

# PENSIONER

## NEWSLETTER

Volume 22, Number 29

Winter Edition

January 2023

*A Publication of the Newfoundland and Labrador  
Public Sector Pensioners' Association*



*New year  
2023*

# *Société Alzheimer Society*

The **Alzheimer Society** builds communities of support for those living with dementia.

First Link is the Alzheimer Society strategy to connect individuals, their families and care partners to education, coping strategies, support and to help them be proactive in planning for future care.



## Community Changes Everything



**First Link is the first place to turn – we are the connection to support, care, knowledge & expertise on the dementia journey.**

Our First Link Program removes the barrier for families during a very difficult time. It offers first steps to ensure families have the right support and information from the time of diagnosis and throughout the progression of the disease. We offer guidance and support to help shape their journey in a positive and proactive manner to reduce emergency room visits.

Our First Link program is designed to connect with people early in the diagnosis to help reduce Care Partner stress and connect them with Programs and Services to improve experience with a dementia diagnosis.

## Contact us

1-877-776-0608 or 709 576 0608

[www.alzheimer.ca/nl](http://www.alzheimer.ca/nl) or email

[info@alzheimer.nl.ca](mailto:info@alzheimer.nl.ca)

## *Our Connections Matter*

**Information:** Offers access to four information kits depending on the stage of the disease.

**Education:** A 15-week learning series about the diagnosis, what to expect, day to day living, positive approaches to care, and how to be proactive in preparing for the future.

**Support:** Access to meetings for people with shared experiences.

**Resources:** Access to community programs and how to navigate the health care system.

### **Mandate Statement:**

The Newfoundland and Labrador Public Sector Pensioners' Association (NLPSPA) is a strong, member supported organization that will be successful in advocating for improved pensions and insured benefits; will advocate for a better quality of life for pensioners; and, is recognized throughout the province for its leadership role in promoting the interests of its members and all pensioners.

### **Executive:**

President – Wayne Noseworthy  
Vice President – Craig Hall  
Treasurer – Craig Hall  
Secretary – Helena Bragg  
Past President – Doreen Noseworthy

### **Directors:**

Ann Marie Cleary  
Paul Fisher  
Doug Laing  
Brian Miller  
Ralph Morris  
Allan Reid  
Cliff Reid  
Wayne Ruth  
Al Skehen

### **Executive Director:**

Sharron Callahan

### **Administrative Assistant:**

Cheryl Myers

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Website: [www.nlpspa.ca](http://www.nlpspa.ca)  
<https://www.facebook.com/NLpensioners>

### **Advertising Policy:**

The Association reserves the right to refuse advertising, or to edit them in consultation with the advertisers. The Association does not endorse or promote any product or service presented in paid advertisements unless so specified.

Graphic Design: Stephanie Furey

# Message from the President

*NLPSPA 2023*



**H**ello fellow retirees,  
It is once again a distinct pleasure to write you as your new President. Since my initial message, our Association has been heavily involved on your behalf. Some of those initiatives are highlighted below.

NLPSPA has now become even more available and accessible to our members through our revamped and interactive technology. I invite you to visit our Website and experience the wealth of information and services that are literally at your fingertips. Thanks go to Communications Chair, Cliff Reid, our staff members Cheryl Myers and Sharron Callahan, and our

consulting partners, Triware Technologies.

We have made direct representation to Government regarding the accommodation tax and medical transportation. Seniors are finding the difficulties associated with our health system increasingly overwhelming.

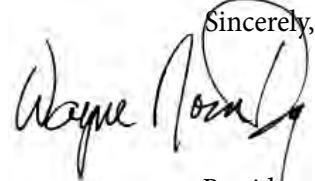
On December 5, our Association, together with C.A.R.P. NL, hosted a session with Susan Walsh, Seniors' Advocate and her staff. This provided an opportunity for over eighty members from the seniors' community, the majority of whom were NLPSPA members, to bring a wide range of concerns to Ms. Walsh. Items discussed included health care, transportation, cost of living and a wide variety of related matters.

