



# **The Future of Aging in Canada Virtual Symposium: What We Heard**

**June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

Prepared by:  
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for  
the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Forum of Ministers Responsible for Seniors

## **The Future of Aging in Canada Virtual Symposium: What We Heard**

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### **PDF**

Cat. No.: Em12-88/2022E-PDF

ISBN: 978-0-660-43402-5



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\*Québec contributes to the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Seniors Forum by sharing expertise, information and best practices. However, it does not subscribe to, or take part in, integrated federal, provincial, and territorial approaches to seniors. The Government of Québec intends to fully assume its responsibilities for seniors in Québec.

**Acknowledgements:**

Prepared by Candice Pollack Consulting for the Federal, Provincial and Territorial (FPT) Forum of Ministers Responsible for Seniors. The views expressed in this report may not reflect the official position of a particular jurisdiction.

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## Executive Summary

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the Federal / Provincial / Territorial Forum of Ministers Responsible for Seniors hosted a Virtual Stakeholder Symposium on the future of aging in Canada. With help from national partner organizations, AGE-WELL NCE, the Canadian Association of Gerontology, the Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, and United Way Centraide Canada, the Symposium explored four key themes:

- Technology to support seniors aging in community;
- Research and innovation in healthy aging;
- Addressing and preventing elder abuse; and
- Emerging best practices in supports for seniors and responding to social isolation.

The opening presentation highlighted the growing role of technology, or AgeTech, in supporting aging in place. Recent results from an AGE-WELL NCE survey indicated that more than 70% of Canadians over the age of 65 are confident using current technology and 66% of those aged 55 and over are willing to pay out-of-pocket for technologies that will help them remain at home and in their communities.

However, barriers remain to successful adoption of technologies that support aging in place. Guest speakers and Symposium participants shared that not all seniors can afford new technologies and the necessary infrastructure for high-speed internet is not accessible in every community. Moreover, many technologies are not designed with senior users in mind, making them difficult to use and incorporate into everyday life. And, lastly, support and training are needed to improve digital literacy for older Canadians, as they did not grow up with the kinds of technologies that are available today. As more and more of the world goes digital, increased efforts will need to be made to bridge the digital divide for seniors in Canada.

The next theme discussed at the Symposium was research and innovation in healthy aging. Aging research plays an important role in informed decision-making at individual, community, health service delivery, and policy levels. Symposium speakers and participants were asked to consider the core elements of a research agenda for the future of aging Canada:

- The first item on the agenda was equity, diversity, and inclusion. Seniors in Canada are a diverse group of people with different backgrounds, cultures, and lived experiences. Taking an intersectional approach to research on aging will generate a deeper understanding of the unique needs and goals of older Canadians while respecting the ways that their different identities have shaped their lives.
- Second, research on aging should include seniors and caregivers as research partners. When it comes to the challenges associated with aging, there are no better experts than seniors themselves. Research is an opportunity to amplify their voices and experiences so that Canadians can better understand the aging experience.
- Lastly, Canada's aging research agenda should focus on improving supports for aging in place. Canadians want to remain at home and in their communities for as long as possible. More research on best practices and innovations in home care, formal supports, and unpaid caregiving will help inform solutions that allow seniors to age the way that they want to, in the places that they want to be in.

During the second half of the Symposium, the conversation shifted to focus on some of the important social issues that seniors are facing: elder abuse and social isolation. Elder abuse comes in many different forms, it can be physical, emotional, financial, psychological, etc. Recent data suggests that the prevalence of elder abuse and mistreatment in Canada is about 8.2%. However, because elder abuse is so often underreported, it is estimated that up to 10% of older Canadians are actually victims of one or more kinds of abuse.

The situation worsened during the pandemic. As Canadians were asked to remain at home, many older adults became further disconnected and socially isolated, which are important risk factors for abuse. Symposium speakers and participants identified several areas for further research and action. The first was improved data collection on elder abuse to better understand its prevalence and the ways it is experienced by different groups of seniors. More training and education programs, as well as information on existing interventions and best practices were also discussed as critical components of a broader roadmap to ending elder abuse in Canada.

Lastly, Symposium speakers explored emerging best practices in supports for seniors and responding to social isolation. Even before the pandemic struck, the International Federation on Ageing had declared social isolation as the number one issue facing seniors in Canada.

When asked about promising practices to reducing social isolation, Symposium speakers and participants acknowledged the important contributions of senior-serving community organizations. Community organizations provide supports like service navigation, grocery shopping, meal preparation, housekeeping, etc. and ensure seniors stay connected through wellness checks, social and physical activities, and regular programming. For many seniors, community organizations became their main point of connection to food, services, mental health support, and friends over the last year. These organizations continuously step up to the plate to make sure that older Canadians receive the supports they need in their communities.

Technologies and intergenerational programming were also highlighted as effective tools for reducing isolation. Symposium participants shared success stories of pivoting to online services and how digital platforms have allowed them to connect more seniors. They also discussed the positive impacts of intergenerational programs like InterAGE, which help seniors form meaningful relationships, learn new skills, and stay connected to their communities while also providing mentorship and connection for young people.

At the close of the Symposium, speakers and participants considered their vision for the future of aging in Canada. In this future, aging will be supported. AgeTech will be accessible, affordable, and designed to meet the needs of older Canadians. Senior-serving organizations will have the flexibility and the resources they need to support seniors aging in community. Additionally, intergenerational relationships will keep older adults connected and engaged with family members and friends throughout their life course.

The future of aging will also be inclusive. In 20 years from now, the diversity of experiences of aging will be better heard and understood. Ageism will be as unacceptable as racism, and concerted efforts will be made to reach seniors in underserved communities and provide culturally competent and safe services to Indigenous seniors.

Lastly, in the future, aging will be celebrated. Older adults and their caregivers will be acknowledged as valued partners at every table, and more cities and communities will be age-friendly. The path forward to achieving this vision requires collective action. But, together,

Canadians can build a future where everyone can age well at home, in their communities, and surrounded by the people they care about the most.

