

**Annual Accountability
Report for the Fiscal Year
2005-2006**

December 2006



Nova Scotia Senior Citizens' Secretariat
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Accountability Statement

The accountability report of the Senior Citizens' Secretariat for the year ended March 31, 2006, is prepared pursuant to the Provincial Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Senior Citizens' Secretariat business plan information for the fiscal year 2005-06. The reporting of Senior Citizens' Secretariat outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgements and opinions by Senior Citizens' Secretariat management.

We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of Senior Citizens' Secretariat management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Senior Citizens' Secretariat business plan for the year.

Signatures

Minister - The Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson

Executive Director - Valerie White

Messages from the Minister and Executive Director

It is our pleasure to present the 2005/06 Accountability Report for the Senior Citizens' Secretariat. With its unique focus on seniors, the Secretariat reinforces the Government of Nova Scotia's ongoing commitment to seniors, now and into the future.

As leaders of the Secretariat, we are proud of our role and the initiatives and progress we made in 2005/06. The commitment from our staff has been extraordinary. They are truly dedicated to finding solutions to issues that face seniors, as well as promoting and valuing the participation of seniors in our province.

While this document accounts for many accomplishments during the 2005/06 fiscal year, there are two, in particular, that are the culmination of a significant amount of work and dedication. The completion and release of the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia* and the *Nova Scotia Elder Abuse Strategy* mark major milestones in our journey to improve the future for seniors in Nova Scotia.

The *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia* is the result of a lot of hard work by the Task Force on Aging advisory committee, and the culmination of input from over 1,000 Nova Scotians, many of whom are seniors. The strategy establishes a clear vision of Nova Scotia as an inclusive society of caring communities that supports the well-being of seniors and values their contribution. It sets out guiding principles that government and others can use to develop appropriate policies, programs and services for seniors, and outlines 190 action steps for all sectors in the province to pursue.

It is a significant agenda, but one that we must achieve in order to prepare ourselves for the near doubling of Nova Scotia's population of seniors in the next 20 years.

In 2005, the Secretariat also released the *Nova Scotia Elder Abuse Strategy*. Similarly, this initiative was fueled by a collaborative team of over 30 organizations that share a common vision – the elimination of elder abuse in our province.

This strategy will be used to guide our work with community organizations, seniors' groups and individuals – to harness their collective strengths in order to create greater awareness of elder abuse. An important element of this strategy is to ensure seniors themselves are better equipped to recognize the problem and know where to get help.

While critical to the work of the Secretariat, these strategies merely scratch the surface of the array of activities and accomplishments our organization experienced in 2005/06. This will become clear as you read through this report.

Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson
Minister of Seniors

Valerie White
Executive Director

Introduction

The content of this accountability report is based on the goals, priorities and outcomes described in the Senior Citizens' Secretariat's business plan for 2005-2006. The report describes the accomplishments and progress that the Secretariat has made in meeting those goals and priorities. It is suggested that the Secretariat's 2005-2006 business plan and this accountability report be read together in order to provide a full picture of the Secretariat's goals, activities and results. Click here for an electronic link to Secretariat's website- <http://www.gov.ns.ca/scs/>. Then click Publications to find the 2005-2006 Business Plan.

The purpose of the report is to update the public, members of the legislative assembly and stakeholders in the seniors' community on the Secretariat's activities.

In the government's 2004-2005 budget, the Secretariat was identified as a public service entity and provided with its own budget. Prior to this, the Secretariat's budget was linked with that of the Department of Health. Becoming a public service entity required the Secretariat to publish a business plan and accountability report for the 2005-2006 fiscal year. This document represents the first accountability report of the Nova Scotia Senior Citizens' Secretariat.

Performance measurement is an important component of the business planning and accountability reporting cycle. Performance measures indicate to our stakeholders how well we are meeting our objectives. The Secretariat's performance measurement system is in the early stages of development and resources are being identified to manage the measurement process. A delay in filling the Research and Policy Analyst position, which plays a key role in performance measurement activities for this small agency, slowed its development in 2005-2006. As the system matures, new measures will be identified, existing measures will be improved, and relevant data collection instruments will be developed.