On Wednesday, December 7, NLPSPA was directly involved in consultations with government representatives on the Social and Economic Well-Being Plan (Poverty Reduction). Significant work remains to be done in helping government realize the true challenges facing seniors in this province.

On December 13, in the true spirit of Christmas, our Association hosted a virtual concert presented by the Cloudberry Choir. The music and sense of fellowship were outstanding and really set the mood for the Holiday Season.

In keeping with the spirit of Christmas season, please remember all those individuals who, for various reasons, experience great difficulty not just at Christmas but throughout the year. Be kind to all those around you and take time to celebrate all the gifts you already enjoy. Given the challenges related to Covid over the past few years, I implore you to always take every opportunity to embrace your family and friends and enjoy all opportunities to be together.

I wish you health, happiness, peace and love for 2023. Be safe, be healthy, and may recovery from isolation and renewal of friendships be your blessings for the new year. ■

Sincerely,  
  
President



# Notes & News

from the Executive Director

Welcome to 2023! The past year was a very busy one for the Association and in partnership with the Board of Directors and our Administrative Assistant Cheryl, I look forward to another successful year with hope and positivity. Although things seem to have been fairly quiet for the Board and the Association in the last few weeks of 2022, business has been brisk and a lot is happening behind the scenes in terms of planning, communications, and advocacy.

First off, I want to thank you, the Board of Directors and the membership, for your confidence in offering me the position of Executive Director for the next three years, with an option for renewal after this period. I am honoured by your trust and I pledge to always have the interests of the Association and its membership front and centre in all that I undertake.

In this edition of the newsletter, you will find a full reporting of the October Convention. You will be pleased to know that it was a huge success with strong attendance, interesting presentations, outstanding entertainment, and a high level of appreciation to the Association for its courage to offer an in-person event which provided the delegates with an opportunity to support recovery from isolation and loneliness of the pandemic years, to renew friendships with folks who had not been seen for over two years, and to reconnect with activities and interests available within their communities. While there were a few minor glitches, these were all managed as best as possible and all recommendations for future events will be carried forward to the planning for the next convention in 2024.

**Advocacy** has been a high point for the Association during the last quarter of 2022 and continues into the new year.

- A Coalition meeting was held with Minister Tom Osborne, Minister of Health and Community Services, on September 28. Topics presented included the need for a National Seniors Strategy,

advancement of National Universal Pharmacare, Personal Care Home Standards, Long Term Care Standards, Continuing Builds of LTC facilities; closure of emergency services, lack of family practitioners, LPN's and RN's practice to full scope; and push to digital services without alternate servicing for folks without capacity. The full issues document can be viewed in the Coalition section of the NLPSPA website.

- A letter has been written to Minister Siobhan Coady on the Accommodation Tax and its impact on persons having to visit larger centre for purposes other than tourism.
- A letter has been written to Minister Siobhan Coady and Minister Tom Osborne on a number of issues concerning medical transportation.
- Since her appointment, I have arranged four meetings for the Seniors' Advocate to meet with: NLPSPA Board, CARP Executive Committee; Coalition Member Organizations; and the Seniors' Advisory Committee, St. John's to solicit and confirm issues that are of importance to aging persons.
- On December 5, NLPSPA and the member organizations of the Coalition also hosted an in-person meeting with the Seniors' Advocate. The goal of the engagement was to hear the voice of seniors on current concerns, priorities, and ideas for positive change. High attention was given to health care, with additional reference to housing, transportation, and financial security and the high cost of living. The Association was very pleased with the huge turnout and the level of engagement. The meeting could have gone on a lot longer in time as there were many related topics and lived experiences those attending wished to share.
- As the year came to a close, representatives from the Coalition and the NLPSPA Board

participated in an online conversation with the NL Government on the Social and Economic Recovery Plan (Poverty Reduction Strategy). This meeting was very concerning given the direction the engagement sessions seemed to be taking, prompting a follow-up meeting with Minister John Abbott on December 21. The concerns expressed included the direction being taken by government to align this Plan with the Health Accord, to focus the discussions on life cycles emphasizing children, education, finance, housing and services currently being offered by government and their successes, and the lack of direction specific for seniors. On December 21, it was re-emphasized that Government was not getting the "on the ground picture", folks want some quick changes, and cannot wait 10 years for a full roll-out. The final message was "to do some things now that put or allow more people to keep money in their pockets". It was also pointed out that the Income Support program and other programs were making people dependent and these programs all need a refocus to independence.