## Introduction

According to Statistics Canada, by 2036, approximately 25% of Canadians will be over the age of 65 (Statistics Canada, 2015). After a lifetime of working hard, raising families, and contributing to their communities, older Canadians want to have the supports they need to age at home for as long as possible. While Canadians expect to experience continued personal growth and lifestyle changes as they age, they also expect to experience new challenges associated with getting older. Chronic health conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and dementia are more common among seniors (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2020). New mobility limits can impact activities of daily living like going grocery shopping or taking care of hygienic needs. Finances may become more restricted as seniors retire from the workforce, and new challenges to participating in social and recreational activities may arise.

Over the last year in particular, Canadians have witnessed the disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the aging population. Seniors were at greater risk of becoming seriously ill from exposure to COVID-19 (Government of Canada, 2021; World Health Organization, 2020). Older Canadians living in long-term care facilities were among the most affected groups; during the first wave of the pandemic, residents of long-term care homes accounted for approximately 80% of COVID-19 related deaths across the country (Hsu et al., 2020). In addition to the increased health risks, physical distancing orders left many seniors socially isolated from their friends and families and prevented them from receiving some of the supports needed to stay engaged and connected to their communities (Armitage & Nellums, 2020).

By limiting social support networks and exacerbating healthcare needs, the COVID-19 pandemic shed a light on the many challenges that Canadian seniors were already facing to aging in place. As the population continues to age, Canadians need now, more than ever, to be asking themselves critical questions about what they want the future of aging to look like in Canada.

## About the Virtual Stakeholder Symposium

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the Federal / Provincial / Territorial Forum of Ministers Responsible for Seniors (Forum) hosted a Virtual Stakeholder Symposium (Symposium) on the Future of Aging in Canada. The Symposium aimed to bring together experts, practitioners, and researchers from across the country to discover and discuss innovations and promising practices in aging. Over 650 people from every province and territory in Canada tuned in over Zoom, with many more Canadians livestreaming the event on YouTube.

The Symposium began with welcoming remarks from the Ministerial Co-Chairs of the Forum, Honourable Josephine Pon, Minister of Seniors & Housing for the Government of Alberta, and Honourable Deb Schulte, Minister of Seniors for the Government of Canada. Their remarks were followed by words of welcome from the Prime Minister of Canada, Rt. Honourable Justin Trudeau. Following these introductions, four key themes regarding the future of aging in Canada were explored:

- Technology to support seniors aging in community
- Research and innovation in healthy aging
- Addressing and preventing elder abuse



- Emerging best practices in supports for seniors and responding to social isolation

Each of the four themes were introduced by one of the Symposium's national partner organizations: AGE-WELL NCE, the Canadian Association of Gerontology, the Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, and United Way Centraide Canada. These organizations helped plan the event, contributed their knowledge and expertise on the four themes, shared best practices and innovations, and participated on the speaker panels (for a full list of speakers, see **Annex A**).

Following this was a third and final panel, where partner organizations reflected on the lessons they learned over the past year and their visions for the future of aging in Canada. They discussed how Canadians rose to the occasion amid a global pandemic to keep older adults safe. They also acknowledged that more work must be done to make sure every senior in Canada can age well at home and in their communities.

The Symposium closed with a call to action for participants: share their knowledge, expertise, and ideas about aging in Canada with the Federal / Provincial / Territorial Forum of Ministers Responsible for Seniors. This Report highlights what was heard, both from partner organizations and from Canadians, regarding the four themes of the Symposium and how Canada is innovating to improve the future of aging. For a detailed list of organizations who provided submissions to inform this Report, please see **Annex B**.

## Partner Organizations

The Virtual Stakeholder Symposium on the Future of Aging in Canada was made possible with support from the following national partner organizations:



### AGE-WELL NCE

AGE-WELL NCE was launched in 2015 through the federally funded Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) program. It is a pan-Canadian network of over 5000 older adults, caregivers, researchers, partner organizations and future leaders working together to accelerate the delivery of technology-based solutions that make a meaningful difference in the lives of Canadians.

### Canadian Association of Gerontology

The Canadian Association of Gerontology is a national, multidisciplinary scientific and educational association established to provide leadership in matters related to the aging population. Founded in 1971, their mission is to improve the lives of older Canadians through the creation and dissemination of knowledge in gerontological policy, practice, research, and education.

### Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse

The Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse is a pan-Canadian charity made up of individuals and organizations who care about older adults and the prevention of harm in later life. Their mission is to connect people and organizations, foster the exchange of reliable information, and advance program and policy development on issues related to preventing the abuse of older adults in Canada.

### United Way Centraide Canada

United Way Centraide Canada is a federated network of 76 local United Way Centraides serving more than 5,000 communities across Canada. Together, their mission is to create opportunities for a better life for everyone in our communities. United Way Centraide's broad support focuses on three key pillars: moving people from poverty to possibility, helping kids be all they can be, and building strong and healthy communities.

## Technology to Support Seniors Aging in Community

The first theme explored at the Symposium was the role of technology in helping seniors age at home and in their communities. For many, the word technology evokes thoughts of virtual reality or artificial intelligence. However, AgeTech includes everything from eyeglasses, hip protectors, and wheelchairs to wearable devices like smart watches and more high-tech tools like sensors, robots, and smart homes. These technologies benefit older adults in many ways; they can increase access to necessary health and social services, monitor and improve physical and cognitive function, and help seniors maintain their mobility and independence as they age (AGE-WELL, nd; Stanley, 2015).

*64% of Canadians aged 65+ believe that technology advances can help to lessen the impact of COVID-19 on their daily lives (AGE-WELL NCE, 2020).*

Like the rest of Canadians during the pandemic, older adults turned to technology to help them stay active, healthy, and connected to their communities. A poll done by AGE-WELL in 2020 found that **88% of Canadians aged 65 and over are using the internet every day and 65% own a smartphone** (AGE-WELL, 2020). Over the first year of the pandemic, seniors nearly doubled their use of video calls as a way to communicate with their families and friends (AGE-WELL, 2020). In addition, nearly three-quarters of older Canadians are confident using the technologies currently available to them, and 66% are willing to pay out-of-pocket for AgeTech that will help them live safely and independently at home for longer (AGE-WELL, 2020).

As the interest in technology-based solutions to aging in place increases, so too has the development of AgeTech to meet seniors' needs. The Forum asked partner organizations and Symposium participants to share with them examples of innovations that can help seniors age in community. Here are some of the technologies and programs that were identified:

[Braze Mobility](#) developed an add-on obstacle-detection sensor system that can transform a regular wheelchair into a “smart” wheelchair that prevents collisions. The sensor can provide different kinds of alerts to the wheelchair user that identifies the location of obstacles in their way.

