
DATE: April 18, 2012

REPORT TITLE: **SENIORS' MONTH – JUNE 2012**

FROM: Janette Smith, Commissioner of Health Services
Janet Menard, Commissioner of Human Services

RECOMMENDATION

That the month of June 2012 be proclaimed as “Seniors’ Month” in the Regional Municipality of Peel.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- June 2012 marks the 28th anniversary of Seniors’ Month in Ontario.
- Seniors’ Month is an annual celebration of the contributions of seniors in Ontario.
- The number of seniors in Peel is expected to double over the next 20 years, largely due to the aging of the baby boomer population.
- The Region of Peel currently provides a wide range of programs and services that support seniors and their families living in Peel.
- Changes to provincial legislation and policies are placing seniors at the forefront of policy discussions across the province and the country.
- Term of Council Priority #11, Assess the impacts of the aging population on Health and Human Services, has initiated research that will inform decisions about how the Region can best support the needs of seniors in Peel, now and in the future.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

Seniors are vital and valued members of the Peel community. Senior citizens make important contributions in Peel every day as family members, caregivers, mentors, volunteers, workers and consumers. Seniors’ Month is a time when seniors are acknowledged and honoured throughout Ontario. This June (2012) marks the 28th anniversary of Seniors’ Month in Ontario, making this an important time to celebrate the strong and vibrant seniors’ population in Peel.

The number of seniors in Peel (and, indeed, across Ontario) is increasing with the aging of the baby boomer generation. As this aging trend continues over the next 20 years, it will be important to recognize, support and encourage positive and active aging. The Region of Peel strives to support residents as they age by providing a number of key programs and services that serve the needs of seniors and, where appropriate, advocating on behalf of seniors.

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This report provides information about the growing and changing seniors' population in Peel, the key programs, services and initiatives for seniors delivered by the Region of Peel and provincial direction on seniors-related issues.

2. Findings

a) Peel's Seniors' Population

Canadian provinces and municipalities are observing a demographic shift as the large baby boomer population ages and fertility rates decline. Population projections developed by the Peel Data Centre forecast that Peel's seniors' population (calculated as the number of residents over the age of 65) will double over the next 20 years, meaning that the number of seniors in Peel will increase from 133,340 in 2011 to 294,880 in 2031. Seniors over the age of 85 are growing at a faster rate than younger seniors, especially in Brampton and Caledon. Appendix II provides a visual representation of the growing number of seniors in Peel, as well as the variation in growth by age sub-group.

Some statistics about the seniors' population in Peel include:

- Thirty-seven per cent of seniors in Peel are members of volunteer organizations;
- Sixteen per cent of seniors in Peel live alone and nearly 40 per cent of seniors living alone live in poverty. This rate jumps to 43 per cent for single female seniors;
- Seventy-five per cent of seniors in Peel have a strong sense of community belonging;
- Thirteen per cent of Peel seniors are physically active; and
- Ninety-three per cent of seniors report their health as good or very good.

Raising awareness of some of the challenges faced by seniors in Peel and highlighting the unique strengths of Peel's seniors' population is an important part of Seniors' Month. This information is also integrated into the development, design and analysis of the services the Region currently provides to seniors.

b) Regional Services Provided and Direction to Support Seniors in Peel

The Region of Peel operates a number of programs and services that reach a large proportion of seniors or are specifically targeted at seniors. These services, combined with programs provided by different levels of government and the private and non-profit sectors, help meet the diverse needs of the growing number of seniors in Peel. Detailed information about the seniors related programs and services provided by the Region of Peel is included in Appendix III.

In addition to the programs and services listed in Appendix III, Regional Council has identified seniors as a Term of Council Priority (ToCP). Through ToCP #11, staff were directed to "assess the impacts of the aging population on health and human services delivered." As such, the goal of the ToCP is to engage the Region in preparedness planning in order to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the growing and changing seniors' population in Peel.

