



Regional Geriatric Program  
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# Investing in Seniors Health: A Public and Personal Imperative

Council on Aging  
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## Purpose:

- To provide an overview of seniors' health, and the health promotion in later years.



## The Context for Seniors Health

- 3 in 4 seniors are in good health
- 1 in 4 require support
- 1 in 10 do not get the support they need



## Seniors Health: A Study in Contrasts

- Life expectancy in Canada continues to increase
- 74% of seniors view their health as good, very good or excellent
  
- The prevalence of chronic diseases is increasing;
- Physical inactivity is increasing
- Seniors have less access to publicly funded home care
- Seniors in Champlain are more likely to be referred for placement
  
- National Health System Report Card for Seniors **C+**



## The Investment Disconnect...

- Services for seniors 65+ account for 43% of total health expenditures in Ontario.
- Services used by 75+ account for 32% of the \$37.7 B provincial health funding. (2007)
- Predicted to grow from \$8B to \$15.5B by 2011.  
( Conference Board of Canada)



## Highest Volume Users

- Seniors are disproportionately high users of medical services
  - 12.3% of population is over 65
  - 1/3 of all hospital admissions and 2/3 of all hospital days
  - Average length of stay is twice that of the general population
  - The frailest elderly (3%) are using 30% of health care resources
  - 25% of ED visits and 48-53% of admissions through ED



## The Health Outcomes Disconnect

- Health promotion for seniors no longer funded as core public health service



## Accountability Disconnect

- Continuity of care, health promotion & illness prevention are key attributes of seniors health services.
- Economic pressures have focused on delivery of episodic 'units' of service.



## Untapped potential

- Avoid unintended effects of hospitalisation
  - 1/3 lose function due to hospital practices (Sager, 1996)
- 50% lifelong health potential impacted by personal behaviour (CDC)
- The 'unfrailing' of Canada's seniors (CSHA)



## Summary

- The status quo does not achieve desired outcomes, nor is it economically sustainable.
- A future business plan for investment in more integrated seniors **health**, including health promotion & primary care, enhanced hospital and geriatric care.



## Back to the future

- Business Plan for Investment in Seniors' Health
  - evidence-based care of the elderly
  - balanced distribution of resources along continuum of care ( seniors health trajectory)
  - integrated service delivery.



## A Public Investment

- Improved seniors' health status benefits us all:
  - Extend contributions to our communities through active living (wisdom, work and wealth)
  - Improve the capacity of provincial health system by reducing avoidable, unnecessary care & treatment.

# Lifelong Personal Choices



- Family & Friends & Community
- Physical Activity-( 16 years, \$150M/yr)
- Living Arrangements
- Mobility & Transportation

*It is never too late*