



Yukon Aging in Place  
**Annual Report 2020–21**

Our vision is to work together 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.

## Introduction

The Yukon Aging in Place Action Plan was released in September 2020. The plan was informed by broad public engagement with more than 1,200 Yukoners. It 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.

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

The Government of Yukon is working with its partners, including Yukon First Nation governments, municipal and federal governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and community groups, to carry out these actions and achieve our common goals.

The Yukon Aging in Place Action Plan groups the recommended actions into four main pillars that help us achieve our shared vision. To help us focus our work, we also identified key goals for each of the four pillars:

### Pillar 1: Living a Full and Meaningful Life

**GOAL** 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.

### Pillar 2: Housing

**GOAL** 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 related to this pillar.

### Pillar 3: Transportation

**GOAL** A Yukon where seniors and Elders have access to a range of transportation options that meet their needs.

There are 5 recommended actions relating to transportation.

### Pillar 4: Programs, Services and Infrastructure

**GOAL** Ensure 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 under this pillar.

Each year, the Government of Yukon will publish an Aging in Place Annual Report, which will detail its progress on addressing the 56 actions. This is part of our commitment to transparency and accountability to Yukoners. This first annual report highlights completed and ongoing projects from September 2020 to September 2021, all of which aim to promote, enhance and protect the well-being of Yukon seniors and Elders.

## Aligning with Putting People First

There is 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.

While the recommendations in Putting People First apply to Yukoners of all ages, about a third are in some way linked to the Aging in Place Action Plan. This synergy will play an important role in helping us to reach our shared goals.

## Advancing Truth and Reconciliation: a shared priority

Yukon continues to take steps toward redressing the harms of residential schools and advancing truth and reconciliation.

The Government of Yukon continues its work with the Council of Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nations governments to identify how to best respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

Cultural humility is a core principle in the Aging in Place Action Plan. Our goal is a Yukon where seniors and Elders are able to access services and providers that recognize and support their cultural, racial and ethnic diversity. This includes Yukon First Nations history, culture and governance, and the legacy of residential schools.

## Aging in Place: a shared responsibility

The responsibility to implement the actions is shared across seven Yukon government departments and agencies (see table below).

These departments and agencies are working collaboratively with partners, including Yukon First Nations governments, municipal and federal governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and community groups to implement the Aging in Place actions and achieve our common goals.

Two committees have been created to help guide our joint efforts:

The **Aging in Place Seniors Advisory Committee** serves as a focal point for Yukon Seniors and Elders to collaborate with government on matters relating aging in place. The committee is a resource and information source, and provides advice to government and its partners on the development of public policy, programs and services.

The **Aging in Place Implementation Committee** brings together Assistant Deputy Ministers from across Yukon government to represent departments and agencies that have been identified as a lead for one or more of the recommended actions.

## Government of Yukon departments and agencies

The following Government of Yukon departments or agencies are responsible for leading the implementation of the Aging in Place Action Plan:

- **Community Services (CS)**
- **Economic Development (Ec Dev)**
- **Executive Council Office (ECO)**
- **Education (EDU)**
- **Health and Social Services (HSS)**
- **Public Service Commission (PSC)**
- **Yukon Housing Corporation (YHC)**



# Timelines

The action plan included timelines for each of the 56 recommended actions, as a way of identifying the amount of time expected to complete each action. Some of the recommended actions were already underway when the plan was released. Others were actioned immediately, while some reflect future steps we still need to take together to achieve our vision and goals.

We would like to acknowledge the impact the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has had on the timelines that were projected when the action plan was released in September 2020. Responding to the pandemic has consumed a great deal of time, and in some cases, many resources that would typically be available to support partners to implement aging in place actions. Some initiatives have been adversely affected by COVID-19, while others have accelerated the timelines in order to more quickly adapt to the ongoing pandemic.



# Overall progress

The following section provides an overview of the action status by pillar and details about the seven actions that are complete.

A full list of the current status of all actions can be found in Appendix A.

## Overview

Of the 56 recommended actions:

- Forty-five actions (80%) are complete, underway or in the planning or development stages.
- Eleven actions (20%) have not been started.

### Action Status



#### Complete

Action complete as of September 2021.



#### Work underway

Specific action started. More work is being considered or added.



