

# Strategies for Aging in Place

Population Forum

April 29, 2011

Valerie White

Chief Executive Officer

Nova Scotia Department of Seniors

Seniors

  
NOVA SCOTIA

# Outline

- Nova Scotia Department of Seniors
- Changing Demographics
- Strategy for Positive Aging
- Aging in Place
- Aging in Place Initiatives
- Age-Friendly Communities

# Nova Scotia Department of Seniors

- Nova Scotia Seniors' Citizens Secretariat was established in 1980 by an Act of the Nova Scotia Legislature
- The Nova Scotia Department of Seniors was created in September 2007 by an Order in Council
- The Seniors' Secretariat Committee of Cabinet Ministers remains intact to oversee the work of the Department and coordinate government services and programs for seniors
- The committee comprises cabinet ministers representing the following Departments: Seniors, Community Services, Health and Wellness, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, Labour and Advanced Education, and Justice

Seniors

  
NOVA SCOTIA

# Nova Scotia Department of Seniors

## Mandate:

- To lead the implementation of the Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia
- To facilitate the planning, development, and coordination of policies, programs, and services for seniors in partnership with government departments, seniors, and voluntary seniors' groups
- To consult with seniors and ensure their views are considered by the province in the development of policies, programs, and services
- To serve as a single entry point to the Government of Nova Scotia - providing information on programs and services for seniors and their families and responding to seniors' issues and concerns

Seniors

  
NOVA SCOTIA

# Changing Demographics

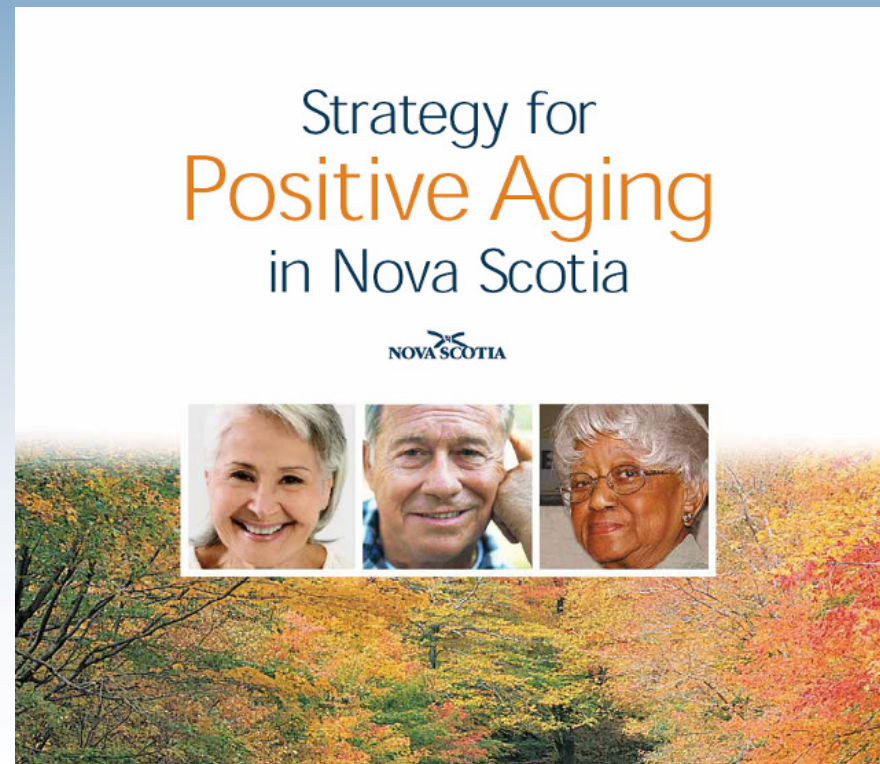
- Population aging is a global phenomenon
- Nova Scotia has the highest percentage of seniors in Canada (15.4%)
- Between 2007 and 2033, the population of seniors will increase by 86.3%
- Each month 1000 Nova Scotians turn 65

Seniors

  
NOVA SCOTIA

# Strategy for Positive Aging

- In 2005, the Government of Nova Scotia released the Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia
- Collaboration is the key to success!



