

LET NO ONE BE ALONE

on Valentine's Day, or any day



Let No One Be Alone week occurs each year the week of Valentine's Day. While social isolation and loneliness can occur at any time, it can be even more pronounced on Valentine's Day. Canada and Saskatchewan are not exempt from the impact that social isolation and loneliness can have on older adults.

The National Institute on Ageing (NIA), a leading Canadian policy and research organization based at Toronto Metropolitan University, has identified social isolation and loneliness as a significant public health issue affecting older Canadians. In reports such as *Understanding Social Isolation and Loneliness Among Older Canadians and How to Address It (2022)* and *Understanding the Factors Driving the Epidemic of Social Isolation and Loneliness Among Older Canadians*, the NIA stresses that older adults are particularly vulnerable due to factors like retirement, health declines, mobility limitations, and loss of loved ones.

NIA's research reveals alarming prevalence rates. According to their 2022 Ageing in Canada Survey data, 41% of Canadians aged fifty and older are at risk of social isolation, and up to 58% have experienced loneliness at some point. The NIA describes this as an "epidemic," with the ageing population set to exacerbate the issue. More recent findings from the NIA's 2025 Ageing in Canada Survey show persistent challenges: 43% of respondents aged 50+ remain at risk of social isolation, and 57% report experiencing loneliness.

Saskatchewan is experiencing a steadily ageing population, with adults aged sixty-five and older representing approximately 17.5% of the provincial population as of the 2021 Census (Statistics Canada, 2022). This demographic trend is growing faster than the overall population and increases the number of older adults potentially vulnerable to social isolation and loneliness.

In addition, findings from SPHERU's Saskatchewan Seniors Impact Survey indicate that nearly one in four older adults scored medium or high on measures of social isolation, with many reporting limited social support and reduced community connection. Rural and remote communities in Saskatchewan face additional challenges related to geographic distance, transportation limitations, and reduced access to social programming.

Saskatchewan has developed resources and community-based initiatives aimed at reducing isolation among older adults. Programs supported through Age-Friendly Communities, and projects funded through Facilitating Independence Grants (funding provided by the Ministry of Health and managed by SSM) provide localized resources and outreach to help rural and urban seniors maintain social connections and access supports.

This is in line with the NIA. As the NIA underscores that while social isolation and loneliness affect many older Canadians, targeted interventions, particularly those in rural areas like Saskatchewan, can promote healthier, more connected ageing.

Access the 5 LET NO ONE BE ALONE resources:

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