



Department of Seniors Business Plan 2009-2010

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B. MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

It is with pleasure that I present the Department of Seniors business plan for the fiscal year 2009-2010 that details another busy and exciting year for the Department of Seniors.

The Seniors' Secretariat Committee of Cabinet Ministers continues to ensure inter-departmental coordination of policies, programs and services available to seniors. In this, our second full year of having a dedicated Deputy Minister and Minister, we are also seeing the benefits of these roles in ensuring the voice of seniors is a vital contributor to corporate planning and priorities.

This year's Business Plan goals continue to set a steady pace toward implementing the Strategy for Positive Aging.

We continue to partner with municipalities to help them achieve their own Age-Friendly goals through project grants and to support Seniors' Safety Programs to foster secure communities. We will also support a time-banking initiative to encourage volunteering and person-to-person cooperation that will help seniors' practical needs to be met. This year we will also advance our goals around respecting diversity. The Department will also continue to administer the Positive Aging Fund to advance initiatives that focus on helping seniors remain healthy, active Nova Scotians. The department continues to support accessible services through involvement in the inter-departmental review committee for the Community Transportation Assistance Program and Accessible Transportation Assistance Program grants.

This year, the department will also accomplish most of the work required to advance the 8th goal of the Strategy for Positive Aging by hosting a Silver Economy Conference in May 2010. Bringing together a wide variety of stakeholders will allow us to educate ourselves about the challenges and matching jobs and business opportunities inherent in the current demographic shift in order to help Nova Scotia remain globally competitive. Finally, we'll continue to support and evaluate literacy projects that are funded through the Department of Labour and Workforce Development's Seniors' Literacy and Learning Grants Program, and to consult on issues concerning older workers.

The Department of Seniors should be proud of its accomplishments to date. Governments and organizations well beyond our provincial borders continue to use the *Strategy for Positive Aging*, as we do, to develop their plans for adapting to the needs of an older population. The three funding initiatives we began to deliver last year are allowing us to achieve the goals of the *Strategy* in tangible ways. Each grant is leveraging community support and volunteer efforts that multiply the real effects of the grants far beyond their face value.

Population aging will continue to have broad implications for workforces, economies, and government-supplied services in countries around the world. It is in the best interest of all Nova Scotians to ensure that seniors are encouraged and supported in their own efforts to remain self-reliant and that they are able to continue to contribute to families and communities in meaningful ways. The work of this department will benefit seniors and their families, but it also contributes in many, many ways to the prosperity of Nova Scotia today and into the future.

Respectfully submitted by,
Honourable Denise Peterson-Rafuse
Minister of Seniors

C. MISSION, VISION AND MANDATE

Mission

The Department of Seniors is committed to ensuring the inclusion, well-being, and independence of seniors in Nova Scotia by facilitating the development of policies on aging and programs for seniors across government and through the provision and coordination of strategic planning, support, services, programs and information. This will be achieved through leadership and collaboration with our partners.

Vision

Nova Scotia is an inclusive society of caring communities that supports the well-being of seniors and values their contributions (Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia, 2005, pg.25).

Mandate

- (a) To lead the implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia*.
- (b) To facilitate the planning, development, and coordination of policies, programs, and services for seniors in partnership with government departments, seniors, voluntary seniors' groups and the business sector.
- (c) To consult with seniors and ensure their views are considered by the province in the development of policies, programs, and services.
- (d) 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.

Demographic Considerations

It is clear that Nova Scotia is undergoing a demographic shift that will have a far-reaching effect on every facet of society.

Population Aging¹ – Based on the percentage of the population over the age of 65, in 2008, Nova Scotia is the oldest province in Canada with 144,446 or 15.4% of its population over 65 years of age. With the exception of Newfoundland, at 14.4%, the Atlantic Provinces have the highest percentage of seniors in the country. Each month, nearly 700 Nova Scotians turn 65.

The total population of Nova Scotia is expected to decline by approximately four and a half percent (4.69%) between 2007 and 2033. The 55-64 age group will also decline; a decrease of (4.86%) percent between 2007 and 2033; in contrast, by 2033, the seniors' population will be 257, 874, an increase of 86.3% from 2007. Seniors are the fastest growing population group in Nova Scotia and Canada;

¹ Population Aging Statistics – Source: Statistics Canada, 2008, Statistics Canada Projected Population 2007 – 2033, Statistics Canada Population of Nova Scotia Seniors by County 2007 and 2031.

The rapid aging of Nova Scotia's population is already evident in many communities. Halifax is the youngest county in the province; seniors make up 10.9% percent of Halifax County's population. In contrast, 11 of the 18 counties have a senior population that represents 15 percent or more of the population. At 21.8%, Cumberland County has the largest share of seniors.

Income Levels² – The income levels of seniors 65-74 were 28 per cent lower than the under 65 age group and the incomes of seniors 75 and older were 40 per cent below the under 65 group. The overall incidence of poverty for Nova Scotia seniors is comparable to the rest for younger adults in the 18-64 age group. 11% of seniors, or 13,715 older Nova Scotians were living below the low-income cut-off (LICO) in 2006. Two-thirds of seniors living in economic hardship were women living by themselves.

Labour Force Issues³ - The aging of the baby boom generation, lower fertility rates and net out-migration of young people has accelerated the aging of Nova Scotia's population. Baby boomers are the larger than expected post-war generation who were born between 1946 and 1964 - the oldest among them have recently entered their 60s.

Long-term outlooks clearly show slowing population growth and reduced labour force participation rates resulting from the aging of the workforce and retirement of the baby boomers. If current trends continue, the economic cost of low labour market participation among older workers will be substantial.