- Please read the full article "Advocacy in Action" contained in this newsletter for an in-

depth accounting of all that has been undertaken by the Association on your behalf during 2022.

The Association is particularly pleased that the revised **NLPSPA Website** has launched. After a year of careful and studious planning and under the guidance and leadership of Cliff Reid, the NLPSPA newly updated website was launched online on November 9, 2022. While some small glitches occur every now and then, the website is a great improvement to our ability to communicate to the membership and the general public. See the included article in this newsletter by Cliff Reid with directions on navigating the new site.

As we go to print with this newsletter, a large number of the membership is looking forward to a dinner and dance evening on January 6, our first such gathering in three years. This signifies hope and normalcy in a safe setting and marks the start of a successful year for the Newfoundland and Labrador Public Sector Pensioners' Association. ■



## Thank You

### "Renew! Recover! Reconnect!" 2022 NLPSPA Convention

The Board of Directors of NLPSPA, on behalf of the membership, offers a sincere thank you to the businesses, associations, and individuals who provided support, either financial, in-kind or in-person to the success of our 2022 Convention, "Making Choices – The Power of You". A convention is a monumental undertaking, which would not be possible without the support, commitment, and dedication of our sponsors and supporters who make such an event possible. With the utmost gratitude, we say THANK YOU!

To our Convention Partner:

- Anthony Insurance

To our other supporters:

- Sisters of Mercy-Responsible Sharing Committee
- Shoppers Drug Mart
- Doreen Noseworthy & Board Directors

To our booth supporters:

- Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP)
- TakeCHARGE NL
- Vision Loss Rehabilitation
- Seniors NL

# **“Recover! Renew! Reconnect!”**

## **A Report on the 2022 NLPSPA Convention**

*----Submitted by: Sharron Callahan, Executive Director----*

This year, NLPSPA delegates to the 2022 Convention had reason to celebrate. In keeping with the theme, which was purposefully chosen to support recovery from the isolation and loneliness of the pandemic years, to renew friendships with folks that had not been seen for over two years, and to reconnect with activities and interests available within communities, it was very apparent that pensioners and their friends were eager and enthused to come together after a long interruption. This reason to celebrate was confirmed by the high level of satisfaction with the convention, in numerous areas, including the venue, exhibits, meals, and convention program.

Overall Comments: The overall general commentary indicated this was a very good, well organized and well received convention. There seemed to be some misunderstandings about why there was a presentation on the Teachers' Pension Plan and some found the presentation by Connections for Seniors to be interesting but quite long. Clearly the highlight of the convention was the entertainment by the Salt Beef Junkies, who thrilled everyone with their youthful talent. Generally, parking at the hotel was not a problem but there was some commentary that there was insufficient disability parking for some of the delegates in attendance. Meals received a high ranking, with some commentary about the dessert on Wednesday night and more variety for the continental breakfast. Despite some unexpected commentary suggesting the Association provide wine or drink tickets, there was great appreciation for the low cost of registration to attend. Huge kudos were received for the organization, management and overall presentation of the convention.

### **Presentations/Speakers:**

Most responses were positive to the Provident 10 presentation with some misunderstanding of the reason behind having a parallel presentation on the Teachers' Pension Plan. To explain, membership in the NLPSPA is not restricted to public service pensioners only, but is inclusive of all persons who worked on behalf of the people of the province, including uniformed services, MHA's, teachers, reciprocal plan members, Government Money Purchase Plan members and judges. As NLPSPA membership is increasing by retired teachers and being

respectful and inclusive of all pension plans, it was appropriate to also provide an up-date on the TPP. The presentation on Frauds and Scams and the presentation by Connections for Seniors were well received and timely, with some suggestions for better lighting and a different color palette of the slides for better visibility.

