

Alberta Council on Aging

Strategic Plan

September 2013 –

Approved by the Board: September 27, 2013

Handwritten signature of Gary Pool in black ink, written over a horizontal line.

President 2013/14

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Background

This strategic plan summarizes discussions at the April 2013 planning session and follow-up conversations. It has been developed by the Board of Directors of Alberta Council on Aging in order to offer direction over the next two years.

Preamble

Who We Are

Founded in 1967, the Alberta Council on Aging represents and supports seniors in both rural and urban areas through its province-wide network and committees. The organization's membership is comprised of groups, individuals, and organizations primarily in the province of Alberta. The Alberta Council on Aging is Alberta's only province-wide non-profit, charitable, independent umbrella organization representing seniors.

Quality of Life

This plan makes frequent reference to “quality of life”. The work of the Alberta Council on Aging is aligned with the work of the World Health Organization which includes the following in its description of active aging and quality of life, and is similar to Canada’s Age-Friendly Communities initiative:

- opportunities for “health, participation and security”
- “physical, mental and social wellbeing”
- “adequate protection, security and care when needed”
- “continuing participation in social, economic, cultural, spiritual and civic affairs”
- “active contributors to... families, peers, communities and nations”
- “maintaining autonomy and independence”
- “interdependence as well as intergenerational solidarity”

(From the World Health Organization’s “What is active ageing?” web page – www.who.int/ageing/active_ageing/en/)

Means to achieve quality of life:

- “Outdoor areas and public buildings are pleasant, safe and accessible”
- “Housing is affordable, safe and well designed for seniors”
- “Public transportation is affordable and accessible”
- “Neighbourhoods are safe”
- “Health and community support services are available”
- “Opportunities exist for seniors to be socially active”
- “Seniors take part in volunteer, political and employment positions”
- “Information is easy to find and easy to understand”

(From Public Health Agency of Canada’s Age-Friendly Communities web page – www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/afc-caa-eng.php)

Vision

All seniors enjoy a high quality of life.

Mission

Our mission is to improve the quality of life for seniors and encourage their participation in all aspects of community by educating seniors and the public and by advising government.

Goals

We do this by:

- delivering Senior Friendly™ programs
- advising government on the issues and concerns that are important to seniors
- collecting input and views from seniors and those who provide services for them

Regional Representation

Region 1 (Northwest) – Yvonne Dickson (Secretary)	Region 6 (Calgary area) – Frank Hoebarth
Region 2 (Northeast) – Donna Chamberland	Region 7 (Southwest) – Murray Campbell
Region 3 (West Central) –	Region 8 (Southeast) –
Region 4 (Edmonton area) – Gary Pool (President of ACA)	Region 9 (East Central) – Fred Olsen (interim treasurer, Vice President)
Region 5 (Central Alberta) – Ron Rose	

Alberta Council on Aging Current Priorities

Housing

- Seniors desire to reside in a place affordable and appropriate to their circumstances.
- Community supports and health services must be available to all seniors.
- Outdoor spaces and buildings must support seniors to maintain themselves in their community.

Finances

- Seniors need to have adequate financial resources to meet their needs.
- Affordability of housing, transportation, health, and the ability to maintain oneself in the community are major concerns for seniors.
- Current supports for seniors are often based on a means test which looks at income, but fails to consider other expenses that may be incurred.
- Alberta Council on Aging recommends that needs testing be used to complement current means tests and be related to individual needs.

Continuing Care

- Continuing care services for Albertans often impose significant costs for seniors. Alberta Council on Aging supports efforts to make continuing care services clearly and consistently defined, appropriate and affordable for all seniors.
- Alberta Council on Aging recommends that the provincial government expand legislation of Protection of Persons in Care to ensure all seniors are covered by the Act no matter where they reside.

Health Care

- Universal pharmacare program.
- Equal access to emergency care, surgeries, hospitalization, treatment and health-related education.
- Seamless delivery of publicly funded Home Care services which include clearly defined standards and eligibility.