While the majority of seniors and persons aged 55-64 are not working, a substantial number in both groups are still part of the paid workforce. In 2008, 10,405 seniors were involved in paid employment. Self-employment was more prevalent among seniors, 1 in 4 or (25%).

Older workers show little sign of slowing down. Workers in the 55-64 age group averaged 36.7 hours of work per week. Seniors in the workforce averaged 34.8 hours each week. The participation rate among those aged 55-64 was 55.2 percent, and it was 7.9 percent for those 65 and older. The participation rate is defined as the percentage of the population that is employed for a particular age group.

Volunteering - In 2004, approximately 35% of seniors in Nova Scotia volunteered in their communities for an annual average of 258 hours. Nationally, the percentage was 32% for an annual average of 245 hours.

According to a Genuine Progress Index study, Nova Scotia lost approximately 30,000 volunteers between 1997 and 2000. Many not-for-profit groups have reported severe challenges in recruiting and retaining volunteers.

² Income Levels Statistics – Source: Statistics Canada, 2006

³ Labour Force Issues Statistics – Source: Statistics Canada Nova Scotia Workforce and Participation Rate and Older Nova Scotia Workers, 2006

Education and Literacy⁴ – Seniors have relatively low levels of formal education. In 2006, not quite 1 in 5, or 19.2%, had a high school certificate or equivalent. Considering the limited available educational opportunities available to seniors when they were young, their educational achievement is noteworthy. The percentage of seniors with a Bachelor degree (3.9%), Master’s degree (2.2%), Doctorate degree (0.8%) and a degree in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, or optometry (0.5%) totals 7.4%.

Living Arrangements⁵ – The majority of Nova Scotia seniors own or rent their homes. In 2006, 77.5% of seniors owned their home and 22.3% rented, for a total of 99.8%. A smaller portion 0.2% lived in Band housing. In 2006, four percent of the province’s seniors lived in public rental housing, while 3.6% lived in a licensed nursing home. A smaller portion, 0.8% lived in a licensed residential care facility.

D. PLANNING CONTEXT

It’s up to everyone, individuals, governments, business, community organizations and the voluntary sector to anticipate the challenges and take the steps needed to meet them. Some steps can be taken by one sector acting alone, while most would benefit from joint or combined action (National Advisory Council on Aging).

The Department of Seniors

The Minister of Seniors is responsible for overseeing the work of the department and, as one of seven Cabinet Ministers on the Seniors Secretariat, shares responsibility for ensuring cross departmental co-ordination of policies, programs and services affecting seniors. A critical role of the Department is leading the implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging* – a 10-15 year planning guide for maximizing opportunities so that Nova Scotia is equipped to manage the challenges associated with population aging. Implementation of the Strategy’s nine goals and 190 societal actions will ensure that services, programs and policies are in place to support Nova Scotia’s seniors to lead healthy lives in supportive communities.

Strategy Adopted as Strategic Framework

The *Strategy* is a framework for government. It is also a comprehensive guide for assisting *all* sectors in planning for an aging population. The *Strategy* reflects the direct input of more than 1,000 Nova Scotians who participated in Task Force on Aging consultations in 2004-2005. Endorsed by government in December 2005, the Strategy represents a commitment to ensuring *Nova Scotia is an inclusive society of caring communities that supports the well-being of seniors and values their contributions*⁶ The 2009-2010 business plan articulates a set of 13 priority initiatives to be undertaken to advance implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging*.

Additional funding of \$800,000 received in the 2007-2008 fiscal year allowed the Department to develop key grant initiatives to advance the *Strategy for Positive Aging*.

⁴ Education and Literacy Statistics – Source: Statistics Canada Highest Degree, Certificate or Diploma for Nova Scotians, 2006

⁵ Living Arrangements Statistics – Source: Nova Scotia Department of Health and Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, 2006

⁶ *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia* Vision Statement

The Age-friendly Communities Program, Positive Aging Fund and Senior Safety Grant all contribute to supportive communities where seniors can access services, participate in community life and feel safe.

Key Models of Practice

The Strategy inspires key models of practice for guiding government's work with seniors. These models of practice include: identifying opportunities and developing proactive responses; working collaboratively with other government departments, stakeholders, seniors, community-based organizations and the business sector; and involving seniors in policy development, planning and delivery of community-based responses. Underlying these models of practice are the notions that we must be proactive in our approach and, most importantly, that seniors must be intricately involved at every step in the development of policies and programs to meet their needs.

The *Strategy for Positive Aging* was the first Government initiative to address the complexity and broad impact of demographic change. The *Strategy* was a ground-breaking framework that received national and international attention. At the time of its release, in December 2005, no other province in Canada had attempted this type of approach to addressing the impact of demographic change on the social and economic fabric of Canadian society. Other provinces have since used the framework as a model for developing their own strategies, and it has guided the work of federal government officials, senate committees, and national non-government organizations.

E. Link to Department of Seniors Strategic Framework – *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia*

The *Strategy for Positive Aging* places particular emphasis on meeting the needs of Nova Scotia seniors now and in the future. Specifically, the Positive Aging goals pertaining to “celebrating seniors, maximizing independence, employment and life transitions, **transportation**, valuing diversity, and supportive communities” all emphasize the value of building on community and individual assets and encouraging various sectors to adapt to change by seizing opportunities. The *Strategy for Positive Aging* promotes a proactive, innovative approach that is able to identify opportunities in response to economic, social and demographic challenges.

This year, the department will focus on key initiatives that:

- enhance the age-friendliness of communities
- support community organizations that involve seniors and enhance their health, well-being and community participation
- support community organizations that provide sustainable services and programs that prevent and respond to senior abuse, particularly in rural communities
- promote the business and social opportunities associated with the “silver economy”
- develop an innovative approach to growing volunteerism.