Booth Displays: NLPSPA acknowledges the location of the booths was cramped and the lighting in the area was not the best. Despite these drawbacks, most respondents found the booths to be interesting, informative, and helpful. Most people recommended having more booths on a wide variety of interest areas for older persons.

Recommendations for Future Conventions: In general, there was high praise for the program. When asked for suggestions for future speakers, most offered topics related to health care, shortage of family doctors, financial security, how to cope with the high cost of living, nutrition, self-care, mental wellness, travel tips, taxation, volunteering, and community resources for seniors. As the convention planning team is always guided by recommendations from past conventions, these suggestions will be considered in the planning for Convention 2024. Handouts of the presentations were recommended for the future.

### **Convention Venue:**

Most respondents found the hotel to be acceptable, easily accessible, and a good location, despite the challenge for some with insufficient disability parking. The staff were friendly, welcoming, and provided excellent and efficient service. Some commented that the room temperature fluctuated causing some coolness on the first evening and some thought the meals could have been served in a different room, which was not doable due to the layout of the hotel and available space for the size of the convention.

### **Validity of Evaluation:**

In total, 115 persons were present and 68 convention evaluations were returned, for a 59.1% rate of evaluation. If I were to remove presenters, staff and others from this total, the rate of return would be higher. This is an excellent return and consequently represents a sound evaluation of the convention. Staff, the planning committee and the Board of Directors of NLPSPA appreciate the honest and

respectful feedback and will consider all recommendations in the planning for the next convention.

Most respondents (77) learned about the convention from email, the NLPSPA newsletter and from other members. Other sources of knowledge came from the website or social media.

#### Other Comments:

There was an excellent level of satisfaction with the registration process and the registration and membership information set-up. Many compliments were offered to the convention planning team, including Cheryl's and Sharron's organization and behind-the-scenes work.

The Planning Committee notes that a lot of effort and

follow-up was done with potential sponsors, including letters, phone calls and emails. Despite a strong effort to increase sponsorship for the convention, many past sponsors are cutting back due to difficult times. The NLPSPA remains ever grateful for the continuing contributions from Anthony Insurance, Shopper's Drug Mart, and Sisters of Mercy-Responsible Sharing Committee, as well as the members of the Board of Directors who provided donations for the prize draws.

The staff and planning committee offer a sincere thank you to the Board and the membership for the opportunity to have planned and delivered an awesome 2022 convention. ■

## NLPSPA SPONSORS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITH SENIORS' ADVOCATE

*Sharron Callahan, Executive Director*

On December 5, the Association sponsored one of the public engagement sessions that the Seniors' Advocate has been conducting for a number of weeks across Newfoundland and Labrador. These engagement sessions were a commitment by Ms. Susan Walsh, the Seniors' Advocate, following her appointment this past summer as she sought to confirm the issues she has heard from seniors and to develop her strategy for addressing these concerns. Also, given the significant economic and social changes that have occurred in the past three years since the appointment of the first Seniors' Advocate, it became critically important to ensure that the concerns and issues voiced in past consultations were current and there was a process of accountability established to ensure action was being taken.

Sponsored by the Association in partnership with the member organizations of the Seniors & Pensioners Coalition, interest was very high in this in-person event, with 60+ persons in attendance. The meeting was held at the Comfort Hotel, Airport Road, St. John's.

