



# Yukon Aging in Place **Action Plan**





# Minister's Message

The Government of Yukon values the contributions older Yukoners have made, and continue to make, to the territory. Seniors and Elders help to sustain families, workplaces, communities, and the territory as a whole, and we are committed to working with our partners to help all seniors age well in Yukon.

As the Minister of Health and Social Services, my overarching priority is to fulfill our government's commitment to enhance the long-term well-being and quality of life for Yukoners – all Yukoners.

I was also directed by the Premier to take a comprehensive approach that provides effective responses at all stages of people's lives, as well as working with Yukoners to create solutions that promote aging in place and a full spectrum of care, both public and private.

As Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation, I am committed to working with the Department of Health and Social Services and our community partners to create effective housing models that support and respond to people's needs, in all of our communities. I am also working to transform social housing in the territory into a resilient community housing program.

The *Aging in Place Action Plan* is a road map to help us meet these goals. Its aim is to improve the lives of Yukoners and to help ensure that the resources of our housing, health and social system remain focussed on providing support and empowering people. It sets the direction for how our government and stakeholders can work together to improve the health and wellness outcomes of seniors in a sustainable way. This road map is also our commitment to better support Yukon Elders through a spirit of reconciliation and partnership.

We all have a role to play in helping Yukoners age in place. This plan provides a framework by which governments, First Nations, NGOs, the private sector, individuals, families and communities can work together to ensure that Yukoners can live full and meaningful lives as they age.

Our government is committed to the goals of positive aging, where older people age well and are healthy, connected, independent and respected. At its heart, Yukon's *Aging in Place Action Plan* is about people and adding life to years, not just years to life. People age in different ways and our population is diverse, so we must recognise the range of ways our senior and Elder population accesses and interacts with services. We need a multi-faceted and coordinated approach to support the health and well-being of our senior and Elder population. This approach becomes crucial for those who live with long-term conditions and complex needs.

Our government has done much over the past four years to promote, protect and enhance the well-being of Yukon seniors and Elders. We have actively listened to the voices of our seniors and Elders, and many of the actions recommended in this plan are already underway. In the years ahead we will continue to meet our commitment to focus on the needs of our aging citizens.

As I write this message, we are living in the new reality that is the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past few months, I have seen many examples of communities and neighbours supporting each other, and supporting seniors and Elders in particular – by shopping for them, offering to help with errands, or simply reaching out to make sure they are okay. Yukoners are compassionate people who have demonstrated their deep respect for seniors and Elders during this time of great upheaval.

Many people and organizations were involved in developing this action plan and this reflects the importance of seniors' health and well-being to our communities. I would like to thank everyone who contributed and I would especially like to acknowledge the input of seniors, Elders and their caregivers. Your contributions have been particularly important in helping shape the *Aging in Place Action Plan*.

Mahsi,

**Honourable Pauline Frost**

Minister of Health and Social Services  
Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation



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# Executive Summary

In 2018 and 2019 the Government of Yukon conducted an extensive public engagement with Yukoners that asked: “What does aging in place mean to you? What can we do to help you age well in your community?” By the end of the engagement, more than 1,200 Yukoners had participated.

We heard that aging in place means different things to different people. Yukoners told us that it means maintaining autonomy and independence, being able to choose where to live, and being included and respected.

Yukon seniors and Elders overwhelmingly stated that they want to age with dignity and autonomy in their own homes and communities. To achieve this, it is essential that supports and services are provided at the right time, in the right place.

The vision of the *Aging in Place Action Plan* is to ensure that Yukoners can access the supports needed to live safe, independent, and comfortable lives in their own home or community for as long as possible, regardless of age, income, or ability level.

This action plan provides a path forward upon which the entire community will work together to promote, protect and enhance the well-being of Yukon seniors and Elders. This collaborative approach must include representation from the Government of Yukon, First Nations governments, municipal and federal governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community groups, all working together towards a common goal. It is time for us to come together as one team to support people to age well in their own homes and communities.

The feedback received from the aging in place engagement is categorized into four interconnected pillars that form the basis of this plan:

- Pillar 1: Living a Full and Meaningful Life
- Pillar 2: Housing
- Pillar 3: Transportation
- Pillar 4: Programs, Services and Infrastructure

The goal of Pillar 1 is to work together to ensure that seniors maintain cultural, social and recreational connectedness within their communities and that their contributions are valued. There are 15 recommended actions related to this pillar. These actions are categorized into five key themes: autonomy and a voice for seniors; technology as a tool to foster social inclusion; age-friendly workplaces; social and recreational activities; and age-friendly communities.

The goal of Pillar 2 is a future where seniors and Elders have access to a full continuum of housing options that are adequate, suitable and affordable. There are 15 recommended actions in this plan related to housing. These actions are categorized into five themes: funding for home modifications and practical services; innovative housing options; independent and assisted living options; long-term care homes; and initiatives in collaboration with Yukon Housing Corporation.

The goal of Pillar 3 is a Yukon where seniors and Elders have access to a range of transportation options that meet their needs. There are five recommended actions in this plan relating to transportation.

The goal of Pillar 4 is ensuring that seniors and Elders have access to a broad range of appropriate programs and services to support their health, independence and active involvement in their community. There are 21 recommended actions related to this goal. These are categorized into seven themes: support for caregivers; Home First; virtual care; palliative, end-of-life and hospice care; navigation of programs and services; prevention; and financial supports.

**In total, this plan recommends 56 specific actions to help us achieve our vision and meet our common goals.**

Many of the actions in this plan are already underway, or are in the planning stages. Some of these were initiated during the aging in place public engagement – the input we were receiving provided us with valuable guidance and direction on which we could act immediately. The *What We Heard* report on aging in place provided us with further clarity about the needs of Yukon seniors.

There is also considerable overlap between the recommended actions in this plan and the recommended actions in *Putting People First*, the final report of the comprehensive review of Yukon's health and social services. The two documents share the same

philosophical perspective – they are focused on helping seniors and Elders remain in their own homes and communities. This synergy will play an important part in helping us reach our shared goals.

While the recommendations in *Putting People First*<sup>1</sup> apply to Yukoners of all ages, about a third are in some way directly relevant to the *Aging in Place Action Plan*.

**Chapters 4 through 7 in this plan look in detail at each of the four pillars. Where a recommended action in this plan is already underway, information about the current status of this work is provided. When an action or goal is reflected in *Putting People First*, the relevant recommendations from that report are also provided.**



# Aging in Place Action Plan: Recommended Actions

## Timelines

Some of the actions in the plan will be actioned immediately, or are already underway. Others are future steps we will need to take together to achieve our vision and goals.

### Timeline key



Short-term



Medium-term






Long-term


## Pillar 1: Living a Full and Meaningful Life


**GOAL: Seniors and Elders maintain cultural, social and recreational connectedness within their communities and their contributions are valued.**

### A. Autonomy and a voice for seniors and Elders

- 1.1  Establish a Seniors' Advisory Committee that reports to the Minister of Health and Social Services.
- 1.2  Collaborate with national organizations on initiatives that support the aging population in a Yukon context.




1.3  Continue to work with Yukon First Nations governments and citizens to formalize a collaborative approach to ensure that government actions and decisions reflect traditional knowledge, including Elders' knowledge, values and perspectives.

1.4  Encourage the development of community-led seniors' organizations in rural communities.



1.5  Help seniors and Elders decide whether to stay in their current home or move in order to access the care and services they need, by creating an evidence-informed decision aide document.







## B. Technology as a tool to foster social inclusion

- 1.6  Provide more – and improved – options for Yukoners and their families and friends to visit virtually.
- 1.7  Partner with the AGE-WELL summer institute program, with a focus on issues facing rural, remote and Indigenous populations as they age or care for their loved ones.
- 1.8  In partnership with Yukon Learn, ensure that seniors are aware of the technology literacy training services that are available to them.


## C. Age-friendly workplaces


- 1.9  Continue to provide training to Government of Yukon staff on aging and ageism.
- 1.10  Work with seniors' organizations in Whitehorse to help recruit seniors for the tutoring program offered by Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon.

## D. Social and recreational activities

- 1.11  In partnership with stakeholders, seek ways to increase funding to support active living and social participation for seniors and Elders.
- 1.12  Partner with First Nations governments and NGOs to provide more day programs for seniors, particularly in rural communities.
- 1.13  Work with early childhood educators and other experts to expand intergenerational programming throughout long-term care homes.
- 1.14  Initiate intergenerational programming with school-aged children and youth in collaboration with the Department of Education.

## E. Age-friendly communities



- 1.15**  Provide advice and tools to help municipalities, local advisory areas and community organizations create age-friendly communities. Work with Yukon Community Services and the Association of Yukon Communities to ensure this is a collective priority.

- 2.3**  Work with the Seniors' Information Centre and the Yukon Council on Aging to ensure that seniors are aware of funding options for home modifications and practical services such as the Seniors' Home and Yard Maintenance Program referral service.




## Pillar 2: Housing

**GOAL: Seniors and Elders have access to a full continuum of housing options that are adequate, suitable and affordable.**


### Funding for home modifications and practical services


- 2.1**  Offer funding for accessibility home modifications for low- to medium-income clients through the Home Repair Program.
- 2.2**  Offer funding for emergency repair for low- to medium-income clients to allow seniors to stay in their homes.


### Innovative housing options

- 2.4**  As part of the Community Housing program, engage with seniors to better understand their support needs, and track those changing needs over time.
- 2.5**  With guidance from the Safe at Home Action Plan, continue to address the gaps in housing with supports for seniors with unique and complex needs (e.g. homeless seniors, seniors with cognitive and developmental disabilities).
- 2.6**  Through collaboration and engagement, explore a home-share project.