For the purposes of this accountability report only the measures identified in the 2005-2006 business plan will be addressed.

For ease of use and readability, this report is structured around the priorities identified under each of the Secretariat's core business areas:

- intra-government and inter-departmental collaboration
- policy development and consultation
- planning and coordinating programs and services for seniors
- information and education.

Description of the Senior Citizens' Secretariat

Mandate

The Senior Citizens' Secretariat facilitates the planning, development, and coordination of policies, programs, and services for seniors in partnership with government departments, seniors, and voluntary seniors' groups. It also serves as a single entry point to the Government of Nova Scotia – providing information on programs and services for seniors and responding to senior's issues and concerns.

Structure

The Senior Citizens' Secretariat consists of the Minister of Seniors, Minister of Health, Minister of Community Services, Minister of Education, Minister of Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations, Minister of Health Promotion and Protection, and Minister of Justice. The Minister of Seniors serves as the Chairperson of the Secretariat. The Secretariat is staffed by an Executive Director and six permanent employees.

Vision

Nova Scotia is an inclusive society of caring communities that supports the well-being of seniors and values their contributions (*Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia, 2005*).

Note: With the December 2005 release of the Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia, the Secretariat decided to tailor its mandate specifically to the vision contained within the Strategy in order to place emphasis on the importance of community.

The previous vision for the Secretariat was, "Nova Scotia, a society for all ages, promotes the well-being and contributions of older people in all aspects of life".

Goals and Core Functions

Goals

In 2005-2006, the Secretariat's strategic goals supported the government's corporate priorities, particularly its commitment to protect what Nova Scotians value – seniors and families in need.

1. Provide leadership in the planning, development, and integration of policies and programs for seniors.

The Secretariat plays an important role in championing and coordinating the efforts of provincial government departments to meet the current and future needs of Nova Scotia's aging population. It also encourages other sectors of society to help prepare for an aging population, including individuals, communities, voluntary sector, business, labour, and all levels of government.

2. Seek the input and views of older Nova Scotians to assist in public policy development and ensure seniors have a strong voice in planning their future.

The Secretariat uses a variety of methods to consult with seniors and ensure their views are considered by government in the development of policies, programs, and services.

3. Inform and educate on aging issues, programs and services for seniors, and the contributions of seniors to family and community life.

The Secretariat provides information to seniors, their families, and service providers through a variety of methods including telephone access, publications, and a website. It also encourages a greater understanding of seniors by promoting their skills, abilities, and contributions and supporting their right to remain active and develop to their full potential.

Core Business Areas

The Secretariat's core business areas and associated priorities contributed to the attainment of the Government's corporate priorities for 2005-2006 and the Secretariat's strategic goals.

Intra-Government and Interdepartmental Collaboration

The Secretariat promotes collaboration across government and between levels of

government in identifying and addressing the needs of seniors. This involves advising the Minister of Seniors and other Ministers of the Senior Citizen's Secretariat of the concerns and priorities of seniors and formulating strategies to address the challenges and opportunities presented. Participation in the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Forum Responsible for Seniors is also a focus.

Policy Development and Consultation

The Secretariat promotes quality and evidence-based decisions in the development of aging-related plans and policies through collaboration with government departments, academics, and community groups. Its staff consult extensively with seniors and seniors' groups in order to inform its research and policy work.

Planning and Coordinating Programs and Services for Seniors

The Secretariat promotes the active involvement of seniors in society and builds partnerships with government, business, and voluntary organizations in identifying and addressing the needs of seniors. It involves seniors in organizing and supporting activities such as the 50+ Expo, Seniors' Art and Photo Gallery, and Seniors Literacy and Learning Programs, to name a few.

Information and Education

The Secretariat informs and educates on aging issues, programs and services for seniors, and the contributions of seniors to family and community life. It provides useful, quality, and easily-accessible information to seniors, their families, and those who work with seniors. It uses a variety of methods to create awareness about its role and the services it provides.