Employment and Life Transitions

Workplace policies and human resource practices that were developed during times of high unemployment and a surplus of young workers are ill-suited for the coming demographic changes. Older workers represent a huge amount of human capital and wasting talent is as self-defeating as burning money (Strategy for Positive Aging, pg. 130).

Demographic change and aging are commonly regarded as a threat. It is becoming evident that it's time to help effect a shift in both attitude and approach that furthers our goals as a province. Nova Scotians need to consider demographic change and the aging of our society as a challenge *and* as an opportunity for economic growth and improving our province's competitiveness.

In partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Economic and Rural Development and other stakeholders, the Department of Seniors will host the Silver Economy Conference in May 2010. In the fiscal year 2009-2010, the Department will engage in extensive consultation and planning for the conference. The Silver Economy Conference will feature international speakers. A formal relationship between the Province of Nova Scotia and the Silver Economy Network of European Regions will also be announced - making Nova Scotia the first region outside of Europe to receive this distinction.

The first in North America, this conference will bring together numerous stakeholders to learn about new marketing approaches, new products and services, and a wide range of business opportunities that are emerging with demographic change in Nova Scotia and around the world. The conference will also investigate best practices for workplace policies that will ensure workforce stability and, in turn, economic stability and a continued high standard of living for all Nova Scotians in the future.

Transportation

Transportation is vital to ensuring seniors maintain quality of life (access to essentials such as medical appointments, grocery stores, and pharmacies) and a high quantity of life (access to nonessentials such as the nursing home to visit a spouse, the hairdresser, the local seniors' centre, a nutrition or exercise program, or adult day programs) (Strategy for Positive Aging, pg. 107).

To advance the implementation of transportation-related actions in the *Strategy for Positive Aging*, the Department of Seniors continues to be involved in the inter-departmental review committee for the Community Transportation Assistance Program (CTAP) and Accessible Transportation Assistance Program (ATAP) grants.

Supportive Communities

At every Task Force on Aging consultation meeting across the province, participants confirmed that the best solutions for an aging population are found in Nova Scotia's strong sense of community. The emphasis is on supporting volunteers and not-for-profit organizations, better utilizing existing community resources, addressing the challenges that are unique to Nova Scotia's rural communities, and improving literacy (Strategy for Positive Aging, pg. 137).

This year, to foster supportive communities, the department will implement the following grant initiatives and support the development of the Time Banking approach to volunteerism.

- Age-Friendly Communities Program – Building on Nova Scotia’s participation in national and international age-friendly initiatives, this program involves a province-wide initiative to introduce *Age-Friendly Communities Guidebooks* to municipalities. This initiative will engage elected officials, staff, planners and community members including seniors in dialogue about how they can ensure that the needs of older residents are considered an important part of the community planning process. The initiative also includes the Department’s Age-Friendly Communities Program grant which provides municipalities with grants of up to \$5,000 to assist them in creating a range of services, infrastructure, and built environments that ensures seniors are able to lead healthy, active, injury-free lives in their communities.
- Positive Aging Fund –The *Positive Aging Fund* supports non-profit community based organizations in their delivery of programs which advance the *Strategy for Positive Aging* by promoting the health, well-being and community participation of seniors. This grant is available to a maximum of \$10,000 and will cover up to 100% of the project’s costs.
- Senior Safety Grant – The Senior Safety Grant is a new initiative of the Departments of Seniors and Justice. The grant is available to a maximum of \$20,000 and supports Seniors’ Safety Programs as they promote education and awareness about crime prevention, senior abuse and safety and health issues and enhance communication between seniors and police. These programs advance Nova Scotia’s *Elder Abuse Strategy: Towards Awareness and Prevention* by providing resource and supports that respond to seniors abuse.
- Seniors’ Literacy and Learning Initiatives - In partnership with the Skills and Learning Branch of the Department of Labour and Workforce Development, the Department of Seniors provides funding for a seniors’ literacy coordinator to support and evaluate the ongoing work of eight literacy projects that are funded through the Seniors’ Literacy and Learning Grants program. Seniors’ Literacy and Learning Grants support the health literacy of seniors; this is critical to promoting seniors’ self-determination with respect to their health needs.
- Time Banking Program Development – Time Banking is a unique approach to volunteerism, similar to the “pay it forward” philosophy - for every hour you spend doing something for someone in your community, you earn one Time Dollar, which you can spend on having someone do something for you. Time Banking programs help people of different ages and abilities obtain the help they need while maintaining their dignity because it also empowers them to help others. The Department will continue to provide support to volunteers and stakeholder organizations in developing models for community engagement that gauge community interest and open dialogue about the potential for Time Banking programs.

Opportunities

The Department of Seniors is the lead agency in implementing the *Strategy for Positive Aging*. In order to better manage the long-term implementation process, the department has committed to supporting and tracking cross-governmental activities related to the *Strategy*, and to ensuring that each fiscal year significant progress is made in advancing at least one societal action within each of the Strategy's nine goals – Celebrating Seniors, Financial Security, Health and Well-Being, Maximizing Independence, Housing Options, Transportation, Respecting Diversity, Employment and Life Transitions, and Supportive Communities.

Through the development of its grant initiatives, the Department has demonstrated its commitment to supporting community-based responses, to plan for Nova Scotia's aging population. Furthermore, by providing community supports, through access to services and programs, these initiatives support aging in place – a key factor in the emotional and physical health of seniors

Labour Force Issues and Age-Friendly Workplaces - Labour shortages in the skilled trades and in some service industries are already being experienced, including a shortage of paid health care providers. Low workforce participation rates among older workers further exacerbate this situation. If Nova Scotia's rates were merely at the national level, the province's workforce would be larger by about 25,000 workers.