## Timeline key

 Short-term



 Medium-term


 Long-term

## Independent and assisted living options





- 2.7  Continue to work internally and with private industry and community partners to develop independent and supportive housing for seniors across Yukon. These can include co-housing and intergenerational housing.
- 2.8  Explore partnerships with First Nations governments and rural communities to develop culturally relevant housing options for Elders, guided by the Safe at Home Action Plan.

## Long-term care homes

- 2.9  Maintain high-quality infection control practices in existing and future long-term care homes.
- 2.10  Uphold a home-based and culturally safe philosophy in partnership with long-term care home residents and their families.






- 2.11  Continue to plan for the future to ensure sufficient, high quality, long-term care capacity.

## Yukon Housing Corporation

- 2.12  Implement a seniors' engagement program in corporation-owned seniors' housing buildings.
- 2.13  Work towards de-labeling Yukon Housing Corporation units to de-stigmatize social housing and improve quality of life for seniors.
- 2.14  Enable a client-focused partnership between clients, Yukon Housing Corporation and Yukon Home Care.
- 2.15  Work to provide seniors who are in need of core housing with access to rent subsidy and home-ownership affordability grants (such as the Canada Housing Benefit Program).

## Pillar 3: Transportation





**GOAL:** Seniors have access to a range of transportation options that meet their needs.

- 3.1  Enhance the use of technology (e.g. telehealth, virtual care) within the healthcare system to minimize the need for transportation to access care.
- 3.2  Work with the City of Whitehorse to improve Handy Bus services.
- 3.3  Work with NGOs to develop volunteer-driver programs.
- 3.4  Provide advice and tools to municipalities to develop age-friendly infrastructure (e.g. sidewalks, ramps).
- 3.5  Develop partnerships with First Nations governments and the private sector to increase transportation options within and between communities.


## Pillar 4: Programs, Services and Infrastructure


**GOAL:** Seniors and Elders have access to a broad range of appropriate programs and services to support their health, independence and active involvement in their community.


### A. Support for caregivers

- 4.1  Implement the Shine a Light on Dementia program to provide education and training to support caregivers.
- 4.2  Promote and enhance the adult community day program.
- 4.3  Look at implementing a caregiver benefit program for low-income caregivers who care for low-income older adults.
- 4.4  Work with Yukon University to pilot flexible-learning options in rural communities to provide training to increase the number of skilled support workers in those communities.



## Timeline key

 Short-term



 Medium-term

 Long-term


### B. Home First


- 4.5  Expand and support Home First and reablement approach throughout Primary Care and Yukon's hospital system.
- 4.6  Enhance the role of paramedic specialists, and work to integrate their services into the system with a focus on helping seniors age in place.


### C. Virtual care

- 4.7  Offer remote monitoring services to clients receiving palliative care or managing chronic conditions.
- 4.8  In conjunction with the private sector, work to implement a virtual exercise program.


### D. Palliative, end-of-life and hospice care


- 4.9  Open Wind River Hospice at the Whistle Bend Place long-term care home.


4.10  Implement the Rural, In-Home, End-of-Life Care Funding Program.


4.11  Expand the Embedding a Palliative Approach to Care model throughout long-term care homes.

### E. Navigation of programs and services


4.12  Together with the Yukon Council on Aging, and other NGOs, increase awareness of services at the Seniors' Information Centre.


4.13  Through partnerships, improve transitions of care throughout the health and social services system.


4.14  Engage Yukoners in a review of the Travel for Medical Treatment Program.


4.15  Complete a service evaluation to ensure that adult protection services are effective and accessible.

## Timeline key





 Short-term

 Medium-term


 Long-term

- 4.16  Work with NGO and academic partners to implement the Nav-CARE or similar program to support increased volunteer-based supports for seniors at home.

## F. Prevention

- 4.17  Implement best practices for ongoing vaccination schedules for seniors.
- 4.18  Through partnerships, explore options for a geriatric model of care from primary to specialized care.
- 4.19  Launch a public education campaign to reduce the stigma associated with dementia and provide information about prevention and treatment.
- 4.20  Provide education for seniors about the interactions of medication with alcohol and other substances.

## G. Financial Supports

- 4.21  Review social supports for seniors to ensure that seniors receiving income support have adequate funding to meet their needs.



# Introduction

Yukon's population is growing and aging – the senior population is projected to more than double in the next 20 years.<sup>2</sup> The fact is that a major population shift is underway. Longer life expectancies and lower birth rates mean that, from now on, our population will be older. Our shared challenge is to address the needs of our aging population so that seniors can age well in Yukon.

Governments have a central role, in partnership with other stakeholders, to provide the right care and support, in the right place, at the right time and by the right provider. Yukoners of all ages also have the right and ability to participate in determining the best ways to age with independence, dignity, and respect in the place of their choice.

Through this new action plan, we want to ensure that seniors and Elders in Yukon can continue to live life to the fullest as part of a healthy and vibrant community. By working together to ensure that Yukon seniors and Elders stay independent, healthy and active, safe and socially connected, we all can continue to benefit from the knowledge, skills, experience and connections that seniors have to offer.

In this plan, we use terminology that recognizes the strength and wisdom associated with chronological age. The term “seniors” is still the most commonly used term to reference government programs, benefits and discounts. Consequently, we will continue to use the term “seniors” throughout this action plan but recognize that the term itself is linked only to age, and not to one's abilities. When directly referencing First Nations people, the term Elder will be used.

## Aging in place

The Government of Canada defines aging in place as “having the health and social supports and services you need to live safely and independently in your home or your community for as long as you wish and are able”.<sup>3</sup>

Yukoners told us that it means maintaining their dignity, autonomy and independence, being able to choose where to live, and being included and respected.

Yukon seniors overwhelmingly stated that they want to age in their own homes and communities. To achieve this, it is essential that supports and services are provided at the right time, in the right place.



Organizing Yukon’s health and social service system to support Yukoners as they age is a vital undertaking. Seniors can expect a system that is able to address the complex, wide-ranging and changing needs of seniors, which can involve multiple chronic conditions and transitions between different care settings.

Communities play a critical role in helping seniors age in place and enjoy their quality of life. In addition to individuals assuming personal responsibility to age well, family, friends, community groups, businesses, volunteers and municipalities need to be prepared to offer support to seniors.

## Key work underway to support aging in place

The Government of Yukon’s commitment to a Home First philosophy, and its investment in the Yukon Home Care program have had clear positive results for Yukoners. In 2018/19, 92% of people discharged from hospital had home supports ready when they were discharged – they did not have their hospital stay extended while waiting for the supports they needed to return home.

Home First is a philosophy in which the focus is on discharging people home after an acute episode in hospital, instead of assuming that a long-term care home is the only option. Home First means the individual, family and entire care team work to help people stay in their homes instead of moving into long-term care too soon.

Reablement is a person-centred approach that enables seniors to gain or regain their confidence and ability to live independently, especially after having experienced a health or social care crisis, such as illness, deterioration in health or injury. Reablement helps seniors to redevelop the capacity to do things for themselves rather than having to rely on others.

The reablement program at Thomson Centre in Whitehorse is a relatively new type of programming in this country. The reablement program has been very successful, with 75% of individuals achieving their goal of returning home.<sup>4</sup>

In addition, the length of stay in Yukon government long-term care homes decreased last year compared to the previous two years, which indicates that Yukoners are staying in their homes longer before the need to access the more intensive services available in long-term care.

During our public engagement, many Yukon seniors and Elders told us that improvements were needed to our Travel for Medical Treatment program. The engagement related to the comprehensive review of Yukon's health and social services also provided this feedback. Consequently, action 4.14 in this plan involves formally engaging Yukoners in a review of the Travel for Medical Treatment program. That review was recently completed, and as a result several improvements are underway that will streamline the program and make it more accessible.

Two cities have been added as 'gateways' for medical travel – Yukoners can now receive treatment under this program in Victoria and Kelowna BC.

A partnership between the Whitehorse International Airport, the Whitehorse Hospital Corporation and Health and Social Services will soon see secure drop-boxes installed at the airport and at Whitehorse General Hospital. Yukoners can leave their medical travel subsidy forms in these boxes, eliminating the need to mail them or deliver them in person.

Medical travel application and subsidy forms are being streamlined and digitized, and new communications tools are being developed to help Yukoners navigate the medical travel process.

Yukon Housing Corporation has also initiated work to help seniors age in place.

The recently launched Accessibility Grant program helps homeowners retrofit their homes to make them more accessible for family members who have mobility challenges.

The corporation has also provided land, grants, construction capital and loans for a project in Whitehorse that will provide housing with services.

To help provide Yukoners with a continuum of housing options, the Government of Yukon is providing funding support through the Housing Initiatives Fund to private sector partners to construct new supported living residences for seniors in Whitehorse.

The Government of Yukon is holding a lot in Whistle Bend until May 1, 2021 to support the Vimy Heritage Housing Society's ongoing work to create a not-for-profit, supportive independent living rental housing facility for Yukon seniors.

## Ageism

Seniors are often stereotyped as dependent, frail, and burdensome, even though most seniors live independently and contribute meaningfully to their communities as they age. The term “ageism” refers to two concepts: a way of thinking about seniors based on negative attitudes and stereotypes about aging; and a tendency to structure society based on an assumption that everyone is young, which limits the ability of those with accommodation needs to participate in and contribute to one’s community.<sup>5</sup>

While the health of some seniors necessitates access to specialized services such as home care or long-term care, many seniors are living independently without the need for those specialized supports. In 2018-2019, fewer than 5% of Yukon seniors aged 65 and older resided in long-term care homes.<sup>6</sup>

Older Canadians are valuable members of our communities, yet many are vulnerable to various forms of ageism, abuse, mistreatment and isolation. Negative attitudes towards aging are found across society, creating a barrier to developing positive connections with seniors in our communities. Ageism is multi-faceted and manifests itself in multiple ways, such as prejudicial

attitudes towards older people, old age, and the aging process; discriminatory practices against older people; and institutional practices and policies that perpetuate stereotypes about older people.