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c) Provincial Direction

Fiscal pressures in the province, combined with the aging baby boomer population, have pushed seniors to the forefront of policy discussions in Ontario. Recent changes to provincial legislation and policies related to seniors' programs and services demonstrate the Ontario government's desire for fiscal restraint, improved monitoring, and increased measurement of services delivered or funded by the provincial government. Key pieces of legislation, policy reports, and other provincial documents representing this shift include:

- The Aging at Home Strategy (2007-2011), which has invested \$1.1 billion in community-based services for seniors and their caregivers;
- The *Long Term Care Homes Act, 2007* (effective July 1, 2010), which creates a single system of governance for all long term care homes in Ontario and brings greater attention to quality and accountability in the sector;
- The *Retirement Homes Act, 2010*, which creates a governance and regulation framework for the retirement home sector, providing retirement home residents with greater protection;
- The Assisted Living Services for High Risk Seniors Policy, 2011 (effective January 1, 2011), which provides a provincial framework for assisted living/supportive housing services and situates these services within the continuum of care for frail and at-risk seniors;
- Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care (released by Minister Deb Matthews on January 30, 2012), which identifies a series of programs and initiatives for seniors that will be the focus of a provincial "seniors' strategy"; and
- The Report of the Ontario Commission for the Reform of Public Services (released by Chair Don Drummond on February 15, 2012), which proposes a series of health reforms to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Ontario's health care system, including its ability to meet the needs of a growing seniors' population.

Regional staff actively monitor provincial direction and report to Regional Council on issues of importance for Peel or that may have an impact on Regional programs and services.

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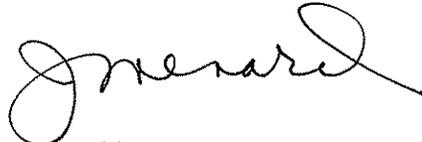
CONCLUSION

Seniors' Month is an important annual event that celebrates the role of seniors in society today and acknowledges the contributions they have made across their lifespan.

The Region of Peel is fortunate to have a vibrant, diverse and engaged seniors' population where seniors continue to serve as leaders, mentors and volunteers in the community. Seniors' Month is an important time to recognize the knowledge and experience of seniors in Peel and the strength that they bring to our community's fabric.



Janette Smith
Commissioner of Health Services



Janet Menard
Commissioner of Human Services

Approved for Submission:



D. Swarc, Chief Administrative Officer

For further information regarding this report, please contact Dawn Langtry at extension 4138 or via email at Dawn.Langtry@peelregion.ca

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c. Legislative Services

APPENDIX I

Proclamation

SENIORS' MONTH

June 2012

WHEREAS, Seniors' Month is an annual nation-wide celebration;

AND WHEREAS, seniors have contributed and continue to contribute immensely to the life and vibrancy of this community;

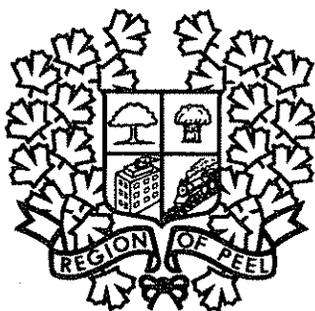
AND WHEREAS, seniors continue to serve as leaders, mentors, volunteers and important and active members of this community;

AND WHEREAS, their contributions past and present warrant appreciation and recognition and their stories deserve to be told;

AND WHEREAS, the well-being of seniors is in the interest of all and further adds to the health and well-being of the community;

AND WHEREAS, the knowledge and experience seniors pass on to other generations continues to benefit all;

