



ACA News

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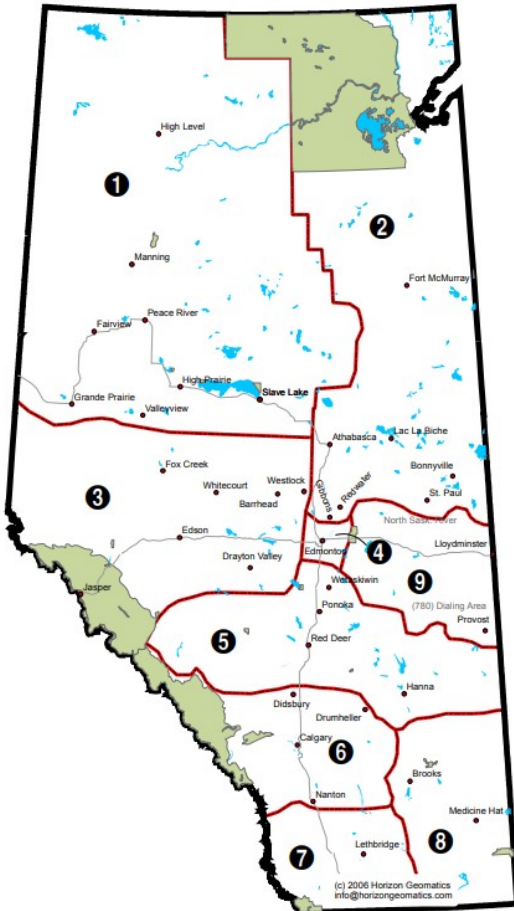
Region 4 (Edmonton and area): Leslie Morgenstern
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There are Regional Director vacancies across the province at this time. If you are interested in volunteering as a Regional Director, please contact us today!

Contact Information

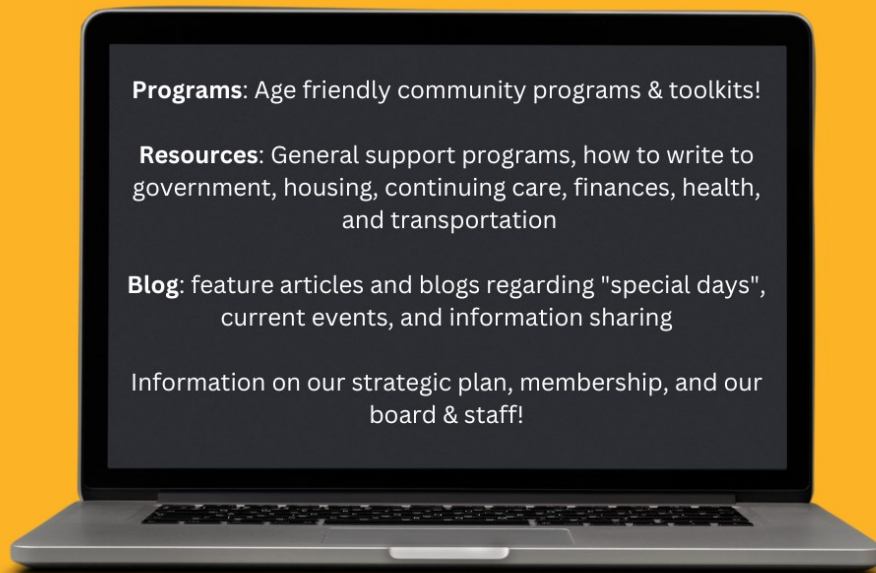
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Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of Alberta Council on Aging. We reserve the right to condense, rewrite, and reject material.

What you can find on www.acaging.ca



We want to hear from you!

What would you like to learn more about? How can we support you?

We offer educational materials and resources for topics including : housing, continuing care, finances, transportation, health, Age Friendly programs, Living Strong, and Age Friendly Tools

Contact our office today at info@acaging.ca or by phone **780.423.7781**

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Alberta Council on Aging Strategic Plan 2019-2024

Vision

All older adults enjoy a high quality of life

Mission

Encourage and enable older adults' full participation in all aspects of community through inclusion, education and advocacy

Goals

- ◇ Build awareness and capacity
- ◇ Align organizational structure to ensure viability and relevancy
- ◇ Promote alliances with other senior-serving organizations in Alberta
- ◇ Provide and promote educational program and services to older adults throughout the province.

Outcomes

- ◇ Public knows who Alberta Council on Aging (ACA) is and how to engage
- ◇ Effective representation and structure
- ◇ Improved member and regions support
- ◇ Increased alliances with other organizations and agencies
- ◇ Positive communication with members and regions
- ◇ Value/benefits of membership in ACA identified
- ◇ Improved learning materials and increased opportunities for older adults' engagement
- ◇ Improved mechanisms in place to ensure older adults are heard and represented

Next page: read about our progress and what we have been up to!

Strategic Actions Report: June to November 2022

Goal 1: Build awareness and capacity

Memberships

Memberships and donations encouraged through Alberta Seniors Week online campaign

- Blog a day by volunteers and students.
- E-letters sent to all members.
- Travellers are back on board and memberships continue to grow.

Social Media/Website/Online/Face to face meetings

- Donna Wilson UofA research study providing funds to ACA for data collection and sharing information with members.
- Volunteers and support staff discussing life after the pandemic, how to be more active in communities through farmers markets, town halls, etc.
- Office support staff working on active programs and membership outreach.

Funding

- AGLC casino 2022—all funds directed to programs and services.
- CIP grant for operations includes support for staff, marketing.
- UofA research study on caregivers approx. \$1,600.00 per month.
- Final report for AWIC (Aging Well in Communities) grant submitted and accepted.

Goal 2: Align organizational structure to ensure viability and relevancy (next column)

Board of Directors meetings

Frequent meetings to discuss planning, recruiting directors, and reviewing staff requirements.

Advocacy

- ACA as stakeholders on AAG Futures Policy Forum focus on continuing care reform.
- Ongoing deliberations re: ageism, seniors and housing, continuing care, home care.

Administration

- Audit completed.
- Orientation of new staff and volunteers.

Goal 3: Promote alliances with other senior serving organizations

- Members of Alberta Age Friendly, Healthy Aging Alberta (CORE), PIA Seniors Task Force, Age Friendly Edmonton, Age Friendly Calgary, Future Policy Forum, ThirdACTION film festival, RDN Dementia Advisory, UofA caregivers study.
- involved with the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers discussion “Addressing the Social and Economic Impacts of Ageism in Canada”, the Minister’s Advisory committees on Elder Abuse, Older Workers action plan, and social prescribing initiatives

Goal 4: Provide and promote educational programs and services to seniors

- Distribution of toolkits: Recognizing Fraud, Let’s Talk Dementia, Let’s Stop Ageism.
- CHOICES host sessions on Let’s Stop Ageism and Let’s Talk Dementia.
- ACA Spring News distributed to members and public—online and hardcopy.

Alberta Council on Aging Updates

Farewell to Donna Durand!

After ten years with Alberta Council on Aging, we say farewell to Donna Durand as she resigned her position as Executive Director as of June 30, 2022. Donna's contributions to the organization have been immense; they include but are not limited to the development and implementation of our website, long-term planning, correspondence and relationship building with government, the Senior Friendly program, and much more. Donna has cared deeply about the members of this organization and will surely be missed by all.