[Welbi](#) is a software platform that creates personalized wellness programs to help older adults in seniors' residences stay active. Welbi automates the administrative work done by recreation programmers in long-term care homes, helping them create activity calendars that take into consideration every resident's needs. It can also generate personal wellness programs for individual use.

[Emitto by Novalte](#) integrates existing smart technologies in a home or care facility on to a single platform that is easy to use. As a result, older adults are empowered to use technologies in a way that best meets their needs, and caregivers can spend more time focusing on personal interactions instead of managing care tools.

[McMaster's Optimal Aging Portal](#) is an online resource that provides free evidence-based information about healthy aging through blog posts, web resource ratings, and evidence summaries.

**Zoom Support During the COVID-19 Pandemic** (Submission by Ryerson Leadership Lab, 2021) is a webpage that includes a list of training resources, videos, and online events focused on teaching practical Zoom navigation and setup skills. It also includes information about privacy, security, and telehealth services on Zoom.

**Home EXCEPT** is a customizable privacy-protecting home monitoring system to prevent accidents for seniors at home. Smart sensor tags can be placed on household objects that are used by older adults daily. The tags use artificial intelligence to detect patterns of everyday living and flag potential indicators of future risk.

**Altum View** offers access to a low-cost fall detection sensor with built-in privacy features for older adults and their caregivers. The sensor, called Sentinare, detects and analyzes human activities to identify trends and sends alerts when emergencies are detected. The technology focuses on privacy protection by sending stick-figure data instead of videos to its users.

*“Technology is not going to take over person to person connections - the type that really matters. [I hope to learn] that technology will somehow allow more face-to-face and one-on-ones.” – Coalition of senior serving organizations*

Although AgeTech is an important tool in the toolbox, it is not meant to replace human touch and will not, on its own, solve the complex challenges Canada faces to supporting seniors who want to age in place.

At the Symposium, speakers expressed that **equitable access to technology is a human right**. Nonetheless, Canada faces a digital divide between those who have the knowledge and resources to use technologies, and those who do not. These resources are often referred to as the “*digital determinants of health*”.

Digital determinants of health interact with, and are influenced by, the social determinants of health. They consider factors like reliable high-speed internet access, digital literacy, and access to technology devices as critical components of an individual’s health and well-being, alongside traditional social determinants like income and geography (Crawford & Serhal, 2020). Symposium participants indicated that, when it comes to technologies that support seniors to age in place, proactive measures must be taken to address the digital divide among Canadians. The biggest barriers to overcome are:

## Accessibility

Technologies and the infrastructure needed to support them have to be available and affordable for all seniors in Canada. Many rural and remote communities still do not have access to high-speed internet. While Canada’s Connectivity Strategy aims to get 100% of Canadians connected to reliable internet access by 2030 (Innovation, Science, and Economic Development, 2020), infrastructure support needs to go further. Older Canadians want one-on-one support and training, recommendations on what applications to use, and help to identify how they can get more out of being online. Moreover, technology devices and internet subscriptions need to be affordable for seniors who live on fixed or low-income. All technologies, from assistive devices like hearing aids to computers and smart phones, need to be priced affordably and support is required for device maintenance that reduces the need for regular upgrades.

## Usability

Technologies developed for seniors in Canada need to be user-friendly. Research should be leveraged to better understand the needs and perspectives of older adults when it comes to using technologies: how do they navigate the tools they are using, what frustrates and excites them about the technology, and what are their concerns when it comes to safeguarding their personal information. Older adults also face unique challenges when using technologies. By involving seniors in technology development, challenges can be addressed or overcome during the solution design process. For example, while a senior may be confident using their smartphone, some of the applications they use may have font sizes that are too small for them to read. Engaging with seniors during the technology development process will ensure that usability issues are addressed and solutions are developed that best meet their needs.

*“The pandemic has been a catalyst for more older adults getting involved; they have embraced technology when they have the means to” –Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse – Symposium Speaker*

## Digital Literacy

New forms of technology can be confusing and frustrating to use, even for people with high levels of digital competency. For older adults, who did not grow up with the types of technologies that are used regularly today, such as social media, smart phones, tablets, etc., limited digital literacy can become a complete barrier to participation. Concerns about privacy and online security intensify the challenge, as information about how to stay safe online is not always accessible. Developing a deeper understanding of how seniors use and navigate technological tools is necessary in order to create tailored support programs that can increase literacy and reduce the digital divide for older Canadians.

*“When technologies are available, for example being able to FaceTime with grandchildren, it will be helpful to know how these means of connecting compare to genuine face-to-face time spent together. Are there some technologies that can significantly reduce the harms of social isolation [for Elders in communities?]” - Advocacy Organization (Indigenous Peoples)*

As more and more services go digital, overcoming these barriers will be critical to preventing further systemic inequities. Particular equity concerns were raised regarding low-income seniors, seniors living in rural and remote communities, older seniors who are hesitant or resistant to technology adoption, and seniors from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds whose first language is not English or French. Moreover, targeted action will need to be taken on connectivity for Indigenous communities. Given limited broadband in many First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, more research is needed to understand to what extent Indigenous People are using technologies, how technologies can be aligned with the needs of seniors in the community, and what readily available technologies can be deployed to improve wellness and aging for Indigenous People.

## Research and Innovation in Healthy Aging

Research on aging plays a critical role in informing the decisions made at a policy, health service delivery, and community level in Canada. It generates a deeper understanding of the experiences, needs, and challenges associated with aging and supports the design of innovative solutions to aging in place. Research in aging has been more important than ever over the course of the past year as Canadians came together to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a means of fostering research and collaboration, several Canadian organizations have leveraged their resources to form networks for aging research. Some of the innovative networks we heard about include:

- [AGE-WELL NCE](#) engages over 250 researchers, 1000 trainees, 50 startups and 5000 older adults and caregivers on research in technology and aging.
- The [Canadian Association of Gerontology](#) brings together a dynamic mix of people with an interest in gerontology, from healthcare professionals to researchers and academics, to government representatives, national organization executives, students, and seniors.
- Hospice Palliative Care Ontario has established the [Compassionate Community](#) – a community of practice for researchers to come together and explore new ideas in order to guide change that supports aging in place.