Wayne Noseworthy, NLPSPA President, welcomed everyone, Dr. Linda Phillips, C.A.R.P. NL Communications Chair read the Land Acknowledgement, and Sharron Callahan, Executive Director, introduced the Seniors' Advocate, Susan Walsh. The goal of the engagement was to hear the voice of Seniors on current concerns, priorities, and ideas for positive change. Health Care consumed most of the time. Concerns ranged from only one health care item per visit with some doctors, the lack of family doctors, mental health and dementia issues, the limited restrictions faced by pharmacists and nurse practitioners, the need for medical students to have an incentive to stay in NL upon completion of their

studies, to the erosion of our health care system. Some serious shortcomings were addressed and oversights were shared that were appalling. The second issue was housing – rental costs have skyrocketed, those wanting to age at home must have the cooperation of the city, town, village they live in with simple matters such as mowing the lawn and snow clearing being easy fixes, with home care being a greater and more difficult issue. Transportation was also discussed as being particularly challenging in rural areas. The cost of living for those on a fixed income is a major concern and issues such as the almost triple cost of oil and the ever-increasing cost of groceries, amenities, and health care. Seniors also raised and reported on disrespect, dismissal, and discrimination experienced on a daily basis. They pointed out – we are taxpayers and thus have earned our rightful place in society. Suggestions for policy changes were made on all of the issues with the caveat of NOW and not five to ten years time. (Linda Phillips, CARP NL Communications Chair)

The session attendees were very engaged and spoke of their issues with clarity, concern, and worry for the future. The session was also interspersed with personal stories of lived experiences which added further clarity and a face of reality to the issues.

The Seniors' Advocate was very appreciative of this opportunity sponsored by NLPSPA and the Coalition. As an Association, we look forward to the report on this engagement series and will provide same to the membership when it is received. It will then be critical upon all of us to ensure there is accountability for these issues and for the solutions/actions offered. ■

# What is the Public Legal Information Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (PLIAN)?

*Sara Hawkins, Access to Justice Coordinator, PLIAN*

The Public Legal Information Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (PLIAN) is an independent non-profit organization that provides legal education and information services to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador with the intent of increasing access to justice across the province.

Some of the services we offer are:

1. **Lawyer Referral Service.** This service is available for people who need help in finding a lawyer or who are looking to consult with a lawyer. Currently there are about 40 lawyers registered with the Lawyer Referral Service. Lawyers enroll in our database with their name and areas of practice. When you contact us to ask for a referral, we will provide you with the name and contact information of a lawyer who will provide a 30 minute consultation for a flat cost of \$40.00 (taxes included). You can request a lawyer referral by contacting PLIAN's Legal Information Line at **1-888-660-7788** or by email at [info@publiclegalinfo.com](mailto:info@publiclegalinfo.com).
2. **Legal Information Line.** This service will connect you with a live person who can provide general legal information, lawyer referrals, and guidance on where to find additional information. We do not provide legal advice. This legal line runs Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM. The toll-free number is **1-888-660-7788**. If you are in Labrador, you also have the option of contacting PLIAN's Labrador office at 709-896-5235 or [labrador@publiclegalinfo.com](mailto:labrador@publiclegalinfo.com).
3. **Legal Information Publications.** We regularly write and update publications about many legal topics, such as wills and estate issues, family law, residential tenancies, and much more. These publications are available online. We also have hard copies available and deliver them to many locations across the province. Our website is [www.publiclegalinfo.com](http://www.publiclegalinfo.com) or you can request hard copies at [sara@publiclegalinfo.com](mailto:sara@publiclegalinfo.com)
4. **Community Information Sessions.** We love to visit communities around the province and give information sessions on various legal issues such as estate planning, family law, worker's rights and more. If you are interested in booking a session, you can reach out to Sara at [sara@publiclegalinfo.com](mailto:sara@publiclegalinfo.com)

**For more information on PLIAN services, you can check us out at  
[www.publiclegalinfo.com](http://www.publiclegalinfo.com)  
or call 1-888-660-7788**

# Energy Savers Kit

Free\* for income-qualified customers

**SAVE** up to  
**\$100<sup>†</sup>**/year  
when you install  
these products.

## What is the *Energy Savers Kit*?

It's a **FREE\*** box of products for income-qualified customers to use in your home to save energy and money – mailed directly to you!