The Board of Directors recognizes Donna Durand's ten years of leadership and contributions and we wish her the best for her next chapter of life.

You can read a farewell blog written by Donna on our website [here](#).

<https://acaging.ca/a-message-from-donna-durand/>

Alberta Council on Aging Welcomes Mary Benson as Executive Director!

A message from Mary Benson, Executive Director

"I'm fortunate to have experienced several opportunities in life with my career and volunteer choices. I spent 25 years in the Dental field—holding a lot of hands, and comforting and reassuring individuals of all ages. I always knew I wanted to help and support others. In 2010 I pursued a career change. Little did I know that Senior Care would have such an impact on my life and become such a passion in my heart. I worked in two very different senior facilities. I provided recreational and support programs for seniors of an independent level of care, and worked with seniors in Level 4 supportive living, and those with dementia. I have offered supports and direction for families, provided resources and helped navigate them through the changes in life with their loved ones. I am a strong advocate who is always pushing for supports and resources to help our most vulnerable population. I want to continue to be the voice for those that can not speak. In my spare time I enjoy being at the lake the most, the peace of nature, and spending time with family and friends.

I am very honoured to take on the role as the Executive Director of this amazing organization. There are so many important issues in discussion at present. These talks will mold the future of our healthcare, support families, and help caregivers. Please feel free to reach out to Alberta Council on Aging with your thoughts. I'd love to hear from you."

A message from the President and Executive Director

Alberta Council on Aging continues to work hard ensuring the concerns of senior Albertans are being heard.

ACA is an active participant and collaborator with many organizations. We are currently involved with the Federal, Provincial and Territorial (FPT) Ministers discussion “Addressing the Social and Economic Impacts of Ageism in Canada”, as well as the Minister’s Advisory committees on Elder Abuse, Older Workers action plan, and social prescribing initiatives.

ACA supports the efforts and research gathered by the Alberta Association on Gerontology – Futures Policy Forum. The goal of this forum is to implement changes transforming healthy aging and quality of life for older Albertans.

Alberta Council on Aging continues to partner and support initiatives with the Edmonton and Calgary Age Friendly Communities. Creating an age friendly community helps us all.

We encourage your thoughts and questions on these important issues. Please feel free to reach out to us if you would like more information.

Alberta Council on Aging continues to offer referral and resource services throughout the province. We will continue to partner with senior serving organizations and ensure that support and access to all services is available for all senior Albertans.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers, we wish you the very best for this Holiday Season. and may good health and prosperity be with you in 2023.



Seasons
Greetings!

from
Alberta Council on Aging



Message from Honourable Jeremy Nixon Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services

I am honoured to serve as Alberta’s Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services. The work done by this ministry provides invaluable services for some of our province’s most vulnerable populations.

My passion for the social service sector has been an integral part of my life. I dedicated my career to building strong communities where all Albertans can thrive. I have been lucky to work closely with amazing organizations like the Mustard Seed, Canadian Mental Health and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary, where I was able to develop and implement innovative, life-changing programs for Albertans.

I believe the work this ministry and its community partners do to protect and support the most vulnerable among us is critical to fostering healthy families, strong communities and an inclusive province.

Since becoming Minister I’ve heard from seniors living on a fixed income. Too many are having to make the difficult choice between filling their prescriptions or paying the rent. Tackling the affordability crisis is a top priority for Alberta’s government.

For those struggling with the rising cost of living – help is on the way. Along with affordability measures to help all Albertans, we are providing targeted relief to seniors. This includes individual payments to seniors and indexing seniors benefits to inflation.

Alberta’s government is committed to supporting the health and well-being of elderly Albertans, and I know the Alberta Council on Aging shares this goal. Thank you for more than 50 years of incredible service to seniors.

I understand the enormity of the tasks ahead and I’m keen to hear from Albertans on how we can strengthen social supports to ensure there is always a social safety net for those who need it.

Together we can make real changes for thousands of Albertans.

Jeremy Nixon
Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services



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Brain health involves the function of your brain in regard to many areas including: Cognitive health; Motor control; Emotional regulation; Tactile sensation and function. (1)

There were 569,600 Canadians living with dementia in Canada in 2020.(2) This number is expected to grow to 2 million by 2050.(3)

While cognitive decline and brain health disorders primarily affect older adults, it is not an inevitable part of ageing. (4)

There is no cure for cognitive decline currently available.

1 in 3 people will develop a neurologic disorder at some point in their life. Making them the leading cause of disability globally. (5)



Source:

1. Cognitive Health and Older Adults | National Institute on Aging [Internet]. [cited 2022 Oct 6]. Available [here](#)
2. Chambers LW, Bancej C, Mcdowell I. The Alzheimer Society of Canada in collaboration with the Prevalence and Monetary Costs of Dementia in Canada PoPulation Health exPert Panel. [cited 2022 Oct 6]; Available [here](#)
3. Navigating the Path Forward For Dementia in Canada [Internet]. [cited 2022 Oct 6]. Available [here](#)
4. Dementia [Internet]. [cited 2022 Oct 6]. Available [here](#)
5. Launch of first WHO position paper on optimizing brain health across life [Internet]. [cited 2022 Oct 6]. Available [here](#)



Dementia Inclusive Initiatives

A Rural Perspective

An environmental scan by the Rural Development Network

August 2022

The Rural Development Network (RDN) collaborates with rural communities across Canada to identify and bring focus to rural issues, build local capacity, and find innovative, rural-based solutions to unique issues. A key aspect of that work is to support rural communities in the implementation of the proposed solutions by providing capacity. RDN's initiatives include:

- ◆ addressing rural homelessness;
- ◆ Building affordable housing;
- ◆ Addressing substance misuse;
- ◆ Age-friendly rural communities;
- ◆ Rural immigration
- ◆ Rural access to services including transportation, broadband and justice;
- ◆ Agri-food initiatives; and
- ◆ Rural revitalization.

Because of their involvement in the program development of age-friendly and anti-ageism initiatives in rural communities, RDN identified the need to collaborate with and support rural communities in becoming dementia friendly.

This project is funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) through their Dementia Strategic Fund. In 2020, PHAC announced an invitation to submit applications to receive funding for projects related to dementia awareness-raising initiatives targeting the prevention or delay of onset of dementia, reducing stigma surrounding the condition, and encouraging communities to be more dementia-inclusive.

The Alzheimer Society of Alberta and Northwest Territories has been a generous ABCD project partner sharing their time, knowledge, and resources throughout the development of the project and deliverables.

The ABCD project's Advisory Committee is made up of twelve dedicated people who are caregivers and loved ones of those living with dementia and professionals working in areas related to dementia. They have provided feedback on project deliverables related to the ABCD project, including this environmental scan, and have created a supportive environment within the committee where personal stories and resources are shared.

Continued on next page



RDN identified that people in rural communities living with dementia, along with their care partners, experience challenges uniquely different from those living in urban settings, such as limited dementia support services and programming, minimal transportation options, and lesser capacity to fill service gaps and implement programming. Funded through PHAC, RDN is now working to build capacity in rural Albertan communities in becoming more dementia-friendly through their Awareness Builds Connection in Dementia-Friendly Communities (ABCD) project.