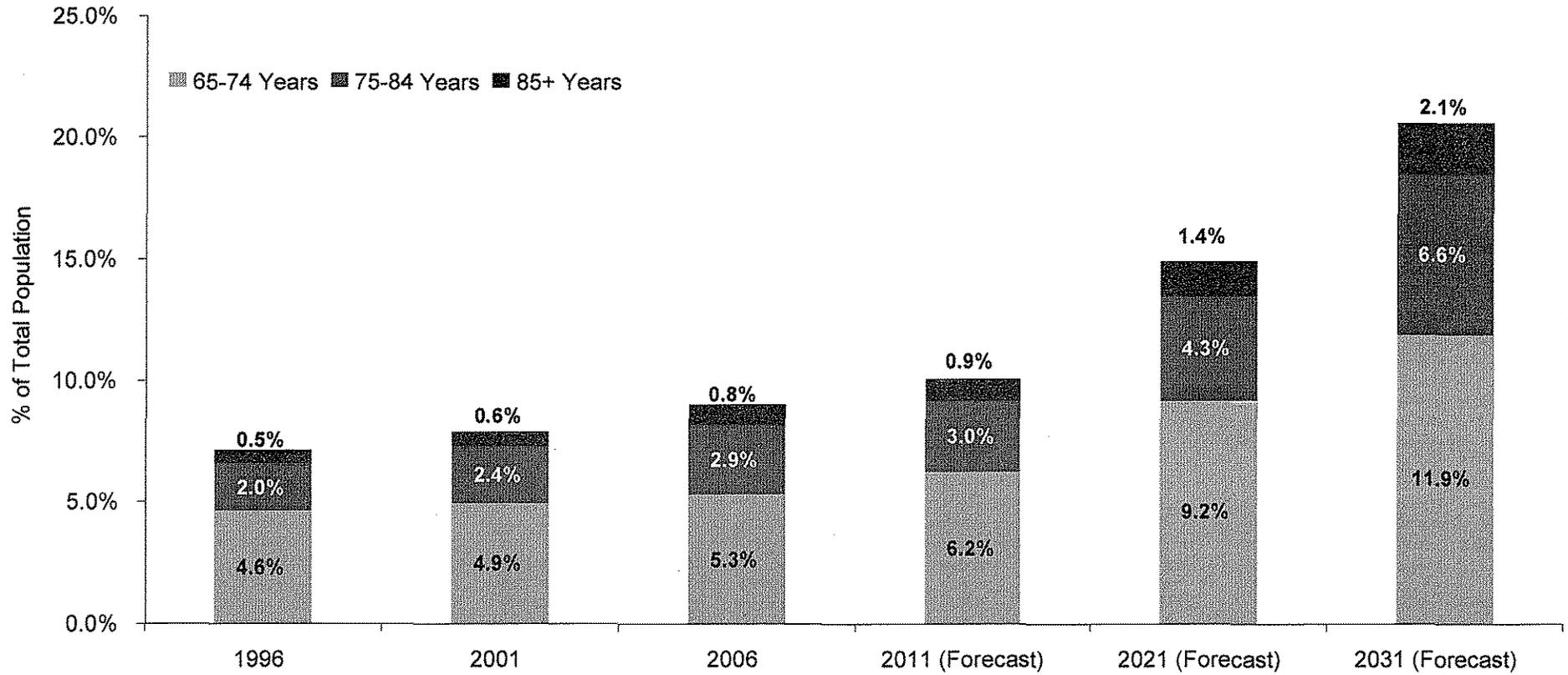
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the month of June, 2012 be proclaimed "SENIORS' MONTH" in the Regional Municipality of Peel



Emil Kolb
Regional Chair

APPENDIX II
Population Projections for the Aging Population in Peel

Seniors by Age Sub-Groups as % of Total Population in Peel



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APPENDIX III

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- a) **Social Housing:** The Region of Peel is the Service System Manager for Housing in Peel. The system in Peel spans the housing continuum from supports for people who are homeless, subsidies or more affordable rents for low-income families or individuals, and assistance with the purchase of homes. The system also includes directly operated services like Peel Living (the Region of Peel's non-profit housing corporation), shelters, transitional housing and homelessness prevention services. Seniors currently account for 19 per cent of occupants in all social housing units in Peel (approximately 2,800 seniors) and seniors wait an average of three to seven years for available social housing.

