



Message from the Minister

February 2, 2023

Dear Friends,

What a start to the New Year it has been! January proved to be a busy month, full of announcements, meetings and planning for the year ahead!

On January 31, Minister Duclos and I were pleased to welcome the publication of long-term care standards developed by the CSA Group and the Health Standards Organization (HSO). It was an important day and another milestone in the effort to improve the quality of care provided to residents and families in LTC. Every senior in Canada deserves to live in dignity, safety and comfort, regardless of which province or territory they call home.

As we enter February, we also prepare to celebrate and commemorate Black History Month. This is a time to honour the legacy of Black Canadians, past and present, and to recognize the significant contributions they have and continue to make to our country. Find out more about how we have been able to [fund many Black Canadian organizations and communities through the New Horizons for Seniors Program](#).

Last month, I met with older Canadians across Ontario, and I had the privilege to learn more about the incredible work of seniors-serving organizations in the province. Over the course of my tour, I had the chance to meet with several organizations dedicated to helping seniors remain more connected, supported, and active members in their communities. It was inspiring to see how these organizations are making a real impact on the lives of seniors. You can read more about [my Ontario tour here](#).

We know that one of the top issues is the challenges that seniors continue to face with global inflation, which is raising the costs of basic necessities like groceries. Over the past year our government introduced concrete, targeted measures to help Canadian seniors who need it most. Our Government has doubled the GST which put an average of an additional \$225 in the pockets of Canadian seniors, and delivering a \$500 one-time top-up to the [Canada Housing Benefit](#) to support low-income renters. And we continue to deliver support through the Canada Pension Plan benefits, and the Guaranteed Income Supplement for seniors which goes up with the cost of inflation.

As Minister of Seniors, I am committed to ensuring that seniors from coast to coast to coast have access to the supports they need. Additionally, as tax season is approaching, I encourage you to take the time to read about what you could claim on your income tax and

benefit return and the benefits and credits available to seniors as well as information on [free income tax clinics you can visit to help you file your taxes](#).

You will also find information about:

- [Announcement of new standards on long-term care](#)
- [Tax season](#)
- [Updates on the National Seniors Council](#)

Please take a moment to share this link with friends and colleagues so that they can [sign up to receive my updates](#).

Thanks for reading and sharing.

Kamal Khera
Minister of Seniors



Black History Month

Black History is an important part of Canadian history and is an opportunity to increase awareness and to honour the important

contributions Black Canadians and their communities have made to the settlement, growth and development of Canada.

The theme this year is [*Ours to Tell*](#), which invites Black Canadians to tell their stories of history, success, sacrifice and triumph.

Through the New Horizons for Seniors Program, we have been able to invest funding in projects led by Black Canadians and organizations that have projects focused on black communities throughout Canada such as, the African Canadian Women Engagement Society, Truly Alive Youth and Family Foundation Inc, the Canadian Caribbean Cultural Association of Durham, The University of Regina, the Afro-Canadian Caribbean Association, The Ontario Muslim Academy, and many more.

In my recent Ontario tour, I announced funding in the Kitchener-Waterloo area. During my visit, I was able to announce the investment of over \$20,000 to the Community Capacity Building Network for their Enabling Black, Visible Minority and Immigrant Seniors to Combat Social Isolation project. I also visited AFRO— The African Family Revival Organization.

Black communities have helped shape our history and have stood as leaders across the country. Despite all this, systemic anti-Black racism still exists in Canada, and has undermined the livelihoods of Black Canadians and caused deep pain. Many Black Canadians in our communities continue to face discrimination, hate, and a lack of opportunity and resources every day. That is why I am proud to support and invest in Black Canadian organizations and projects that aid Black communities through the New Horizons for Seniors Program.

This month, I encourage you to pay tribute to, and learn more about,

the important roles that Black Canadians have played in Canada, as well as the historic and ongoing oppressions, by visiting the [February is Black History Month webpage](#).



Minister Khera engaging in a drumming circle with the African Family Revival Organization.



Minister Khera and a group from the African Family Revival Organization at the New Horizons for Seniors Program event in Kitchener on January 16, 2023.



Minister Khera with New Horizons for Seniors Program funding recipients from the African Family Revival Organization in Kitchener.



Minister Khera taking a selfie with members of the African Family Revival Organization.

Announcement on standards on long-term care

Every senior in Canada deserves to live in dignity, safety and comfort, regardless of which province or territory they call home. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted long-standing and systemic challenges in infection prevention and control, staffing, infrastructure and quality of care in long-term care homes across Canada.