RDN's ABCD project aims to support rural Alberta communities in becoming more dementia-inclusive, allowing those living with dementia to age in place for as long as possible. The Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors Forum (2012) describes aging in place as "having the health, social support and services

needed to live safely and independently at home and in the community for as long as possible" (p.2). For a person living with dementia, home and familiarity can be beneficial in the ability to stay active and engaged. Just as every journey with dementia is different, so are a person's care needs. For many, living at home can be the right choice as long as appropriate supports are in place. The ABCD project is guided by the three priorities outlined in Canada's national dementia strategy, A Dementia Strategy for Canada: Together We Aspire (2019): (1) dementia prevention; (2) reducing stigma related to dementia; and (3) supporting communities to become more dementia inclusive. The project's overall objective is to work with and support five rural Albertan communities to adapt and implement a dementia-inclusive initiative (PHAC, p.5). RDN uses a strength-based approach, believing that selected communities are experts in their own needs. Communities will have the power to lead the implementation of initiatives. The ABCD team is there to offer a supportive hand, provide funding and assist with planning.



Continued on next page

What does it mean to be a dementia-friendly community?

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines dementia-friendly initiatives as the activities being undertaken to make society more inclusive of people with dementia. Dementia-friendly initiatives are the most impactful when communities focus on ways to directly improve the lives of those living with dementia. A dementia-friendly community, as described by the Alzheimer's Society, is a community focused on both stigma reduction and the inclusion of people living with dementia in the places they work, live, and play.

Benefits of becoming a dementia-friendly community

1. Aging population: The Canadian population is aging and the number of people living with dementia continues to increase therefore it is important to provide support to promote wellness and inclusion. This support is especially important for rural communities, as "Rurality impacts the availability and accessibility to services".
2. Economic benefits: Businesses have an opportunity to build strong connections with community members living with dementia. Businesses that are respectful, safe, and accessible allow individuals living with dementia and their caregivers to feel comfortable, ultimately increasing both customers and revenue.

3. Inclusive environment: Dementia-friendly communities not only benefit those living with dementia, but also those socially vulnerable individuals and those living with disabilities. Improving the physical and social environments of a community to promote inclusion and accessibility can result in increased opportunities and better health outcomes for everyone.

Rural communities & dementia:

Challenges

Additional challenges exist for people living with dementia and their caregivers in rural communities. These challenges are unique from the experiences of those living in an urban setting. Rural – specific challenges include a lack of transportation, difficulties accessing support and care services, failure of proper diagnoses, and privacy concerns due to the size of their communities. Seniors in these communities experience stress in planning and organizing transportation, a shortage of healthcare providers and services, financial strain of travelling for care from specialists, gaps in day programming and respite care, counselling, early stage supports and services of minority populations.

Equitable Care

Reliable education about dementia, how to navigate the health systems, complete legal documents, and where to find support are common challenges and concerns for people living with dementia and their care partners. Some demographic populations may be at higher risk of being diagnosed with dementia or may face additional barriers to equitable care.

Indigenous Peoples, newcomer and minority language communities, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, and people with intellectual and physical disabilities experience unique challenges. Challenges experienced by historically marginalized populations are compounded when living in rural settings. Mainstream organizations and rural communities may lack knowledge and understanding when it comes to culturally appropriate care and ways to increase accessibility for these populations. Continued funding and research must happen in order to increase support and fill the gaps for those who are at greater risk of developing dementia and may face barriers to accessing support.

“

By consciously using language in a more sensitive manner, we can avoid reducing individuals with dementia to a series of labels, symptoms or medical terms. Person-centred language focuses on the person, not on their condition. The use of person-centred language helps us deal with the fear and stigma surrounding dementia. By reducing the fear associated with dementia, people are more likely to acknowledge, learn and have discussions about dementia (p. 2).

”



Alberta Council on Aging is a stakeholder in the ABCD project and the information provided is only a small excerpt. You can read the full report [here](#) which further explains the ABCD project, the purpose of the Environmental Scan & methods used. The report further explores the challenges rural communities face, expands on equitable care and what this means for minority populations. The report provides dementia-friendly initiatives and activities, dementia prevention, reducing dementia-related stigma and how to encourage and support communities in becoming dementia friendly.



WISHES YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

OUR PRESENT TO ACA MEMBERS

2 Free Tickets to our January Film

Tuesday, January 10, 2023

6:30PM

Film: TBA

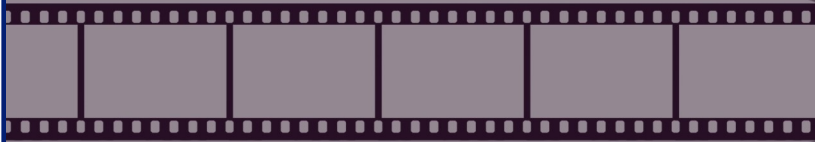
online or in-person in Calgary

The code below will let you obtain 2 free tickets.
This code will work for both in person and online tickets.

Discount Code:
ACAHAPPYHOLIDAYS2022

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Celebrities & Aging



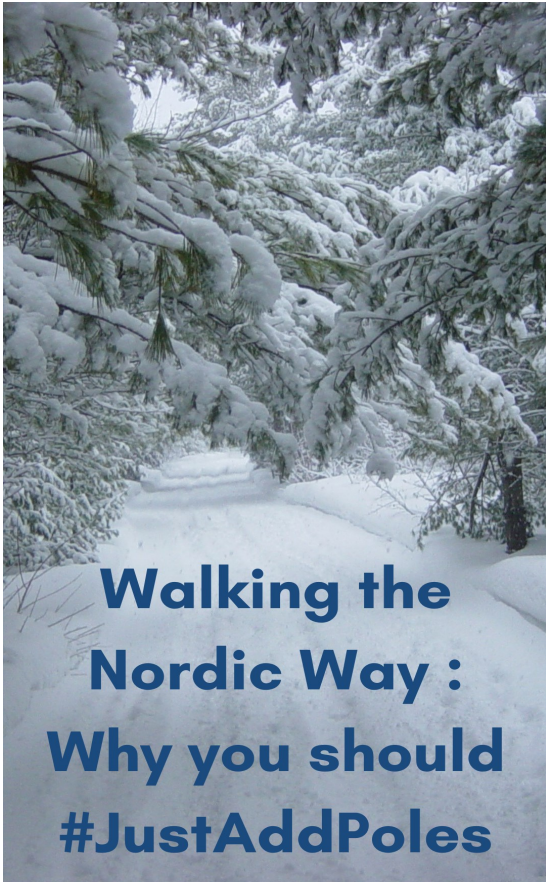
Celebrities are talking more about aging than ever before.

What are they saying?

Maybe you've noticed too—we've been seeing more celebrities talking publicly about aging and it's positive!

