



REAL OPTIONS BETTER OUTCOMES  
LOWER COSTS

## HOME SUPPORTS INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER



Updates



How YOU Can  
Participate



Upcoming

# Home Supports Initiative Newsletter December, 2022

Our newsletters come out every few weeks, especially when there is new information to share, and we hope you'll find them informative. You may unsubscribe at any time, using the link at the bottom of the newsletter. You will still be considered a supporter of the Initiative.

# Updates



## The Aging Journey

Everyone ages. The Saskatchewan population is aging and the percentage of people 60+ will continue to grow, probably reaching 25-30% by 2030. As could be expected for a range of ages from 60 to 100+, individuals' health and abilities vary greatly. However, there are broad stages that most people experience if they live for a long time – especially into their late 80s, 90s and over 100. These are sometimes described as continuum of care. The need for support to live well increases as health and social circumstances change with age.

**Stages of aging:** These stages are not rigid. A person may move from one stage to another and back to a former stage if a health or social problem is addressed.

- *Totally independent* – able to live without intentional support from family or community.
- *Short term changes* – e.g. health incident affects strength and independence - medical assistance and practical supports needed while healing takes place. A "handyperson" who has helped moves away or stops supplying the services. Older person moves to another location – needs help with finding services.
- *Long term changes to physical or mental health* – e.g. Close family move away. Major physical health problems or dementia affect a single person or life partner. Older adults can still live in their home with regular medical or practical supports.
- *Permanent changes* – deterioration so the person becomes frail – needing daily help for medical or practical needs.
- *Permanent 24 hour care in a facility*

**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.

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## Home Supports Initiative Stakeholders Gathering November 23, 2022

SSM invited representatives of Saskatchewan organizations that have a stake in the future for older adults and their families. They have showed concern for the health and well-being of older adults and have provided service in their communities for decades. Several organizations, including SARM, Saskatchewan Health Quality Council, the Legion, Lions, Firefighters, Red Cross and SHA participated along with SSM's own Member Organizations. The major question facing SSM and stakeholders is **how to raise awareness of the need for Home Supports, to gather allies and to strengthen ongoing advocacy.**

Don Drummond from Queen's University presented the economic case for investing in Home Supports so that older people can age in the homes and community of their choice via video. Link to video here: <https://youtu.be/DpOCGgkcqQc>

Shan Landry (SSM vice-president); Dr. Dennis Kendel, retired physician and social media activist; and Steven Lewis, adjunct professor of health policy at Simon Fraser University engaged in lively conversation about **“How to achieve the critical mass to demand change?”**

Insightful analysis arising from the panelists' career expertise and personal life experiences led to these challenging and inspirational statements:

- Evidence of the value and need for Home Supports has been public for decades, yet ignored by politicians and general public. Why? Governments don't feel enough power and purpose coming from voters. No party feels it is a wedge issue – so no winner or loser for them.
- We who are advocating for HS need to be political but NOT partisan.
- Can the current population value base shift? Perhaps with economic competition, job shifts, negative personal family experiences of what awaits aging adults, strong clear voices.
- How to mobilize? Need to be clear – What for? What against?

e.g. today's over-investment in only long term care beds without investment in other options. We need to be clear about what we want and don't want.

- Mobilize women! They carry the weight of caring and they have proved they can make change – as they have done in the past.
- Canada should lead the world on aging well! Canada is doing a poor job! Lots of excuses. Must invest more money in those evidence-based projects. Tax credits for businesses and individuals who invest (with or without governments). TRY SOMETHING!

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## How YOU Can Participate



### SSM Ads about Home Supports

Watch for any SSM ads on Home Supports in newspapers, on websites, on Facebook, etc. Let us know when and where you saw the ad(s) and if you have any comments about the ad(s). This will help us evaluate the reach and effectiveness of our advertising. Please email your comments to Linda:

[ageis@skseniorsmechanism.ca](mailto:ageis@skseniorsmechanism.ca)



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## Links of Interest



Here's an interesting article from Ireland where they're working on a "new co-ordination service that is supporting older people to remain living at home independently.

The Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme is delivered by local government via the Age Friendly Ireland shared service. It is funded by Sláintecare in the Dept of Health, and under it, local co-ordinators visit older people in their homes and help them to access grants and other supports in the areas of housing, health, community services and assistive living technology."

[Click here to read the full article.](#)

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CTV News recently reported that a person anticipating another season of care home lockdown, and nearing the end of life, chose medically assisted death. [Click here to read the article.](#)

Note: Other jurisdictions, like the Netherlands, quickly recognized the decline in senior residents of long-term care homes, and found balance between precautions and allowing activities and family visits. After [a pilot project](#) allowing one visitor per resident at 26 nursing homes did not result in a single new case of COVID-19, the Netherlands officially allowed all nursing homes to adopt those guidelines across the country.

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This article says Canadian seniors should have the same basic treatment as did the Queen (taking into account her privileged status). It challenges people with the question "How did this female nonagenarian, who recently marked her 70th year on the job, manage to live such a full, active and respected life and then die peacefully in her bed in her beloved home? And why is it so very hard for others to do the same?"

[Click here to read the full article.](#)

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## Season's Greetings!



We at SSM wish you all a warm, cozy, and happy holiday season!

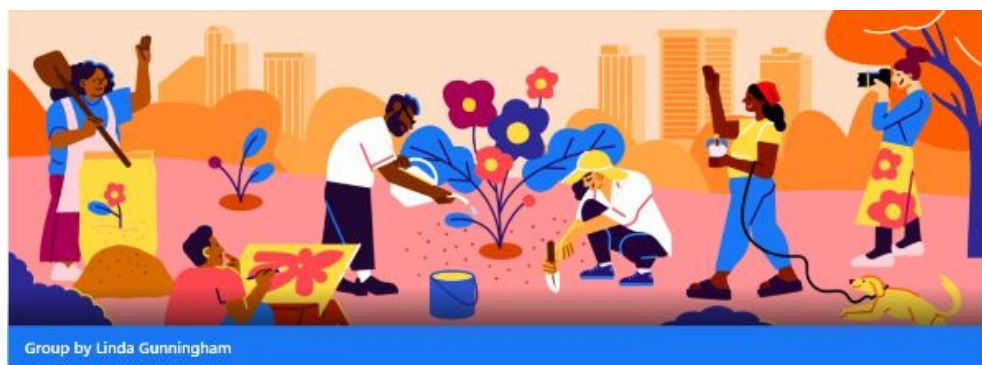
We'll be in touch again in the new year.

**Happy Holidays!**

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SSM has embarked on a 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



Group by Linda Gunningham

### Saskatchewan Positive Aging

Private group · 42 members



Joined

+ Invite

Go to the [Saskatchewan Positive Aging](#) page from your Facebook page.  
Ask to join.



[www.skseniorsmechanism.ca](http://www.skseniorsmechanism.ca)

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