Transportation

- Equal access to services, especially in the case of health and special needs, often requires seniors in rural areas to travel to receive services. Alberta Council on Aging recommends that the provincial government undertake a review as to how transportation for seniors for both rural and urban areas can be improved.

Elder Abuse

- Elder abuse is any action or inaction by self or others that jeopardizes the health or well-being of any older adult. Elder abuse can take several forms including financial, emotional, physical, sexual, neglect and medication. Alberta Health, 2015
- Alberta Council on Aging envisions a world free of abuse. We work toward this aim by raising awareness in conjunction with community partners, offering appropriate referrals for reporting and receiving help, and influencing governments which protect older persons.

The Strategic Plan

Strategic Directions

Alberta Council on Aging has chosen to focus on five strategic directions in the next two year period:

1. Develop Senior-Friendly™ **Programs**
2. Engage in **organizational revitalization** to build the membership and promote long-term sustainability
3. Expand **fund development plans** in order to ensure sustainability
4. Regularly address Alberta Council on Aging's five **current priorities** (housing, finances, continuing care, health care, and transportation)
5. Refine processes to invite open and engaged **communication** with directors, staff, members, the public, government, and other groups interested in meeting the needs of seniors

Outcomes and Actions

An **outcome** is what will be in place as a result of our efforts.

An **action** is how we will get to that outcome.

Strategic Direction One: Senior-Friendly™ Programs

Possible Outcomes and Actions	Time Line	Who	Budget
<p>Outcome 1: The revitalized Senior-Friendly™ Program is being shared throughout Alberta and Canada.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>a. Continue to develop the infrastructure for the Senior-Friendly™ Program including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seeking ongoing funding through government grants, sponsorship, donations, and fee for service • creating an evaluation process and evaluation tools • communicating and promoting Senior-Friendly™ Program as aligned with the Age-Friendly Communities and Environment initiatives 			

Strategic Direction Two: Organizational Revitalization

Possible Outcomes and Actions	Time Line	Who	Budget
<p>Outcome 1: We have identified and articulated our relevance as an organization.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>a. Conduct an annual survey to discover the needs and interests of seniors.</p> <p>b. Host regional town hall meetings for members and the general public. Gather information about how the Alberta Council on Aging could be meeting the needs of seniors.</p> <p>c. In order to educate seniors and the public and to advise government, compile and report the results of these formal and informal consultations in the newsletter, web site, and at the Annual General Meeting.</p> <p>d. Use this information to refine marketing of and communications about Alberta Council on Aging. Note especially what the Alberta Council on Aging does to meet the needs of seniors. Use consistent branding.</p>			
<p>Outcome 2: The organizational structure and practices allow staff and volunteers to work efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>a. Address the issue of extensive travel of the directors in the regions.</p> <p>b. Set priorities in re-establishing Board committees (eg. health, policy advisory, administrative, etc.)</p>			

Outcome 3: Membership is increasing.

Actions:

- a. Develop a marketing tool kit for each region to use. The tool kit will include information, membership forms, banners, a PowerPoint presentation (introducing the organization, outlining benefits and services), etc. (Note: The materials should address a variety of language and cultural needs.)
- b. The Alberta Council on Aging provincial office hosts one information/consultation event annually in each region on issues of high priority to that region. These sessions are also designed to inform the general public about the Alberta Council on Aging and issues of interest to seniors, and attract new members. (MLAs and other leaders will be invited to attend and/or present.)
- c. Distribute the newsletter in new venues including hospitals, seniors' centres, MLA offices, etc.
- d. Establish a committee to develop plans for Alberta Council on Aging's 50th anniversary (2017).
- e. Each region identifies at least one new partner that could assist in promoting Alberta Council on Aging with its members or clients.
- f. Directors attend/present at Health Advisory Council and other relevant meetings.
- g. Examine the possibility of a mobile classroom.

Outcome 4: All Board positions are filled and succession plans are in place for the future.