Here's a collection of quotes that we appreciate seeing in the media

1. **Jamie Lee Curtis** "This word 'anti-aging' has to be struck. I am pro-aging. I want to age with intelligence and grace and dignity and verve and energy."
2. **Andie McDowell** "Age isn't a detriment and we don't need to chase youth. We should all embrace every month of our life."
3. **Julianne Moore** regarding the term "women of a certain age." "When you say that, it sounds like the age is so horrible you don't want to mention it. Whereas I just don't think that's true"
4. **Kate Winslet** "Aging is so far really fun and so much changes. You do feel more confident"
5. **Thandie Newton** talking about her grey hairs "This is my wisdom, my badge of honor. And I want to see these greys so it reminds me every day that time is running out and that is something to celebrate; not to be afraid of."
6. **Padma Lakshmi** "Growing older gracefully means having a keen curiosity about learning things about the world that you didn't know yesterday, no matter how many yesterday's you've had."
7. **Oprah Winfrey** "Every year brings you closer to expressing your whole and healed self. I celebrate that. Honor it in reverence. And I'm grateful for every age I'm blessed to become."



By **Mandy Johnson**, an Urban Poling Master Trainer and Nordic Walking Ambassador for Alberta

<https://www.wintercityedmonton.ca/walking-nordic-way-justaddpoles/>

As winter draws to a close, but spring has not truly sprung, typical outdoor activities can become challenging. The ice castle has melted, the skating rinks are becoming lakes again, and soon only the die-hards will be tackling the ski trails and the slopes. But the ideal weather for hiking and biking, jogging, gardening and golfing isn't here yet either. The outdoors still beckons, but the trails can be icy or gritty or muddy or all of the above.

In this shoulder season, Nordic walking shines! It is very much like cross-country skiing, but without the skis – or the snow, for that matter. Specialized poles are purposefully planted with each stride. Pushing firmly on the poles propels you forward. The easy-to-learn technique did actually originate as dry-land training for Nordic athletes. It mimics Nordic skiing and affords walkers similar benefits:

- Uses virtually all the body's major muscle groups with every stride
- Contracts your abdominals over 1000 times per km
- Burns on average 20% more calories than walking
- Offers great cardiovascular conditioning

Nordic poles come with specially-designed booties that cover the same tip you find on a hiking pole. Booties “turbo charge” walks on city streets and paved recreational trails, and are the ideal equipment for exploring the paved Edmonton River Valley trails. Many people confuse Nordic walking poles with hiking poles. But hiking poles do not have the core muscle-engaging features and the noise reducing features to deal with paved surfaces. On the other hand, Nordic walking poles will take you everywhere you need to go, from city streets to mountain peaks. Some Nordic poles feature a glove-like attachment to maximize the “push and propel” phases of the technique. Others are strapless, with an ergonomic handle to engage the core muscles and that act as shock absorbers to minimize injury to the hand in the event of a fall. On the other hand, hiking or trekking poles have a simple loop strap to keep the poles attached to you at all times.



**Continued on
the next page**

Walking the Nordic Way : Why you should #JustAddPoles, Continued

The poles provide great stability on challenging terrain, including ice and snow. You can remove the booties and use the metal tip instead. Think of them as providing “4-wheel-drive for humans.” Specialized handles off-load stress from the hip, knee, and lower back joints to the upper body. These features make pole-walking a favourite activity of older adults who often have arthritic joints or have a fear of falling. But the extensive benefits of Nordic walking makes it an ideal activity for people of ALL ages, abilities and fitness levels, starting with school-aged kids. Because Nordic walking combines aerobic training & strength training, maximizing the benefit of every fitness minute you have available, it is also an ideal workplace wellness activity. You just grab your poles and go. No need to drive to the gym, change, shower, etc. Whether you have 15 minutes, or more or less time, you can get outside and absorb some essential Vitamin (N)ature.

Given these benefits, why would you want to walk anywhere without poles?!

The typical answer is that people assume it is just an activity for seniors. Nothing could be further from the truth! People of all ages benefit from this form of activity, and younger people are taking it in their stride. You may also find people looking at you quizzically or commenting, “you forgot your skis!” But think of how uncommon bicycle and ski helmets were not that long ago. We are in the same situation with Nordic walking.

It is an activity being enjoyed by the “early adopters,” people who don’t mind being seen doing something a bit different. Just ask members of the St. Albert Trekkers Volkssport Club, who have several trained Urban Poling instructors and a set of equipment that accompanies them on many walks in the greater Edmonton area.

Once people try it, the common reaction is “surprise” and even “amazement” as they feel their abdominal, chest and arm muscles working. They love the extra propulsion from the poles that encourages them to pick up the pace and stride out. They love the great pulse-quickening cardio workout without the added exertion and pounding of other aerobic activities like jogging. We hope it catches on in a big way in our city very soon.

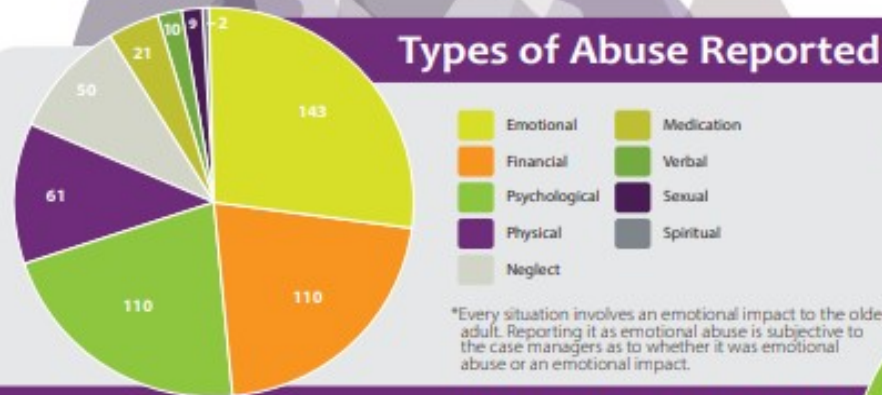
Where can you try Nordic walking? The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues trained more than 20 volunteers to be Urban Poling instructors last year. Participating community leagues can be found on the EFCL website. Urban Poling is Canada’s leading provider of Nordic walking equipment and instruction. Urban Poling instructors in the Edmonton area can be found on the find a class page of the Urban Poling website. The website also contains great instructional videos, success stories, and links to Edmonton-area retailers of Urban Poles.

Whenever or wherever you walk this month, think about all those extra muscles you could be training and toning, all those extra calories you could be burning and all the fitness fun you could be having if you just add poles.

Taking Action Against ELDER ABUSE Case Management



Interim Report
SPRING 2022



75% of seniors accessed first-time supports for abuse

*Every situation involves an emotional impact to the older adult. Reporting it as emotional abuse is subjective to the case managers as to whether it was emotional abuse or an emotional impact.

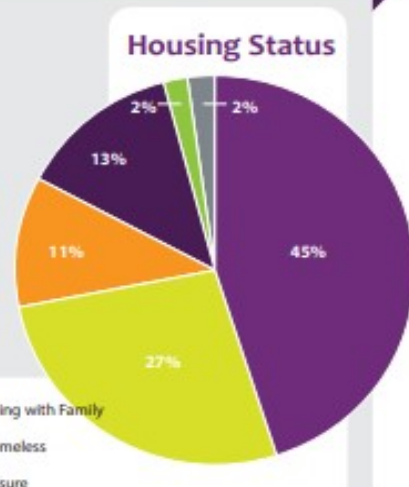
Abuse Reported By

34% of reporting came from a friend or family member highlighting the importance of providing training by-stander training such as **It's Not Right: Neighbours, Friends, and Family.**

Only **1/4** of cases were self-reported highlighting the need for increased awareness.