The Human Services department also supports the Housing for Older Adults in Peel (HOAP) working group (previously known as the Peel Advisory Working Group for Older Adults, PAWGOAH). This multi-stakeholder community-based committee was first established in 2001 and, since then, has conducted research on the housing needs of older adults and delivered numerous presentations to community groups to promote a variety of housing options for the 55-plus age group in Peel. HOAP also shares research findings with partners in the housing sector, including planners, home builders, developers, renovators and realtors.

- b) **Project Lifesaver Peel:** Project Lifesaver is a non-profit organization that equips and trains law enforcement agencies in an active response system to assist with the challenges of finding wandering or bolting loved ones, including seniors with Alzheimer's disease. Project Lifesaver was officially launched in Peel in 2010 through a partnership between the Region of Peel, Peel Regional Police and the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) Caledon Detachment. Individuals enrolled in the program are equipped with a one-ounce wrist transmitter that emits a signal that can be tracked over a seven-kilometer radius. Search times are significantly reduced and the system operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Nine of the 22 currently enrolled individuals in Peel's program are seniors with Alzheimer's disease.

2. Health Services

- a) **Peel Regional Paramedic Services:** Peel Regional Paramedics Services are an integral part of Peel's health care system, providing effective assessment, treatment and transport, both emergent and non-urgent, to individuals in the community who are seriously ill or injured. Peel Paramedics have seen an increased call demand from seniors in recent years. Today, seniors currently account for 38 per cent of the total call volume. Though not specifically intended for the seniors' population, the implementation of the Community Referrals by EMS (CREMS) program has helped connect seniors using the 9-1-1 system on a regular basis with the community support services they need to remain healthy in the community. Through CREMS, Paramedics are able to notify the appropriate Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) of individuals requiring supports, which diverts future calls from the system and ensures that seniors receive the necessary long-term and consistent community health services they need.

Term of Council Priority (ToCP) #12, "explore the feasibility of community paramedicine partnerships and strategies to reduce non-essential transports," may help determine

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those seniors who are most likely to call Peel Paramedic Services and identify community paramedicine and other patient diversion strategies that can best meet the needs of the seniors' population in Peel.

b) Peel Long Term Care

- **Residential Long Term Care:** The Region of Peel operates 703 beds in five long term care homes in Peel: Davis Centre, Malton Village, Sheridan Villa and Tall Pines. These homes provide residents (predominantly the frail elderly) with a full range of services, including medical and nursing care, nutrition, personal care for daily needs, social and therapeutic activities, facility maintenance, security, laundry and other housekeeping services. There are long wait lists and wait times for long term care homes across the province. A total of 1,700 individuals are currently on the wait list in the Mississauga Halton and Central West Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs). The wait time for a long term care bed in the Central West LHIN is 40 days, while residents in Mississauga Halton LHIN wait approximately 122 days.
- **Special Behaviour Support Unit:** The Region of Peel operates a 19-bed Special Behaviour Support Unit out of the Sheridan Villa long term care home. The enhanced services provided in this unit are supported 100 per cent by the Mississauga Halton LHIN and provide seniors with cognitive and behavioural issues with the rehabilitation and supports they need to stabilize and transition to a traditional long term care bed. This unique program fills a large gap in the continuum of care for seniors with cognitive and behavioural problems, and has inspired the development of similar programs across the province.
- **Community Support Services:** Adult day services programs are run out of four of five of the Region's long term care homes: Davis Centre, Malton Village, Peel Manor and Sheridan Villa. These programs serve 180 seniors living in the community who come to the Region's homes for one or more days a week to partake in social, recreational and therapeutic activities that help maintain their health and independence. Funding from the LHINs allows the Region to provide enhanced services (e.g. support with bathing and other personal care needs) to its adult day services clients, further limiting or suspending the need for institutionalization. The Region of Peel operates one short stay/respite bed at the Davis Centre in Caledon, providing scheduled, temporary, substitute care to seniors being cared for in the community. The temporary break from responsibilities enables caregivers to continue to support their loved ones longer, again delaying the need for full-time institutional care.