Ageism can contribute to social isolation, elder abuse, lack of physical activity, physical and cognitive decline, reduced confidence, and a lack of productivity. For example, those who feel they are perceived as a burden to society may have reduced emotional well-being and increased risk of depression.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, social connections may be severed or weakened.

This action plan is based directly on what we heard from older Yukoners during the extensive public engagement. This is the best way to ensure that unintentional or systematic ageism does not stand in the way of our ongoing work together.

## Engaging with Yukoners

This action plan is a community-wide initiative, led by the Department of Health and Social Services and the Yukon Housing Corporation, and developed in consultation with Yukoners of all ages. Yukoners were engaged throughout 2018 and 2019 on what aging in place means to them. The goals of the public engagement were to determine Yukoners' understanding of aging in place and to identify ways to support aging well in the territory. Along with two large gatherings in Whitehorse, engagement sessions were held in almost every Yukon community. The team also met with residents in long-term care homes and conducted numerous personal interviews to acquire feedback about aging in Yukon. In addition to these in-person methods, the team received emails, phone calls, and written suggestions and surveys. By the end of the engagement, more than 1,200 Yukoners provided input. These perspectives have been reflected in the development of the plan.

The action plan builds on the work of the *Housing Action Plan for Yukon (2015-2025)* and the *2018 Yukon Health Status Report: Focus on Seniors*. One of the key objectives of the *Housing Action Plan* is to identify and address key gaps in the delivery of housing with services, particularly around helping those with disabilities and seniors to age in place and live independently in their own homes.<sup>8</sup>

Additionally the direction for the Yukon Housing Corporation to modernize social housing is based on achieving better client outcomes, balanced with fiscal responsibility and future sustainability of the community housing program, and will provide more housing options for seniors.

The [2018 Health Status Report](#) offers an in-depth look at seniors' health and well-being in Yukon. In it, the Chief Medical Officer of Health provides specific recommendations to help seniors in the territory to maintain their health, lifestyle and independence. The findings of the *Health Status Report* align with what we heard from Yukoners in the engagement.

## Linking with the *Putting People First* report

In 2018, the Yukon government appointed a five-member Independent Expert Panel to conduct a review of health and social services in the territory. Its mandate was to identify ways to make these services more effective, provide better value for money, and improve the experience for Yukon health and social service providers, clients, patients and families.

The final report of the comprehensive review was released on May 13, 2020. [Putting People First](#) outlines the panel's findings, including 76 recommendations for the future of Yukon's health and social systems.

As expected, there is considerable overlap between the review and the *Aging in Place Action Plan*. Several recommendations in the final report are focused on supporting Yukoners to remain in their own homes and communities as long as possible.

While the recommendations in *Putting People First* apply to Yukoners of all ages, about a third are in some way directly relevant to the *Aging in Place Action Plan*. These are noted in chapters 4 through 7 in this plan.

### An excerpt from *Putting People First: Supporting Elders and seniors*

Finally, Yukon seniors told us they want more supports to allow them to age in place in their own communities. Yukon's seniors may be dealing with:

- difficulty finding services to meet their needs or to keep them active and involved in the community;
- housing options that do not always fit their specific needs;
- a lack of transportation alternatives; and
- limited ways to find meaningful connection to their communities.

Government has already started to engage with Yukoners about these issues. While they are felt across Yukon, it is clear what is most needed are supports at the community level. Each community will have to come up with its own solutions on what will help its seniors to stay living at home and in the community for as long as possible.

## What we heard through the Aging in Place public engagement

“The government needs to take a more comprehensive view [on aging in place]. It is a social issue for the whole community.”<sup>i</sup>

As we listened to Yukoners across the territory, it became clear that opportunities and issues for Yukon’s aging population are complex and interrelated, requiring a response from all governments, community organizations, NGOs, the private sector and seniors themselves. Yukon seniors have stated they want to remain in the home of their choice and in their communities for as long as possible.

The [What We Heard](#) report resulting from the engagement reflects the diverse voices of Yukon participants and provides a summary of key themes, complex issues, and contrasting views. The feedback received in the engagement is categorized into four interconnected pillars:

1. Living a Full and Meaningful Life
2. Housing
3. Transportation
4. Programs, Services and Infrastructure

These four pillars will direct the work of our government, in collaboration with our partners, to advance efforts to ensure that Yukoners have access to the supports necessary to age in place.

The actions proposed in this plan are informed by: consultations with stakeholders; the final report of the comprehensive review of Yukon’s health and social programs and services (*Putting People First*); the 2018 Yukon Health Status Report: Focus on Seniors; Yukon Housing Corporation’s Strategic Plan<sup>9</sup>; the Housing Action Plan for Yukon<sup>10</sup>; the Safe at Home Action Plan<sup>11</sup>; and thorough reviews of published research and best practices. This action plan builds on the good work already underway to improve the health and well-being of seniors.

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<sup>i</sup> All quotes in this document originate from the diverse voices of Yukon participants throughout the aging in place engagement. These comments do not represent the opinions of the Government of Yukon or its employees.

## Seniors and Elders in Yukon

Each of us is aging. The words we use to describe older members of society reflects our vision of their capabilities and our recognition of the contributions that older adults make to their families and communities.

The experience of aging varies from person to person and the age at which one becomes a 'senior' or an 'older adult' is not universally agreed upon. In some instances, seniors' discounts may be offered at 55 years, while most government benefits for seniors are targeted at those aged 65 and over.

Seniors (65 years and older) are the fastest growing age group in Yukon. The proportion of the Yukon population in the age group of 65+ years has steadily increased from 8.2% of the total population in 2009 to 13.2% in 2019. By 2040, it is projected that 21.1% of Yukon's population will be 65 years or older, an increase of 6,513 people or 124.8%, compared to 2018.<sup>12</sup>

Based on the 2016 Census results, an estimated 645 Yukon seniors (65+) identified as 'Aboriginal', primarily First Nation, which is 16% of the total senior population.<sup>13</sup>

As of December 2019, 74% of seniors were living in the Whitehorse area, with 26% of seniors residing in rural communities. This ratio was consistent through the age span.<sup>14</sup>

Yukon seniors have the highest median incomes in the country. The median total income for people age 65 and over in Yukon in 2017 was \$34,380; in Canada it was \$28,010.<sup>15</sup>

## In 2017-2018, Yukon seniors (65+) reported on their various health concerns and conditions.

### Prevalent conditions



**49%**

Arthritis



**38%**

High blood pressure



**14%**

Diabetes



**8%**

Asthma

### Perception of physical health



**42%**

Said 'very good' or 'excellent'



**24%**

Said 'fair' or 'poor'

### Perception of mental health



**74%**

Said 'very good' or 'excellent'. 'Fair' and 'poor' ratings were too unreliable to publish.<sup>16</sup>



## Reconciliation: a shared priority

Yukon, along with the rest of this country, has embarked on a process of healing from a history of residential schools and a destructive policy of assimilation. The Government of Yukon continues its work with Yukon First Nations governments to identify how to best respond to the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action*.

Cultural humility is one of the core principles in this plan. Our goal is a Yukon where seniors are able to access services and providers that recognize and support the cultural, racial and ethnic diversity of Yukoners. This includes Yukon First Nations history, culture and governance, and the legacy of residential schools, in keeping with the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action* and the *Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*.

Advancing reconciliation is also one of the key themes of *Putting People First*. It talks about ways providers can address systemic racism in the system, as well as the ways culturally appropriate and traditional care can address health inequities and ensure all Yukoners have access to care.

### **An excerpt from *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*.<sup>18</sup>**

For many Indigenous families, poverty acts as a barrier to securing safe and affordable housing. As researchers Yale Belanger, Gabrielle Weasel Head, and Olu Awosoga have argued, “adequate, affordable, and suitable housing contributes directly to improved health and well-being” and is “directly linked to an individual’s ability to participate in the economy and general society.”

The issue of unaffordable housing is linked, though not equivalent, to the concept of Indigenous homelessness. As researcher Jesse Thistle explains, “Indigenous homelessness is a human condition that describes First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals, families or communities lacking stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means or ability to acquire such housing.”

## The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action<sup>17</sup>

In order to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission made 94 calls to action. Calls to action that are relevant to aging in place include:

18. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to acknowledge that the current state of Aboriginal health in Canada is a direct result of previous Canadian government policies, including residential schools, and to recognize and implement the health-care rights of Aboriginal people as identified in international law, constitutional law, and under the Treaties.
22. We call upon those who can effect change within the Canadian health-care system to recognize the value of Aboriginal healing practices and use them in the treatment of Aboriginal patients in collaboration with Aboriginal healers and Elders where requested by Aboriginal patients.
23. We call upon all levels of government to:
  - i. Increase the number of Aboriginal professionals working in the health-care field.
  - ii. Ensure the retention of Aboriginal health-care providers in Aboriginal communities.
  - iii. Provide cultural competency training for all health-care professionals.
24. We call upon medical and nursing schools in Canada to require all students to take a course dealing with Aboriginal health issues, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, and Indigenous teachings and practices. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.
57. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.



# Vision, Mission and Principles

The vision, mission and principles are based on the voices of Yukoners and all stakeholders who shared their stories, challenges, ideas and insights.