Seniors Demographics



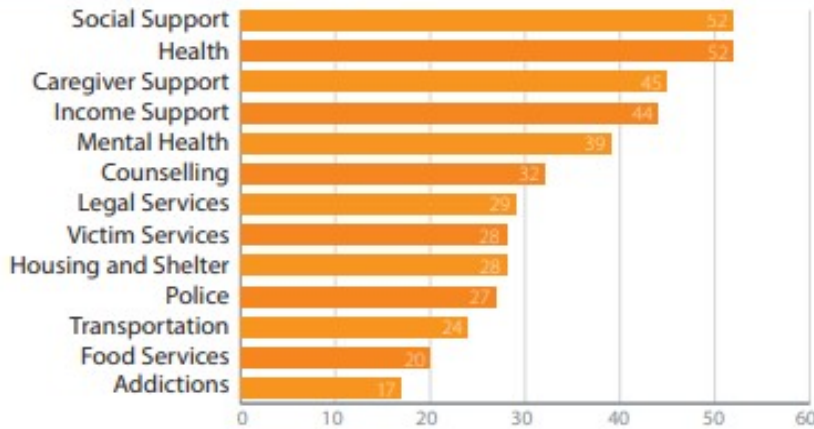
70% of elder abuse victims are either widowed, single, divorced or separated.

Being single is considered **1** of the **top 5** risk factors in elder abuse.*

* According to a National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly (NICE) 2015 national elder abuse prevalence study called "Into the Light: National Survey on the Mistreatment of Older Canadians."

Top Case Manager Referrals

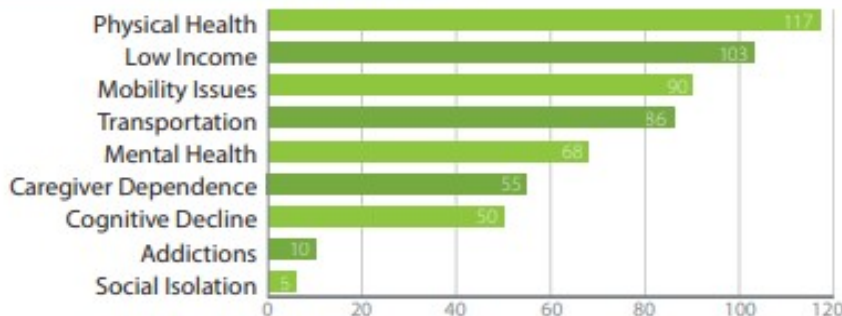
Top referrals include social prescribing, health supports, and financial supports; however, the complexity of issues highlights the importance of building relationships with other service providers.



Vulnerabilities Reported

43% of cases listed transportation as a vulnerability, which can lead to an increased risk of financial abuse.

6 of 10 seniors with addictions issues also had mental health issues.



Elder abuse cases are complex and there are often multiple contributing factors occurring.

- Nearly **1/2** reported financial issues as a contributing factor for the perpetrator, as well as almost half having a sense of entitlement.
- 3/4** had mental health and/or addiction issues.
- 1/4** reported a history of family violence which reflects the prevalence study – that a history of family violence is **one of the top 5 vulnerabilities of elder abuse cases.**¹

Perpetrator Demographics

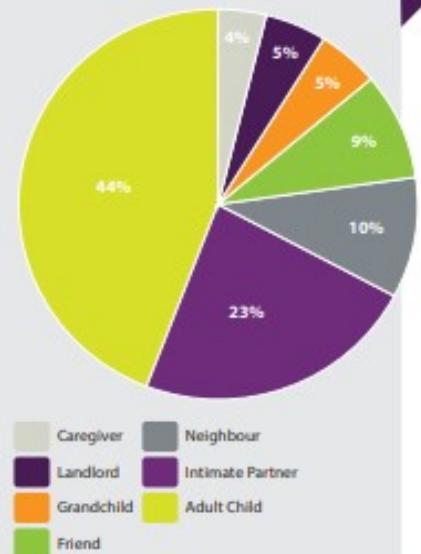


Highest number of perpetrators reported ranged from

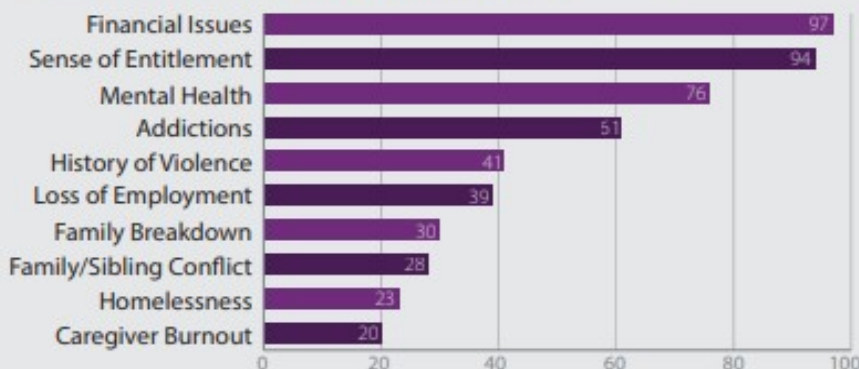
30 - 60
years of age

58% men
42% women

Relationship to Perpetrator



Contributing Factors for Perpetrator Abuse



info@albertaelderabuse.ca



albertaelderabuse.ca



@AlbertaElderAbuse



@alberta_elder_abuse

Here's an update!

FAMILY CAREGIVERS RESEARCH GROUP



stay well or to get healthcare services without having to be admitted to a hospital bed. We are really pleased to get funding for this study from Alberta Health, and therefore also through the Government of Alberta. No doubt, they are aware that we have an aging population, with more older people living in Alberta, and therefore more people needing new types of health care and support.

Thanks again ACA!

Donna and Gail

[Dr. Donna M. Wilson, RN, PhD](#)

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Hello,

Thank you ACA!

University of Alberta nursing researchers, Dr. Gail Low and Dr. Donna Wilson are pleased to be teamed with ACA and its excellent staff!

We are doing a year long 4-part research study: A day in the life of a family caregiver of a community-based older family member.

The first of four parts is wrapping up soon, this is the weekly interviews of 150 family caregivers across Alberta. ACA helped us advertise the study and gain volunteers for it, with 6 months of interviews done to identify 10+1 common needs of family caregivers (see the list below). As those needs were being identified we did a research literature review of each one to see what has been done and also what has been successful elsewhere in meeting those needs. From all that information, we identified 5 major family caregiver support solutions: personal care services, homemaking/housekeeping services, transportation services, adult day care programs, and respite services; each of these solutions are now being explored in Alberta to see what exists and also how these can be expanded and improved so all family caregivers in Alberta can rely on them. The fourth part of this 4-part study is in process, we are analyzing cross-Canada hospital data to see how often older people and dying people are admitted to hospitals in Canada. We will also compare Alberta to other provinces to see if we use hospitals differently from other places where there may be more home care services or other services to help older and terminally-ill people

Common Needs of Family Caregivers

1. Information needs
2. Emotional support needs
3. Help with IADLs
4. Help with ADLs
5. Respite
6. Self-care encouragement and support
7. Transportation assistance
8. Financial support
9. Anticipatory grief of the family caregiver
10. Anticipatory grief of the care recipient
- +1. After caregiving – many different needs



What is the Futures Policy Forum?

