

1. Q. What is the Canadian Seniors Partnership (CSP)?

- A. The CSP is an association of organizations that includes participation from the volunteer sector and all three levels of government. Since 2001, it has been committed to transforming and improving the way in which Canadian seniors, their families, caregivers and supporting service organizations access programs and services. The Partnership is continuously working to explore ways in which governments and non-government organizations can better integrate service delivery in order to ensure simplified and straightforward access to benefits and services.

2. Q. Are our service delivery mechanisms not sufficient at this point in time?

- A. The Canadian population is aging and today's baby boomers will double the proportion of seniors in the next decade. Today there are 6.8 million adults over the age of 55; by 2011, there will be 9.2 million seniors representing 27.5% of the population. In 2016, their numbers represent 30.6% or 10.5 million citizens. At present, service providers struggle to balance meeting the needs of the senior population while offering quality client service.

With limited budgets and a growing Canadian senior population, it is clear that new ways are needed to deliver services in order to meet the needs of seniors and their caregivers.

3. Q. How did the Canadian Seniors Partnership begin?

- A. The 2000 federal budget earmarked funding for the Government On-line (GOL) initiative. Brian Ferguson, Assistant Deputy Minister, Veterans Services, Veterans Affairs Canada, invited a number of his federal colleagues and counterparts from Prince Edward Island, the Royal Canadian Legion, Dominion Command, and Geoff Quirt, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Ontario Seniors Secretariat, to serve on a Steering Committee. The purpose was to guide the development of a proposal seeking federal funding to create a Web site dedicated to improving access to services for seniors, their family members and caregivers.

The proposal was funded and the Seniors Cluster project office was created. The Steering Committee's first accomplishment was the launch of the Seniors Canada On-line Web site in January 2001. For the first time, government and certain non-government information dedicated to seniors was clustered into easy to find categories.

Government On-line (GOL) has always been about more than creating simplified access to government information. The Steering Committee recognized that GOL was also about transforming service delivery. This represented a huge change in how government organizations tend to operate. All service channels (telephone, in-person, mail, and the Internet) are part of the vision to improve and streamline services.

It was also clear that achieving better client service required the involvement of all levels of government, non-government organizations and the volunteer sector. In November 2001, after a very successful planning event held in June called "When I'm 64", the original Seniors Cluster

Steering Committee adopted an expanded vision and set out performance targets. This group renamed itself - the Canadian Seniors Partnership.

4. Q. Who selected the co-chairs and how long is their tenure?

A. The co-chairs represent the Government of Canada (Veterans Affairs Canada) and the Ontario government (Ontario Seniors Secretariat). Both co-chairs were instrumental in the creation of the Canadian Seniors Partnership. Their tenure is at the pleasure of the members of the CSP Governing Council.

5. Q. What do CSP members do?

A. See the Fact sheet entitled: "*What We Do*" which is included in this information kit.

6. Q. Do I have the flexibility to decide to not participate in a project?

A. Yes. Where a CSP member is looking for partners to work on a collaborative project, the Partnership quarterly meetings are an appropriate forum to "pitch" the idea. There is no obligation or pressure to participate. However, it is important to note that members are part of the CSP because of their shared commitment to work toward the vision and objectives of the CSP. When a member does decide to collaborate with another member, they are required to establish a working group, assign the needed resources and provide quarterly updates to the membership.

7. Q. What is the CSP Governing Council?

A. The founding members of the CSP form the Governing Council. These members have also all signed a Memorandum of Understanding.

8. Q. What is the purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)?

A. The MOU is a gesture of a member's commitment to the vision and objectives of CSP. It is considered a "good will" document.

9. Q. Does this mean I can't participate if I don't sign the MOU?

A. Not at all. A number of the provinces and territories are still giving thought to signing the MOU. In the meantime, their participation at the quarterly meetings is welcomed and sought after.

10. Q. Will members be called upon to sign more formal documents?

- A. Only as part of any good project management endeavour when partners agree to assign resources to undertake a specific project. Decisions about such things are left up to the participating organizations.

11. Q. Why do the co-chairs ask that alternates not attend CSP meetings?

- A. Supporting officials are welcome to accompany the CSP members. Because of the significance of the results that are to be achieved through this partnership, only senior level officials have the authority to accomplish this work.

12. Q. When do the CSP members meet?

- A. On a quarterly basis. Two meetings a year are face-to-face and are scheduled to coincide with meetings that bring members of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Committee (FPT) of Officials (Seniors) together. The other two quarterly meetings encourage out-of-town participants to join in by teleconference.