In an era where jobs will soon out-number workers, there is a significant opportunity to encourage and support workplace policies and practices that enable Nova Scotia companies to become employers of choice and gain a competitive advantage on a national and global scale.

In addition to enabling businesses to become more competitive, these policies can also influence the way Nova Scotians view their careers and the time they spend in the workforce - creating a society where more time is devoted to children, aging relatives, lifelong learning, and volunteerism. Policies that address life-work balance can play an increasing role in retaining baby boomers and attracting the next generation of workers.⁷ Furthermore, workplace modifications that accommodate the physical needs of older workers open opportunities to people with disabilities.

Volunteerism - Nova Scotia's ability to mobilize the kind of community support needed to meet the challenges of an aging population will depend on growing and strengthening the voluntary sector.

Retiring baby boomers represent a very large pool of highly skilled, capable, and active volunteers. If baby boomers decide to volunteer in their retirement at the rate they did

⁷ According to the Conference Board of Canada, 75% of Canadians age 51-61 would take advantage of phased-retirement policies to remain in the workforce longer – provided retirement income, pension systems and other financial considerations such as professional fees were modified to eliminate financial disincentives.

when they were in their 40s and 50s, one in three will do so. An opportunity exists to strategically influence the volunteer rates of baby boomers in retirement.

By supporting the development of Time Banking Initiatives, (previously discussed on page 9) the Department is supporting innovative ways of growing volunteerism in Nova Scotia.

Inter-generational Bonds – Among the most segregated groups in our society are the young and the old. Both have misconceptions about each other. An opportunity exists to increase each group's knowledge and understanding of one other, reduce misconceptions and fears, and foster a culture of caring. Initiatives to ensure community-based programs, schools, and long-term care facilities involve and include all age groups will make better use of existing resources and help bridge the gap between generations. Since baby boomers are less likely than their parents to choose activities by age group and more likely choose activities based on shared interests, regardless of the age of other participants, it appears that the timing is right to pursue this opportunity.

Finally, the promotion of inter-generational activities is a key component of the Positive Aging Fund and Senior Safety Grant; These encourage community groups to develop activities that promote inter-generational relationships.

F. STRATEGIC GOALS, CORE BUSINESS AREAS, PRIORITIES & PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Note about Performance Measures

In 2006, the Department of Seniors (then the Senior Citizens' Secretariat) launched its formal performance measurement system. It soon became evident that many of the measures put in place in 2006 were not the most suitable measures for the department to track over time, so in the *2006-2007 Accountability Report*, the department indicated a number of measures would be reviewed and/or discontinued.

The evolution of the Secretariat into a Department, in addition to the Department's new focus of providing a number of community grant programs, requires a new focus for the department's performance measures. In 2008-2009, it became apparent that a more in-depth assessment of the effectiveness and relevance of the performance measurement system, prior to revising the measures, was needed to accurately capture the long term social impact of the Department's work. The Department was one of two lead departments/agencies involved in an initiative of special policy agencies to examine performance measurement. As this process continues to unfold, no new measures have yet been added through this year's business planning process, however one measure was revised. It is the department's intention to review and adjust previous measures, as well as develop and add new measures in the 2010-2011 business plan in accordance with a revised performance measurement system.

2009-2010 Priorities and Performance Measures

The proceeding outlines the Strategic Goals and Core Business Areas of the Department of Seniors. For this business plan, 2009-2010, priorities and performance measures

appear once again under Strategic Goals rather than Core Business Areas. Therefore, the Strategic Goals (with corresponding Priorities and performance measures) are outlined again beginning on page 14. The three performance measures outlined have been identified because they are crucial to advancing the work of the Department. They are: Consultations with Seniors and Nova Scotia's Seniors' Networks; Number and Type of Initiatives the Department's Staff Provides Consultation and Policy Advice on and; Communication with Seniors and Nova Scotia's Seniors' Networks. All Priorities related to the performance measure are noted in the table. Under each Core Business Area is a list of specific activities the Department will undertake in order to achieve that area's goals.

Strategic Goals

1. To improve innovation and collaboration to ensure the diverse needs of seniors are met.
2. To increase the age-friendliness of communities and promote active, healthy aging.
3. To improve the financial security of seniors, particularly those with low and modest incomes.
4. To increase awareness of the value of older workers and the economic benefits of older worker participation in the labour force.
5. To enable seniors to live in safe and supportive living environments, free from danger, fear, and exploitation.
6. To support and promote the important work of volunteers.

Core Business Areas

The Department of Seniors will carry out its responsibilities through the following four core business areas:

1. Intergovernmental, Interdepartmental and Government-Wide Collaboration and Policy Development

The Department of Seniors will:

- Work with seniors and government department/agencies and organizations to support initiatives affecting seniors
- Continue to guide the implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia* in collaboration with the Action Plan for Positive Aging Working Group and report on activities which address the *Strategy's* societal actions
- Coordinate meetings of the Seniors' Secretariat Committee of Cabinet Ministers to ensure cross-government collaboration and decision-making on issues affecting seniors

- Collaborate on joint initiatives and participate in ongoing discussions with the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors and Committee of Officials
- Provide policy advice and engage in policy research related to issues affecting seniors

2. Stakeholder Consultation and Collaboration

The Department of Seniors will:

- Serve as a resource to seniors and other government and non-government stakeholders on aging policies, programs, and services
- Participate on issue-specific standing committees of government and non-government agencies
- Facilitate the participation of seniors in the work of the department, and seek their advice on policy issues, primarily through regular consultation with the Group of IX Seniors' Organizations and two consultations held annually with other senior-serving organizations and community members