A unique AAG initiative with distinct goals for Albertans:

- To engage with a broad range of individuals, all with a stake in a future of healthy aging and quality of life.
- To develop opportunities to be part of a movement to create a culture and community for change.
- To promote awareness of the need for transformation and our initiative.
- To encourage learning and grow collaborative action for change.
- To reflect on opportunities to contribute to and co-create the future.

Alberta's Opportunity

Alberta is rich with talent and energy. AAG wants to focus that energy on building a future of healthy aging and a better quality of life for Albertans. Some of the initiatives happening across our province are:

Healthy Aging Initiatives

- Community engagement with older adults by groups across the province.
- Energy and work to coordinate a seniors' facing sector.
- Enhancing support for informal caregivers.
- Preparing the workforce with skills and expertise to be effective partners in care.
- Community-based research identifying expectations for change from older adults.
- Research about workforce needs, issues, and urgency for change.
- Plans for change beginning in a range of government departments.

Paying Tribute to Care Workers

As part of our initiatives, AAG salutes front-line service providers and support staff. These individuals provide exemplary services across all settings during the pandemic.

We acknowledge the organizational leaders giving their best through seemingly never-ending challenges. We recognize the perseverance and losses experienced by older adults, family, and friends. Together, we can create the conviction to move forward!

A Continuing Care Review Report

In May 2021, Alberta Health released a report that they had commissioned from MNP LLP (a Canadian consulting firm). MNP created the Facility-Based Continuing Care Review Report, entitled:

[Improving Quality of Life for Residents in Facility-Based Continuing Care: Alberta Facility-Based Continuing Care Review Recommendations: Final Report.](#)

This report articulates a 'Healthy Aging Vision for Alberta' (from page 114 of the report): "Albertans are supported to be healthy and active in their community, with an improved quality of life, and they are engaged, empowered, and enabled to live in inclusive communities with social connectedness and healthcare access."

The report specifically recommends three tiers of policies and services to achieve this vision :

Tier 1: For Individuals with Minimal Health Care Needs

Tier 2: For Individuals with Moderate to Complex Care Needs (Living at Home or in the Community)

Tier 3: For Individuals with Highest Care Needs Living in Facility-Based Continuing Care

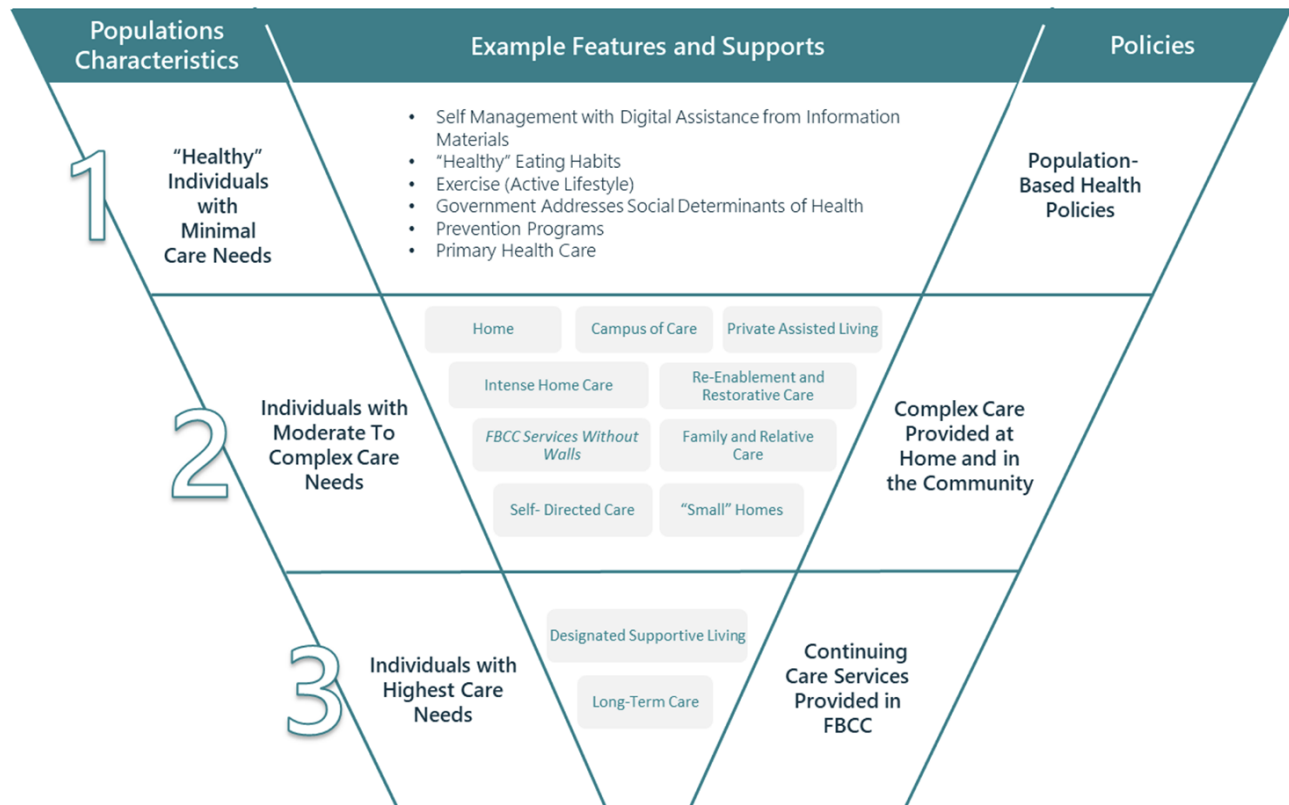
Futures Policy Forum Initiative

This initiative aims to explore these policy tiers.

We will discuss barriers for implementation and options for change. Ultimately, AAG aims to mobilize a culture and community for change among stakeholders. We seek to build support and sustain the changes required.

We will work toward a broad understanding of needs and opportunities. We will create action plans and policy. Our recommendations must foster the vision we desire.

Layers of Policy to Achieve "Healthy Aging"



Change Matters, Now

Research with individuals & families & stakeholders consistently indicates an urgent need for fundamental change. We need to create an environment for quality of living as we age.

Alberta can be a leader in moving forward in new ways—and we ALL gain when we:

- Increase opportunities for healthy living and aging.
- Provide more services and choices for living in the community.
- Improve connections and strength across services and care partners.
- Enhance quality of resident living and quality of work-life in facility-based continuing care.

Making these changes and the future vision a reality means:

1. **Creating momentum**

- Continuing dialogue with individuals, families, care partners, communities, and service providers.
- Learning as we go, developing new perspectives and attitudes, and co-creating the future.

2. **Knowing change takes time. But, remaining resolute in the need for action by:**

- government
- Communities
- Organizations across the system
- And each one of us!