## Vision

Yukoners can access the supports needed to live safe, independent, and comfortable lives in their own home or community for as long as possible, regardless of age, income, or ability level.

## Mission

Working together to promote, protect and enhance the well-being of Yukon seniors and Elders.

## Principles

The following principles will guide the way in which policies, programs and services are created and delivered:

- 1. Inclusion and Respect** – All seniors and Elders deserve to be involved and included in their communities, without physical or social barriers.
- 2. Cultural Humility** – All seniors and Elders are able to access services and providers that recognize and support the cultural, racial and ethnic diversity of Yukoners. This includes Yukon First Nations history, culture and governance, and the legacy of residential schools, in keeping with the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action* and the *Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*.
- 3. Choice and Autonomy** – All seniors and Elders are enabled to make choices and determine what is right for them.

4. **Accountability** – Actions are based on community discussions, partnerships with seniors and Elders and their families and evidence-informed practices. The system is transparent and accountable for programs and services that support aging in place.
5. **Growth and Innovation** – Services and supports adapt to meet seniors' and Elders' changing needs. Community dialogue and support, alongside research and development is undertaken when implementing innovations.
6. **Person-Centred (individual, family, community)** – The person and family are at the centre of the health and social service system.

Yukon's *Aging in Place Action Plan* provides a framework to address the needs of our aging population. It outlines four pillars for action: living a full and meaningful life; housing; transportation; and programs, services and infrastructure.



## Pillar 1: Living a Full and Meaningful Life

**GOAL** Seniors and Elders maintain cultural, social and recreational connectedness within their communities and their contributions are valued.

The purpose of this plan is to build a Yukon where seniors can maintain cultural, social and recreational connectedness with their communities and remain as independent as possible in an age-friendly environment. Keeping socially connected and active is the principal issue facing seniors in Canada.<sup>19</sup> There is strong evidence that social isolation or loneliness is linked to serious negative health effects and reduced quality of life for seniors.<sup>20</sup>

We value Yukon seniors' engagement in communities and the contributions they make to society. We all benefit when we encourage and support the contributions of seniors to our communities.

The feedback that we heard related to this pillar is categorized into five key themes:

- A. Autonomy and a voice for seniors
- B. Technology as a tool to foster social inclusion
- C. Age-friendly workplaces
- D. Social and recreational activities
- E. Age-friendly communities

**Note: Where a recommended action in this plan is already underway, information about the current status of this work is provided. When an action or goal is reflected in *Putting People First*, the relevant recommendation from that report is also provided.**

**Putting People First 4.1:** Partner with Yukon First Nations to develop and implement a comprehensive and coordinated approach to cultural safety and humility that prevents racism and includes:

- Mandatory cultural safety and humility training and a continuous education process for all health and social services providers, managers, and leaders that receive funding from the government as a condition of their agreement.
- An Office of First Nations Health within the Department of Health and Social Services that supports cultural safety and humility across the system and is focussed on advancing reconciliation within the department and the health and social system.

### **What is cultural safety?**

Originating in New Zealand in the field of nursing education, cultural safety has become an influential perspective in developing better health care for Indigenous people. It is an approach that considers how social and historical contexts, as well as structural and interpersonal power imbalances, shape health and health-care experiences.<sup>25</sup> The goal of cultural safety is for all people to feel respected and safe when they interact with the health-care system. Culturally safe health-care services are free of racism and discrimination. People are supported to draw strengths from their identity, culture and community.<sup>26</sup>

## **A. Autonomy and a voice for seniors**

Ageism is harmful to seniors in our communities. The misconception that seniors are a burden overrides the valuable contributions that seniors make to their families and communities. Recognizing the wide range of capacities and resources among seniors and respecting the decisions and lifestyle choices of seniors are ways to promote autonomy and foster healthy aging. Autonomy includes ensuring that seniors are well-represented on boards and committees that make important decisions in communities. Autonomy also involves being less risk averse to letting informed seniors engage in whatever activities they choose.

Throughout the engagement, many Yukon seniors expressed that they want to do more than simply continue to reside in their communities—they want to contribute to, and benefit from, community life in a meaningful way. One way to promote seniors' autonomy could be to establish a Seniors' Advisory Committee to provide policy and program advice to the Minister of Health and Social Services to improve the quality of life for seniors.

Active and involved seniors are less likely to experience social isolation and more likely to feel connected to their communities. These connections are particularly important, given the strong linkages between social isolation and health. While social isolation tends to increase as people age, communities that promote social participation and inclusion are better able to support the health of citizens.<sup>21</sup>

Autonomy can be more challenging for specific groups of seniors such as women, LGBTQ2S+, Indigenous, newcomers and those with disabilities. Many individuals from these groups are more vulnerable to poor outcomes. Recognizing the unique needs of certain sectors of seniors could help ensure that local investments and services are targeted at those who require them the most and where they will have the greatest impact.

**Putting People First 1.1:** Reorient Yukon’s health care system from a traditional and fragmented medical model to focus on population health accompanied by integrated, person-centred care across the health and social system.

**Putting People First 2.10:** Develop a client charter that empowers clients to be proactive partners in their own health and wellness care.

### **1.1 Establish a Seniors’ Advisory Committee.**

- Initial planning work is currently underway to establish this committee. It will report to the Minister of Health and Social Services, and will provide advice to the minister on implementing this action plan and other relevant initiatives moving forward.

### **1.2 Collaborate with national organizations on initiatives that support the aging population in a Yukon context.**

- The Department of Health and Social Services has an ongoing collaboration with the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement, Canadian Frailty Network, Canadian Patient Safety Institute, and the Centre for Aging and Brain Health Innovation. We will continue to work with these and other partners on initiatives that support Yukon seniors.

### **1.3 Continue to work with Yukon First Nations governments and citizens to formalize a collaborative approach to ensure that government actions and decisions reflect traditional knowledge, including Elders’ knowledge, values and perspectives.**

- Initial planning work is currently underway by the Executive Council Office.

**Putting People First 1.4:** Partner with First Nations governments, municipal governments, non governmental organizations and member of the public in the long term planning of health and social services that meet community needs and are culturally safe.



- 1.4 Encourage the development of community-led seniors' organizations in rural communities.**
- 1.5 Help seniors and Elders decide whether to stay in their current home or move in order to access the care and services they need, by creating an evidence-informed decision aide document.**

## **B. Technology as a tool to foster social inclusion**

Advances in technology and online social networking can have positive implications for the well-being of seniors. Technology can make it easy for people to connect with one another, and can enhance convenience in certain domains (e.g. seeking out information). Applications involving the use of tablets or other technologies may promote physical, emotional and mental well-being.<sup>22</sup> Higher social technology use is associated with better self-rated health, fewer chronic illnesses, higher subjective well-being, and fewer depressive symptoms. Close relationships are a large determinant of physical health and well-being, and technology has the potential to cultivate and maintain relationships among seniors.<sup>23</sup>

- 1.6 Provide more – and improved – options for Yukoners and their families and friends to visit virtually.**
  - We are currently supporting virtual visits through a variety of platforms in all of Yukon's long-term care homes, and are working to expand its use.
- 1.7 Partner with the AGE-WELL summer institute program, which focusses on issues facing rural, remote and Indigenous populations as they age or care for their loved ones.**
  - AGE-WELL is a national organization dedicated to the creation of technologies and services that benefit older adults and caregivers. We have established a partnership with this organization. It was planning to run its summer institute program in Whitehorse in 2020, but this is postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.8 In partnership with Yukon Learn, ensure that seniors are aware of the technology literacy training services that are available to them.**

## C. Age-friendly workplaces

Yukon seniors help sustain families, workplaces and communities. They care for others, contribute to community projects, participate in employment, volunteer and get involved in politics. They are leaders and mentors who have a vast wealth of knowledge and experience to share.

Older workers can help organizations retain and transfer knowledge, skills and experience. While the nature and level of work may shift as one ages, older workers are productive, dedicated and motivated workers. Employers can support and retain an intergenerational workforce by offering flexibility in terms of hours worked, job sharing and teleworking. Flexible work arrangements help employees manage many priorities, including work.<sup>24</sup>

### **1.9 Continue to provide training to Government of Yukon staff on aging and ageism.**

- The Yukon Public Service Commission currently provides training to staff on aging and ageism. We are planning to make this training more readily available and to offer it more frequently to employees in specific program areas.

### **1.10 Work with seniors' organizations in Whitehorse to help recruit seniors for the tutoring program offered by Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon.**

## D. Social and recreational activities

For some seniors, living a full and meaningful life involves making healthy choices in terms of lifestyle and nutrition and participating in community activities and civic affairs.

Intergenerational approaches that bring seniors and young people together are one way to reduce isolation. Bringing seniors and young people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities promotes understanding and respect between generations and contributes to building cohesive and culturally safe communities. This inclusive approach builds on the positive resources that the young and the old can offer each other.