## Why Get a Kit?

The *Energy Savers Kit* contains products that help you:

- Save up to \$100<sup>†</sup> on your electricity bill each year
- Keep your home cozy when the temperature drops
- Save on lighting costs and reduce hot water use

## What's in the Kit?

Your kit includes LED light bulbs, a high performance showerhead, faucet aerators and more!

**Accessible version available upon request.**

## 4 Ways to Apply For A Kit



**Online**

Online is the quick and easy way to apply for a kit. Go to [TakeChargeNL.ca/EnergySaversKit](http://TakeChargeNL.ca/EnergySaversKit)



**Print**

Download and fill out the application at [TakeChargeNL.ca/EnergySaversKit](http://TakeChargeNL.ca/EnergySaversKit) and mail it to your utility.



**Email**

Email us your application at [EnergySaversKit@TakeChargeNL.ca](mailto:EnergySaversKit@TakeChargeNL.ca)



**Call**

**1-888-371-6551**  
Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Visit [TakeChargeNL.ca](http://TakeChargeNL.ca) for eligibility requirements and even more ways to save energy and money.



\*Must meet eligibility. † Savings may vary.

**take!**  
**CHARGE!**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



## NLPSPA Newsletter Dinner & Dance 2023

NLPSPA Celebrates Life and Happiness through music and dance! On January 6 of 2023 after a hiatus of three years, the Association held its annual dinner and dance celebrations, with over 200 NLPSPA members, their family members and other guests in attendance. Amidst the still sparkling Christmas lights, folks enjoyed a delicious meal together, were excited to meet friends they had not seen for some time, congratulated those who won prizes in the ticket draws, and then danced the night away to the fabulous music of Eric Webber, the DJNewSoundMan. It was very obvious that everyone had a great time as they jived, waltzed, twisted, step danced, and old fashioned waltzed across the dance floor until well into the late hours of the night. A great evening with great friends, great food, and great music. Book your calendars now for next year, January 5, 2024 at the Knights of Columbus, St. Clare Avenue.



# Navigating the NLPSPA Website

by Cliff Reid, Communications Chair

In the February 2022 Newsletter the Association announced the introduction of a new revised Facebook Page. On page 8 of the article ([feb 2022.indd \(nlpspa.ca\)](#)) an explanation of how to Like and Follow the page was presented. Throughout this year the Association worked with Triware Technologies Inc., computer consultants in St. John's, NL, to revise the NLPSPA Website ([NL Pensioners Association \(nlpspa.ca\)](#)). The purpose of this article is to help readers navigate the new site while gaining an understanding of all its features.

**For the purpose of this demonstration, I will use the NEWS Link. There are two ways to get to most sections of this site.**

- ❖ Method 1: Move your mouse over the **Top Menu Items** at the top of most pages. See the dropdown list under **NEWS**. Click any of these Items to go to that page. Some Top menu items link to just one page while others link to several, as shown in the News dropdown picture below.



- ❖ Method 2: Scroll down the Home Page and Click on either Picture. Each image has a brief explanation telling what you should find if you click on it.

After you have clicked on a **top menu item** or one of the pictures on the Home Page you will be taken to the page appropriate to your selection. Clicking on **CURRENT NEWS** will take you to image below.



1. Each News Article contains:
  - a. Date it was uploaded to this site.
  - b. A brief paraphrase of the article.
  - c. **Link** – Click on the word Link and you will be taken to the article.

If you follow a **Link** and you feel you have left the NLPSPA site then click on the **Back Arrow** ← as seen at the left of the 2<sup>nd</sup> row from the top of the page. See picture below.



This will return you to the **NEWS** Page.



Now you have 3 options:

1. Click on **Back to Home** which appears above the **NEWS** title to return to the home page
2. Click on **HOME** in the top Menu to return to the home page.
3. Click on any other Menu item in the **TOP Menu** to navigate to a page of your choice on the site.