13. Q. Is the CSP a funding mechanism?

- A. No. Each partner brings their own resources - staff, expertise, material, etc., to the table.

14. Q. If there is no funding available from the Partnership how does it operate?

- A. Funding has been made available through the Government On-line (GOL) initiative for the purposes of having a small secretariat support the co-chairs of the CSP. This source of funding is temporary.

15. Q. Who will benefit from this Partnership?

- A. Seniors, their families, caregivers and supporting service organizations will have easier access to all levels of government services, benefits and programs so they can easily find the relevant programs and services that will meet their needs.

Studies have shown a correlation between client satisfaction and trust in government. Public servants and their elected representatives benefit when citizens are highly satisfied with their interactions with governments. As taxpayers, satisfied citizens will interpret the simplified and integrated services across all levels of government as bringing about efficiencies.

16. Q. What are the benefits of this Partnership to Canada?

- A. The building of new service delivery partnerships amongst governments and non-government organizations will permit service providers to work together to meet the needs of seniors in the 21st century. Citizens continue to ask for simplified and easier access to programs and services. They do not necessarily want to know which level of government is responsible for meeting their needs. Service providers, whether government or non-government, are experiencing significant workload pressures that will only increase as the Canadian population ages. Through the CSP, its members have access to an association of leaders who are motivated to create new methods of delivering programs and services.

17.Q. How does the work of the Canadian Seniors Partnership complement the work undertaken by the Committee of Officials (Seniors) on behalf of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Ministers responsible for seniors?

A The Canadian Seniors Partnership received support from the F/P/T Ministers responsible for seniors at their June 2000 meeting held in Toronto. F/P/T meetings of Ministers responsible

for seniors provide the opportunity to discuss the challenges and opportunities faced by Canada's changing demographics; to share experiences of their respective jurisdictions; and to direct their officials to undertake collaborative policy and program work in specific areas in order to help address the challenges of Canada's aging population.

Agendas are arrived at through consensus among 14 governments, Ministers from jurisdictions leading initiatives present items at meetings. Meetings are co-chaired by the host province and Health Canada on behalf of the federal government and are convened every 18-24 months.

The Canadian Seniors Partnership is focused on building on the work of the F/P/T Ministers and their officials in order to help transform and improve service delivery to seniors. The CSP includes representatives from the provinces and territories, some of whom are also on the F/P/T/Committee of Officials (Seniors). In addition, there are representatives from municipalities and non-government organizations. The CSP is focused on creating partnerships that will help transform and improve services so that they can be delivered in an integrated, straightforward manner to seniors, their families and caregivers. Transformation such as this also impacts on policy and program design, thereby complementing the work of the F/P/T Committee of Officials.

18. Q. How does Seniors Canada On-Line (SCOL) fit into this picture?

A. Seniors Canada On-line (SCOL) was the first project that the CSP governing council completed. The success of this collaboration demonstrated that the partner organizations were keen to continue working toward the ultimate goal of bringing about seamless, integrated and transformed service delivery. Although GOL funding sunsets in March 2006, it is clear to the founding partners, that efforts to create a network of integrated services for seniors will be a long-term commitment - well beyond 2006.

The SCOL Web site is one means of improving access to government and non-government service providers. Many seniors, their family members and caregivers do not use the Internet to obtain information and assistance. The members of the CSP understand that they also have to explore how to integrate and establish common approaches to their other service channels - telephone, in-person and mail.

The SCOL Web site is a reusable repository of government and non-government links found on the Internet. The Partnership has established a performance target of connecting all seniors portals (Web sites) across the country. The Collaborative Seniors Portal in Brockville at www.Seniorsinfo.ca gathered its information for federal programs from the SCOL Web site. The reusing of this information saved considerable time, effort and money.

19. Q. How does the CSP Advisory Panel fit in this picture?

A. The CSP Advisory Panel is comprised of representatives from over 20 nationally and regionally based seniors and Veterans organizations. They represent all regions across Canada. Initially the CSP Advisory Panel was convened to ensure the Seniors Canada On-line Web site met their

needs for simplified access to relevant information. When the CSP was formed, the Advisory Panel agreed to expand their role to provide advice and recommendations related to the work of the CSP. A member of the Advisory Panel is elected for a one-year term to represent the Panel at CSP quarterly meetings.