### **1.11 In partnership with stakeholders, seek ways to increase funding to support active living and social participation for seniors and Elders.**

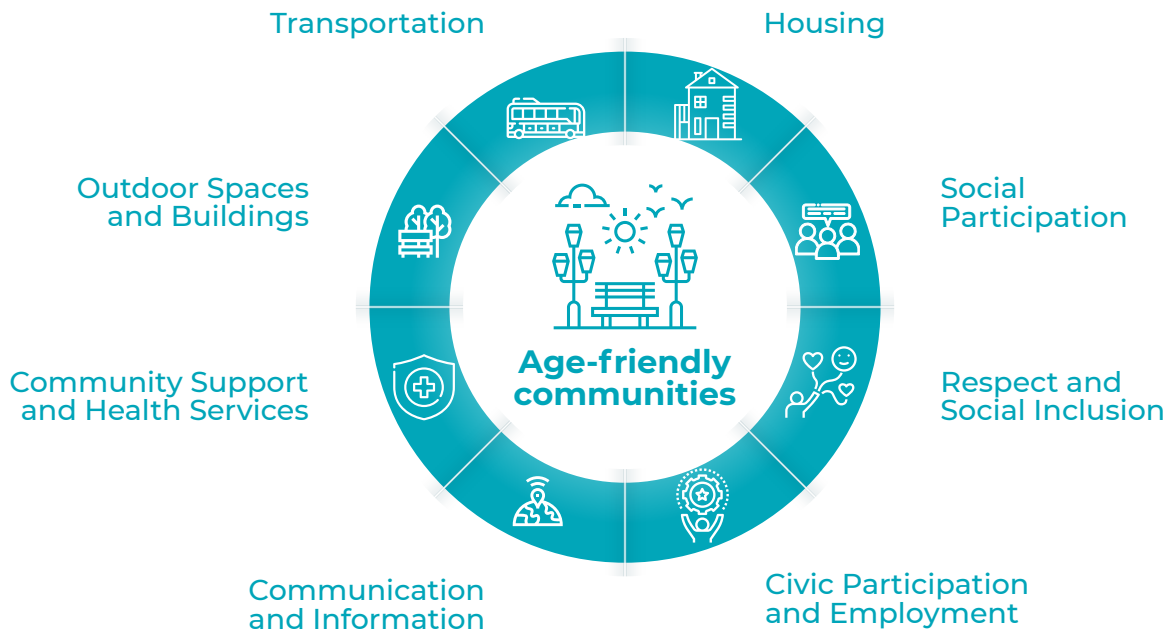
**1.12 Partner with First Nations governments and NGOs to provide more day programs for seniors, particularly in rural communities.**

- A day program for seniors is currently underway at Whistle Bend Place. We are looking at options to offer day programs in other locations.

**1.13 Work with early childhood educators and other experts to expand intergenerational programming throughout long-term care homes.**

- An intergenerational program is offered at Whistle Bend Place once or twice weekly. It provides opportunities for young children to meet and connect with residents.
- We are currently planning to expand this program to our other long-term care homes.

**1.14 Initiate intergenerational programming with school-aged children and youth in collaboration with the Department of Education.**



## E. Age-friendly communities

**1.15 Provide advice and tools to help municipalities, local advisory areas and community organizations create age-friendly communities. Work with Yukon Community Services and the Association of Yukon Communities to ensure this is a collective priority.**

The World Health Organization and the Government of Canada promote the development of age-friendly communities. In age-friendly communities, policies, services, and

structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to support and enable older people to age actively, to live in security, enjoy good health and continue to participate fully in society.<sup>27</sup>

Governments, volunteer organizations, the private sector and citizens' groups can all play a role in helping to build an age-friendly society that supports aging in place.

Our changing demographics have major policy and planning implications. We need to plan well to make sure we have the right infrastructure in place to keep Yukoners in good health and to support those who are not.

The World Health Organization has published a checklist of essential features of age-friendly cities, which can be used by individuals and groups interested in making their community more age-friendly. That checklist can be found here: [www.who.int/ageing/publications/Age\\_friendly\\_cities\\_checklist.pdf](http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Age_friendly_cities_checklist.pdf)

“We want to be addressed as unique community members. Services need to be community-centred, so that remote community members do not feel marginalized.”

“Living at home isn’t great if you are isolated.”

“Social isolation leads to depression, it’s hard to get motivated.”

“There needs to be a way to keep couples together.”

“We need to make checks on seniors known to live in isolation. An Elder in the community who lived alone fell in his house and was only discovered on the floor two and a half days later.”

## What does an age-friendly community look like?

In an age-friendly community:

- outdoor areas and public buildings are pleasant, safe and accessible;
- housing is affordable, safe and well-designed for seniors;
- roads and walkways are accessible and kept in good shape;
- public transportation is affordable and accessible;
- neighbourhoods are safe;
- relationships are respectful;
- health and community support services are available;
- opportunities for seniors to be socially active exist;
- seniors can take part in volunteer, political and employment positions; and
- information is easy to find and easy to understand.<sup>28</sup>



## Pillar 2: Housing

**GOAL** Seniors and Elders have access to a full continuum of housing options that are adequate, suitable and affordable.

According to its mandate, the Yukon Housing Corporation aims to respond to people's housing needs by ensuring that Yukon seniors have access to a continuum of housing options. According to Yukon Housing Corporation, housing is acceptable when it is adequate (does not need major repairs), suitable (has enough bedrooms for the household), and affordable (costs less than 30% of before-tax income). A household is considered to be in core housing need when its housing is not acceptable, and the household cannot find an acceptable alternative.

Housing is a social determinant of health, which means that it is one of the social and economic factors that influence people's health. In Yukon, the number of seniors, who tend to spend more time at home, is expected to more than double in the next 20 years.<sup>29</sup> This change in demographics highlights the increasing importance of housing to seniors' health and well-being.

According to the 2016 Census, 14.7% of Yukoners over the age of 65 experience core housing need, compared with 10.7% overall in Canada.<sup>30</sup> For Yukoners aged 65 and older, 33.2% are living alone, 64.1% live in a family/with relatives and 2.6% live with non-relatives.<sup>31</sup>

In Whitehorse, seniors make up 13% of the population and occupy 50% of Yukon Housing Corporation's subsidized housing units.

## Modernizing social housing to community housing

At the same time that it is looking at specific actions to support aging in place, Yukon Housing Corporation has been asked to modernize its social housing portfolio with an approach aimed at improving client outcomes, while managing for the future in a fiscally responsible way. The move away from the concept of social housing towards a new vision of community housing will effectively support aging in place. By destigmatizing social housing and working directly with communities to determine their specific needs, we can support innovative housing approaches that will lead to more housing options for seniors.

As individuals age, they may experience challenges in finding suitable housing to accommodate their changing needs. This may include difficulty in finding affordable housing with or without adaptive changes, limited access to mobility aids and gaps in availability of supportive services such as home care and respite care.<sup>32</sup>

Seniors can face two main challenges in finding or maintaining appropriate housing: affordability issues, and the need for accessibility features and support services. Some may experience both. It is important to distinguish these differences, as there is not a one-size-fits-all solution for all people.

Increasing access to affordable housing, expanding the availability and awareness of funding options for home modifications, assistance with practical services such as general home maintenance and the continued provision of home and respite care services are all initiatives that help seniors to age in place.

Acceptable housing is recognized as a fundamental condition and resource for health and well-being. Safe, adequate, suitable and affordable housing enables households to enjoy improved life outcomes. It contributes to improved physical, economic, environmental and social health that sustains communities. These impacts are particularly important for low-income households and vulnerable populations.

Yukon's seniors represent a multifaceted and dynamic cohort, with diverse living arrangements and housing needs. Throughout the aging in place engagement, Yukoners expressed their desire for a continuum of housing options within their communities, where they are able to transition from one level or type of housing to the next, as their health care needs change with age.

## The housing continuum

### Privately owned or rented housing

Seniors remain in their own homes, whether owned or rented. Some downsize to condominiums or rental apartments.

Programs that offer assistance with home modifications and practical services can help seniors remain in their own homes for longer.

### Independent living accommodation

Independent living is any housing arrangement designed exclusively for seniors. Since independent living facilities are aimed at those seniors who need little or no assistance with activities of daily living, medical care is not provided by the housing operator.

Available in Whitehorse and in some communities in Yukon.

### Assisted living accommodation

Intended for seniors requiring services ranging from meal preparation and housekeeping to personal care services such as bathing, dressing and taking medication.

While retirement residences are most common, assisted living also includes a range of supportive housing options. Supportive housing includes on- or off-site delivery of personal care services and recreational activities.

There are no retirement or assisted living homes available in Yukon.

### Long-term care accommodation

Long-term care homes are designed for people who can no longer live independently and require 24-hour nursing care. In some jurisdictions, this type of accommodation may be operated by for-profit, non-profit or public corporations. In Yukon all long-term care homes are operated by the Government of Yukon.

There are currently five long-term care homes in Yukon with a total capacity of 319 rooms.



## A continuum of housing options for seniors

The majority of seniors have minimal or no care needs, and live independently in their own home. If an individual's needs increase, they may receive minimal, moderate, or extensive home care services. For some, this will be sufficient. Others requiring more support may move into a long-term care home where professional services are offered around the clock.

Providing housing with services for seniors is integral to support Yukoners along the housing continuum. That continuum can include a breadth of economic options, from privately owned homes to private market rentals and subsidized housing. All can include services or supports to provide assistance to age in place.

The full housing continuum should accommodate seniors with various lifestyle preferences and socio-economic circumstances, including those who require varying levels of care.

### Modernizing social housing – the Community Housing Program

In order to be sustainable, Yukon Housing Corporation recognizes the importance of delivering housing with services that is client-focused and fiscally responsible.

Rather than continuing to “do more”, the Community Housing Program will focus on “doing better” with the human and financial resources that are available. Doing better means identifying and targeting housing needs with the appropriate tools based on evidence about housing affordability, availability, vulnerability and adequacy.

For seniors, this represents an important opportunity to target limited subsidized housing resources to where they are most needed and will have the biggest impact. The current and future demand among

seniors for Yukon Housing Corporation's social housing must be within its fiscal and operational capacity.

Work is underway to provide incentives for private market solutions that meet the needs of seniors who have the means to secure housing without the assistance of government.

It will be important to clearly distinguish between those seniors who struggle to find and maintain housing due to affordability, and those that struggle to find housing due to lack of availability.

