.m.	Ramada Inn & Conference Centre 11834 Kingsway Ave.
October 12	Red Deer	7:00 – 9:30 p.m.	Westerner Park 4847A – 19 Street
October 13	Drumheller	2:00 – 4:30 p.m.	Drumheller Civic Centre 224 Centre Street
October 14	Calgary	2:00 – 4:30 p.m.	Huntington Hills Community Centre 530 – 78 Ave. NW
		7:00 – 9:30 p.m.	Fairview Community Centre – 8038 Fairmount Dr. SE
October 16	Fort McMurray	2:00 – 4:30 p.m.	MacDonald Island Pavilion 151 MacDonald Dr.

October 18	High Level	2:00 – 4:30 p.m.	Provincial Building 10106 – 100 Ave.
October 19	High Prairie	7:00 – 9:30 p.m.	Moostoos Building 4723 – 53 Ave.
October 20	Grande Prairie	2:00 – 4:30 p.m.	AADAC 11333 – 106 Street
October 21	Edson	7:00 – 9:30 p.m.	Edson & District Recreation Complex #1 Golf Course Ave. (East side of Edson)
October 25	Medicine Hat	7:00 – 9:30 p.m.	Medicine Hat Lodge 1041 Ross Glen Dr. SE
October 26	Lethbridge	2:00 – 4:30 p.m.	Travelodge – El Rancho – 526 Mayor Magrath Dr. South
October 27	Pincher Creek	2:00 – 4:30 p.m.	Heritage Inn 919 Waterton Ave.

Please Note: All facilities are wheelchair accessible.

# Appendix II

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## Executive Summary, *Report A:* *Review of Current Government* *Programs and Services*

### Background

The Government-Wide Study on the Impact of the Aging Population was initiated in response to the need for planning for the future challenges of providing government programs and services to older Albertans. Alberta is a relatively young province today. However, changing demographics mean that over the next two decades there will be many more Albertans, proportionately, who will be seniors. The Study is an important component of the government's recognition of the International Year of the Older Person.

Hon. Shirley McClellan, Minister of Community Development and Minister Responsible for Seniors, appointed Karen Kryczka, MLA, Calgary-West as Chair. She was joined on the Steering Committee by Albert Klapstein, MLA, Leduc as Vice-Chair and ten other members from across Alberta. These members are representatives of the sectors of health care, housing, active living, community supports; as well as seniors' representatives from northern, southern and rural Alberta; and three members at large. Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee outline three key tasks:

1. An Interim Report (***Report A.***) outlining the current situation for older Albertans and providing the Minister with recommendations on short-term issues.
2. A public consultation engaging Albertans of all ages in the discussion of the aging of the population and its impact on Alberta, including a Seniors Symposium in late 1999.
3. A Final Report outlining demographic projections to 2016 and beyond, future needs of older Albertans, role and level of provincial government support needed, and recommendations on policy directions, strategies and program changes.

## Committee Activities

The Committee heard from key provincial departments delivering programs and services to Alberta seniors, including Community Development, Health, Municipal Affairs, and Family and Social Services. Other related work, such as that of the Long Term Care Policy Advisory Committee, was presented to the Steering Committee. A number of groups also made presentations over the course of the past few months. Alberta Community Development provided extensive background materials on the demographics of today's seniors, current programs and services, and interdepartmental initiatives.

Building on statements of vision and guiding principles, the Committee's work to date has resulted in *Report A. Review of Current Government Programs and Services*. The Report provides a profile of Alberta seniors today, information on current programs and services, and recommendations on current issues. A summary of short-term issues and recommendations, determined by the Committee, is presented in the following chart.

### Short-Term Issues

### Recommendations

A. Complexity of programs and services

1. Simplify programs.  
2. Create an Interdepartmental Standing Committee for Seniors Programs and Services.

B. Lack of coordinated and comprehensive data base on Alberta seniors

3. Recommend a clearinghouse for data on seniors, including demographics, that consolidates data used by various provincial departments in planning and delivering programs and services for senior Albertans.

C. User friendly information and technology for effective communication needs to be built upon and enhanced

4. Design communication tools with older Albertans in mind, involving seniors in the development and delivery of the message.  
5. Foster a one-stop integrated approach to seniors' programs for information and communication.