Given the crucial role that research plays in supporting informed decision-making, Symposium participants were asked to share their top priorities for an aging research agenda. Responses from partner organizations, as well as people from all corners of the country, suggested that Canada's aging research agenda should focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion for seniors, meaningful engagement of older Canadians in research activities, and best practices for supporting aging in place.

### Ageism and the Impacts on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion for Seniors

Older Canadians are not a homogeneous group of people. Every senior in Canada has a unique lived experience that is shaped by their culture, values, ethnicity, language, community, and other socioeconomic influences on their lives.

*Ageism refers to the “use of stereotypes, prejudice, or discrimination to categorize and divide people in a way that leads to harm, disadvantage, or injustice on the basis of their age” (World Health Organization).*

Nevertheless, public discourse often places everyone over the age of 65 in the same group. In fact, some of the **public health messaging during the pandemic reinforced this ageist belief**. Older Canadians were often portrayed as frail and vulnerable because of the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 on their physical and mental well-being. This portrayal fails to consider the intersectional identities of older Canadians and acknowledge the **worsened impacts of COVID-19 on people of colour, individuals living with disabilities, and low-income seniors** (Statistics Canada, 2021).



When asking research questions, Canadians want to ensure that the unique experiences of older adults are considered. In particular, research should include seniors who are First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, seniors who live with disabilities, have low incomes, are part of the LGBTQIA2S+ community or visible minority groups, and more.

*“We know that the number of First Nations’ individuals with disabilities increases with age as over 50% of First Nations’ individuals above 50 years old report activity limitations. How can we better support First Nations seniors with disabilities?” – Advocacy Organization (Indigenous Peoples)*

Asking questions that examine the impacts of policies and programs on the diversity of seniors in our communities is critical to combating ageism. Ageism has significant negative impacts on the health, well-being, and human rights of older persons. Consequences can include shorter lifespans, poorer physical and mental health, slower recovery from disability and cognitive decline, increased social isolation and loneliness, and increased risk of experiencing some form of violence (World Health Organization, 2021). According to the World Health Organization, globally, **1 in 2 people are ageist against older persons** (World Health Organization, 2021). Yet, research and data on ageism is limited. A participant submission from the Centre on Aging at the University of Manitoba shared that “ageism underlies so many issues related to older people in Canadian society, whether it is at the policy level, businesses, or within older people themselves. Right now, even Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committees and initiatives fail to delve into this as an issue.” More research is needed to ensure equity and inclusion in programs and services for the diversity of older adults in Canada as they age.

## Meaningful Engagement of Older Adults in Research

Symposium participants highlighted the importance of listening to and amplifying the voices of older adults in research. Canadians want to better understand the social meaning and lived experience of being a senior, and they know that the experts in this area are seniors themselves.

Older adults need to be engaged as partners in research. Research partnerships with seniors begin with asking them directly about what their needs are, what challenges they face, what they are most concerned about, and what they want aging in place to look like for themselves and their peers. Equipped with greater knowledge of their hopes and challenges, researchers can then work together with seniors to design studies, solutions, and innovations for the future of aging in Canada. Each solution should be tested with older adults, and their feedback must be central to its evaluation as a successful support for aging in place.

*“How will you engage older adults in a meaningful and collaborative way as co-designers and co-leaders of research, innovation, and knowledge translation/implementation in supporting healthy aging in a way that matters to them?” – Advocacy Organization (Seniors)*

There are many ways that researchers can engage older adults and amplify their voices and experiences. From consultations and focus groups to leadership and review committees, research partnerships with seniors can look different in every project. Some innovative examples that were shared include:

- [Across These Worlds Podcast](#) is a podcast that is co-hosted by Dr. Jie Zhang at the University of Victoria and her colleague Anne, a resident of an assisted living facility. Anne is in her 80s and lives with dementia. She also has a wealth of knowledge in nursing, caregiving, housing development, and senior advocacy. In each podcast episode, Jie and Anne talk about their life stories and share practical information about aging in place for their listeners.
- [Brief Practical Guide to Older Adults' Engagement in Technology Projects](#) is a guide with tools for researchers on how to work with seniors as project partners. Key components of the guide include timelines and activities for recruiting seniors to participate in research, how to obtain informed consent, how to facilitate participation, learning, and conceptualization, and best practices for valuing seniors' engagement and feedback.

## Research to Support Aging in Place

Lastly, partner organizations and Symposium participants highlighted research on supports and best practices for aging in place as the biggest priority for Canada's future of aging agenda. Access to appropriate care still acts as a barrier for many seniors who want to age at home. For First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities, supporting seniors to remain in the community, where they are surrounded by the land and their families and friends, is especially challenging. There are few long-term care resources in rural and remote areas, which increases the pressure on unpaid and formal caregivers to meet the complex medical care needs of seniors in their lives.

### ***Innovation: My Bingo Hub Team***

*“When it comes to aging in place, many supports are already available; however, seniors and family caregivers are often not aware of them when they need it the most. The process of finding reliable information and connecting to the right program or services is both time consuming and inefficient. In an effort to help bridge these gaps, we took on this initiative and created an easy-to-use practical tool that serves as the one stop shop for our end users to better address and coordinate different needs related with aging in place. The goal is for mature adults and family members to be able to find reliable up-to-date health and social information, get connected to different programs and vetted service providers as well as register for events and sign up as a member of different groups all under one platform.” – Community-based seniors serving organization*

Canadians want to know more about innovations in formal supports, like home care, and informal supports, like intergenerational connections, that can enable seniors to age in place. For First Nations in particular, there is added emphasis on the principle of Bringing Care Closer to Home and exploring innovations that will allow seniors to get the long-term care, hospice, and palliative services they need within their communities.

Furthermore, research on improved supports for unpaid caregivers was identified as a priority. Unpaid caregivers play a significant role in providing care to aging Canadians. Despite their important contributions to the healthcare system, caregiving roles often carry heavy social and financial burdens (Fast et al., 2020). Caregivers have to balance time for their work, families,



and care obligations on a long-term basis. They assume costs for out-of-pocket expenses of their care recipients. Unpaid caregivers also have to navigate the complex web of health and social services for seniors, among their many other caregiving responsibilities. More research is needed to better understand the experience of unpaid caregivers, as well as to identify solutions that will alleviate the social and economic burden of caregiving for Canadians.