3. Planning, Coordinating and Delivering Programs and Services

The Department of Seniors will:

- Continue to collaborate with various government and non-government stakeholders to promote age-friendly programs and coordinate service delivery
- Support and promote efforts at the community level that enhance the well-being and quality of life for Nova Scotia seniors through its grant initiatives
- Develop and implement new seniors' programs that support implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging*

4. Communications and Information Sharing

The Department of Seniors will:

- Assist in the communication of issues and concerns of seniors to government
- Inform and educate various government and non-government stakeholders and the public on aging issues, programs and services for seniors, and promote the contributions made by seniors to family and community life
- Inform government, not-for-profit and private sectors of the economic and social benefits of retaining and retraining older workers and the value of increasing the participation of aging baby boomers in paid and unpaid work
- Promote innovative solutions for seizing opportunities associated with demographic change and ensuring programs and services affecting seniors are sustainable

The following are the Strategic Goals of the Department of Seniors with corresponding priorities and performance measures.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: *To improve innovation and collaboration to ensure the diverse needs of seniors are met.*

PRIORITY 1 – Collaborate on joint initiatives and participate in ongoing discussions with federal/provincial/territorial jurisdictions on seniors' issues.

Strategic Actions:

- Support the participation of Nova Scotia's Minister of Seniors in the 11th meeting of Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Ministers Responsible for Seniors, planned for Fall 2009.
- Provide staff support, including the CEO serving as Provincial/Territorial Co-Chair on the F/P/T Committee of Officials, in the preparatory work for the meeting of Ministers.
- Participate in sub-committees of the F/P/T Committee of Officials including: Safety and Security; Healthy Aging and Wellness; Positive Images of Aging; and Financial Security.

PRIORITY 2 – Collaborate on joint initiatives, provide informed contributions, and support the work of initiatives led by other provincial government departments that undertake work which impacts seniors, supports community development, and responds to demographic change.

Strategic Actions:

- Host planning sessions on the impact of demographic change involving the members of the interdepartmental working group tasked with developing the Action Plan for Positive Aging.
- Engage the Action Plan for Positive Aging Working Group in creating a report to communicate Government progress on implementing the *Strategy for Positive Aging*.
- Participate on aging related standing committees across Government.
- Continually review research and innovations related to a wide range of aging issues in order to remain current and provide sound policy advice.
- Participate in educational and networking opportunities that enable the department to maintain its expertise in aging issues, learn about innovative solutions, and develop partnerships locally, nationally, and internationally.

Other Supporting Activities:

- Participate on issue-specific standing committees of government and non-government agencies. In 2009-2010, representatives of the department will participate on more than 30 committees focused on issues that include: long-term fiscal planning, community development, volunteerism, older workers, caregiving, women/work/care, healthy active living, literacy and lifelong learning, housing and falls prevention.

PRIORITY 3 – Engage seniors from diverse communities in order to further advance the 9th goal, 'Respecting Diversity', outlined in the *Strategy for Positive Aging*.

Strategic Action:

- Engage the inter-departmental Action Plan for Positive Aging Working Group and seniors to identify priorities and best practices for engaging seniors from diverse groups. Diverse groups refers to, but is not limited to, Aboriginal, Acadian/Francophone, African Nova Scotian/Canadian, disabled and lesbian, gay and transgendered seniors.

PRIORITY 4 – Lend support to community-based seniors’ organizations, promote the continued growth of Nova Scotia’s seniors’ networks, encourage the participation of seniors in the work of the department, and seek their advice on policy issues.

Strategic Actions:

- Host regular forums such as meetings of the Group of IX Seniors’ Advisory Council of Nova Scotia and host Spring and Fall Consultations for consultation and information-sharing.
- Encourage the participation of seniors on standing committees, other special task forces, and through special forums related to advancing implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging*.
- Provide opportunities for seniors to increase their knowledge and share information, participate in public policy consultations and identify solutions to seniors’ issues.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE: STRATEGIC GOAL 1 – Priority 4

Performance Measure: Consultations with Seniors and Nova Scotia’s Seniors’ Networks.

Performance Measure: Consultations with Seniors and Nova Scotia’s Seniors’ Networks					
OUTCOME (immediate or inter-mediate)	MEASURE	DATA	TARGET	TARGET Year (Ultimate Target)	Strategic Actions to achieve target
<p>Seniors, seniors’ organizations and senior-serving agencies have opportunities to provide advice on public policy issues.</p> <p>Increased awareness and knowledge of the policies, programs and services available to seniors in Nova Scotia.</p>	<p>Satisfaction level of seniors’ organizations with information provided by the department on the policies, programs, and services available to seniors and the mechanisms in place for bringing issues of concern to the attention of the Nova Scotia government.</p> <p>Evaluation form to assess Group of IX (advisory committee to the department comprised of seniors’ organizations from across the province) satisfaction (low, med, high) with the opportunity to provide advice on public policy issues.</p> <p>In 08-09, a new evaluation form will be developed to determine the satisfaction level (low, med, high) of seniors’ organizations attending the Department’s Spring and Fall consultations.</p>	<p>Base Year: 2006-2007</p> <p>53% high satisfaction</p> <p>40% medium satisfaction</p> <p>7% mixed/unknown</p> <p>Base Year 2008-2009</p>	<p>Target: 2008-2009</p> <p>70% high overall satisfaction</p> <p>Result: 73% high satisfaction</p> <p>27% medium satisfaction</p> <p>0% low</p>	<p>Ultimate Target: 2009-2010</p> <p>80% high overall satisfaction</p> <p>To be determined at end of 2009-2010</p>	<p>PRIORITY 4 – Lend support to community-based seniors’ organizations, promote the continued growth of Nova Scotia’s seniors’ networks, encourage the participation of seniors in the work of the department, and seek their advice on policy issues.</p> <p>Hold regular meetings with the Group of IX Nova Scotia Seniors’ Organizations.</p> <p>Continue to hold regular consultations with seniors’ organizations.</p> <p>Collect data on Seniors’ Information Line using updated data collection form.</p> <p>Continue to update Ministers of the department on emerging aging issues identified by seniors.</p>

PERFORMANCE MEASURE : STRATEGIC GOAL 1 – Priority 1, 2, 3 and STRATEGIC GOAL 3 – Priority 9:

Performance Measure: Number and type of initiatives the Department’s staff provides consultation and policy advice on.