By Following these procedures, you will be able to check out the entire NLPSPA website. It contains the following;

- Under Governance & Policies – The Constitution, Roles & Responsibilities of Board Members, Annual Reports from 2010 to 2022, Policies that Govern the Association and Terms of Reference for each Committee of the Association.
- The About NLPSPA section includes; Presidents Message, a brief profile of each Director, the members of each Committee, a History of the Association, Membership Forms, the Association's Honour Roll and benefits to being a Member of the NLPSPA.
- The Coalition section includes a complete list of the Organizations that make up the Coalition with links to their websites and Facebook pages, contact information and a message from the Chairperson, their Charter and a brief History.
- The NEWS section contains 6 links as follows:

- CURRENT NEWS – covers announcements relevant to Seniors / Pensioners throughout NL
- ADVOCACY – actions taken by the NLPSPA and/or THE COALITION to try to better the lives of Seniors / Pensioners in NL
- EVENTS – a calendar listing all events scheduled by the NLPSPA and/or THE COALITION to provide information, entertainment and social/political action to improve the lives of Seniors / Pensioners in NL
- NEWSLETTERS – Provides links to all Newsletters published by the Association from 2004 to 2022.
- MEMORIES – A series of photo albums depicting past events.
- RESOURCES – A list of links to relevant websites and to Presentations made during several ZOOM Sessions and at the AGM & Convention 2022.
- FAQ is a Frequently Asked Questions section that attempts to address questions that members may have but do not know where to reach out for answers. This section is always under development.
- CONTACT is a page that provides the information required to contact the NLPSPA main office.

Happy Navigating: Feel free to Email us any questions or comments about the revised website you may have at [pensioners@npspa.ca](mailto:pensioners@npspa.ca)



## Laughter is the Best Medicine

NLPSPA 2023



# Advocacy in Action 2022

**Sharron Callahan, Executive Director & Chair NL Seniors' Coalition**

As we bid farewell to 2022 and welcome 2023, it is appropriate to reflect on the advocacy actions that the Association and the member organizations of the Coalition have undertaken in the past year. As we do this reflection, it is also important to emphasize that our collective advocacy actions also require your individual voice to emphasize the issues and concerns that are important to us, as aging persons, to our political leaders so that change can happen as we expect and deserve. For the full text documents for these advocacy actions, visit: <https://nlpspa.ca/advocacy>

On January 13, 2022, the Coalition met with Consumer Advocate, Dennis Browne to express concerns over the rising costs of heating fuels and to offer support, voice, and input to his advocacy work in trying to keep fuel prices at a reasonable rate.

On January 14, 2022, the Coalition met with MP Clifford Small to appraise him of the issues on the federal agenda and to inform him of the Coalition's position on the issues identified to the Liberal MP's and to engage his support in accountability for these issues. A meeting has been requested before the House of Commons resumes at the end of January.

On January 19, 2022, the Coalition met with the Liberal MPs for Newfoundland & Labrador, including Minister Gudie Hutchings and Minister Seamus O'Regan, to discuss ongoing concerns for urgent and immediate action on a variety of issues, including a National Seniors Strategy, National Universal Pharmacare, Long Term Care Standards, Aging at Home, Preventative Health Services, Financial Security, and Seniors Poverty. Another meeting is anticipated early in 2023.

January 27, 2022, feedback was provided on the proposed legislative changes to the Building Accessibility Act.

In January, the Coalition wrote Minister Abbott and Minister Hogan concerning delayed amendments to the criminal code for elder abuse. This was the result of a Coalition meeting with Minister Abbott in December of 2021. The Minister replied that the matter would be on the agenda for an F/P/T meeting of Ministers for Seniors in February. The Coalition will continue to monitor this matter.

February 9, 2022, there was attendance at a HBE webinar on Healthy City Designs.

On February 16, 2022, NLPSPA hosted a virtual membership meeting on Tax Benefits and Credits presented by CRA.

On February 24, 2022, NLPSPA hosted another virtual membership meeting on How to Conserve Energy Use presented by TakeChargeNL.

On March 18, May 4, and again on May 31, letters were written to Minister John Abbott and Minister Sarah Stoodley to ensure that the increased usage of digital services for a variety of business uses was not to the detriment of those persons who did not have the equipment, skills and accessibility to such services.

