

Demanding Action in Saskatchewan

Research and recent polling demonstrate that people want to age in their own homes and communities. SSM is inviting everyone to join the movement to make this possible.

On October 1st, SSM launched its **Home Supports Initiative** in order to:

- Raise awareness of the need for practical home supports
- Engage individuals, organizations and communities to grow a powerful movement to demand action
- Compile a list of all those who commit to supporting this initiative
- Maintain contact with supporters to share information and create synergy
- Maintain contact with and engage governments to raise their awareness of the needs, possibilities and positive return on investment
- Collaborate with governments as they make home support programs a reality

We need the government to plan and implement programs of support for older adults as they age. The provincial government must work with municipal governments and older adults to create an effective plan. SSM and its member organizations are the provincial voice for older adults and are prepared to work collaboratively with provincial and municipal governments.

SSM is calling for:

Real Options
Better Outcomes
Lower Costs

Real Options

“Most wish to age well and in place, in homes and communities they call their own. Canada is an international outlier in spending much more on institutional care of seniors than on home care. We need to develop housing options that are flexible and adjustable as needs change with age. Factors such as frailty and dementia that compromise independent living must be addressed through changes to lifestyle and approaches to care. Social needs must be satisfied. The best time to change course to address better the wellbeing of seniors was many years ago. The second-best time is right now.” – Ageing Well Report

Older adults need supports that meet their changing needs as they age. Home Supports in Saskatchewan should include:

- Practical supports such as assistance with:
 - Housekeeping
 - Yard care
 - Minor home renovations
- Services to address particular medical and/or personal care needs:
 - Consistent, trusted home care workers
 - Expanded in-home services to cover diverse needs e.g. physiotherapy, education on managing conditions, ostomy and wound care

Whatever their stages of life, older adults have the right to make their own decisions, including where and how they will live, to the best of their ability.

There are examples of a variety of Home Supports initiatives in countries around the world. e.g. Denmark, Australia, Netherlands

Better Outcomes

“Seniors are highly capable of living fulfilling and vibrant lives well into old age when they are given the freedom and the support needed to do so. It is not hard to understand why most seniors do not want to live in LTC-homes. These facilities remove them from their families and friends, making it more difficult to maintain the strong social relationships that give them a certain sense of independence and the freedom to interact regularly with their communities.

Seniors should be afforded autonomy over how they age and given a variety of options from which to choose where and how they grow old. Although their capabilities may change over time, maintaining control over what is meaningful in their lives is important to preserve their dignity.

A senior’s health should not be viewed solely through a healthcare lens. ...seniors have four key categories of need: housing, lifestyle, social, and care. They are all critical to a senior’s health. Their housing determines in many ways to what level they are able to satisfy these other categories of need, especially their social and lifestyle needs.”

– Ageing Well Report

Increasing the levels of Home Supports is a win-win-win for everyone involved. Older adults who are able to stay independent, with supports they might need, are healthier, happier and able to continue to contribute to their communities – as volunteers, caregivers, mentors, taxpayers, and voters. Communities benefit from the presence and contributions of these residents. Provincial government and taxpayers benefit from providing better services at lower costs. Long term care facilities benefit from having less strain on their staff and resources.

Lower Costs

Changes in the way we do things is what older adults want. The great news is that it’s also more cost effective. The recent Queen’s University study “Aging Well” demonstrated that providing quality home support was one-third the cost of annual institutional care where costs exceeded \$60,000.00 annually per resident.

Home Supports requires a provincial framework and standards. Municipalities play an essential role in the process as services would be provided locally by approved provider. Costs to individuals would be subsidized according to income.

This is possible!

We are asking you to join those who are committed to the Home Supports Initiative

We are compiling a list of persons who confirm they support the Initiative. We need to have your name, phone number and email address. We will not share your phone number or email with anyone but need it to confirm you are a real individual. More names will lend more power to our demands. SSM will communicate with members of the group via email, our website and Facebook.

Please join by sending an email including your name and phone number to HomeSupports@skseniorsmechanism.ca