Actions:

- a. Develop formal recruitment and orientation processes and materials for community leaders, directors and individuals serving on Board committees.

Strategic Direction Three: Fund Development

Possible Outcomes and Actions	Time Line	Who	Budget
<p>Outcome 1: Increased memberships draw in more revenue and make Alberta Council on Aging more attractive to organizations who wish to reach seniors.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>a. Use the Alberta Council on Aging information/consultation events to add new members and invite individuals to become involved. See many of the potential actions under the second Strategic Direction (“Organizational Revitalization”) and the fourth (“Communication”).</p>			
<p>Outcome 2: A new Board committee has developed and then begun to implement a fund development initiative.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>a. Gather individuals willing to work on this plan and its implementation. The plan may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying high priority fund development projects related to the strategic plan • developing a legacy program for individuals who wish to donate to the Alberta Council on Aging through their estate • working with the planning group for the 50th anniversary to ensure that fund development is a key component in those plans • developing special events such as a “Grandparents Walk” • promoting continuation of Community Spirit Grant (to cease December 31/13) by involving other seniors and senior-serving organizations 			

Strategic Direction Four: Current Priorities

Possible Outcomes and Actions	Time Line	Who	Budget
<p>Outcome 1: Alberta Council on Aging has prompted conversation and provided information/ education on current priorities at every occasion.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>a. Refine the text for the “Health Care” current priority.</p> <p>b. Raise the current priorities at the Alberta Council on Aging information/consultation events in each region. Use these events to discover which are of particular interest and importance to that region.</p> <p>c. Meet with decision-makers on at least two current priorities in order to present information and encourage ongoing conversation/consultation with the Alberta Council on Aging.</p> <p>d. Publish and disseminate responses to current government and other announcements that affect seniors – especially as they relate to the current priorities.</p> <p>e. Long term care is included in discussions on issues with continuing care</p>			
<p>Outcome 2: A resource listing is available for the current priorities that have been selected.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>a. Use the newsletter and web site to collect information and opinions about the current priorities.</p> <p>b. Develop a list of key resources (electronic and paper) related to each priority. Make the electronic resources available to members through the web site and newsletter.</p>			

Strategic Direction Five: Communication

Possible Outcomes and Actions	Time Line	Who	Budget
<p>Outcome 1. Improved communication to and from members, the general public, regional directors, and staff.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>a. Continue to use a range of options for communicating in ways that work best for members, directors, and the general public (i.e. e-mail, web site, telephone, face-to-face meetings, etc.).</p> <p>b. Refine and/or look for new processes that prompt ongoing two-way communication.</p>			
<p>Outcome 2: Board members and staff are able to communicate and share resources easily.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>a. Establish an “intranet” system as an internal communication resource.</p>			
<p>Outcome 3: Alberta Council on Aging is in regular communication with government and others whose policies and decisions affect seniors.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>a. The President and/or designated spokesperson communicate with the government on issues as they emerge. Establish ongoing meetings, as well as looking for informal opportunities.</p> <p>b. Develop and disseminate template letters that members can use to communicate with their government representatives.</p> <p>Outcome 4: Alberta Council on Aging collaborates with senior-serving groups.</p>			

Actions:

a. Have representation on ANSRO (Associated Network of Seniors Related Organizations) Seniors Task Force, PIA (Public Interest Alberta), Alberta Association of Seniors Centres, etc.

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Follow Up

Strategic Plan Review

Discussion, debate, and thoughtful planning precede strategic action. Action must follow thoughtful strategic planning.

The strategic plan will become an ongoing agenda item at Board meetings. At each meeting, the Board will review progress that has been made and discuss what else is needed in order to ensure that the organization is making progress on these important strategic directions. In early 2014, the Board will begin to prepare for a more detailed review in the spring. The focus of that meeting will be on the period from September 2014 to September 2015 and perhaps beyond.

Celebration

Using present communications tools (including the newsletter and web site), Alberta Council on Aging will look for opportunities to share successes that emerge from implementation of the plan at the provincial and regional level.