As always, rural communities each provide a unique set of circumstances and will require individual solutions based on their community-based priorities.

## Seniors with unique and complex needs

The population of Yukoners with unique and complex needs is aging, and will need additional and various levels of supports as they age. Yukon's five long-term care homes in Whitehorse and Dawson City offer specialized and professional care for seniors. However, there is a clear gap in the continuum related to the lack of assisted living options for seniors.

Supporting our seniors as they age also includes ensuring that sheltering is adequate and accessible for homeless seniors, and that mental health supports are appropriate for individuals with unique and complex needs.

**“We could use a tiered type of facility. The resources you use can be scaled to meet your needs all in one place. Something with only meal support if you chose, or to be scaled to a lot more care if necessary.”**

The feedback that we heard related to this pillar is categorized into five key themes:

- A. Autonomy and a voice for seniors
- B. Innovative housing options
- C. Independent and assisted living options
- D. Long-term care homes
- E. Yukon Housing Corporation

**Note: Where a recommended action in this plan is already underway, information about the current status of this work is provided. When an action or goal is reflected in *Putting People First*, the relevant recommendation from that report is also provided.**

**Putting People First 5.15:** Align Government of Yukon housing initiatives under one provider, including management of NGO services for Yukoners requiring housing supports.

## **A. Funding for home modifications and practical services**

- 2.1 Offer funding for accessibility home modifications for low- to medium-income clients through the Home Repair Program.**
  - Yukon Housing Corporation recently launched a dedicated Accessibility Grant program, which helps homeowners retrofit their homes to make them more accessible for members who have mobility challenges.
- 2.2 Offer funding for emergency repair for low- to medium-income clients to allow seniors to stay in their homes.**
- 2.3 Work with the Seniors' Information Centre and the Yukon Council on Aging to ensure that seniors are aware of funding options for home modifications and practical services such as the Seniors' Home and Yard Maintenance Program referral service.**

## **B. Innovative housing options**

- 2.4 As part of the Community Housing program, engage with seniors to better understand their support needs, and track those changing needs over time.**
- 2.5 With guidance from the *Safe at Home Action Plan*, continue to address the gaps in housing with supports for seniors with unique and complex needs (e.g. homeless seniors, seniors with cognitive and developmental disabilities).**
  - A Senior Engagement Specialist has been contracted by Yukon Housing Corporation to have regular contact with senior tenants at all senior buildings in Whitehorse.
  - Yukon Housing Corporation has provided land, grants, construction capital and loans for project in Whitehorse that will provide housing with services.
  - A 16-unit building in Whitehorse that is operated on Housing First principles was recently opened. The Government of Yukon provided significant funding for this project, and continues to work with its partners on operating the facility and supporting its residents.

## 2.6 Through collaboration and engagement, explore a home-share project.

“It would be extremely difficult for me to remain in my own home without assistance from the Home and Maintenance program administered by the Yukon Council on Aging. I have acquired many services, from gutter cleaning to curtain hanging with an unlimited variety of other chores. I have felt secure hiring these workers who are interviewed and listed with the program. In fact, one worker has come at various times all nine years.”

## C. Independent and assisted living options

**Putting People First 5.14:** Provide self- or family-managed care funding to enable adult Yukoners with disabilities to live at home for longer.

### 2.7 Continue to work internally and with private industry and community partners to development independent and supportive housing for seniors across Yukon. These can include co-housing and intergenerational housing.

- To help provide Yukoners with a continuum of housing options, the Government of Yukon is holding a lot in Whistle Bend until May 1, 2021 to support the Vimy Heritage Housing Society’s ongoing work to create a not-for-profit, supportive independent living rental housing facility for Yukon seniors.

### 2.8 Explore partnerships with First Nations governments and rural communities to develop culturally relevant housing options for Elders, guided by the *Safe at Home Action Plan*.

- Yukon Housing Corporation will continue to work with the federal government and Yukon First Nations governments to identify a potential funding source through the National Housing Strategy and the Indigenous Housing Strategies. Yukon Housing Corporation will continue to seek partnerships and other funding options to address First Nations housing needs.

**Putting People First 3.1:** Involve communities in assessing their local health and social needs and planning local health and social programs and services that meet their needs and are culturally safe.

## **D. Long-term care homes**

### **2.9 Maintain high-quality infection control practices in existing and future long-term care homes.**

- Yukon Continuing Care recently hired an additional, temporary infection control nurse. Plans to continually enhance infection control practices are being prioritized due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **2.10 Uphold a home-based and culturally safe philosophy in partnership with long-term care home residents and their families.**

- Yukon Continuing Care's philosophy of care is: "We are a community that respects and promotes dignity, individual freedom, choice and lifestyle and meaningful quality living. We continually strive to create a feeling of home and belonging for all who live here by being responsive to the uniqueness of each resident."
- Our goal is that our long-term care homes are homes, not institutions or facilities.

### **2.11 Continue to plan for the future to ensure sufficient, high quality, long-term care capacity.**

**Putting People First 4.2:** Enhance programs and services at long-term care homes to better support First Nations residents and their families. This includes culturally focused activities, increasing staff knowledge and sensitivity, offering traditional meals, and ensuring residents' spiritual needs are met.

## **E. Yukon Housing Corporation**

- 2.12 Implement a seniors' engagement program in corporation-owned senior's housing buildings.**
- 2.13 Work towards de-labeling Yukon Housing Corporation units to de-stigmatize social housing and improve quality of life for seniors.**
- 2.14 Enable a client-focused partnership between clients, Yukon Housing Corporation and Yukon Home Care.**
- 2.15 Work to provide seniors who are in need of core housing with access to rent subsidy and home-ownership affordability grants such as the Canada Housing Benefit Program.**
- The Yukon government, and jurisdictions across Canada, are working with the Government of Canada on agreements to provide access to this \$4 billion federal funding program.
  - The Canada Housing Benefit has been co-developed by Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Yukon Housing Corporation and is anticipated to run from April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2028.
  - The objective of this program is to reduce housing need by making private rental housing more affordable for low to moderate income Yukon households who aren't receiving shelter allowance or living in subsidized or community housing.



## Pillar 3: Transportation

**GOAL** Seniors have access to a range of transportation options that meet their needs.

We aim to support the development of a range of accessible, affordable and reliable transportation options for Yukon seniors. Transportation is foundational to individual and community well-being. When people lack transportation options, it severely limits their ability to participate in society and to access services, including health and social services. Whether driving a car, getting a ride from friends or family, or taking public or private transportation, access to transportation allows seniors to participate in social, cultural, volunteer and recreational activities, as well as enabling them to carry out daily tasks such as working, shopping or going to appointments.

Most Canadians live in neighbourhoods designed around cars as the primary means of travel.<sup>33</sup> This means that seniors often have to drive or be driven to work, errands, medical appointments, or social activities. An individual's desire to age in place can be limited if one does not have access to transportation or to a vehicle.

Yukoners indicated that transportation both within Whitehorse and in rural communities is a challenge. Travelling from communities to Whitehorse was also raised as a challenge, particularly for health-related travel. Living without access to a private vehicle can be challenging, particularly in rural Yukon, given the limited public transportation options and the distance to many services.<sup>34</sup>

Transportation solutions are needed to reduce social isolation and improve seniors' abilities to participate in their communities and access health and social services. As a government, we are committed to continuing to work with our partners to improve access to transportation for seniors in Yukon.

Improving safety for all road users including pedestrians and cyclists, prompt and adequate snow removal and ensuring access to safe and affordable taxis or shuttle services are among the transportation-related actions that support seniors' inclusion in communities.

**Note: Where a recommended action in this plan is already underway, information about the current status of this work is provided. When an action or goal is reflected in Putting People First, the relevant recommendation from that report is also provided.**

**Putting People First 2.9:** Working in partnership with First Nations and municipal governments, provide safe and alternative driving services between rural communities and Whitehorse.

### **3.1 Enhance the use of technology (e.g. telehealth, virtual care) within the health-care system to minimize the need for transportation to access care.**

- Yukon's Travel for Medical Treatment program is currently under review. This action is being considered as part of that review.
- As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic we have increasingly been using virtual visits to connect residents in our long-term care homes with their families and health-care providers. We plan to continue this practice in the future.
- In response to COVID-19, we have partnered with the Yukon Medical Association to support individuals to conduct virtual healthcare visits using Doxy.me, a secure video conferencing platform. The Yukon Home Care program is also using Doxy.me to provide virtual visits where appropriate for individuals' needs.
- The Chronic Conditions Support Program has begun offering Remote Patient Care with Cloud DX, an extension of the existing chronic conditions supports where staff and clients work together to monitor clients' biometric information and take action preventatively when needed.
- Teams at Continuing Care are using Cloud DX to allow clients who are receiving palliative care to report on their symptoms to their care providers, allowing for more appropriate and timely adjustment of their care plans.



**Putting People First 2.3:** Increase the use of virtual care and develop options for Yukoners to connect with care from their homes and in their communities.

### **3.2 Work with the City of Whitehorse to improve Handy Bus services.**

- The Handy Bus service is jointly funded by the Government of Yukon and the City of Whitehorse. It offers safe and secure transportation to persons who, for a variety of reasons, have difficulty using regular transit service.
- Discussions are underway between the Yukon government and the City of Whitehorse about ways to improve the service.

### **3.3 Work with NGOs to develop volunteer-driver programs.**

### **3.4 Provide advice and tools to municipalities to develop age-friendly infrastructure (e.g. sidewalks, ramps).**

### **3.5 Develop partnerships with First Nations governments and the private sector to increase transportation options within and between communities.**

“My biggest problem as a rural senior who does not drive is getting to a medical appointment in Whitehorse. While I can always get a ride to town for shopping with a neighbour, I cannot get in for a specific date without great difficulty and/or expense as my neighbours are all retired and only go to town on random days.”