Progress and Accomplishments 2005-2006

Core Business Area: Intra-Government and Interdepartmental Collaboration

Priority: Facilitate Nova Scotia's Participation in the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Ministers Responsible for Seniors Forum

Nova Scotia's Minister Responsible for Seniors participated in the eighth meeting of the F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Seniors held in Quebec City, May 24-27, 2005. Agenda items included: social isolation, cumulative impacts on seniors, healthy aging and seniors' wellness, safety and security, planning for an aging population, and a special focus on diversity and the role of seniors in rural communities.

The Secretariat's Executive Director played an active role in the work of this forum by serving as provincial/territorial co-chair of both its Committee of Officials and Committee of Deputy Ministers, and representing the province on working groups that focused on specific aging issues.

Core Business Area: Policy Development and Consultation

Priority: Distribute the Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia and Guide its Implementation

The *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia* was released October 20, 2005. Its creation was a significant undertaking that involved incorporating the direct input of more than 1,000 Nova Scotians who participated in 34 public meetings and 11 stakeholder forums and submitted written responses in the winter months of 2004/05. Consultations were followed by an extensive literature review process in 2005, which involved more than 400 policy and research papers, books and reports from across Canada and around the world. More than 100 of these were directly cited in the strategy.

Numerous drafts of the strategy were reviewed by a 24-member advisory committee which was comprised of senior government officials from key departments, representatives from seniors' organizations, and a cross-section of Nova Scotians who provided gender and age balance, geographic and cultural diversity.

This extensive consultation and collaboration process resulted in a 200–page document that articulates a vision, guiding principles, nine goals, and 190 societal actions. The strategy also features “quick facts” and “demographic drivers” designed to quickly and

efficiently inform media representatives and other opinion makers about Nova Scotia's aging population - the catalyst for the Task Force on Aging initiative and the reason Nova Scotians need to begin planning now to ensure our province is able to meet the challenges by maximizing the opportunities associated with population aging. The strategy also features a "context and background" section which provides research notes, statistical highlights and summarizes comments received at public and stakeholder meetings and through written submissions. And finally, it highlights innovative initiatives that have been undertaken in other jurisdictions. The "good ideas" section is intended to stimulate creative thinking and problem solving around a variety of aging issues.

Pre-Release Activities - Caucus briefings were conducted to ensure MLAs from all parties were aware of the strategy and its objectives and could share this information with their constituents. Many MLAs requested large quantities of the strategy to distribute to interested individuals and relevant community groups.

Media training was provided to members of the advisory committee and Group of IX Nova Scotia Seniors Organizations, many of whom used their media skills to further the objectives of their organizations and advance the goals of the strategy, locally and province-wide.

Strategy Release and Distribution - The strategy was released on Oct. 20, 2005 at a launch event attended by more than 60 key stakeholders. It also attracted media representatives from Nova Scotia's largest television, print, and radio outlets, who sought out advisory committee members for interviews. The benefit of the media training was evidenced by the comfort level of committee members and their ability to provide quality interviews on a variety of topics addressed in the strategy and reflected in their personal experiences.

Strategy distribution involved several tactics. Copies were mailed to those who had attended the public and stakeholder meetings. They were also distributed through various conferences and exhibits and sent in response to telephone and e-mail requests generated by media coverage and advertisements placed in a variety of publications, newsletters, conference programs, etc. By March 31, 2005, nearly 3,000 copies had been distributed.

Post-Release Activities - It became evident following the release of the strategy that a greater emphasis on communications activities was needed in order to capitalize on the interest being generated and encourage province-wide participation in implementing it. Resources were therefore focused on accepting a growing number of speaking engagements, participating in joint planning activities, and responding to information requests about the strategy.

In March 2006, an awareness tour was launched to reach audiences with a key role to play

in strategy implementation such as municipal governments, district health authorities, community health boards, regional development agencies and chambers of commerce. These speaking engagements provided an opportunity to update stakeholders on initiatives and actions being carried out by government and in other sectors – information that has been collected and maintained on a database since the release of the strategy.