3. **Staying the course. This will be the ultimate test for a future for older Albertans that is different from today.**



AAG's Futures Policy Forum Initiative is a two-year initiative (2022-2023)

Through shared learning and collaboration, we will find opportunities for meaningful change. Purposeful deliberation will result in a better future for all Albertans.

Alberta Council on Aging is a member of the Stakeholder Collaborative Committee (SCC) as a champion for change. The SCC guides development and implementation of the Futures Policy Forum Initiative. We will provide results of this collaboration as we receive them. As always, Alberta Council on Aging wants to hear from you. If you have ideas, thoughts, or comments regarding the work of this forum please contact us.



**ALBERTA ASSOCIATION
ON GERONTOLOGY**

Improving the Lives of Older Albertans

<https://www.albertaaging.ca/futures-policy-2022/>



Alberta Council on Aging

Volunteer with us!

Why become a volunteer?

1.

To represent all Albertans, we need to hear concerns from seniors throughout the entire province. Would you like to be a voice for your community?

2.

Your volunteering helps all Alberta seniors!

3.

Volunteering is rewarding and empowering!



Alberta Council on Aging has been a voice for Seniors in Alberta for 55 years. We are a non-profit, charitable organization committed to working towards improving the quality of life for older adults through education, advocacy, and inclusion.

Contact our office to learn more about
current volunteer opportunities

info@acaging.ca or by telephone 780.423.7781



"WHY WE VOLUNTEER"

Hear from our Board of Directors on why they choose to volunteer in their communities and with Alberta Council on Aging!

"I was introduced to Alberta Council on Aging in the fall of 2010 when a friend, learning of my recent retirement, asked if I'd be interested in serving on a home care committee struck by the Red Deer branch of ACA.

I had worked as a pharmacist for 40 years - the last twenty in long term care. The committee work got me involved with the board for the central region, and the programs and events that it sponsored for the benefit of seniors in Red Deer and area.

I served as president for the region from 2012-2016, then representative to the provincial board of directors the following year. That put me in touch with the many enthusiastic and dedicated members from every corner of the province who advocate for seniors and the issues they encounter. At the annual general meeting in 2017, I was asked to consider the position of Vice President. When our President was forced to resign due to ill health the following year, I moved into the position of President.

Our executive director proved invaluable, helping me navigate the many aspects of our organization and get up to speed on so many issues. Thank you, Donna Durand!

There were certainly some challenges along the way, but overall, I have found it to be a rewarding experience."



Ron Rose

President





Pat Santa

Region 7 Director

"I have been volunteering in one way or another since my children were in elementary school. My husband volunteered as well.

As a member of Nord-Bridge Seniors, I have been on the Board as well as volunteering on fundraising initiatives and the Annual Tax Preparing Service.

Each of these organizations have given me the opportunity to give back to my community. The time i give has been enjoyable because it is a good cause needing a hand.

I have really appreciated these organizations lately because they were a diversion for me due to the loss of my husband, Don, this year. I have the chance to do something good while keeping myself occupied. It is also great to feel appreciated for my time.

I would recommend volunteering to anyone who has free time and talent to donate!"

"I am a new Director in the Calgary zone with Alberta Council on Aging. I am currently a nursing student at the University of Calgary and have previous experience working in healthcare. I come to the organization with a passion for working with older adults. Prior to joining the Board of Directors with ACA, I volunteered at the Good Samaritan Society in Edmonton as a friendly visitor in one of the Long-Term Care facilities. This role included providing companionship, playing games, assisting with activities, and visiting with the residents. Upon moving to Calgary, I started volunteering with Bethany in a similar role. I chose to become an active member of Alberta Council on Aging because I am interested in learning more about working with older adults, gaining perspective on the challenges faced, and working toward spreading understanding. I find volunteering with ACA fulfilling because it feels like I can make a difference in the Councils' goal of improving the quality of life for older adults in Alberta. I am committed to learning what I can do to connect people and work toward a level of genuine care and understanding that is truly deserved by all. Volunteering with Alberta Council on Aging is a wonderful way to get involved in the community!"



Paige Walker

Region 6 Director



"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others"

- Mahatma Gandhi



John Feddema

Region 9 Director

"Back in 2019 I was approached by the Executive Director of Alberta Council on Aging. Thinking at the time I was at the last quarter of my life, and I had never known anything about Alberta Council on Aging. What is it? Why does it exist? What do they do? They were putting together a team for the "Let's Stop Ageism" campaign. Now that sounded intriguing and something worthwhile! Maybe I could learn about ACA, so I agreed to be a participant. By the end of that year, I was asked if I would consider the position of Director for Region 9. I looked it up and found a rather large region (just under 100 town, cities, and communities) with no one representing them, so I agreed to come on board. As a volunteer, opportunities can put you into experiences and places that you would never expect. I was told that as a volunteer you can take on a level that you are comfortable with. Following that, the Covid pandemic put everyone and everything through ways to cope like never before. Alberta Council on Aging was in a position to give advice and support through those cruel times.

Here's what volunteering has meant to me over the course of my life:

- I have seen and felt improvements take place.
- I met volumes of new people.
- I tried many new things
- I found it was an opportunity to stay away from negativity that drags you down.
- I have seen new places and experienced different ways of living.

Volunteer opportunities that I have had:

- I was a 4H Club leader that grew until we needed to split into two clubs.
- Formed an Agriculture Society so the community could get funding to build a hall and community centre.
- Took part in a ministry that went to Africa which taught how to grow vegetables.

Volunteering gives you a chance to be involved with positive community projects and an opportunity to find or follow a passion that otherwise isn't available."

**Alberta Council
on Aging invites
you to participate
in our Newsletter!**



If you have a hobby or interest such as photography, art, writing short stories, or poetry, we would love to share your talents with our members!

To have your submissions featured please send your content to info@acaging.ca

Thank you for making our Newsletter exciting and personal to read!



THE EARTH'S NATURAL INTERNET

Submitted by Leslie Morgenstern

There is an old saying “If you clap your hands when you are alone in the forest does anyone hear?”

Well, there is new evidence that not only do they hear but you might be interrupting general communications between plants for miles around. “There is a natural internet right beneath our feet” (Paul Stamets, fungi expert). Fungi are the internet of the forest. Plants send nutrients and electrical impulses to one another using fungal mycelium. The 19th century biologist Albert Bernard Frank was the first to discover the symbiotic relationship between fungal colonies and the roots of plants. Frank created the term “mycorrhize” to describe it. Today we know that 90% of all land-based plants are connected through the “mycorrhizal network.” Fungi and trees are so interconnected that some scientists believe they should not be viewed as separate organisms. Mycelia are highly intelligent structures made up of rigid cell walls forming massive networks that can move through soil and tough environments. They are capable of breaking down structures in nature and can hold up to 30 times their mass. They are compatible with 90% of land plants and have created a massive underground neural network that plants and fungi use to communicate.