## Addressing and Preventing Elder Abuse

During the second half of the Symposium, the conversation shifted to focus on some of the important social issues that seniors are facing. The first issue discussed was elder abuse. Elder abuse comes in many different forms. From physical and sexual abuse, emotional harms and neglect, systemic ageism and violations of human dignity, and financial and legal manipulation or coercion, older adults can be subject to a variety of violations of their fundamental human rights (Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, nd). Recent data from the National Initiative for the Care of Elderly suggests that about 8.2% of Canadians over the age of 55 (over 750,000 Canadians) have experienced some form of mistreatment (National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly, 2015).

Elder abuse is often underreported. Lack of awareness, social isolation, and family relationships are all barriers that may prevent someone from reporting abuse. Because of these barriers, it is estimated that **up to 10% of older Canadians are actually silent victims of one or more kinds of elder abuse** (Justice Canada, 2015).

### ***Innovation: In Hand: A Mistreatment of Older Adults Intervention Ethical Decision-Making Framework***

*In Hand was designed to support health and social service practitioners in their ethical reflection during the intervention process in a situation where an older adult has suffered mistreatment. This decision-making framework targets various competing values arising in a situation of mistreatment and introduces various suggestions for practice.*

This situation worsened during the pandemic. As Canadians were asked to remain at home, many seniors became further disconnected and socially isolated. An isolated senior may lack access to basic necessities like groceries, be more vulnerable to scammers, or be trapped at home with their abuser. At the same time, the services that are usually provided to seniors by community-based organizations were disrupted. As a result, older adults living at home during COVID-19 reported higher rates of isolation and mental health struggles (Canadian Red Cross, 2020).

Combatting elder abuse requires collaboration and collective action. Action needs to be taken at individual, organizational, community, and policy levels. Some of the critical areas for further action that were identified by Symposium participants include improved data collection, training and education resources, and knowledge sharing on interventions and best practices to prevent and address elder abuse.

## Improved data collection

Canada lacks important data about the experience and prevalence of elder abuse. The most recent pan-Canadian elder abuse study was conducted six years ago. This study did not provide a detailed outlook into the prevalence of elder abuse at the provincial and territorial levels. It also did not capture the intersectionality of older adult identities. Thus, more research and improved data collection on the prevalence and impacts of elder abuse in Canada is needed. Further, data collection should be disaggregated, or broken down, by sociodemographic factors like age, sex and gender, sexual orientation, culture and ethnicity, etc. to improve understanding of how diverse groups of seniors experience elder abuse.

## Training and education resources

Canadians need more education and training resources that raises awareness on how to recognize the signs of elder abuse and what to do about it if they see it happening. Symposium participants shared the belief that more training and education resources should be deployed at all levels of society. General awareness campaigns can be used to inform the public about how to recognize the signs of elder abuse. Curriculum on elder abuse and ageism can be incorporated in schools and post-secondary institutions to increase societal awareness of the issue.

*“Training that is not geared to social services or health professionals is needed, and resources in French are scarce.” – Advocacy Organization (Seniors living in official language minority communities)*

Additionally, training has to be provided to professionals and volunteers who work with seniors on a regular basis, such as nurses, social workers, personal support workers, and community-based organizations. It should also be provided to professionals that interact with seniors in areas where abuse is prevalent: lawyers, banking staff, and police officers can all play a role in preventing and identifying elder abuse in communities. An innovative training program identified by Symposium participants was the [“It’s Not Right: Neighbours, Friends and Families for Older Adults”](#) pilot. This bystander intervention training program was deployed in every province and territory in Canada and provides training on how to recognize and address signs of elder abuse in community.

## Interventions and best practices

Lastly, Symposium participants wanted to know more about existing best practices to prevent and address elder abuse. More information is needed on effective interventions, educational resources, and training activities to determine what should be invested in and scaled to other communities. The Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (CNPEA) is taking the lead on this work through their [Roadmap to Increase Elder Abuse Prevention](#). Together with their partners at the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children, Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario, CanAge, the Canadian Centre for Elder Law, NICE, Egale Canada, and the International Longevity Centre Canada, CNPEA is working on a tool that stakeholders can use to figure out where the gaps are in their community and what they can do to improve their approach to elder abuse prevention. The Roadmap will outline what works, what does not, what the gaps are, and how they can best be filled to meet local needs. Through

this Roadmap, individuals and communities will be empowered to take action and work together to address elder abuse at a local, regional, and national level.

## Emerging Best Practices in Supports for Seniors and Responding to Social Isolation

The final theme explored during the Symposium was social isolation of older Canadians. Social isolation can be defined as a lack of meaningful interactions with others (HelpAge Canada, nd). It has important physical and mental health impacts including depression, anxiety, and physical and cognitive decline (Statistics Canada, 2020). Even before the pandemic struck, the International Federation on Ageing had declared social isolation as the number one issue facing seniors in Canada (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2021).

Over the last year, as Canadians were asked to stay home and limit in-person interactions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, instances of social isolation worsened for older adults. Seniors living in rural areas or long-term care facilities, those who have lower incomes or decreased mobility, and seniors who have limited digital literacy skills were all identified as individuals at higher risk of isolation.

Symposium participants indicated they want to know more about the strategies used to identify people living in isolation, as well as the innovations that were applied and tested during the pandemic to keep older adults connected. Participants also highlighted that social isolation is a mainstream term that may not reflect the experiences of Indigenous Peoples. Further engagement is needed with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples to better understand their cultural needs as it relates to connection with their lands, youth, families, and communities.

*“There has never been a time in history that our population has experienced a loss of social interaction as we have through the COVID-19 pandemic. We must understand the severe impact this has had on seniors living in place (at home), seniors’ community centres, and for those separated from family while living in their bedrooms in long-term care homes. The health impact must be measured and acted on.” – Advocacy Organization (Retirement and Income Security)*

Research demonstrates that community programming, technologies, and intergenerational interventions are all effective tools to reduce isolation among older adults. The innovations shared by Symposium speakers and participants confirms the important role that these organizations and programs play in supporting seniors, both during COVID-19 and beyond.