On January 31, Minister Duclos and I were pleased to welcome the publication of long-term care standards developed by the CSA Group and the Health Standards Organization (HSO). Together, these complementary, independent standards provide guidance for delivering services centred on residents' needs, fostering a healthy

and competent workforce as well as promoting a culture of quality improvement and learning across long-term care homes.

Both standards were shaped by the needs and diverse perspectives of long term care residents, family members, caregivers, and health stakeholders. While these standards are independent, the Government of Canada provided close to \$850,000 in funding to the HSO and CSA Group to support enhanced engagement and consultations.

Budget 2021 provided \$3 billion over five years to support provinces and territories in their efforts to improve long-term care by supporting implementation and enforcement efforts. We believe that strengthening compliance and enforcement activities in long term care facilities, as well as supporting workforce stability through wage top-ups and improvements to workplace conditions, is essential to improving safe and care for patients, and creating a more positive and healthy environment for all who live or work in long term care.

These standards are an important step in helping to ensure quality care for seniors and will raise the bar for safe and respectful care in long term care homes across Canada.

To learn more, read the [CSA Group](#) standard and the [HSO standard](#).

Ready for tax season?

I know that seniors are feeling the impact of the rising cost of living. That's why I want to remind seniors that they may be eligible for the following tax credits and benefits to help make life more affordable:

- The [Canada Caregiver Credit](#) provides help to Canadians who are supporting a family member with a physical or mental impairment. The family member must rely on you for necessities such as food, clothing and shelter.

- The [Disability Tax Credit](#) helps reduce the income tax that people with physical or mental impairments may have to pay. The aim of this credit is to help offset some of the costs related to the impairment. Supporting family members may also take advantage of this credit.
- You may also be eligible to for the [Medical Expenses Credit](#). To qualify, you must have medical expenses that exceed 3% of your net income. You can also claim expenses you paid on behalf of a family member. But remember, these expenses must not have been reimbursed.
- The [Home Accessibility Expenses Credit](#) is a tax credit for home renovation expenses. The expenses incurred must make a home more accessible for seniors or people with disabilities living in the home, and the renovation must be permanent.
- The [Age Amount Credit](#) may help you reduce your payable income tax. To be eligible, you must be 65 or older at the end of 2022 and your net income must have been less than \$90,313. You can transfer all or part of this credit to your spouse or common-law partner.
- If you report eligible pension, superannuation or annuity payments on your tax return, you may qualify for the [Pension Income Amount Credit](#). Income from Old Age Security (OAS) benefits, Canada Pension Plan benefits and Quebec Pension Plan benefits are not eligible for this credit.
- New for 2023, the [Multigenerational Home Renovation Tax Credit](#) provides up to \$7,500 in support for constructing a secondary suite. A family member who is a senior or an adult with a disability must live in the suite.

Last year's 10% increase to the OAS for those 75 and over made life more affordable for millions of seniors. This highlights the importance of providing your income information to the government.

For low-income seniors, it's especially important that you file your

taxes on time. We use the information in your income tax return to review your eligibility for the Guaranteed Income Supplement each year. Filing on time helps you avoid any disruption to your payments.

If you are a renter, you may be eligible for help. We are providing a [one-time payment of \\$500](#) if you qualify, based on your income and the amount that you pay on rent. But you must hurry! Applications are open until March 31, 2023.

We also doubled the GST credit for the past six months, which put an average of \$225 more in the pockets of seniors. The last payment went out on January 5.

Plan ahead! Sign up now for [direct deposit](#) and [file online](#). Using these tools will help you avoid delays. Also, please sign up for [My Account](#), as it is the best way to view and manage your tax and benefit information.

Need help? [Register for the Canada Revenue Agency's webinar](#) on February 15. This webinar will provide important tax information for Canadians aged 65 and older. You can also look for community volunteers who may be able to help you do your taxes. Find a [free tax clinic](#) near you.

Make a plan to file your taxes as soon as possible!

Updates on National Seniors Council

Today, Minister Jean-Yves Duclos and I announced that Dr. Marie Beaulieu was appointed as a member of the National Seniors Council. Dr. Beaulieu works extremely hard to end the invisibility experienced by mistreated older adults. She is currently a full professor at the School of Social Work with the Université de Sherbrooke and co-director of the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for

Age-friendly Cities and Communities, attached to the CIUSSS de l'Estrie-CHUS Research Centre on Aging. In recognition of her hard work, the United Nations named Dr. Beaulieu one of 50 international leaders of the Decade on Healthy Aging (2021–2030) in September 2022. She also previously served on the National Seniors Council from 2013 to 2018. Dr. Beaulieu has been appointed to the Council for a three-year term. Read more about [recent appointments to the National Seniors Council](#).