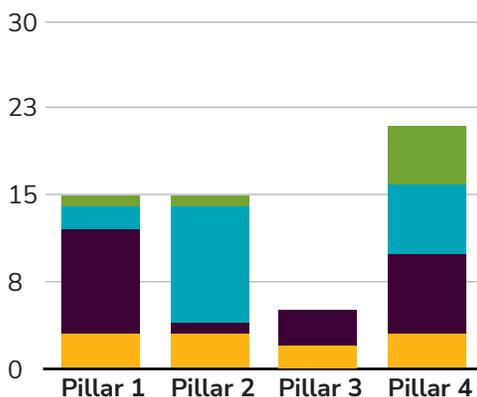
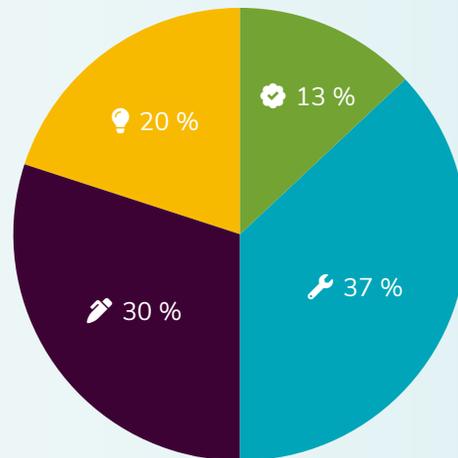
#### In planning or development

Work is underway to plan for or develop initiatives associated with the action.



#### Not started

Work on these actions has not yet begun.



### Action Status by Pillar

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



# Completed Actions

The following seven actions are complete as of November 30, 2021.

## 1.1 Establish a Seniors' Advisory Committee that reports to the Minister of Health and Social Services

**Lead: Health and Social Services**

The Aging in Place Seniors' Advisory Committee was established in February 2021.

Membership diversity was a key consideration when forming the committee. This included ensuring there are members from Yukon First Nations, and Yukon NGOs, individuals with rural Yukon experience, representation from the French-speaking community, and members at large who represent experiences as a senior or Elder in general.

The purpose of the committee is to offer a focal point for Yukon seniors and Elders to collaborate with government on matters relating aging in place. The committee is a resource and information source, and provides advice to government and its partners on the development of public policy, programs and services.

The committee is lead by the Assistant Deputy Minister of Innovation, Quality and Performance and consists of up to fourteen members. Currently, there are twelve individuals on the committee. The committee meets quarterly, in the months of March, June, September and December.

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

**Lead: Health and Social Services**

All infection control policies are reviewed every three years, or more frequently if required, in order to ensure information is evidence-informed and aligns with current recommendations and guidelines for infection control.

Comprehensive COVID-19 prevention and safety policies were developed for long-term care homes in the spring of 2020 and have been updated (November 2021).

We continue to offer influenza and COVID-19 vaccines to all residents and Continuing Care staff.

Long-term care residents and Continuing Care staff were among the first Yukoners eligible to receive COVID-19 booster shots, with boosters made available to residents starting in September and to staff beginning November 23, 2021.

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

**Lead: Health and Social Services**

The Shine a Light on Dementia training program brings formal and informal caregivers together to share experiences, information and resources on dementia. The goal of the program is to improve caregivers' knowledge and skills in order to support Yukoners to remain at home longer. Providing training to caregivers in Yukon about dementia gives them the knowledge and skills needed to better carry out their duties and eliminate burnout.

The Continuing Care Division held the first offering of Dementia 101 for a public audience in April 2019. Feedback gathered from program participants was used to develop an online course. The English version of the Shine a Light on Dementia course became available on YG Learn in January 2021 and is available to the public [yglearn.gov.yk.ca/health-and-social-services](http://yglearn.gov.yk.ca/health-and-social-services).

A French language translation is currently underway and is almost complete. Yukon University will begin advertising for both courses when the French version is ready.

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

**Lead: Health and Social Services**

Wind River House opened in June 2020. It offers hospice palliative care services to people with progressive, life-limiting illnesses. Using a holistic, person-centre approach, this program services 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. Hospice respite rooms are also available for individuals when caregivers need respite support.

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

**Lead: Health and Social Services**

The Rural End-of-Life Funding program was launched in September 2021.

Input received from Yukon First Nations Health Directors and members of the Aging in Place Seniors Advisory Committee informed the design of the program.