### Senior-serving community organizations

Senior-serving community organizations play a critical role in supporting older Canadians to age in place. Community organizations provide supports like service navigation, grocery shopping, meal preparation, housekeeping, etc. and ensure seniors stay connected through wellness checks, social and physical activities, and regular programming.

*“What has happened in every community across the country is that the community services sector serving seniors have really mobilized, adapted, and innovated to find*

*new ways to connect with seniors that are struggling with isolation”. –United Way Centraide Canada – Symposium Speaker*

When COVID-19 hit and physical distancing measures were put in place, senior-serving community organizations pivoted their work and stepped up to the plate to make sure that their clients got the help that they needed. They put many of their in-person programs on hold and shifted to virtual activities. They ramped up food delivery services and phone call wellness checks to see how their clients were coping with the pandemic. For many seniors, community organizations became their main point of connection to food, services, mental health support, and friends over the last year. A few of the innovative community programs identified by Symposium participants include:

[United Way of Lower Mainland’s Safe Seniors, Strong Communities Program](#) helps older adults aged 65 and over get the supports they need while staying safe at home. Seniors can dial 211 or complete an online form to request volunteer help with grocery shopping, meal prep and prescription pick-up or receive a friendly check-in call. Their requests will be sent to one of the province’s Better at Home COVID response agencies who will match seniors with local volunteers to help meet their needs.

[Seniors Centres Without Walls](#) provides free educational and recreational telephone-based programming for adults over the age of 55. SCWW programs create safe and inclusive spaces for seniors to learn, connect, and form friendships. Programming topics include educational presentations, health and wellness, language classes, book clubs, travelogues and support groups.

[United Way Centraide Canada’s 211 telephone line and online directory](#) helps connect Canadians with vital community and social resources, close to home and specific to their needs. For seniors, 211 can connect them to services related to housing, food, housekeeping, mental health supports, and more.

[Let No One Be Alone Week](#) is a grassroots initiative in Manitoba where community resource coordinators organize activities that raise awareness of social isolation and provide opportunities to make new connections. Coordinators arrange a wide variety of events including teas, volunteer phone programs, dinners, and entertainment. They offer transportation for each activity as well.

## Technologies to reduce social isolation

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, most Canadians turned to technology to stay connected with their friends and families. Older adults were no exception. Research shows that technologies that enable people to maintain meaningful connections with their communities can greatly improve quality of life and decrease loneliness and isolation (Khosravi et al., 2016; Chen & Schulz, 2016). Several organizations shared success stories of pivoting to online programming in their submissions. Many identified that digital services allowed them to reach more users and connect more people.

Nevertheless, key barriers exist for older adults turning to technology to stay connected, particularly for those who are low-income or living with a disability, and those in rural and remote communities or long-term care homes. Seniors need to have access to technologies and learn

how to use them. Symposium participants shared a few examples of innovative programs and technologies that help seniors who have limited digital literacy get connected:

[2RaceWithMe](#) is a technology that motivates seniors to pedal through engaging travel videos as a means of helping them stay active and connected. Using hand or foot pedals, individuals can pedal alone or race against others in their care home or with people in remote locations. Family members, friends, or other caregivers can be notified when an older adult is using the device and can start a video chat with them to cheer them on.

**Hi, Tech!** (Submission by March of Dimes Canada, 2021) was developed to help people with disabilities learn how to use platforms such as Zoom, MS Teams, Skype, and Facebook so they can connect with friends, family and community virtually. Clients interested in learning are matched with a volunteer who can provide one-on-one coaching. The client and volunteer will meet as often as needed until the client can confidently use technology independently and engage in meaningful activities.

[FamliNet](#) is an easy-to-learn platform that helps seniors and their family members get connected digitally. The platform has automatic group-sharing, one-to-one chat functions, pictures of the user's contacts, simple icons, and training tools to help seniors develop their digital skills. It also has gaming and scrapbooking activities that seniors can use along with their care circle members.

[Lonely No More Program](#) is an effective virtual outreach model to empower seniors in rural communities who self-identify with the negative impacts of social isolation. It enhances well-being through co-facilitating new networks, and enables improved community engagement through peer support, coaching conversations and system navigation.

## Intergenerational programming

Lastly, Symposium participants highlighted the importance of intergenerational programming as a means of reducing social isolation for seniors. Intergenerational activities can help seniors form meaningful relationships, learn new skills, and stay connected to their communities (Shaw & Konnert, 2014). They can also provide mentorship and connection for young people. Intergenerational programs are particularly important for First Nations, where maintaining connections with young people is an important role for elders in the community. Although many intergenerational programs had to be put on hold in the last year, Symposium participants want to see more of these best practices scaled at a local level. A few examples of innovative intergenerational programs include:

[The Intergenerational Activities for Growth and Engagement project \(InterAGE\)](#) is a unique experiential learning opportunity and research project where students at the University of Northern British Columbia complete an on-site special topics course while living and sharing activities together with older adults in a Northern Health Authority housing location. Initiated by Dr. Shannon Freeman and Professor Dawn Hemingway, the overarching goal of InterAGE is to improve the mental health and wellbeing of residents through increased social engagement with university students, while also providing students with a unique co-housing opportunity to connect with and learn from older adults in a day-to-day living environment.

[Canada HomeShare](#) is a program run by the National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly (NICE) that matches older adults (55+) with a spare room in their home who would benefit from receiving additional income and/or help around the home with university and college students seeking affordable housing. In exchange for reduced rent, students provide up to 7 hours per month of companionship or assistance with light housekeeping responsibilities.

## The Future of Aging in Canada

At the close of the Symposium, partner organizations were asked to reflect on their lessons learned over the last year while looking ahead to the future of aging in Canada. Every speaker shared that, despite the challenges that were faced, a spirit of collaboration has guided Canada's pandemic response. Government, academia, industry, healthcare and frontline service providers, non-profit organizations, communities, and individual Canadians stepped up and worked better together to keep people safe and limit the spread of COVID-19. This "**all hands-on deck**" approach needs to continue forward. Symposium participants believe that the complex challenges that come with an aging population need to be tackled with the same dedication to collective action.

The future of aging in Canada is everyone's future. Symposium speakers and participants were asked to share what they believe the experience of aging should be 20 or 30 years from now. Their responses focused on a future where aging is **supported, inclusive, and celebrated**.