c) Peel Public Health

- **Fall Prevention:** Approximately one-third of Canadian seniors experience a fall every year, making falls the leading preventable cause of injury among seniors. Falls among seniors often result in serious injuries (90 per cent of hip fractures experienced by seniors are attributable to falls) that result in hospitalization, long-term activity limitation or death. The Substance Misuse/Injury Prevention Team in the Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Division within Peel Public Health leads and supports falls prevention programming for seniors in Peel in accordance with the Ontario Public Health Standards, 2008. Key initiatives undertaken by this team include linking seniors with community agencies to ensure continuity of education and support for addressing falls prevention, distributing resources and tools to community agencies to support their programs and services for seniors, participating

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in a number of networks to share knowledge, promote and support community initiatives that relate to falls prevention, and developing online resources to educate the general public.

- **Substance Misuse Prevention:** Sixty-two per cent of seniors are taking six or more medications, predisposing a large portion of the population to improper medication use and potentially dangerous drug interactions. The Substance Misuse/Injury Prevention Team within the Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Division offers substance misuse prevention programming to seniors in Peel in accordance with the Ontario Public Health Standards, 2008. The key initiatives undertaken by Peel Public Health are similar to those used in falls prevention and include linking seniors with community agencies to ensure continuity of education and support for addressing substance misuse prevention, distributing resources and tools to community agencies to support their programs and services for seniors, and developing online resources to educate the general public.
- **Low-Income Seniors Dental Program:** Oral health is an important dimension of one's overall health, especially in seniors, as oral and periodontal diseases can impact one's quality of life and are linked to the development of serious conditions, such as cardiovascular diseases, ischemic stroke and poor glycemic control in individuals with diabetes. As dental care is often expensive, the Region's low-income seniors' dental program provides one-time oral health services to seniors aged 65 years and older who have very low income but do not qualify for social services benefits. This program has enrolled 5,040 seniors since it was first launched in 2008 and has also held a waiting list since that date. Currently, there are 2,700 seniors on the wait list who wait an average of 9 months for treatment.

3. Public Works

- a) **Accessible Transportation:** The Public Works department administers a "family of services" model, which provides a range transportation options for people with disabilities in Peel. As disability increases with age, many of the services provided under the accessible transportation program serve seniors in Peel. These services include a combination of TransHelp buses, external taxi vendors and partnerships with community organizations such as Caledon Community Services and the Red Cross to reach all residents in Peel and deliver specific transportation services (i.e. dialysis transportation). In 2010, there were a total of 397,000 trips recorded by the Accessible Transportation division.

4. Participation and Support to Community Networks

- a) **Peel Elder Abuse Prevention Network:** The Peel Elder Abuse Prevention Network (PEAPN) was established in 2003 with a goal to stop and prevent elder abuse in Peel. The network of more than 45 community organizations aim to do this by working together to recognize and respond to elder abuse using a standard community protocol and advocating for other important interventions. Staff representatives from the Region's Health and Human Services Departments provide ongoing support and advice to the network.
- b) **Coalition of Agencies Serving Immigrant Seniors:** The Coalition of Agencies Serving Immigrant Seniors (CASIS) was established in 2009 with a mission to be a collective voice for immigrant seniors. CASIS' objectives are to develop the capacity of its 28 member agencies serving immigrant seniors and improve the coordination of agencies'

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services in Peel. Financial support from the Region of Peel and the United Way of Peel Region in 2011 enabled CASIS to develop a comprehensive five-year strategic plan to help guide the implementation of the coalition's goals. The Region of Peel remains engaged with CASIS through Human Services staff representation.