The later than expected release of the strategy coupled with an increased focus on increasing awareness and support for the strategy across the province delayed the establishment of an interdepartmental committee that would identify the government-specific priorities in the strategy and develop an action plan. This work and the development of a template for reporting progress will be undertaken in 2006-2007.

Priority: Facilitate Partnerships with Seniors and Seniors' Organizations

Seniors are encouraged by the Secretariat to serve on a number of standing and project steering committees so they can both advise and have the opportunity to identify solutions to specific issues. In 2005-2006, many seniors served on advisory committees of the Secretariat including those for Medication Awareness, Seniors' Safe Driving, Elder Abuse Prevention, Task Force on Aging, 50 + Expo, Literacy and Learning, and the Seniors' Art and Photo Gallery. On three of those committees the role of committee chairperson was filled by a senior. Additionally, the Group of IX Nova Scotia Seniors' Organizations, an advisory body to the Secretariat, is comprised of either seniors or individuals whose organizations serve seniors.

Priority: Engage in Regular Consultations with Seniors and Seniors' Organizations

Regular forums and consultations with seniors were held throughout the year to facilitate the involvement of seniors in public policy consultation and information sharing.

Group of IX Nova Scotia Seniors Organizations - this advisory body to the Secretariat had 10 full-day meetings with Secretariat staff in 2005-2006. These meetings featured guest speakers and briefings on topics of concern to seniors.

In-depth information about the seniors pharmacare program informed the Group's annual recommendations to the Minister of Health on this important issue. As well, there were regular briefings and informal consultations on the development of the Continuing Care Strategy. Other topics addressed included elder abuse, 50+ Expo, speech pathology and seniors, public information needs, health care safety issues, energy rebates, wait time management system, elder law, RCMP senior safety programs, and mandatory retirement.

Consultations with Seniors' Organizations - In 2005, day-long Spring and Fall consultations and information-sharing sessions with seniors organizations and senior-serving agencies from across the province were held in Dartmouth. Approximately 80 representatives attended each session. A wide-range of topics were discussed and organizations had the opportunity to update Secretariat staff and others on their activities and to discuss emerging issues.

Priority: Host the Canadian Association on Gerontology National Conference

From October 20-23, 2005, the Secretariat hosted the national Canadian Association on Gerontology (CAG) conference, *Navigating Aging—Adjusting the Sails to Meet the Winds of Change*. CAG is a national, multi-disciplinary association that seeks to improve the lives of older Canadians through the creation and dissemination of knowledge in gerontological policy, research, practice, and education.

Hosting the conference helped establish Nova Scotia as a national leader in the field of aging and provided many practitioners and students from Nova Scotia with an opportunity to attend and present information.

The Executive Director of the Secretariat served as Chair of the Conference Planning Committee and Secretariat staff provided support to the committee, as-needed.

Over 400 participants from across the country and over seven countries attended and presented their expertise at the conference.

Core Business Area: Planning and Coordinating Programs and Services for Seniors

Priority: Strengthen Community-based, Peer Support, Volunteer Networks for Seniors

To enable seniors, particularly new retirees, to continue using the skills, expertise, and experience they have developed over the years, the Secretariat focused on beginning the work of strengthening community-based, peer support, and volunteer networks for seniors.

Collaboration - This involved both maintaining and revitalizing partnerships with organizations that have similar priorities for volunteerism. The Executive Director convened a discussion on issues related to seniors and volunteerism. It resulted in non-government stakeholders deciding to meet further to determine ways to move forward and

lobby governments for support. On an ad-hoc basis the Secretariat also met with a number of voluntary organizations to discuss the issues.