- D. Insufficient income for independence . . . . . 6. Undertake a review of benefit levels and eligibility and threshold requirements of all programs. Consider ‘basic needs’ expenses as well as income in determining eligibility. Conduct periodic reviews, at a minimum every five years.
- E. Housing issues for seniors . . . . . 7. Encourage the development of innovative housing concepts.  
8. Encourage further development of programs to allow seniors to stay in their own homes.  
9. Policy on housing for seniors should be coordinated amongst Ministries.
- F. The need for coordinated health services . . . . . 10. Recognize that the work being done by the Long Term Care Advisory Committee complements the work of the Steering Committee on the Impact of the Aging Population Study.  
11. Encourage specialized training for meeting the needs of older Albertans.  
12. Increase home care and home supports to allow seniors to age in place.
- G. Need to improve access to appropriate services . . . . . 13. Encourage joint efforts by the provincial government, municipalities and communities in developing workable transportation models, particularly for rural areas. Information on the implementation of successful models needs to be shared.  
14. Support FCSS funding and encourage communities to direct FCSS funding to programs for seniors.

- H. The need for an increase in . . . . . 15. Use the knowledge and skills the promotion and participation of seniors to promote healthy living in healthy communities. by communities in healthy living 16. Wellness, through active living and social interaction in safe and healthy communities, should be supported and encouraged by all members of the community.
- I. Need for adequately trained . . . . . 17. Encourage awareness of, and service providers the need for, training programs for community support workers, specifically the skills needed to deliver programs and services to seniors. 18. Encourage a team approach to delivering services in the community to seniors.
- J. Need for more language and . . . . . 19. Utilize cultural networks and culturally sensitive program agents within these communities information and delivery to advance communication and respond to information needs.
- K. Need to be prepared for the . . . . . (Observation Only) increasing number of physically and developmentally disabled seniors in the future

### Summary/Profile of Today's Senior in Alberta

For the purposes of the Study, 'senior' was defined as a person 65 years of age or older. The Committee recognizes the arbitrary nature of the age 65, but also the need for a definitive age in order to consider demographics and program utilization.

In summary, Alberta's current senior can be pictured in a number of ways. If you are a senior between the ages of 65 and 75 years, you are probably living in your own home, with your spouse, mortgage free, retired from the work force but still maintaining an active life. Your activities likely include a component of volunteerism, often in helping other seniors.

If you are 75 years and older, you may still be healthy, active and living in your own home or in housing for seniors. You are more likely to be a woman, who is widowed, with a limited income. As we look at Alberta's seniors over 80 years of age, we see more frail elderly with more complex health problems and lower income levels, who have the greatest needs and probably receive the maximum assistance from government programs and services.

### Next Steps

With the completion of *Report A*, on current issues and recommendations, the Steering Committee is turning its attention to the future.

The Study will now focus on the impact of the aging population on government services and programs to the year 2016 and beyond. This work will involve not only those currently defined as seniors, but also the near seniors, 'baby-boomers', and younger generations of Albertans.

The longer-term work of the Study will also include demographic projections that will assist planners, policy makers and the public in their determination of future needs and how they will be met.

The Steering Committee plans to consult with all generations about the future challenges and opportunities for Alberta seniors and to gain an understanding of expectations for the roles of government, community, family and the individual.

Over the coming months, a consultation plan will be finalized. In the fall of 1999, persons across the province will be invited by the Committee to discuss future issues and opportunities. The consultation will include a Seniors Symposium in November 1999. The Symposium will be an important part of the celebration of the International Year of the Older Person. It will be an opportunity to bring Albertans of all generations together to discuss the impact of the aging population on government programs and services.

Results of the consultation with Albertans will guide the Committee as they prepare a Final Report to the Minister, to be completed by March of 2000.

# Appendix III

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## Steering Committee Members for the Government-Wide Study on the Impact of the Aging Population

### Chair

Karen Kryczka, MLA  
Calgary — West

### Vice-Chair

Albert Klapstein, MLA  
Leduc

### Health Sector Representative

Jean Graham  
Red Deer

### Housing Sector Representative

Anna D'Agostini  
Edmonton

### Active Living Sector Representative

Warren L. Veale  
Calgary

### Community Supports Representative

Betty Kruse  
Peace River

### Members at Large

Carol Blyth\*  
Calgary

P.A. (Pat) Bunn\*  
Lethbridge

Margaret Heath\*  
Grande Prairie

Donald Jung  
Calgary

Nick Kutash\*  
Willingdon

George Renner  
Medicine Hat

### Current Seniors Representatives

Donna Chamberland  
Rural Alberta

Noreen Mahoney  
Southern Alberta

C. Neil Reimer  
Northern Alberta

\* Appointed July 15, 1999.

