



Bringing Out the Best for Seniors



Seniors are the fastest-growing group of British Columbians – and B.C. is investing more to improve their health-care, housing and lives, by:

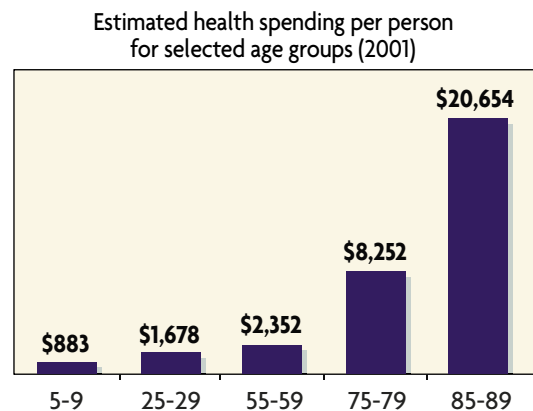
- ▶ Reduced or eliminated premiums for 230,000 low-income seniors and families.
- ▶ Lowering or maintaining prescription costs for 280,000 low-income seniors and families.
- ▶ Supporting more independent living options and a new wellness and prevention initiative.
- ▶ Committing funding to 3,500 new independent housing and assisted living units, plus more resources to address seniors' medical needs at home.

Renewing Seniors' Health Care

To meet the needs of an aging population, the province is increasing health funding and making sure seniors get the care they need. The province has:

- ▶ Increased health funding to its highest level ever and reduced the Ministry of Health Services' administration costs by \$43 million. By 2006-07, annual health spending will reach \$11.3 billion – 36 per cent more than in 2000-01.
- ▶ Created more independent living options for seniors who can manage on their own with some personal supports.
- ▶ Enhanced a program providing free medication, medical supplies and equipment to seniors receiving palliative care.
- ▶ Launched a new wellness and prevention initiative to strengthen early detection and support for major chronic illnesses like diabetes, congestive heart failure and asthma.

Care costs rise as we age



B.C.'s seniors' population will rise 22% by 2010.

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Assisting With Prescription Drug Coverage

The province is acting to protect seniors against the high cost of prescription drugs today and ensure drug coverage is sustainable for the seniors of tomorrow. The province has:

- ▶ Introduced Fair PharmaCare to help about 280,000 low-income seniors and families with prescription drug costs, limit the growth of those costs and ensure they fall or stay the same for most users.
- ▶ Added coverage for Remicade and Enbrel to help seniors cope with rheumatoid arthritis and Crohn's disease.
- ▶ Continued investing in drug treatments that can make a dramatic difference in the lives of seniors and other British Columbians.

Fair Pharmacare ensures greater fairness and protection for low-income seniors



Fair PharmaCare ensures greater fairness and protection for low-income seniors. Fair PharmaCare will curb fast-growing prescription costs while protecting those with low incomes.

Increasing independence for seniors



B.C. is opening up new levels of support that better match the care needs of today's seniors.

Expanding Housing Options to Suit Individual Needs

Expanded housing and care options are helping seniors remain healthy, independent and active members of their communities.

The province has:

- ▶ Committed funding to 3,500 new independent housing and assisted living units over three years. Independent housing provides seniors with a community housing option that includes assistance with activities of daily living, meals, housekeeping, emergency response and social and recreational opportunities. Assisted living offers a care alternative for seniors who can no longer live at home, but do not require the 24/7 nursing care provided in residential care facilities.
- ▶ Developing new and replacement residential care beds.
- ▶ Increased resources to address seniors' medical needs at home. In-home care provides post-acute-care services like oxygen and intravenous therapies, assistance with daily living tasks, meals, palliative care, nursing and rehabilitation therapies.

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Protecting Those With Small Incomes

The province is providing new relief measures to support low-income seniors and help them lead healthy lives. The province has:

- ▶ Cut personal income tax rates to the lowest in Canada, with the greatest benefit going to low-income earners. For seniors with a household income of \$30,000, this means savings of \$430 a year.
- ▶ Eliminated MSP premiums for 230,000 low-income seniors and other British Columbians.
- ▶ Increased the refundable B.C. sales tax credit for low-income seniors and other British Columbians by 50 per cent, to \$75 from \$50 a year.
- ▶ Protected the seniors' bus pass program so that low-income seniors have affordable transportation options.
- ▶ Preserved the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters program, which provides almost \$20 million in assistance to eligible low-income seniors who rent their homes.
- ▶ Maintained homeowner grants that reduce property taxes by \$745 for eligible seniors, and increased the grant threshold so that seniors will receive at least a portion of the grant for homes valued up to \$659,500.

Health Services Information

BC Health and Seniors Information Line

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 465-4911

Ministry of Health Services

www.gov.bc.ca/healthservices

PharmaCare

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 387-4977

www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/pharme/

BC Health Guide

bchealthguide.org/kbaltindex.asp

24-Hour BC Healthguide Nurseline

Vancouver: 604 215-4700

Toll-free provincewide: 1 866 215-4700

TTY deaf and hearing impaired: 1 866 889-4700

Seniors' Medication Information

Monday to Friday: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Vancouver: 604 822-1330

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 668-6233

Information for Seniors: Your Guide to Programs and Benefits in British Columbia

www.mcaaws.gov.bc.ca/seniors/guide/

Enquiry B.C.

(for information on any provincial government service or program)

Monday to Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Victoria: 250 387-6121

Vancouver: 604 660-2421

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 663-7867

Deaf and hearing impaired: 1 800 661-8773

www.msers.gov.bc.ca/prgs/enquiry_bc.htm

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Independent Living Services Information

Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters

Vancouver: 604 433-2218

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 257-7756

www.bchousing.org/applicants/rent_supplements.asp

Supported Independent Living Program

(housing options for seniors and people with disabilities)

Vancouver: 604 433-2218

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 257-7756

www.bchousing.org/ILBC

Seniors Supplement

Victoria: 250 387-4331

Vancouver: 604 682-0391

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 665-2656

www.mhr.gov.bc.ca/publicat/seniors/sen_suppl.html

Old Age Security Program

Human Resources Development Canada

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 277-9914

Deaf and hearing impaired: 1 800 255-4786

www.hrdc.gc.ca/isp/common/oastoc_e.shtml

Home and Community Care

www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/hcc

Palliative Care Benefits Program

www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/cpa/publications/palliative_benefits.pdf

Seniors Bus Pass Program

Victoria: 250 387-4331

Vancouver: 604 682-0391

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 665-2656

www.mbr.gov.bc.ca/publicat/ft/other.htm#bp



We want your input

Seniors comprise an ever-increasing share of our population – and that means we must find new ways to meet their needs.

Our government is working hard to make sure health-care services are accessible and sustainable for all seniors – today and in the future. We are also expanding independent housing and assisted living while preserving income-related programs that support our most vulnerable seniors.

I welcome your input and invite you to contact me for more information on our initiatives to strengthen B.C. communities.

Gordon Campbell
Premier

Send your comments to:

Premier Gordon Campbell
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