

Making Life Better for Seniors



The provincial government is making life more affordable and comfortable for Nova Scotians. Many of these programs and benefits are intended especially to make life more affordable for lower

income seniors. They also help seniors live independently, take part in local activities, and stay mobile. We know that making life

better for seniors also makes life better for their families and their communities.

Read on to find out if these new programs and benefits could help you and how you can get them.

No Provincial Income Tax on Guaranteed Income Supplement

Do you receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)? Are you eligible for the provincial Low Income Tax deduction? If you answered “yes” to both questions, you will no longer pay provincial income tax.



What does this mean for me?

You should receive a bigger tax refund in 2011. For example, a couple with a combined income of \$25,252 in 2010 could save \$480 next year at income tax time. You don't need to apply, but you do need to file your income tax return each year.

What does this mean for Nova Scotia seniors?

This benefit will return about \$12.5 million dollars to about 18,000 seniors across the province.



Affordable Living Tax Credit for lower-income households

Is your annual household income less than \$34,800? If “yes,” you now have a new tax break. You don’t even have to apply. We will calculate it for you when you send in your Income Tax Return. This tax credit from the provincial government will help offset the cost of paying tax on goods and services.

What does this mean for me?

That depends on your household income. If it is less than \$30,000, you could get \$240 over the year. That’s four equal payments of \$60 in July 2010, October 2010, January 2011, and April 2011. If your household income is more than \$30,000 but less than \$34,800, you could get a smaller amount.



What does this mean for Nova Scotia seniors?

This tax credit is designed to benefit all lower-income households. Many seniors are expected to benefit by up to \$240 over the year.

Out of Province Travel and Accommodation Assistance

Do you need to travel outside the province for insured medical care that you can’t get in Nova Scotia? If “yes,” you may now qualify for help with travel costs.



To see if you qualify, ask your specialist to send a letter to MSI explaining why you need the treatment. MSI will inform your specialist if you are eligible for coverage. For more information, visit the Department of Health web site at www.gov.ns.ca/health/OOP or call **1-877-449-5476 (toll free)**.

What does this mean for me?

You could get help to pay for up to 12 medical visits outside Nova Scotia a year. For each trip you could get back up to \$1,000 for travel by plane, bus, or train. You could get back up to \$1,500 for each month’s accommodation (maximum \$125 each night).

You must apply for the rebate and send in your receipts with the deadline.

What does this mean for Nova Scotia seniors?

Helping you pay to travel outside the province when you are sick can make it easier for you to focus on feeling better instead of worrying about travel costs.

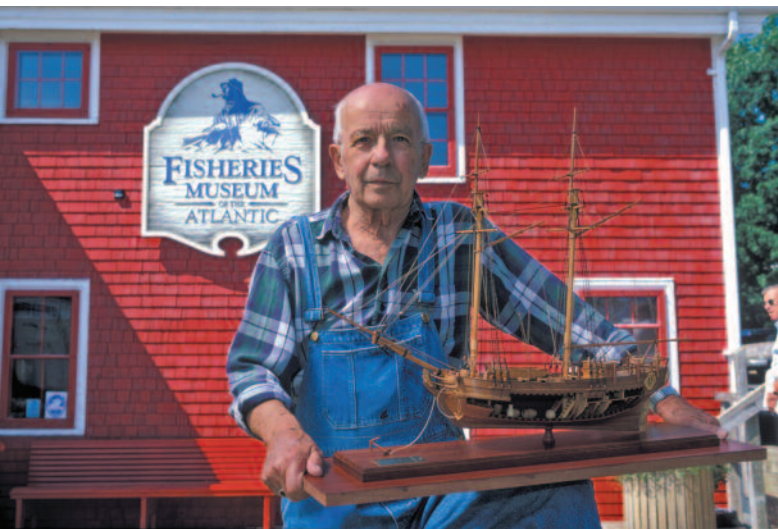
Nurse Practitioners

Do you or does a loved one have trouble seeing a doctor in your nursing home? Nova Scotia is hiring nurse practitioners in four communities to help provide health care in nursing homes.

Nurse practitioners are trained to diagnose and manage common medical conditions, including chronic illnesses. They often work in teams with doctors, dietitians, and pharmacists to provide health care. Nurse practitioners have been working in communities across Nova Scotia for the past 10 years.

What does this mean for me?

If you live in a nursing home in one of these four communities, you might now see a nurse practitioner from a health care team as your regular health care provider.



What does this mean for Nova Scotia seniors?

Seniors living in a nursing home in these communities will be able to receive health care from a nurse practitioner who knows them and their needs.



Self-Managed Care Allowance and Personal Alert Assistance

Would you be able to stay in your own home longer if you had a little more help?

We are working with people and organizations concerned about the health of seniors. Together we are working to more fully develop the self-managed care allowance and personal alert assistance benefits.

Watch for more news in the coming months about these new benefits and what they may mean for you and other Nova Scotia seniors.

Building improvements that help seniors Age in Place

Are you a senior living in public housing? Do you want to stay in your own apartment for as long as you possibly can? This year we are renovating and repairing public housing to help seniors remain mobile and live independently longer.

What does this mean for me?

If you live in public housing, you may notice the following upgrades to help you get around easier and stay safer:

- automatic door openers to make large heavy doors easier to open
- lever door handles to replace hard-to-turn knobs
- ramps to make it easier to avoid stairs and keep seniors mobile
- electricity generators, in case of power failure
- hand rails for added safety
- extra-loud fire alarms, to help hard-of-hearing seniors stay safe in case of fire

What does this mean for Nova Scotia seniors?

The Department of Community Services houses 8,500 seniors in public housing around the province. These improvements will help these seniors live independently longer.



Energy efficiency upgrades for low-income homeowners (Residential Energy Affordability Program)

Are you a homeowner trying to make ends meet on a low income? The Department of Community Services has several programs that help low-income seniors repair and upgrade their homes. Repairs and energy efficiency upgrades can also make your home more comfortable and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

What does this mean for me?



You could get your home repaired for a lower cost. If you make upgrades that reduce energy costs, they

may even be free. Upgrades can often reduce energy bills by about 30 per cent, so you save energy costs every year you stay in your home.

To apply for these programs, contact your regional Housing Services Office. Call **1-800-670-0065** to find the office nearest you.

What does this mean for Nova Scotia seniors?

Many seniors live on low, fixed incomes. Sometimes money for repairs and upgrades just isn't in the family budget. These government programs can make staying in their own homes more comfortable and more affordable for many Nova Scotia seniors.