Fungi aid in plant growth – they help plants locate water, provide nutrients through their mycelia networks and boost the immune systems of plants by providing protective compounds which are triggered when the plants are attacked. They also serve as a communication network connecting plants to each other for miles and miles. Trees transfer carbon, nitrogen, phosphorus and other essential nutrients via mycelia. Larger, older trees help younger trees to survive through mycelia, otherwise many seedlings would die. Suzanne Simard (University of British Columbia) discovered nutrient exchanges between Douglas firs and paper birches, for example. One of her studies found that starving seedlings stuck in the shade were given carbon from nearby trees to help them along. In 2010 a researcher at South China Agricultural University, Ren Sen Zeng, determined that plants also “eavesdrop” on their neighbours to ascertain when to build up their defenses against oncoming pathogens. Tomatoes, infected with blight, release a chemical signal to warn other plants nearby. A 2013 study found that broad beans signal their neighbours through the fungal network to warn of an aphid infestation.

So, the old saying “if you clap your hands when you are alone in the forest does anyone hear?” certainly takes on new meanings.

The next time you are “alone” in the forest...are you?

Alberta Council on Aging Word Search

Words can be found in any direction (including diagonals) and can overlap each other. Use the word bank below.

U C W H C A R E G I V E R F N
C V A R E S E A R C H V K S D
I O Y I J Q E H T L A E H I A
G Z M T T U M U R O F Q Q R G
E T W G I N Z C B R A I N R I
T C S X R R E E T N U L O V N
A R A E J U B M E R U T U F G
R S A F R M R E E P R P I Z O
T Z R D B O T A L D H F I L M
S M V Y V X F M L E S R X P E
M O Q C U O R O G L C F X Q L
F W N E B T C E L C H A N G E
L I C N U O C A D N P V L V J
H R M E M B E R C L L A P B C
G N I K L A W O I Y E K K P G

Word Bank

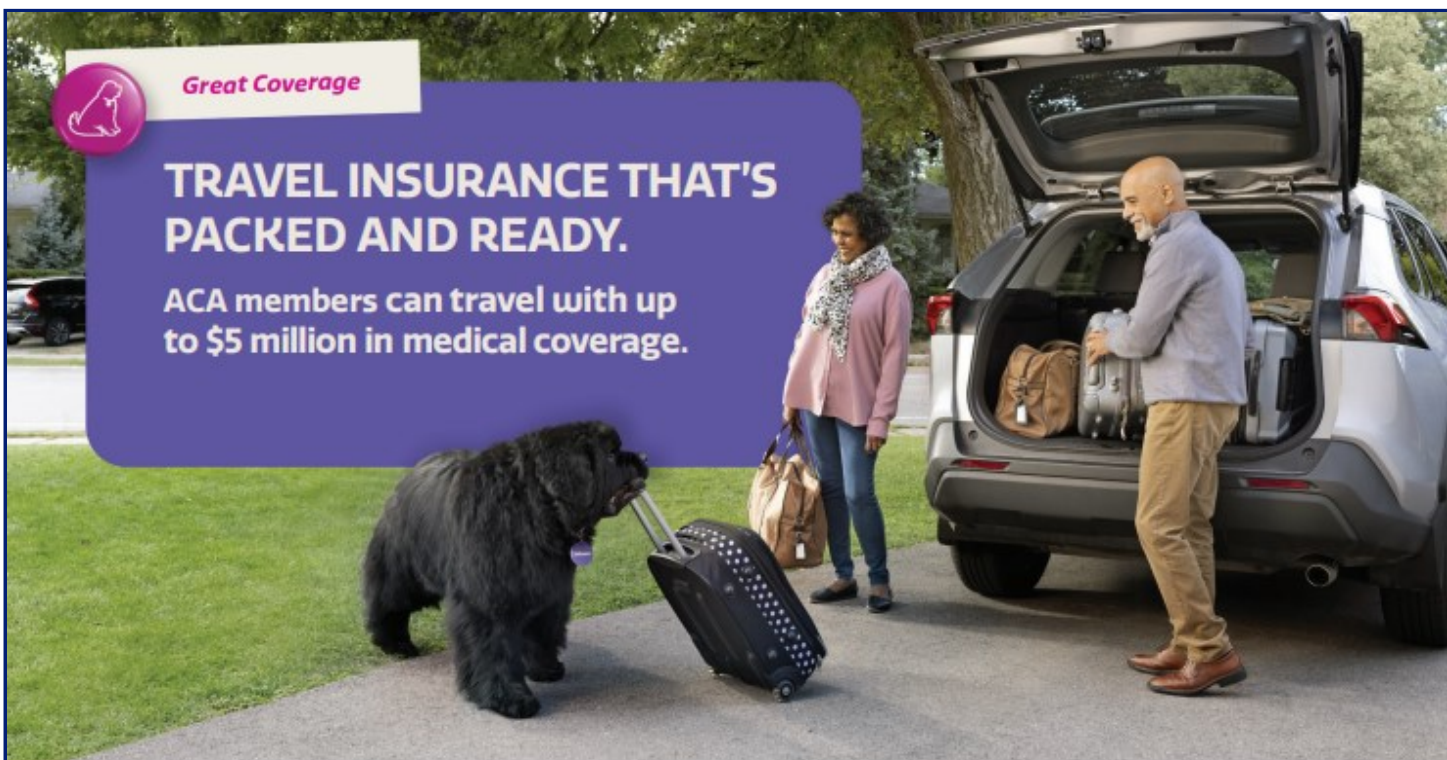
- | | | | |
|------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. aging | 2. film | 3. change | 4. brain |
| 5. council | 6. elder | 7. rural | 8. dementia |
| 9. health | 10. caregiver | 11. member | 12. forest |
| 13. forum | 14. research | 15. advocacy | 16. walking |
| 17. future | 18. strategic | 19. celebrity | 20. volunteer |



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Please renew your membership today!

Renew or purchase your membership for 2023!

Alberta Council on Aging has been a voice for older persons in Alberta since 1967. We are a grassroots organization that operates on funds collected through memberships, sponsorships, donations and grants.

We are asking for your continued support of Alberta Council on Aging by renewing or purchasing a 2023 membership today. All of our volunteers, members, sponsors and donors are truly valued. Thank you for your support!

Benefits of being a member

- » Access to a unique provincial network of supports and resources
- » A subscription to ACA News (2 editions annually)
- » Meaningful volunteer opportunities!
- » Tools and resources for education and advocacy
- » Collective representation for older Albertans
- » Preferred benefits through Johnson Inc. MEDOC travel insurance

How to purchase or renew your membership

Online—visit www.acaging.ca/membership and pay by credit card or PayPal

By Mail— complete the Alberta Council on Aging membership form and mail to the PO box address with payment by cheque or cash

By Phone—call our office at **780.423.7781** to pay by credit card over the phone



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Alberta Council on Aging Membership Form

Membership Type

<input type="checkbox"/>	Household \$25.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lifetime \$250.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organizational \$60.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Corporate \$200.00

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For over 54 years, Alberta Council on Aging has advised local, provincial and federal governments about matters relating to the opportunity for full and equal participation of older persons living in Alberta and Canada. Alberta Council on Aging is hoping to raise \$100,000.00 through fundraising efforts. An estimated 25% of funds raised are used to cover Administration needs within the Organization, 75% of the funds are used to support Senior Friendly programming, educational material, advocacy and inclusion.

Help Alberta Council on Aging make a difference. Please donate today!

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Contact: Mary Benson
Executive Director

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info@acaging.ca
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working to improve the quality of life for older persons