Performance Measure: Number and type of initiatives the Department’s staff provides consultation and policy advice on					
OUTCOME (immediate or inter-mediate)	MEASURE	DATA	TARGET	TARGET Year (Ultimate Target)	Strategic Actions to achieve target
Partnerships with government departments and non-government organizations in identifying and addressing the needs of seniors.	Number and type of initiatives the Department’s staff provides consultation and policy advice on	Baseline: 2008-2009 40 initiatives (estimate)	This measure will be assessed in 2009-2010.	TBD	<p>PRIORITY 1 – Collaborate on joint initiatives and participate in ongoing discussions with federal/provincial/territorial jurisdictions on seniors’ issues.</p> <p>PRIORITY 2 – Collaborate on joint initiatives, provide informed contributions, and support the work of initiatives led by other provincial government departments that undertake work which impacts seniors, supports community development, and responds to demographic change.</p> <p>PRIORITY 3 – Engage seniors from diverse communities in order to further advance the 9th goal, ‘Respecting Diversity’, outlined in the Strategy for Positive Aging.</p> <p>Continue to work with the Office of Health Promotion and Protection to: support seniors in their efforts to be active; develop new community-based approaches to healthy active living for seniors; and prevent falls.</p> <p>PRIORITY 9 – Implement Nova Scotia’s Elder Abuse Strategy: Towards Awareness and Prevention with a particular focus on the strategy’s second strategic area – Prevention of financial abuse.</p> <p>Continue to implement the senior abuse strategy with assistance from the Senior Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee, comprised of internal and external partners.</p> <p>Continue to collaborate with the Dept. of Labour and Workforce Development on seniors’ literacy initiatives.</p> <p>Continue to collaborate with internal and external stakeholders on the seniors’ oral health initiative.</p>

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: *To increase the age-friendliness of communities and promote healthy, active aging*

Age-friendly communities promote positive aging and are guided by the principles of dignity, fairness, participation, respect, safety, self-determination, self-fulfillment, and security. Age-friendly communities provide programs, services, and an infrastructure that enable seniors to access the community's educational, cultural, spiritual, and recreational resources. Age-friendly communities provide access to the community's features and resources, often in inter-generational settings. This allows seniors to maximize their independence and pursue active lives and good health.

PRIORITY 5 – Provide support to municipal governments for creating a range of services, infrastructure, and built environments that ensure seniors are able to lead healthy, active, injury-free lives in their communities, through the Age-Friendly Communities Program.

Strategic Actions:

- Evaluate the results of the program's initial release (February 2008) and apply lessons learned by making program modifications as needed.
- Communicate funded projects and promote innovative applications.
- Engage municipalities in exploring options and long-term strategies for improving the age-friendliness of Nova Scotia communities.

PRIORITY 6 – Provide support to non-profit community organizations by creating projects that advance the implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging*, through the Positive Aging Fund.

Strategic Actions:

- Evaluate the results of the program's initial release (February 2008) and apply lessons learned by making program modifications as needed.
- Communicate funded projects and encourage innovative applications.

PRIORITY 7 – Organize and host the annual 50+ Expo and coordinate Seniors Week Activities.

Strategic Actions:

- Fund an events coordinator to organize the 20th annual 50+ Expo (June 12-13), secure sponsors, and encourage the participation of exhibitors to provide entertainment and a showcase of products, programs and services for older adults.
- Proclaim Seniors' Week during the third week of June.
- Coordinate Seniors' Week activities and encourage province-wide participation.
- Coordinate the selection and presentation of the Remarkable Seniors Awards for leadership, volunteerism, and community service.

PRIORITY 8 – Prepare and distribute publications to ensure information reaches seniors in a format that is senior friendly, and work to promote initiatives and community connections that support the health, wellbeing and cultural contributions of seniors.

Strategic Actions:

- Maintain the quality and distribution level of *Programs for Seniors* – an annual publication that has a solid reputation as a reliable and informative resource for seniors, their families, and people who work with seniors.
- Maintain the quality and distribution level of the *Provincial Directory of Seniors' Councils, Clubs, Centres and Other Seniors' Organizations*.
- Review the content of the *Seniors' News* newsletter to ensure it reflects the department's new strategic direction and to ensure it informs a broader audience and identify ways to expand electronic distribution.

Other Supporting Activities:

- Use the documents *Making Your Printed Health Materials Senior Friendly*⁸, *Communicating with Seniors*⁹, and *National Framework on Aging*¹⁰ as lenses to determine the senior-friendliness of department communications and policy, and encourage stakeholders to communicate in a senior-friendly format.
- Coordinate an informative cross-province tour that promotes positive aging and increases awareness about the Department of Seniors and other Government activities, with support from a range of partners.
- Continue to coordinate and promote the Seniors' Art and Photo Gallery.
- Provide financial support to the annual Tools for Life Conference.
- Continue to support and evaluate the ongoing work of literacy projects that are funded through the Department of Seniors and Department of Labour and Workforce Development's Seniors' Literacy and Learning Grants Program.
- Continue to support activities that develop from the Seniors Healthy Active Living Initiative, in partnership with Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection and Recreation Nova Scotia.