The Secretariat also participated in a forum entitled, "Moving Forward in the Voluntary Sector - The Next Phase" which built upon a previous forum in 2004 held by the voluntary sector in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

In 2005-06, the Secretariat had planned to develop a model to facilitate community-based peer support and volunteer networks for seniors and, potentially, to pilot a peer advocacy support program. However, when considerable interest in volunteerism was expressed by other government departments and agencies, it postponed doing so in favour of working collaboratively across government on this issue. The Office of Economic Development led this work through its Voluntary Sector Committee, a sub-group of its Community Development Advisory Group (CDAG) with representation from over 20 provincial departments and agencies. Into the next year, the Secretariat will continue work with this group to advance volunteerism.

Environmental Scan - to further inform its work in this area, the Secretariat completed an environmental scan of the best practices in volunteerism coordination internationally, nationally, and locally.

Priority: Encourage Healthy Active Living for Seniors

The Secretariat continued to collaborate with Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection on this multi-year initiative designed to encourage seniors to be active and encourage the development of new community-based approaches to active healthy living for seniors.

Nova Scotia 55 + Games - The hosting of Nova Scotia's first ever 55 + Games, held September 28 - October 1, 2005 in Cornwallis Park, Annapolis County, was a highlight. One hundred and sixty-seven seniors from across the province participated in the games which are intended to promote the participation of seniors in leisure and social activities. The Secretariat provided \$4,000 in sponsorship funding to the organizing committee – the Nova Scotia 55+ Games Society – which also received monetary and logistical support from Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection.

Active Healthy Living Resources - Representatives from the Secretariat, Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection, and Recreation Nova Scotia developed a proposal that would see Recreation Nova Scotia undertake preliminary work on the development of an active healthy living inventory. Funding for this initiative – to identify current programs and services for seniors, best practices, and the supports available to help seniors lead active, healthy lives – was approved in March 2006 by Nova Scotia Health Promotion and

Protection.

Other Initiatives - Physical Activity Enhancement Grants provided by Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection continued to provide direct funding to seniors physical activity programs in various parts of the province.

The *Healthy Active Living for Seniors* report, released in September 2004, was posted on the Secretariat's website and an additional 500 copies were distributed to interested stakeholders and the general public.

The Secretariat's *2006 Programs for Seniors* directory (circulation 75,000)- which featured a "Be Active! Be Smart!" ad from Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection- promotes active living opportunities for seniors.

To promote active healthy living and improve the quality of life of seniors, the Secretariat continued to collaborate with its many falls prevention partners including Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection, which is leading the development of the Seniors' Falls Prevention Strategy. The Secretariat was represented on the Preventing Falls Together Management Committee and Provincial Intersectoral Falls Prevention Committee.

Priority: Implement the Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy

The collective efforts of government, seniors, and numerous community partners from across Nova Scotia aimed at addressing the complex and troubling issue of elder abuse saw many important milestones achieved in 2005-2006.

The highlight of the year was the release of the Nova Scotia Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy at the provincial Elder Abuse Forum held on November 2, 2005, in celebration of the province's first proclaimed *Elder Abuse Awareness Day*.

Nova Scotia Elder Abuse Strategy: Towards Awareness and Prevention - the strategy provides the framework within which prevention efforts will occur in Nova Scotia over the next several years. Its goal is to promote the health and well-being of older Nova Scotians through the prevention and awareness of abuse.

More than 30 individual and organizational stakeholders collaborated to identify the priorities for action outlined in the elder abuse strategy through participation on the Secretariat's Elder Abuse Awareness and Prevention Strategy Committee and working groups. Committee members have diverse backgrounds in areas such as social work, policing, law, government, education, and health. Some serve as representatives of seniors' organizations and distinct cultural groups.

The strategy contains 15 actions across four strategic areas: Education and Awareness, Preventing Financial Abuse, Community-Based Networks, and Resources and Supports.

Provincial Elder Abuse Forum - This day-long event, co-sponsored by the Secretariat and Nova Scotia Department of Justice, brought together more than 125 individuals representing seniors' organizations, diverse community groups, government, and the health and justice sectors. Topics discussed included the elder abuse strategy, implementation plans, opportunities for collaboration, and related issues.

