



# Message from the Minister

June 7, 2023

Dear Friends,

Recently, I had the pleasure of [announcing](#) over \$61 million dollars in funding for the New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP). This year we funded over 3000 projects across the country. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate all of the successful organizations and give my sincere thanks for all the amazing work they do in their communities. More information about the NHSP can be found later in the newsletter.

The month of June is special for many Canadians. To start, each year on June 1, we recognize Intergenerational Day, a day on which we celebrate the mutual benefits of building relationships across

generations. I am proud that this year many of the NHSP projects we have funded are aimed at creating connections between seniors and young people.

On June 15, the Government of Canada is joining countries around the world to collectively speak out against elder abuse and mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. This day is important as it raises awareness about protecting the rights of older persons. You can learn on the steps we've taken as government to prevent elder abuse later on in the newsletter.

June is Seniors Month in Ontario, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island and Nunavut. This month, and all year-round, we recognize seniors and the countless contributions they've made to their communities and to Canadian society.

This month, we also celebrate Canada's diversity and recognize the importance of Indigenous heritage. During [National Indigenous History Month](#), I invite you to celebrate the rich history, heritage, resilience and diversity of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people across Canada. This is an opportunity to learn more about the, languages, cultures and experiences of all Indigenous people in Canada.

I would also like to commemorate the launch of [Pride Season](#), [Italian Heritage Month](#), [Filipino Heritage Month](#) and [Portuguese Heritage Month](#), which are all celebrated in the month of June.

And last, but certainly not least, I would like to wish everyone a Happy Father's Day on June 18. Let's take this day to celebrate all fathers and father-figures across Canada and around the world.

In this edition of my newsletter, you'll find information about:

- Investments in the New Horizons for Seniors Program;
- World Elder Abuse Awareness Day;
- Wild Fires Update
- The National Research Council's Aging in Place Challenge program; and
- Affordability for seniors

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

Thanks for reading and sharing.

Kamal Khera

Minister of Seniors



## **Investments in the New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP)**

Every year, the NHSP plays a crucial role in enhancing seniors' quality of life by providing funding for thousands of projects across Canada. On May 23, I proudly announced that our government is investing over \$61 million to fund over 3,000 community-based projects to support seniors across the country this year. These funds are helping seniors across the country to continue being vibrant contributors to their communities. Promoting healthy aging and empowering seniors are essential for building inclusive, age-friendly communities.

NHSP supports projects led or inspired by seniors who are making a difference in their communities and in the lives of those around them.

As part of the [2022–23 NHSP call for proposals](#) for community-based projects, organizations were invited to apply for funding for projects that would create opportunities for seniors to be more connected, supported and active members of their communities. I'm proud of the more than 3000 seniors-serving organizations, who with the NHSP funding they have received are working on:

- supporting healthy aging through engaging social, physical and artistic activities;
- preventing senior abuse through financial literacy training, fraud prevention training, and digital literacy sessions;
- celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion by promoting intergenerational mentoring, serving vulnerable groups and holding peer support sessions; and
- helping the majority of seniors who want to age in their own homes to do so by providing practical supports.

Here is a link to the news release which provides details about the recent funding announcement: [Government of Canada funds more than 3,000 projects across Canada to empower seniors in their communities.](#)



Group photo of Minister Khera with event participants at the NHSP national announcement.



Group photo of Minister Khera with event participants.



Minister Khera speaking at the podium at the NHSP national announcement.



Minister Khera speaking with event participants.

**World Elder Abuse Awareness Day**

On June 15, we mark [World Elder Abuse Awareness Day](#). We recognize that elder abuse is an important issue for many seniors in Canada.



[Elder abuse](#) can take many forms, such as physical and sexual abuse, neglect, and psychological or financial abuse. It includes the mistreatment, neglect and exploitation of older adults, whether a single or repeated act. More specifically, it is any deliberate behaviour, attitude and speech often perpetrated by a person in a relationship of trust—such as a family member, friend or caregiver—that causes or is likely to cause harm or distress to an older person. It is also ageism and the violation of seniors' rights. Raising awareness and recognizing the signs of elder abuse are the first steps to help prevent and end it.

Here are some common signs of elder abuse to recognize and act on:

- sudden changes in appearance;
- sudden changes in behaviour (fear, anxiety or depression) in the presence of someone an older adult has trusted;
- unexplained physical injuries;
- unexplained changes in financial status or sudden changes in legal documents;
- conflicts between the senior and the caregiver; and
- lack of basic care, such as misuse of medications, poor nutrition or poor hygiene.

Our government is proud to invest funding in over 600 projects across Canada that focus on elder abuse awareness and prevention, through the most recent New Horizons for Seniors Program Community-based projects call for proposal. This includes projects that put together sessions on elder abuse, elder abuse prevention and weekly senior activities in a safe environment.

The South Winnipeg Seniors Resource Council in Manitoba is a great example of this. Through their recent NHSP project titled Golden Rule Seniors, educational sessions on various topics, including elder abuse, are available to seniors in the community. Also through NHSP, The Calgary Rural Primary Care Network provides seniors with resources

on elder abuse to promote awareness on the issue through their Elder Abuse Awareness Program.