# Strategy for Positive Aging

- Comprises 9 goals and 190 societal actions
- Goal topics:
  - Celebrating Seniors
  - Financial Security
  - Health and Well-Being
  - Maximizing Independence
  - Housing Options
  - Transportation
  - Respecting Diversity
  - Employment and Life Transitions
  - Supportive Communities

# Aging in Place

- Aging in Place is the diverse range of programs and housing options needed to ensure seniors maintain personal dignity and functional independence in their homes, neighbourhoods, or communities for as long as possible.

# Aging in Place

- Majority of Canadian seniors say they wish to remain in their homes for as long as possible
- 87% of Atlantic seniors have no plans to move
- All Canadians should be able to age in their place of choice
- Several other factors influence a person's residence: household income, family needs (e.g., proximity to extended family and caregiving), type of community (rural/urban), health status, access to services, home characteristics (e.g., size, design, maintenance), transportation options

# Aging in Place

- Seniors are not a homogeneous group
- A wide range of solutions are required in order to meet the functional needs and enhance quality of life for all seniors

# Aging in Place Initiatives

- Continuing Care Strategy (2006)
  - Expansion of home care services
  - Supportive Care Program
  - Expansion of respite options
  - Caregiver Benefit Program
  - Expansion of home oxygen authorizations
  - Personal Alert Assistance Program

# Aging in Place Initiatives

- Home-improvement/Adaptation grants and loans (DCS; CMHC)
- Affordable housing projects (DCS)
- Community-based transportation services
- Falls prevention initiatives
- Enhancements to community based mental health services

# Aging in Place Initiatives

- Department of Seniors developed 3 grant-based initiatives in 2008 to support community-based solutions population aging
- Positive Aging Fund
- Senior Safety Grant
- Age-Friendly Communities Program

# Aging in Place Initiatives

## Opportunities:

- Housing
  - Change zoning ordinances and housing regulations to encourage: “Visitability” (universal design); Multi-occupancy, accessory apartments; and community services and business to co-locate in neighbourhoods
  - Technology holds promise

# Aging in Place Initiatives

## Opportunities:

- Transportation
  - Encourage development of a continuum of transportation options
- Many other opportunities.....social, recreational, educational, cultural, etc.

# Aging in Place Initiatives

## Opportunities:

- “Village” movement
  - Membership driven, grass roots
  - Run largely by volunteers and some with paid staff
  - Funded by membership fees (from \$25 to \$600 or more per year depending on the services members want) and grants
  - Coordinate access to affordable services including transportation, grocery delivery, inspiring health and wellness programs, home repairs, social and educational activities and trips.
  - Beacon Hill established in 2001 (the first one)
  - 50 operating in the US and 1 in Australia
  - [www.vtvnetwork.org](http://www.vtvnetwork.org) (offers support and information)

# Age-Friendly Communities

- Considered a key solution and policy approach to supporting individuals to age in place
- ... a community where policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to support and enable older people to live in a secure environment, enjoy good health, and continue to participate fully in society

# Age-Friendly Communities

## 8 Key Components:

- Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Respect & Social Inclusion
- Social Participation
- Civic Participation & Employment
- Communication & Information
- Community Support & Health Services

# Age-Friendly Communities

- An international movement!
- Nova Scotia participation and leadership on the Age-Friendly Cities Project and Rural and Remote Communities Project (World Health Organization initiative)
- Memorandum of Understanding between Department of Seniors and the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities

# Age-Friendly Communities

- Department of Seniors developed the Age-Friendly Communities Program
  - Grant up to 50% of the project costs up to \$5000
  - Municipality matches contribution in cash or in kind
  - Traditionally supported the creation of programs or built-infrastructure that support aging in place
  - Grant recently expanded to include: Strategic Planning Projects

# Thank You!



[www.gov.ns.ca/seniors](http://www.gov.ns.ca/seniors)

Seniors

  
NOVA SCOTIA