### Aging is Supported

*"As an older adult walks into their smart home, there may be floor tiles that collect vital signs such as heart rate, and blood pressure, and it does this automatically. They may have an intelligent mirror that helps them with tasks such as washing their hands and brushing their teeth. Motion sensors can detect falls automatically and connect the older adult to family members or emergency services..." – AGE-WELL NCE – Symposium Speaker*

In the future, every senior will be supported to age the way that they want, in the places that they want to be in. Innovation will happen at the individual, community, and systemic levels to ensure seniors are better supported to age in place. Partner organizations and Symposium participants identified some key building blocks for that future as follows:

- AgeTech like motion sensors and vital sign monitors, which already exist today, will need to become accessible, affordable, and easy to integrate into an older adult's daily life.
- Senior-serving organizations will need flexible and sustainable funding models that support them to work together toward improving the lives of the seniors in their local communities.
- Research on aging must be translated accurately and efficiently into practice so that healthcare professionals can have the evidence and tools they need to provide the best possible care to older Canadians.



- Intergenerational relationships will need to be nurtured so that all Canadians, young and old, will have the opportunity to learn from and support each other across the lifecycle.
- Investments in infrastructure and coordination within the health and social care systems will need to be made to support stakeholders involved in the senior-serving sector to build trusting relationships that allow them to continue working better together.

## Aging is Inclusive

The future of aging in Canada will also be inclusive. In 20 years from now, the diversity of experiences of aging will be better heard and understood. Every senior will be supported and respected, regardless of their age, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, ability, or other intersectional identity. Ageism will be as unacceptable as racism, and the rights of older persons will be protected, preserved, and promoted, no matter who they are or where they live.

Furthermore, aging will be understood as a distinct and unique process for every person. In the future, focused efforts will be made to reach seniors in underserved communities and to provide culturally competent and safe services to Indigenous seniors. Partner organizations and Symposium participants indicated that these efforts should include:

- Obtaining better data on the health and social outcomes of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit seniors in a manner that respects the OCAP principles and improves understanding of the unique needs of each community.
- Identifying the quality-of-life measures for aging that are important from an Indigenous perspective, such as access to traditional foods and activities, connection to the land and to young people, and more.
- Shifting mainstream concepts of aging to strengths-based language that draws on the traditional knowledge of Indigenous People to positively describe the aging process.
- Regularly engaging with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people to create a seamless continuum of care that mixes western and traditional concepts of health and medicine, incorporates traditional knowledge and virtual healthcare, and encourages Indigenous-led innovation to support aging in place.

## Aging is Celebrated

Lastly, in the future, aging will be an experience that Canadians celebrate. Older adults and their caregivers will be acknowledged as valued partners at every table. Partner organizations and Symposium participants shared that, in order to achieve this future, Canadians need to work together to:

- Meaningfully integrate the voices of seniors and their care partners in the conversations about aging that take place at local, regional, and national levels.
- Improve recognition of the important contributions made by care partners and provide them with support that enables a better balance between their care responsibilities and the other aspects of their lives.

- Capitalize on the United Nations Decade of Healthy Aging by making more cities age-friendly and more organizations age-inclusive.

The future of aging involves a paradigm shift that acknowledges seniors as valued members of every community. Together, Canadians can build this future, so that everyone can age well at home, in their communities, and surrounded by the people they care about the most.



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## Annex A. Virtual Stakeholder Symposium Speakers

### The Honourable Josephine Pon, Minister of Seniors & Housing, Alberta

Minister Josephine Pon was elected to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta on April 16, 2019 as the MLA for Calgary-Beddington, and was appointed as Alberta's Minister of Seniors and Housing on April 30, 2019.

Pon has a wealth of work experience in banking. For more than 20 years, she has worked with three major chartered banks: HSBC, Royal Bank, and Scotiabank. Her experience included both personal and commercial banking. Her most recent appointment was as the Regional Manager, Business Development responsible for Multicultural Banking where she worked with more than 3,000 Scotiabank staff in the Prairie Region. During her career in the banking industry, she also worked at Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), a crown corporation in mortgage insurance, as an International Trade Consultant and in the Assisted Housing department for the Prairie Region.



Prior to being elected as an MLA and being appointed as Minister, Pon was the Vice President of the Taste of Asia Group in Calgary. This executive role provided her the opportunity to enhance her corporate business experience and get personal insight into the current economic situation in Alberta, especially the challenges faced by business owners, restaurant employees, and everyday Albertans.

Pon has actively volunteered with numerous non-profit organizations in Calgary and Edmonton throughout her life. She was a member of the working group on the Edmonton Mayor's Task Force to Eliminate Poverty, the Board Chair of Immigrant Services Calgary (ISC), Chair of the ISC Immigrants of Distinction Awards Gala, Vice President of the Hong Kong Canada Business Association, and Cultural Advisor for the Glenbow Museum.

## The Honourable Deb Schulte, Minister of Seniors, Canada

The Honourable Deb Schulte was first elected as the Member of Parliament for King–Vaughan in 2015.

Minister Schulte is an accomplished community leader who served as a former and regional councillor for the City of Vaughan. In 2017, her dedication to the diversity of her community was highlighted when her Private Member's Motion was passed, marking every June as Italian Heritage Month in Canada.

A local advocate for most of her life, Minister Schulte was appointed to the Greenbelt Task Force and served on the Board of Directors of the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing and preserving one of southern Ontario's most distinct landscapes. Minister Schulte is a long-time member of the Humber Watershed Alliance, now known as the Regional Watershed Alliance.



Minister Schulte has a degree in mechanical and aerospace engineering from Princeton University, and 22 years of engineering and business experience with Bombardier Aerospace, now known as Bombardier Aviation. Minister Schulte lives in Vaughan with her husband, Dave, and their two sons.

## Dr. Alex Mihailidis, Ph.D, P.Eng., AGE-WELL NCE

Professor Alex Mihailidis is the Associate Vice-President for International Partnerships at the University of Toronto (U of T), as well as the Scientific Director of the AGE-WELL Network of Centres of Excellence, which focuses on the development of new technologies and services for older adults. He is a Professor in the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy (U of T) and in the Institute of Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering (U of T), with a cross appointment in the Department of Computer Science (U of T).