## Pillar 4: Programs, Services and Infrastructure

**GOAL** Seniors and Elders have access to a broad range of appropriate programs and services to support their health, independence and active involvement in their community.

We aim to ensure that Yukon seniors can access programs, services and infrastructure to enable them to live as independently as possible. In the engagement, Yukoners expressed that they are looking for a broader range of supports and services that will keep them active and involved in their community, maintain their independence and support them with navigation of services when they need them.

Creating supportive environments that foster autonomy and independence is key to enabling older adults to continue living in their own homes or communities. Factors such as support for caregivers, support following an illness or hospital stay, expanded use of technology, support for palliative and end-of-life care, assistance with navigating the health and social system and prevention are all important components of this action plan that will help Yukoners to age in place.

The Department of Health and Social Services is working to implement 1Health Yukon – a modern, integrated health information system designed for use in Yukon’s hospitals, health facilities and physician offices. It replaces the current Meditech system, which is nearly 30 years old. 1Health Yukon will allow all of Yukon’s authorized health practitioners across the continuum of care to be instantly and securely connected.

When fully implemented, 1Health could connect nearly all care settings in Yukon, allowing authorized clinicians to have a near real-time view of a client's journey through the Yukon health system. 1Health will also include a patient portal that enables clients to securely access their health records online.

**“The two home care workers in our community do an excellent job, but we need more staff in this area and more connection between the health centre and home support.”**

The feedback that we heard related to this pillar is categorized into seven key themes:

- A. Support for caregivers
- B. Home First
- C. Virtual care
- D. Palliative, end-of-life and hospice care
- E. Navigation of programs and services
- F. Prevention
- G. Financial Supports

**Note: Where a recommended action in this plan is already underway, information about the current status of this work is provided. When an action or goal is reflected in *Putting People First*, the relevant recommendation from that report is also provided.**

**Putting People First 1.4:** Partner with First Nations governments, municipal governments, non-governmental organizations and members of the public in the long-term planning of health and social services that meet community needs and are culturally safe.

**Putting People First 2.1:** Create a holistic, expanded primary care system built on relationships between providers and their clients. In this system, Yukoners are empowered to take control of their care and actively share responsibility for their and their families' health and wellness.

**Putting People First 3.2:** Increase the availability of community-based providers by better retaining established providers, and developing new pathways that encourage rural and First Nations Yukoners to enter into health and social services careers.

**Putting People First 6.5:** As an interim measure while developing Wellness Yukon, hire additional nurse practitioners where needed to increase access to primary health care providers in the communities and in specialized clinics.

**Putting People First 8.4:** Work in partnership with the federal government to support a model for a Canada-wide universal pharmacare program.

“We want to have the infrastructure in our community that will allow us to focus on the quality of our elder years in the communities that we have participated in supporting and building up for so many years.”

## **A. Support for caregivers**

Due to our rapidly aging population, an increasing number of Yukoners will desire and require care and supports at home. We know that many Yukoners want to age at home and in their communities, and caregivers contribute significantly to making this a reality. In fact, half of all Canadians aged 15 and over – or about 13 million individuals – have provided care to a family member or friend, at some point in their lives.<sup>36</sup>

For many caregivers, these responsibilities are juggled with their ongoing need to remain employed, raise a family, and to take care of their own needs. As our population continues to age, caregivers require additional support while they manage financial, social, and personal health pressures. Initiatives to assist caregivers will help to ensure that those who provide care feel valued and supported, and those who receive care are able to remain at home.

### Defining caregiver

Caregivers are the people – family, friends, and neighbours – who provide critical and ongoing personal, social, psychological and physical support, assistance and care, without pay, for those in need of support due to frailty, illness, degenerative disease, physical/cognitive/mental disability, or end-of-life circumstances.<sup>35</sup>

#### 4.1 Implement the Shine a Light on Dementia program to provide education and training to support caregivers.

- Continuing Care held the first offering of Dementia 101 for a public audience in April 2019. This program will be offered again in the future.
- Continuing Care delivered a six-session public training program called Shine a Light on Dementia in January and February 2020. Sessions were delivered in-person at Whistle Bend Place and broadcast via Zoom to Yukon College satellite campuses in Dawson, Carmacks, Teslin, and Watson Lake. A second round of training will be delivered in September 2020.

**Putting People First 3.10b:** Expand support for Yukoners with dementia and their families to allow client-owners to remain in their own homes as long as possible. Provide dementia training for formal and informal caregivers to support Yukoners to remain at home longer.

#### 4.2 Promote and enhance the adult community day program.

- Options are being explored to increase the capacity of the community day program at Whistle Bend Place. One consideration is to decrease barriers to transportation to support participation and decrease caregiver fatigue.

**Putting People First 3.10a:** Expanding the already successful day program at Whistle Bend Place will help lighten the load for families caring for a loved one with dementia. It will also help them keep loved ones at home for as long as possible. As transportation is an ongoing concern for seniors and caregivers, offering transportation options for the Whistle Bend Place day program will make it easier for families to participate.

- 4.3 Look at implementing a caregiver benefit program for low-income caregivers who care for low-income older adults.**
- 4.4 Work with Yukon University to pilot flexible-learning options in rural communities to provide training to increase the number of skilled support workers in those communities.**

## **B. Home First**

Home First is a philosophy, a shift in thinking where the focus is on discharging people home after an acute episode in hospital, instead of assuming that a long-term care home is the only option. Home First means the individual, family and entire care team work to help people stay in their homes instead of moving into long-term care too soon.

One of the keys to this is ensuring providers understand the level of functioning a senior had before a hospital admission, rather than making assumptions or decisions while an individual is ill and in hospital. Seniors should not be assessed for long-term care admission while in hospital, as this increases their risk of being moved into care too soon.<sup>37</sup> Another effective method of supporting the Home First philosophy is through reablement programs.

Reablement is a person-centred approach that promotes independence to allow seniors to age in place in their own home and community for as long as possible. Reablement enables seniors to gain or regain their confidence and ability to live independently, especially after having experienced a health or social care crisis, such as illness, deterioration in health or injury. Reablement helps seniors to regain the capacity to do things for themselves rather than having to rely on others. Reablement programs are a relatively recent innovation in Canada. Yukon's reablement program is one of a few operating within Canada.

Expanding Yukon's reablement program and ensuring a Home First philosophy is adopted throughout the healthcare system will provide seniors with the necessary support to ensure they are able to return home following an injury or hospitalization and support them to live as independently as possible at home and in their community.

#### **4.5 Expand and support a Home First and reablement approach throughout Primary Care and Yukon's hospital system.**

- A Home First partnership with the Yukon Hospital Corporation is already underway, and can continue to be expanded.
- Recent investment in a Home First philosophy and the Yukon Home Care program have had clear positive results for Yukoners. In 2018/19, 92% of people discharged from hospital had home supports ready when they were discharged – they did not have their hospital stay extended while waiting for home supports.<sup>38</sup>
- The reablement program at Thomson Centre in Whitehorse has four rooms for reablement. This type of program is relatively new in this country. Reablement can be expanded to be provided in the home and in other environments.
- The reablement program supports seniors to regain strength, endurance and independence. The program is designed for people who do not require acute care but are not quite able to manage living at home, and who are motivated to return to living independently.
- In the first year, 75% of those who entered the reablement program achieved their goal of returning home.
- In addition, the length of stay in long-term care homes decreased last year compared to the previous two years, which indicates that people are staying in their homes longer before they need to access the more intensive services available in long-term care.

#### **4.6 Enhance the role of paramedic specialists, and work to integrate their services into the system with a focus on helping seniors age in place.**

- Specially trained paramedics take on expanded roles as part of paramedicine programs aimed at keeping people out of hospitals and nursing homes. Community Services is working to act on this recommendation as funding becomes available.

### **C. Virtual care**

Leveraging technology in the delivery of health and social services will strengthen our ability to ensure that all Yukoners have access to the right care, at the right time, in the right setting, and by the right provider.

The Department of Health and Social Services has completed two successful virtual health projects and is currently working with industry partners to continue to offer remote care. This will bring care closer to home, reduce the amount of travel required by individuals to interact with medical professionals and empower individuals to manage their own care.

Virtual care has the potential to have a positive impact on the health and well-being of Yukon seniors by providing immediate access to care, reminders about medication adherence and upcoming appointments, and enabling care coordinators to check in more frequently with individuals. Virtual care can help improve seniors' quality of life and overall health and well-being outcomes, whether they remain at home or in a care setting.

**Putting People First 2.3:** Increase the use of virtual care and develop options for Yukoners to connect with care from their homes and in their communities.

#### **4.7 Offer remote monitoring services to clients receiving palliative care or managing chronic conditions.**

- Yukon's home health monitoring trial allowed Yukoners with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) to monitor their condition from their homes and communities.



- In addition to improving access to care, reducing transportation costs for individuals in rural locations and decreasing the need for hospital visits, home health monitoring also helped increase patients' awareness of their condition and improve their quality of life.
- Planning is underway to re-launch a similar program in Whitehorse and in rural communities.