⁸ Produced by the US-based National Institute on Aging

⁹ Produced by Health Canada

¹⁰ Produced by the F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Seniors

PERFORMANCE MEASURES: STRATEGIC GOAL 2 – Priority 8:

Performance Measures: Communication with Seniors and Nova Scotia’s Seniors’ Networks

Performance Measure: Communication with Seniors and Nova Scotia’s Senior’s Seniors’ Networks					
OUTCOME (immediate or inter-mediate)	MEASURE	DATA	TARGET	TARGET Year (Ultimate Target)	Strategic Actions to achieve target
Information on programs and services for seniors is communicated in a senior-friendly format.	Survey method will be used to assess current communications vehicles (quarterly newsletter, Programs for Seniors directory, and website on characteristics such as: suitability of contents, comprehensive-ness, readability, layout, and design. Participants will include seniors and individuals who work with seniors.	Baseline will be established at end of 2008-2009.	To be set at end of 2008-2009.	Set at end of 2008-2009.	<p>PRIORITY 8 – Prepare and distribute publications to ensure information reaches seniors in a format that is senior friendly, and work to promote initiatives and community connections that support the health, wellbeing and artistic contributions of seniors.</p> <p><i>Newsletter:</i> Update per feedback from stakeholders</p> <p><i>Programs for Seniors:</i> Maintain contact with seniors’ networks in Nova Scotia to ensure the directory is inclusive and comprehensive.</p> <p><i>Website:</i> Update per feedback from stakeholders.</p> <p>Ensure public awareness of department’s events, activities and accomplishments through effective communications planning and actions.</p> <p>Website will be maintained and enhanced.</p>
	Number of <i>Seniors’ News</i> distributed.	Baseline 2006-2007: 6,126 (4 editions)	Target 2008-2009: Maintain current distribution	TBD	
	Number of visits to the Department website.	Baseline 2006-2007: Data available Aug 1-Mar 31 average 4,883 visits a month. Based upon this average – estimate for entire fiscal would be 58,593.	Target 2008-2009: 70,000 visits	Ultimate Target 2010-2011: 80,000 visits	
Greater public awareness of the Department and its role and function.	Number of speaking engagements	Baseline 2006-2007: 76 speaking engagements.	Target 2008-2009: 100 speaking engagements	Ultimate Target 2009-2010: 125 speaking engagements	
	Number of calls received on the Senior Information Line	Baseline 2006-2007: 2,797	Target 2008-2009: 3,000 calls	Ultimate Target 2009-2010: 3,500 calls	Staff will be encouraged to keep up to date the completion of tracking and data forms.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: *To improve the financial safety and security of seniors, particularly those with low and modest incomes.*

Adequate income is a key determinant of health and strongly influences an individual's ability to age positively. Reducing the rate of economic hardship among seniors who fall below the poverty line (low-income cut-off), many of whom are single women living alone, is key. Taking steps to improve taxation and benefit policies to assist low and modest income seniors, and ensuring baby boomers are financially ready for retirement, is crucial to improving the financial security of seniors today and tomorrow.

PRIORITY 9 – Implement *Nova Scotia's Elder Abuse Strategy: Towards Awareness and Prevention* with a particular focus on the strategy's second strategic area – Prevention of Financial Abuse.

Strategic Actions:

- Collaborate with the Senior Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee to prioritize and advance the actions related to the second strategic area – Prevention of Financial Abuse
- Collaborate with Federal/Provincial/Territorial Officials Responsible for Seniors Working Groups to address initiatives to increase the financial literacy of seniors and continue to engage in discussions and recommendations on pension reform.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: *To increase awareness of the value of older workers and the economic benefits of older worker participation in the labour force.*

The Department is working to increase awareness about the value of maximizing the skills, contributions and participation of older workers in the labour force. With better understanding, it is hoped that employers will be better equipped to utilize the ideas, talents and productive capacity of Nova Scotians of all ages and abilities in both paid and unpaid work.

PRIORITY 10 – Engage in extensive consultation and planning for the Silver Economy Conference to bring together businesses, the voluntary and higher learning sectors, and all levels of government to learn about a wide range of opportunities that are emerging with demographic change in Nova Scotia and around the world.

Strategic Actions:

- To increase awareness and the knowledge of Nova Scotians regarding the economic challenges and opportunities that will arise as a result of the increasing average age of our population.
- To motivate Nova Scotians to begin to seek opportunities and information that will help them further their individual and collective interests in the silver economy.
- To fill the need for more information and action on these topics by launching and supporting the successful delivery of the Silver Economy Summit 2010.

Other Supporting Activities:

- Continue to participate, with partners across Government, on the Long-Term Planning Council (led by Assistant Deputy Ministers Committee) intended to share information on future trends and projections to better respond to coming challenges and opportunities.
- Participate in issue-specific projects and standing committees initiated by a range of external partners, including NovaKnowledge and Nova Scotia Community College.

STRATEGIC GOAL 5: *To enable seniors to live in safe and supportive living environments, free from danger, fear, and exploitation.*

Many sectors and community-based organizations have a role to play in developing safe communities and ensuring the safety of seniors. Reducing social isolation, falls among seniors, crime rates, and senior abuse is key. Promoting seniors' safety in an emergency and increasing their knowledge of medications, frauds and scams; and legal documents such as power of attorney and wills is also crucial.

PRIORITY 11 – Continue to work towards the prevention and response to abuse of older adults by leading the implementation of the *Nova Scotia Elder Abuse Strategy: Towards Awareness and Prevention*.