Prevention and Education Activities - More than 1,000 copies of the elder abuse strategy and a French version of the Executive Summary were distributed across the province. Other activities included the distribution of brochures and other resources, media releases, speaking engagements and education sessions about abuse, and providing support to individuals and organizations involved in elder abuse prevention work.

Support for Individuals Affected by Elder Abuse - Information was provided to seniors and others who called on the Secretariat's Seniors Information Line with questions or concerns about elder abuse.

Research and Information Gathering - Information to inform future decisions about the feasibility of establishing community-based elder abuse networks in Nova Scotia was collected from within Nova Scotia and across the country.

Priority: Oversee Phase 4 of the Nova Scotia Seniors Literacy Project

The Secretariat recognizes that literacy is an important determinant of health. There is ample evidence that adults with lower literacy levels have less knowledge about disease management and health promotion, are less likely to use preventive services, and experience poorer health. Throughout the year, the Secretariat continued to liaise with seniors and stakeholder groups at the provincial and local levels to promote seniors' literacy.

Health Literacy Manual - The Secretariat continued work on the development of a health literacy manual to be used with older adult learners. The manual will be ready for late fall/early winter 2006 and was funded by the National Literacy Secretariat.

Seniors' Literacy and Learning Initiative - The Secretariat worked collaboratively with the Department of Education, Skills and Learning Branch, to address the literacy skills of seniors through the new *Seniors' Literacy and Learning Initiative* in 2005-2006. Each allocated \$20,000 to the new initiative. The Department of Education provided its \$20,000 contribution in direct program funding and the \$20,000 from the Secretariat provided for a part-time project manager. Through the Seniors' Literacy and Learning Initiative, five

communities received funding to provide literacy programs for seniors. An evaluation of the programs clearly showed the positive impact and success of the programs.

Priority: Support the Work of the Seniors Oral Health Collaboration

The Secretariat participated in the important work of the Seniors' Oral Health Collaboration which is comprised of a group of 14 key stakeholders and their organizations from across Nova Scotia. The Collaboration is committed to facilitating sustainable oral health for Nova Scotia seniors. Funding for the collaboration was received from the Secretariat through the Department of Health. The Secretariat provided in-kind supports such as the handling of large mailouts and printing related to the project.

In 2005-2006, the Collaboration completed and distributed, *"The Oral Health of Seniors in Nova Scotia. Policy Scan and Analysis: Synthesis Report"*. The Secretariat will continue to work with the Collaboration to address the issues and recommendations from government brought forward in the report – specifically, the recommendation to put in place a coordinator for oral health within government.

Core Business Area: Information and Education

Priority: Operate the Seniors' Information Line

To ensure questions and concerns from seniors and their families are addressed, the Secretariat operates the Seniors Information Line. The Information Line is accessible and free of charge, from anywhere in the province, during regular working hours. After-hours calls are returned the next business day.

In 2005-06 the Secretariat focused on revising and piloting the tracking form used to collect information on each of the inbound calls to the Secretariat. The new form will be utilized for data collection in 2006-07.

Priority: Provide Information and Educational Resource Materials to Seniors

Directories of Programs and Services – In order to contribute to the knowledge and understanding seniors have about the programs and services available to them, the Secretariat updated and distributed new editions of the *Programs for Seniors* guide and the *Directory of Senior Citizens' Councils, Clubs, Centres and Organizations*. The distribution of *Programs for Seniors* across the province totals 75,000 copies. Primary distribution points are pharmacies, clubs, councils, and seniors' organizations, and family physicians.

Statistical Profile - During the year the Secretariat also updated and released a new version of the *Statistical Profile of Older Nova Scotians* (2005). This profile helps to inform seniors, as well as general public and policy audiences, about the seniors population and the trends of an aging population.

Housing Directory - The Secretariat continued work on the *Seniors' Housing Directory*, and is seeking a partner to help broaden the information and reach of the document. At the end of the 2005-2006 year, the Secretariat was investigating the possibility of collaborating with the Atlantic Seniors' Housing Research Alliance (ASHRA) on the publication.