**4.8 In conjunction with the private sector, work to implement a virtual exercise program.**

## **D. Palliative, end-of-life and hospice care**

Palliative care refers to focused and specialized care that supports the quality of life of individuals living with a serious or life-limiting illness of any diagnoses. Palliative care occurs as early in the course of the illness as possible and the vast majority of people primarily receive services at the community and primary care level. End-of-life care refers to the final stages of a serious or life-limiting illness. The ultimate goal of end-of-life care is to ensure the best possible quality of life for dying people and their families, regardless of the setting of care. Hospice care refers to whole-person health care that aims to relieve suffering and improve the quality of life for those living with a life-limiting illness, as well as their families.<sup>39</sup>

A palliative approach to care puts the person and their family at the centre of care. When it is applied early in the course of a life-limiting illness it can improve the quality of life for the person and reduce the strain on acute care resources. Having appropriate supports in place can benefit seniors by delivering better care closer to their home and community. Building on Yukon's *2015 Palliative Care Framework*, the initiatives proposed in this action plan will help to improve access to quality palliative, end-of-life and hospice services for Yukoners, further supporting and honouring the values and choices of individuals and their families.

**4.9 Open Wind River Hospice at the Whistle Bend Place long-term care home.**

- Wind River House opened in June 2020, filling a gap in Yukon's continuum of palliative and end-of-life care.

- The program offers hospice care services to individuals with progressive, life-limiting illnesses in order to accommodate those who cannot, or do not wish to be supported to die in their home. The Wind River House program is anchored by the principles within the Yukon Palliative Care framework.

#### 4.10 Implement the Rural, In-Home, End-of-Life Care Funding Program.

- Initial planning is currently underway.

**Putting People First 3.9:** Expand palliative and end-of-life care programs and supports by providing direct funding to individuals and families. A palliative care in-home funding program will provide a small amount of money to Yukoners living in rural areas with progressive, life-limiting illness. It will be available when home care services are no longer able to support end-of-life clients who want to remain at home longer.

#### 4.11 Expand the Embedding a Palliative Approach to Care model throughout long-term care homes.

- Yukon's **Palliative Care Resource Team** provides education, navigation, consultation and coordination to Yukoners who have a life-limiting illness, and to their family members, caregivers and health-care providers. It provides palliative care education to health-care professionals and supports care providers with best practice information, assessment tools and clinical advice. The goal is not for the team to coordinate primary care, but to assist existing care providers to promote an integrated palliative care approach across all settings.
- Continuing Care was selected to participate in a one-year collaborative initiative with the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement (CFHI). Known as Embedding A Palliative Approach to Care, it brought together inter-professional health-care teams from across Canada to share knowledge and resources to improve end-of-life care for long-term care residents.

## E. Navigation of programs and services

Throughout the aging in place engagement, many seniors expressed that they are currently unsure of which services or programs they are eligible for, or where to access them. Existing navigation supports, whether provided by NGOs or by government, are often specific to particular services, to care-setting transitions, or to individuals with particular health conditions.<sup>40</sup> Improving service information, expanding current navigation programs and services and better integrating care services for seniors could help to alleviate navigation problems. Removing navigation hurdles faced by seniors will improve their well-being, assist caregivers in their role of supporting seniors at home and in community, and reduce inequitable access to services.

### 4.12 Together with the Yukon Council on Aging, and other NGOs, increase awareness of services at the Seniors' Information Centre.

### 4.13 Through partnerships, improve transitions of care throughout the health and social services system.

- Health and Social Services and the Yukon Hospital Corporation already work in partnership to improve transitions of care, and are looking at ways to strengthen this partnership to further improve outcomes.

**Putting People First 3.4:** Involve client-owners and families in planning transitions from hospital to community by implementing a patient-oriented care transitions bundle modelled on the Bridge-to Home Program as promoted by the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement.

### 4.14 Engage Yukoners in a review of the Travel for Medical Treatment Program.

- A review of this program is currently underway, which includes public engagement.
- Two cities have been added as 'gateways' for medical travel – Yukoners can now receive treatment under this program in Victoria and Kelowna BC.

- A partnership between the Whitehorse International Airport, the Whitehorse Hospital Corporation and Health and Social Services will see secure drop-boxes installed at the airport and at Whitehorse General Hospital. Yukoners can leave their medical travel subsidy forms in these boxes, eliminating the need to mail them or deliver them in person.
- Medical travel application and subsidy forms are being streamlined and digitized.
- New communications tools are being developed to help Yukoners navigate the medical travel process.

**Putting People First 8.2:** Conduct a program evaluation of the medical travel program, specifically focused on:

- when Yukon uses medevacs and whether there are opportunities to reduce frequency;
- how Yukon Emergency Medical Services integrates with health and social services, including medical travel and medevac; and
- providing services in-territory vs. sending people out, including how increased use of virtual care (see recommendation 2.3) may impact medical travel patterns.

**Putting People First 2.4:** Double the current medical travel subsidy from \$75 per day to \$150 per day, beginning on the first day of travel if an overnight stay is needed, and index to inflation going forward.

**Putting People First 2.5:** Conduct more research on the costs and benefits to provide an additional subsidy for low-income Yukoners who may not receive care due to travel-related cost barriers.

**Putting People First 2.6:** Create residences in Whitehorse and Vancouver to reduce the need for hotel accommodations for medical travellers, provide a base for more coordinated out-of-territory care and discharge back to care in Yukon, and support those who may need help navigating care away from home.

**Putting People First 2.7:** Establish a single unit responsible for case management, implementing decisions on medevac or commercial flights, decisions on escorts, liaising with home and out-of-territory clinicians, medical facilities, hotels and people's families.

**Putting People First 2.8:** Eliminate the restriction of medical travel destinations ("gateway cities") in the current medical travel regulations under the *Travel for Medical Treatment Act*.

**Putting People First 2.9:** Working in partnership with First Nations and municipal governments, provide safe and alternative driving services between rural communities and Whitehorse.

**4.15 Complete a service evaluation to ensure that adult protection services are effective and accessible.**

- Work on this has just begun, beginning with an analysis of how adult protection services function in the other provinces and territories.

**4.16 Work with NGO and academic partners to implement the Nav-CARE or similar program to support increased volunteer-based supports for seniors at home.**

“There is a need to educate people in general about the programs that are available to them, where they can be found and how to access/navigate them.”

## F. Prevention

The 2018 Yukon Health Status Report: Focus on Seniors outlines the importance of prevention initiatives to enhance the health and well-being of Yukoners. In this report, Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of Health recommends enhancing specific prevention activities including behavioural interventions to reduce the incidence of chronic disease. Chronic diseases can be exacerbated by factors such as poor diet, insufficient exercise and substance use. Interventions to alter these behavioural factors often require intensive, specialized and ongoing support.<sup>41</sup> Yukon currently offers several programs to help people with chronic conditions, such as the Weight Wise and Pulmonary Rehabilitation programs; enhancing and expanding prevention programs such as these could help Yukon seniors to continue to thrive in their homes.

**Putting People First 1.7:** Use clearly identified savings from some current programs and invest additional resources to move from a focus on acute medical care to a primary-care based population health model with upstream investments in prevention to improve outcomes and ensure the long-term sustainability of the health and social services system.

### 4.17 Implement best practices for ongoing vaccination schedules for seniors and Elders.

- To support Yukoners' long-term well-being and quality of life, and reduce the risk of shingles as they age, the Government of Yukon is publicly funding a vaccine for shingles.
- The Shingrix shingles vaccine will be publicly available in Yukon starting in fall 2020. Shingrix is a highly effective two-dose vaccine recommended by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

**Putting People First 2.14:** Expand the department's vaccine program to incorporate new vaccinations recommended by public health available at no cost to clients.

### 4.18 Through partnerships, explore options for a geriatric model of care from primary to specialized care.

**4.19 Launch a public education campaign to reduce the stigma associated with dementia and provide information about prevention and treatment.**

**4.20 Provide education for seniors and Elders about the interactions of medication with alcohol and other substances.**

## **G. Financial Supports**

**4.21 Review social supports for seniors to ensure that seniors receiving income support have adequate funding to meet their needs.**

- Initial planning is currently underway.



## Implementation and reporting

This document sets out a comprehensive plan to address multiple challenges and opportunities presented by Yukon's aging population, informed by a vision to promote and enhance the health and well-being of Yukon seniors. By laying the groundwork of services, supports, and infrastructure, Yukon seniors can choose to remain in their home or community and can continue to contribute to the social, civic and economic life of their communities.

Achieving the vision and goals set out in this action plan will require the commitment of many people across and throughout the health and social system, working in partnership with NGOs, governments, communities, seniors and their families. This action plan represents a shared vision for the future, and we need to work together to be successful. Implementing these actions will rely on skilled leadership, solid partnerships and active participation across Yukon's health and social system.

To move this plan forward, we must work together to:

- Unify the numerous stakeholders involved.
- Prioritize those actions that are anticipated to have the greatest impact.
- Develop tracking indicators to assess the impact of the action plan.
- Recommend revisions to the action plan, as necessary.
- Report annually on our progress.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are unable to launch this action plan at a large public event as originally planned. Given that, we are planning to hold a virtual event that will allow for some public discussion. This plan will also be made available online, and printed copies will be distributed to key stakeholder groups.



We will continue to engage with stakeholders and those with lived experience as we move forward with implementation, and make revisions to this plan if needed.

We will also reach out to other levels of government to discuss our progress.

Lastly, we will report annually on our progress implementing this action plan; an annual report will also be provided on the progress of *Putting People First*.



## Acknowledgements

Thank you to all Yukoners who helped shape this action plan. The Aging in Place team consulted many partners and stakeholders seeking their mutual commitment to make changes that will improve the lives of seniors in Yukon. We look forward to working with them towards realizing the key actions identified under each pillar.

We would like to thank the following organizations for their valuable assistance in planning the Aging in Place summit and forum, and for their invaluable contributions to this action plan:

- Seniors Action Yukon
- Yukon Council on Aging
- Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition
- Association of Yukon Communities
- Association franco-yukonnaise



## Endnotes

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