On March 23, 2022, a Letter was sent to Minister Yves Duclos, Minister of Health, Canada, pressing for an immediate implementation of a National Universal Pharmacare Plan.

Also on March 23, 2022, another virtual membership meeting was presented "Demystifying Bankruptcy".

In March, the Association and the Coalition jointly issued a Press Statement calling upon the Provincial Government to take immediate action to remediate the escalating fuel prices by implementing tax relief measures and for fuel companies and distributors to exercise patience as customers struggle to pay their heating accounts this season.

In March, Ann Marie Cleary and I engaged in an online response to the guiding principles being established to guide the Long-Term Care Standards. The issues identified were no mention of family involvement; no metric for measuring outcomes; no identification of a policing body; no one accountable for COVID deaths, especially in private care settings; lack of penalties for noncompliance or under compliance; and the quality of care has no measurable goals or outcomes.

In March, April and May, the Association publicly acknowledged Administrative Professionals Day, National Day of Mourning, and National Volunteer Week.

At the end of May, another letter was sent to Government on problems with accessibility to the registration technology at the Blood Collection Service

on Major's Path. A rapid response was received from Minister John Haggie and the CEO of Eastern Health advising some remediation of the problem.

The Association participated regularly in meetings of the Seniors Groups Sub-Committee of the Vulnerable Populations Task Force.

The Association participated regularly in bi-weekly meetings of the Health Accord, Aging Populations Committee, and contributed considerably to the recommendations contained within the final report.

On July 25, 2022, Anne-Marie Cleary and I met with Darrin Fisher, the Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Seniors. The meeting was a discussion of Service Canada's services and delivery. There was an information session about grants that are available and the application process. It was stated that in some circumstances the funding of a grant does not coincide with the actual implementation of the grant project timeline. The application can be difficult to complete and the project for which funding is being sought often spans longer than a year, but the funding is annually limited, forcing groups to drop the project or find a new way to message the project in the application to seek continued funding.

On September 28, 2022, a meeting was held with Minister Tom Osborne, Health and Community Services. A number of topics were discussed, including pharmacare, the Blueprint for the Health Accord, Aging at Home and the need for services, building codes, vaccines, dental care, ageism, and digital services.

On October 20, 2022, a letter was sent to Government requesting an amendment to the Tourism Levy Tax to exempt guests who "for a daily charge, fee or remuneration are accommodated, lodge or stay in a room in a building within the city, that is licensed under the Tourist Establishments Act or owned by Memorial University" for purposes of medical or other health connected or health related treatment.

On November 14, 2022, a letter was sent to Government to seek their leadership in examining and revising the rates payable for mileage coverage for medical transportation through the Group Insurance Program and through the Medical Transportation Assistance Program.

On December 5, 2022, the Association and the Coalition sponsored a public engagement session with the Seniors' Advocate. The goal of the engagement was to hear the voice of seniors on current concerns, priorities, and ideas for positive change. High attention was given to health care, with additional reference to housing, transportation, and financial security and the high cost of living.

Last but by no means least were the actions taken by the Association and the Coalition to draw attention to the mis-direction being taken by Government in revising the Poverty Reduction Strategy, now being re-named as the Social & Economic Well-Being Plan. A meeting with the Government's engagement team was held on December 7, with a follow-up meeting held with Minister John Abbott and his staff team on December 21. The concerns expressed included the direction being taken by government to align this Plan with the Health Accord, to focus the discussions on life cycles emphasizing children, education, finance, housing and services currently being offered by government and their successes, and the lack of direction specific for seniors. On December 21, it was re-emphasized that Government was not getting the "on the ground picture", folks want some quick changes, and cannot wait 10 years for a full roll-out. The final message was "do some things now that put or allow more people to keep money in their pockets". It was also pointed out that the Income Support program and other programs were making people dependent and these programs all need a refocus to independence.

Conclusion: Clearly 2022 was a busy and active year in holding Government at all levels accountable. These and other actions will continue in 2023. ■



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