Secretariat Website - Plans to update the Secretariat's website were pushed forward to 2006-2007 due to unanticipated staffing challenges among communications staff assigned to the Secretariat by Communications Nova Scotia.

Priority: Operate the Information Resource Centre

The Centre provides Secretariat staff, committee members, seniors, government departments and others with an interest in aging with access to the latest resources on aging.

New Holdings - New resources were obtained to update the general collection, respond to specific requests from staff, and create in-depth subject areas on topics such as elder abuse. During this period, over five hundred new and existing items were catalogued into the Resource Centre's library collection and database, making them available to staff, committee members and the general public. Lists of newly added items were regularly e-mailed to staff. Some of these items were reviewed in the Secretariat's newsletter.

The subject areas covered included the general field of aging, seniors health, financial planning, housing, literacy, mental health, retirement, intergenerational relations, and elder abuse. All are areas of focus for the Secretariat and of interest or concern to government and seniors. The librarian worked with individual staff and community partners exploring the centre's collection and obtaining information for them from other sites, as needed.

Newsletters, Journals, and Media Monitoring - The centre subscribed to approximately 50 aging related newsletters and journals. Individual issues were reviewed and circulated to staff. The Centre also subscribed to a newsclipping service and e-mailed selected newsclipping summaries to staff for awareness purposes and archived the hard copy of clippings for future retrieval. Hansard, the record of the Debates of the House of Assembly, was reviewed, circulated, and electronically archived.

Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia - The librarian located numerous resources to inform the strategy and compiled its bibliography.

Future Planning - The strategic information needs of the Secretariat and its government and community-based partners were determined on an informal basis in 2005-2006. These efforts will be ongoing.

Priority: Strengthen Communications

Visual Identity - The Secretariat introduced a new visual identity and positioning in 2005 that better reflects its spirit and mandate. This new positioning provides the Secretariat with a solid foundation on which to build a strong, positive image and reputation in Nova Scotia communities. The visuals were used in designing the Secretariat's display unit, information brochure, and other publications.

Awareness Building - A media relations strategy was developed to inform ongoing efforts to raise awareness of the Secretariat's role and work.

Other - Some activities intended for action this year will be carried over to next, in anticipation of greater consistency in communications support staff. These include the development of a communications strategy and focus group meetings with stakeholders aimed at improving the Secretariat's current communication mechanisms and tools.

Communications support for the Secretariat is provided by Communications Nova Scotia. Public relations co-op students from Mount Saint Vincent University also provided communications assistance. Gaps in service and staff turnover significantly hampered the Secretariat's efforts to strengthen its communications functions this year.

Additional Significant Accomplishments

This section describes other significant events and accomplishments not identified as priorities in the 2005-2006 Business Plan.

50+ Expo – The 17th annual 50 + Expo was held June 9th and 10th at Exhibition Park in Halifax to celebrate the energy and vitality of the 50 + generation. This year's consumer trade show, exhibition, and entertainment venue for the 50+ crowd and their families, attracted 6,700 people. The exhibition featured 100 information booths, main stage entertainment, informative presentations on a variety of topics, travel salon, and demonstrations of arts, crafts, and hobbies. Volunteers, including many seniors, contributed numerous hours to hosting the Expo. Seniors' Week in Nova Scotia, proclaimed at the Expo each year, featured the theme: *Celebrating Seniors: Changing Images for Positive Aging*.

Seniors Art and Photo Gallery - The Secretariat, with the assistance of senior volunteers, provides artists and photographers from across the province with an opportunity to display and sell their works. All proceeds from the paintings and photographs sold go directly to the artist or photographer. In 2005 -2006, approximately 230 artists displayed their work. The number of pieces sold was 34, with a total value of \$4,754.