Professor Mihailidis has been conducting research in the field of technology and environments to support older adults or the past 17 years, having published over 200 journal papers, conference papers, and abstracts in this field. Dr. Mihailidis is also very active in the rehabilitation engineering profession, currently as the Immediate Past-President for RESNA (Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America). He was also named a Fellow of RESNA in 2014, which is one of the highest honours within this field of research and practice.

Professor Mihailidis received a B.A.Sc. in Mechanical Engineering from University of Toronto in 1996, a M.A.Sc. in Biomedical Engineering in 1998 from the University of Toronto, and a PhD in Bioengineering (Rehabilitation Engineering) in 2002 from the University of Strathclyde (Glasgow, Scotland).

## Dr. Véronique Boscart, Canadian Association on Gerontology

President, Canadian Association on Gerontology; Executive Dean, School of Health and Life Sciences, Conestoga College; CIHR/Schlegel Industrial Research Chair for Colleges in Seniors Care; Executive Director, Canadian Institute for Seniors Care, Conestoga College

Dr. Veronique Boscart has extensive gerontological experience including working as a nurse clinician, educator, manager and researcher in an international setting. Her research interests range from the substantive area of evidence-based care in gerontology and best practices in research methods with older adults to the development of gerontological education for health care professionals and care delivery models in residential care. She has published over ninety peer-reviewed manuscripts and is the lead author on the first and second Canadian edition of Gerontological Nursing and Healthy Aging (2011, 2018).





Dr. Boscart is the Executive Dean of the School of Health & Life Sciences at Conestoga College. Dr. Boscart is also the chair holder of the CIHR/Schlegel Industrial Research Chair for Colleges in Senior Care funded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). Dr. Boscart is the president of Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) Waterloo Chapter. Dr. Boscart was also President (2015-2017) for the Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association and was a Section Editor for the Canadian Journal on Aging from 2014 to 2020. Dr. Boscart is involved in many research projects national and international.

## Kathy Majowski, Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse

Kathy Majowski is a Registered Nurse in Manitoba, where she has focused the majority of her career supporting older adults in various health settings. Her current work as a Community Facilitator for the Healthy Aging Resource Team in Winnipeg provides an opportunity to support older adults by coordinating various health and social services, with the overall goal of stronger, healthier people and connected communities.

Kathy began her career in health care as a support worker while completing her nursing degree, progressing on to front line nursing at Manitoba's largest hospital. After gaining experience in acute care, Kathy's nursing career took her to a remote Indigenous community in northern Manitoba, where she developed additional skills and more understanding of life in a Nehiyawak community, working in a nursing station that functioned as both community clinic and trauma stabilization centre.



Current roles: Board Chair for the Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (CNPEA), Expert Advisory Panel member for the Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability (CFOJA) and Vice Chair for the Board of Klinik, a community health centre rooted in social justice and the belief that everyone deserves quality care, support, and respect.

## Bénédicte Schoepflin, Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse

Bénédicte has been with CNPEA since 2015 and became its Executive Director in 2018. Originally from Avignon, France, Bénédicte now lives and works on the unceded and ancestral territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations (Vancouver).

Bénédicte's path took her from talent acquisition to non-profit management in the arts and culture sector, and eventually to CNPEA. Bénédicte also works for the BC Law Institute and its division, the Canadian Centre for Elder Law, as Communications Director. She is a Board member of the National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly (NICE).



## Dan Clement, United Way Centraide Canada

Dan Clement leads a national movement for social change as President & CEO and Secretary of the Board for United Way Centraide Canada. Dan has more than 20 years of leadership experience within the United Way Centraide network at the local, provincial, and national levels, including 11 years at United Way Centraide Canada, where his expertise is put to work on community impact and engagement, public policy, product development, and network governance.

The United Way Centraide network is comprised of a federation of 77 community-based United Way Centraides, each registered as its own non-profit organization and governed by an independent volunteer-led local Board of Directors. The United Way Centraide movement mobilizes more than 1,000 staff, 200,000 volunteers, and 1 million donors to raise and invest more than \$500 million annually.





## Cameron Ketchum, United Way East Ontario

Cameron Ketchum is a Director of Community Initiatives at United Way East Ontario, with specific responsibility for Seniors & Caregivers issues and the Mental Health sector.

Cameron's work is focused on deploying strategies that create significant and measurable change around the key issues facing the East Ontario region, most often through collaboration with community partners and channeling resources to better address our most pressing vulnerabilities. This includes pursuing the recommendations made in 2017 Vulnerable Seniors Report and the 2020 Eastern Ontario Caregiver Strategy.



Cameron also leads the United Way East Ontario responses to community crisis, such as the ongoing COVID-19 response.

## Annex B. List of Submissions

The following organizations provided submissions to the Federal / Provincial / Territorial Forum of Ministers Responsible for Seniors Virtual Stakeholder Symposium on the Future of Aging in Canada.

- Assembly of First Nations
- Lifelong Learning Centre at the University of Regina
- Communautés amies des aînés/ Maltraitance des aînés
- My BINGO Hub Team
- Immigrant Services Calgary
- Digital Health Circle
- National Pensioners' Federation
- Saskatoon Council on Aging
- Ryerson Leadership Lab
- Volunteer Seniors Task Force – Town of Whitewater Region
- Direction générale des aînés et des proches aidants du Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux
- Associate Professor, Gustavson School of Business, University of Victoria
- Population and Preventive Public Health – Northern Health
- Lions Housing Centres
- Southern Health – Santé Sud
- Rainbow Resource Centre
- Fédération des aînés et des retraités francophones de l'Ontario
- Manitoba Association of Senior Centres
- Berwick Comox Valley Retirement Community
- Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia
- Services aux aînées et aînés Association franco-yukonnaise
- GRAPHITE Public Affairs Inc.
- THIRD ACTION Film Festival
- Multicultural Women's Organization of Newfoundland & Labrador
- New Brunswick Health Council
- Regional Municipality of Durham
- Centre on Aging – University of Manitoba
- Minister for Seniors and Accessibility – Government of Ontario
- March of Dimes Canada
- AGE-WELL NCE
- Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists
- Associate Professor, School of Social Work, University of Northern British Columbia
- Canadian Medical Association
- Hospice Palliative Care Ontario
- National Alliance for Safety and Health in Healthcare
- Lonely No More Program
- Family Caregivers of British Columbia
- Health Checks