I am committed to continue working to strengthen Canada's approach to elder abuse. Last April, I co-chaired the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors Forum with Ontario's Minister for Seniors and Accessibility, the Honourable Raymond Cho. There, ministers approved the report from the working group on senior abuse and the *What We Heard* report from the working group on ageism. Both of these reports will be available on the [Forum's website](#) in the coming months.

We're also committed to strengthening the criminal code by finalizing the definition of elder abuse, investing in better data collection and establishing new offense penalties under the law that are related to elder abuse. As a government, we will continue to work to ensure that those who knowingly abuse and neglect seniors are held accountable.

## **Wild Fires**

Across the country, Canadians, including seniors, are being forced from their communities and losing homes to wildfires, or spending days under a blanket of smoke. We know that climate change is making extreme weather, like the wildfires across the country, more frequent and intense.

I want to thank the many brave firefighters who have been working around the clock to contain the fires. As a government, we are prepared to help in any way possible. To date we have taken measures that include:

- Approving Requests for Federal Assistance in Alberta, Nova Scotia, and Quebec including the deployment of Canadian Armed Forces members to airlift resources and aid in firefighting roles;
- Investing to train more community-based firefighters across the country this season, including 300 Indigenous firefighters and 125 Indigenous fire guardians;
- Receiving hundreds of firefighters from other countries to support our efforts over the coming days and weeks;
- Deploying mobile outreach Service Canada units to help provide quicker access to benefits and services such as EI.
- Partnering with provincial and territorial governments and not-for-profit organizations to match funds donated by Canadians and organizations. For example, this includes a donation matching program with Alberta through the Canadian Red Cross 2023 Alberta Fires Appeal, where every dollar donated becomes \$3 in support towards those affected by wildfires. We are setting up similar donation matching programs in the Northwest Territories and Nova Scotia.

The most up to date information on Government of Canada donation matching programs can be found on the [Red Cross Website](#).

### **The National Research Council is recruiting Experts by Experience**

In recent years, numerous challenges have come to light, affecting the aging community. The National Research Council of Canada's [Aging in Place Challenge program](#) aims to tackle these challenges through innovative technologies. These technologies will help improve quality of life for older adults, providing them with the tools they need to age in place within their own homes and communities.

The perspective of older adults' lived experience is essential to the success of the projects this program supports. The Aging in Place team is looking for adults over 65 and caregivers who support them to

provide their input on these technologies to ensure they match the lifestyle, needs and expectations of the people they are designed for. This is an exciting opportunity to participate in research that will support aging in place today, and in the future.

You can visit the National Research Council's [Experts by Experience page](#) to learn more.

## **Affordability for seniors**

Making life more affordable remains a top priority for our government, even though global inflation is going down, many Canadians are experiencing challenges when it comes to affordability. That is why Budget 2023 lays out our plan to support seniors, which includes providing older Canadians with a grocery rebate, dental care and information on the Canada Health Transfer Top-Up.

Budget 2023 delivers new targeted inflation relief to the Canadians hardest hit by the rising cost of living. On July 5th seniors can expect to see an additional \$225 dollars in their bank account on average.

Budget 2023 also delivers the next steps in the government's transformative plan to ensure Canadians have access to dental care. Our government will introduce legislation to support the implementation of the new Canadian Dental Care Plan, which will provide dental coverage for uninsured Canadians with annual family income of less than \$90,000, with no co-pays for those with family incomes under \$70,000. This year eligibility will open to people who are under the age of 18, seniors, and people with disabilities who meet the income criteria and do not have insurance. The plan would begin providing coverage by the end of 2023 and will provide 9 million Canadians with dental insurance.

To ensure that Canadians have access to family doctors, mental healthcare and their healthcare records, Budget 2023 also proposes an urgent and needed investment of close to \$200 Billion to strengthen our public health care system.

You can find out more about Budget 2023 highlights for seniors in my [April newsletter](#). It includes additional information on:

- the new Grocery Rebate;
- dental care;
- healthcare;
- housing;
- cracking down on predatory lending;
- expanding automatic tax filing; and
- reducing hidden consumer junk fees.

To learn more about this year's Budget, check out [Budget 2023: A Made-in-Canada Plan: Strong Middle Class, Affordable Economy, Healthy Future](#) (webpage) or [Government of Canada releases Budget 2023](#) (news release).

**Spread the word:**

I hope you will take a minute to ensure that this message reaches as many older adults (and the people who support them) as possible. Please share it with your networks through social media, email or your newsletter. You can now sign up and invite others to [sign up for the newsletter online](#).

**For regular updates, please follow:**

Twitter: [@ESDC\\_GC](#)

Facebook: [Seniors in Canada](#)

If you would no longer like to receive updates from the Minister or if you would like to add another email address to this distribution list, please reply to [EDSC.COMMUNICATIONSAINES-SENIORSCOMMUNICATIONS.ESDC@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca](mailto:EDSC.COMMUNICATIONSAINES-SENIORSCOMMUNICATIONS.ESDC@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca).

---