Committees and Projects - Policy Development and Consultation is a core business area of the Secretariat. Key to this work is the participation of Secretariat staff on 34 committees convened by other government departments, academia and community-based organizations. In 2005-2006, Secretariat staff participated on committees on such topics as: labour market development, social trends affecting employment, government libraries, healthy active living, continuing care strategy, healthy balanced lifestyles, seniors health, ambulance fees, oral health, women's mid-life issues, health promotion, falls prevention, safe communities, healthy communities, crime and fraud prevention, safe driving training, elder abuse, family violence, community transportation, community development, accessible service, women's economic security, volunteerism, and seniors' housing.

Financial Results

In 2005-2006, the Nova Scotia Senior Citizens' Secretariat had an approved budget allocation of \$979,000. Actual net 2005 - 2006 expenditures totaled \$916,200 (94% spent).

The following table provides a breakdown of estimates versus actual expenditures of the Senior Citizens' Secretariat.

Budget Context Chart			
Nova Scotia Senior Citizens' Secretariat			
	2005-2006 Estimate	2005-2006 Actual	Variance
Net Program Expenses	979,000	916,200	(62,800)*
Funded Staff (FTEs)	7	6.4	0.6**

* Decrease: Overall decrease due to under-expenditure for the 50+Expo, Oral Health Care of Seniors project, and various operating expenses.

** FTE decrease due to reallocation of positional funding to support consultant.

Performance Measures 2005-2006
Senior Citizens' Secretariat

Seniors Have Opportunities to Provide Advice on Public Policy Issues

The sustained effectiveness of the Secretariat is a desirable outcome which is achieved by supporting seniors and other relevant stakeholders to bring forward the concerns of seniors relevant to policy audiences.

What does this measure tell us?

Tracking the satisfaction level of seniors and seniors' organizations in Nova Scotia with the mechanisms in place for bringing issues of concern to the attention of the Nova Scotia government is multi-faceted and involves a number of measures. In 2005-2006 specific measures were not indicated but rather a number of strategic actions were identified to achieve the target of high level of overall satisfaction.

Where are we now?

In 2005-2006 most of the strategic actions to achieve the target were completed such as holding regular Group of IX meetings, organizing consultations with seniors organizations, and updating the Ministers of the Secretariat on emerging issues identified by seniors. In 2006-2007 measures will be put in place to track the outcomes of these.

Please see the attached list in the appendices for a full account of all the Secretariat committees and projects.

Where do we want to be?

The Secretariat would expect a target of high overall satisfaction with the opportunities to provide advice on public policy issues by seniors and seniors' groups.

Information on Programs and Services for Seniors is Communicated in a Senior-Friendly Format

Information and Education is another of the Secretariat's core business areas. A desired outcome within this area is that seniors and seniors' organizations find the Secretariat materials to be accessible and easy-to-use.

What does this measure tell us?

It was intended that a survey be put in place and focus groups held with seniors and individuals who work with seniors to assess current communications vehicles (for example- quarterly newsletter, *Programs for Seniors* directory, website) for suitability of content, comprehensiveness, readability, layout and design. The idea was to establish baseline data to determine future targets.

Where are we now?

While actions identified in the business plan to achieve the target such as updating publications to reflect new information was completed, a number of actions were not put in place this year and the survey and focus groups were not held. These actions and measures were carried forward into the 2006-2007 Business Plan and will be completed during that year.

Where do we want to be?

The Secretariat would expect a target of high overall satisfaction with the opportunities to provide advice on public policy issues by seniors and seniors' groups.

Utilization of the Telephone- Based Information Service of the Secretariat

Information and Education is another of the Secretariat's core business areas. A desired outcome within this area is that seniors and their families use the telephone-based information service provided by the Secretariat.

What does this measure tell us?

Tracking the utilization of the telephone-based information service involves tracking the number and types of calls received on the Secretariat's toll-free seniors' information line using a data collection form. In 2005-2006, the data collection form was revised and piloted but not put into place until 2006-2007.

Where are we now?

Baseline data will be collected in 2006-2007 to be reported on in the next accountability report and targets will be set for 2007-2008.

Where do we want to be?

We would want to ensure that the usage of the Secretariat's toll-free seniors information line was increasing as more seniors become aware of its availability through the Secretariat's communications activities.