Strategic Actions:

- Collaborate with our Federal/Provincial/Territorial, national and provincial partners as well as the Senior Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee, to work towards the prevention of senior abuse, with a particular focus on financial abuse.
- Coordinate, support, and promote province-wide activities that recognize Nova Scotia's 5th annual Senior Abuse Awareness Day and the 4th World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15th.
- Continue implementing the senior abuse education and awareness campaign to increase awareness and promote use of the Senior Abuse Line.
- Support the further development of the two pilot senior abuse prevention community networks and explore the development of new networks.
- Consult and collaborate with various departments, agencies/organizations and other partners who have expertise and interest in issues surrounding senior abuse.

PRIORITY 12 – Support existing and expand Seniors' Safety Programs in partnership with the Department of Justice through the Senior Safety Grant.

Strategic Actions – The following actions are met through the delivery of the Senior Safety Grant:

- Strengthens the links between Seniors' Safety Programs, Government's senior abuse prevention and crime prevention strategies, and collaborative work related to emergency preparedness.
- Supports the professional development of Seniors' Safety Coordinators across the province to ensure high quality program delivery.

- Provides financial support to existing Seniors' Safety Programs.
- Provides financial support to new Seniors' Safety Programs to expand programs into communities where they do not currently exist.
- Evaluate the results of the program's initial release (October 2008) and apply lessons learned by making program modifications as needed.
- Highlight funded projects and promote innovative applications.

Other Supporting Activities:

- Follow through on collaborative relationships built through the department's participation in 2 international Seniors and Emergency Preparedness Conferences

STRATEGIC GOAL 6: *To support and promote the important work of volunteers.*

Nova Scotia's ability to mobilize the kind of community support needed to meet the challenges of an aging population will depend on growing and strengthening the voluntary sector. Retiring baby boomers represent a very large pool of highly skilled, capable, and active volunteers and an opportunity exists to strategically influence the volunteer rates of baby boomers in retirement.

PRIORITY 13 – Increase awareness of the time banking concept and engage community partners in dialogue about its potential for creating supportive communities by attracting volunteers, increasing intergenerational interactions, supporting a seniors-helping-seniors approach, and valuing the assets and contributions of marginalized groups.

Strategic Actions:

- Provide support to volunteers and stakeholder organizations by developing models for community engagement and hosting events that gauge community interest and open dialogue about the potential for Time Banking programs.

Other Supporting Activities:

- Participate on the Volunteerism Intergovernmental Coordinating Committee led by the Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection.

G. HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY

The Human Resources staff from the Department of Health carries out human resource functions on behalf of the Department of Seniors.

The Department will have seven authorized Full Time Employees (FTEs) in place at the beginning of the fiscal year, 2009-2010, with a plan to fill an additional three authorized Full Time Employees (FTEs) over the course of the year. It is also anticipated that additional staff will be required to fulfill the development of the department.

The Department will also provide learning experiences to university students in a variety of disciplines including Family Studies & Gerontology, Public Administration, and Public Relations, as the opportunity permits.

The human resource priorities for the coming year are focused upon the growth and development of existing and new Departmental staff. They include:

- Creating an agency employee recognition program
- Providing mentorship to new staff both informally and formally through assigned mentors to new staff; Continue to provide leadership development and core competency development opportunities
- In the building of the Department, determine organizational effectiveness strategies to maximize efforts and results
- Explore the benefits of having a Career Starts intern join the Department, possibly to work on policy development and evaluation
- Increase staff awareness of diversity issues by ensuring representation on the Diversity Roundtable Committee. This committee promotes inclusiveness as a model of government led initiatives. Support diversity related training requests
- Ensure continued representation on joint Occupational Health and Safety and Identify Occupational Health and Safety requirements of the Department
- Ensure continued representation on the Healthy Wellness Committee, led by the Department of Health. This committee promotes: a supportive workplace culture, healthy lifestyle practices and; adherence to occupational health and safety standards (DOH Healthy Workplace Committee Framework & Action Plan, March 2009).
- Support staff to attend French language courses to enhance the Department's capacity to deliver services in French
- In a broader view of human resource development, the Department promotes and supports the involvement of seniors in committees and task forces across government. The Department also promotes the value of older workers, within and outside government, as a critical way to address advancing workforce issues.

H. BUDGET CONTEXT

The Department of Health carries out finance, human resources and information technology functions on behalf of the Department of Seniors. This enables the Department of Seniors to function with minimal administrative overhead expenditures.

The Department of Seniors budget and staffing complement was increased in 2007-2008, with a portion of the increase carried over into fiscal 2008-2009; this enabled the department to undertake new activities related to the implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging*, specifically the development, communication and release of 3 new community grant programs.

Nova Scotia Department of Seniors Estimated Budget Expenditures 2009-2010			
	2008-2009 Estimate	2008-2009 Actuals	2009-2010 Estimate
	\$ Thousands	\$Thousands	\$Thousands
Program Expenses	1,443	1,275.6	1,305
Salaries and Benefits	684	417.4	652
Total Operating Costs	2,127	1693	1,957
Funded Staff (FTE's)	10.0	5.32	9.0

I. FISCAL MANAGEMENT, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

During the 2008-2009 fiscal year, a number of activities and priorities created significant implications in the area of financial management, information technology and communications. The development and release of 3 new community grant initiatives (2 prior to fiscal year end in February 2008 and 1 in December 2008) required the Department to develop and implement a grant accountability framework. This necessitated developing a database to track the number of projects funded and the amount allocated to each. To ensure accountability, it also required the development of grant reporting templates for funded projects to track their ability to meet their project's outcomes and exercise sound financial management. The department is also required to spend a considerable amount of time communicating both the availability and eligibility criteria for its grant initiatives.