Members of the Council engage with older adults, stakeholders and experts to provide advice to the Government of Canada on matters related to the health, well-being and quality of life of seniors.

Currently, [the National Seniors Council](#) is undertaking a review of, and providing recommendations on, various measures that could support older Canadians in aging at home.

Ontario Tour

Last month, I visited seniors and seniors-serving organizations in Ontario to learn more about the work they do, as well as to announce New Horizons for Seniors Program project funding for several community-based organizations. While visiting, [I had the opportunity to meet with members of the Seniors Association Kingston Region](#). During my visit, I also announced an investment of over \$145,000 through the New Horizons for Seniors Program to fund eight community-based projects in Kingston, Ontario.

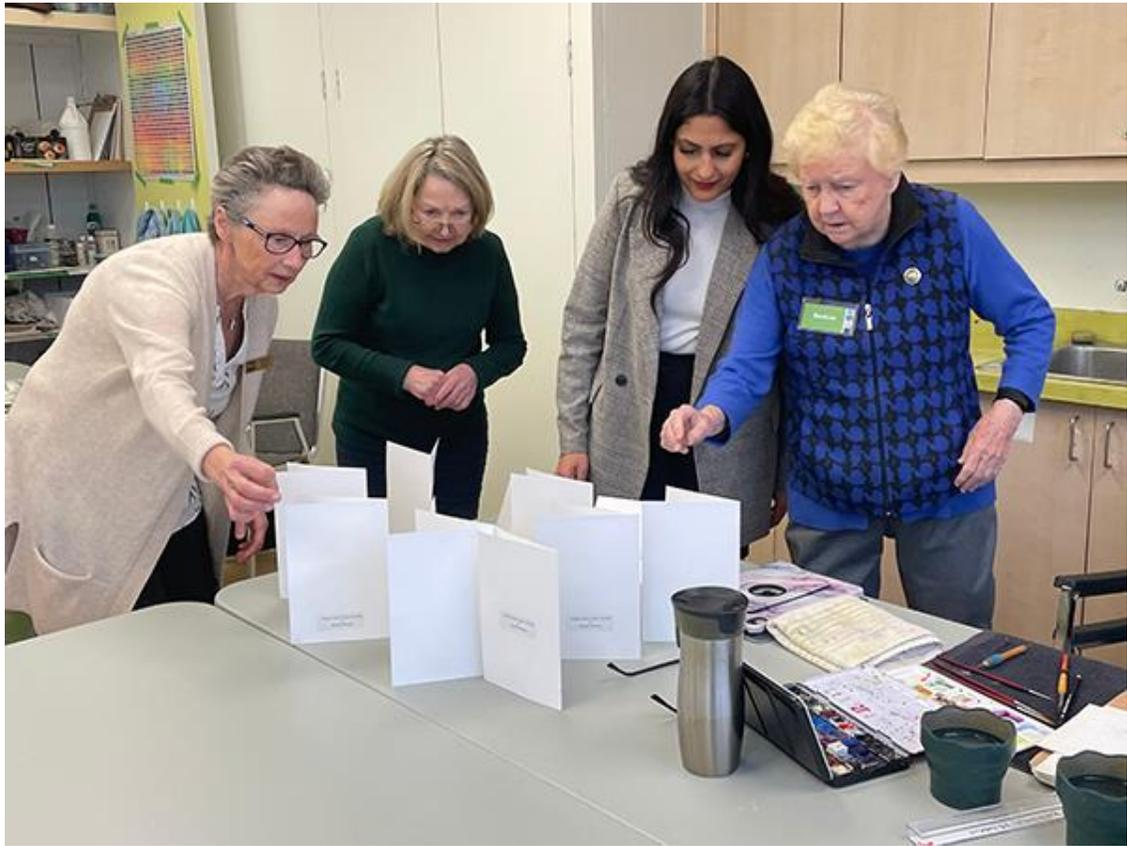
Under the 2021-2022 **New Horizons for Seniors Program** community-based call for proposals, over \$61 million was invested in more than 3,000 community-based projects across the country. **In Ontario, 1,036 projects were funded for a total of over \$21.94 million.** This year's national priorities aim to continue to provide opportunities for seniors to be more connected by focusing on projects that:

- Support healthy aging.
- Prevent elder abuse.
- Celebrate diversity and promote inclusion.
- Help seniors age in place.

I am grateful for every visit, as I get the opportunity to learn more about the needs of seniors in Canada. I always come back to Parliament motivated to continue to work toward a better quality of life for all older Canadians.



Minister Khera with members of the Seniors Association Kingston Region at the New Horizons for Seniors Program event in Kingston on January 19, 2023.



Minister Khera engaging with members from the Seniors Association Kingston Region.