The Rural End-of-Life Funding program provides extra support to Yukoners in rural communities who need end-of-life care services that can't be provided by Yukon Home Care or other care providers.

One of the main goals of the program is to help people remain in their home community longer. It is designed to allow people to manage their own care, and to hire care providers who can meet their unique cultural or language needs. It can also be used for respite care, which provides short-term breaks to family members or other unpaid caregivers.

Under the program, people can hire a care provider of their own choosing. They (or their substitute decision maker) will be reimbursed a set dollar amount, based on the number of care hours provided at a set hourly rate.

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

##### Lead: Health and Social Services

Health and Social Services launched its public engagement on medical travel in the fall of 2019.

The department received almost 2,400 responses to its survey. It also conducted 19 in-person focus groups in eight communities, as well as 16 online sessions.

The What We Heard report was released in October 2020. Many of the actions recommended in the report have since been completed.

These include:

- The subsidy for patients on overnight travel has been doubled, from \$75 per day to \$150 per day.
- This subsidy is now available on the first day of medical travel.
- Access to medical travel locations outside Yukon has been broadened. Doctors can now request to send patients anywhere in Canada where required treatment is available.

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

##### Lead: Health and Social Services

An internal review of Senior Services and Adult Protection Services was completed in July 2020.

The resulting report included: a thorough description of services areas and their operations; an analysis of how adult protection services function in the other provinces and territories; and feedback from Government of Yukon stakeholders.

The report included 13 recommendations related to program operations and service delivery.

One of the recommendations was to reallocate the Senior Services and Adult Protection unit to focus solely on adult protection work, as demand for these services is such that it requires the capacity of the entire team.

The review also determined that the seniors' services being provided by the unit were a duplication of services being offered elsewhere – in particular by the Yukon Council on Aging, at the Seniors' Information Centre.

The Seniors' Information Centre, which is funded in part by Health and Social Services, has been successfully providing these services since March 2021.

Work to address other recommendations is ongoing.



## Appendix A: Current status of all actions

The following Government of Yukon departments or agencies are responsible for leading the implementation of the Aging in Place Action Plan:

- **Community Services (CS)**
- **Economic Development (Ec Dev)**
- **Executive Council Office (ECO)**
- **Education (EDU)**
- **Health and Social Services (HSS)**
- **Public Service Commission (PSC)**
- **Yukon Housing Corporation (YHC)**

### Timelines

We acknowledge the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on the original anticipated timelines.

- **Short-term actions** were expected to be complete within 6-12 months
- **Medium-term actions** were expected to be complete within 1-2 years
- **Long-term actions** represent future steps that require more planning and were expected to take more than 2 years.

## ■ 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.

### Autonomy and a voice for seniors and Elders

HSS	 1.1	Establish a Seniors' Advisory Committee that reports to the Minister of Health and Social Services.	 Complete
HSS	 1.2	Collaborate with national organizations on initiatives that support the aging population in a Yukon context.	 In Planning
ECO	 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.	 In Planning
CS	 1.4	Encourage the development of community-led seniors' organizations in rural communities.	 Not started
HSS	 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.	 In Planning

### Technology as a tool to foster social inclusion

HSS	 1.6	Provide more – and improved – options for Yukoners and their families and friends to visit virtually.	 Work underway
HSS	 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.	 In Planning
EDU	 1.8	In partnership with Yukon Learn, ensure that seniors are aware of the technology literacy training services that are available to them.	 In Planning

### Age-friendly workplaces

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

Timeline key

 Short-term

 Medium-term

 Long-term

### Social and recreational activities

CS	 1.11	In partnership with stakeholders, seek ways to increase funding to support active living and social participation for seniors and Elders.	 In Planning
HSS	 1.12	Partner with First Nation governments and NGOs to provide more day programs for seniors, particularly in rural communities.	 Not started
HSS- EDU	 1.13	Work with early childhood educators and other experts to expand intergenerational programming throughout long-term care homes.	 In Planning
HSS- EDU	 1.14	Initiate intergenerational programming with school-aged children and youth in collaboration with the Department of Education.	 Work underway

### Age-friendly communities

CS	 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.	 Not started
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## ■ 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

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

Timeline key

 Short-term

 Medium-term

 Long-term

### Innovative housing options

YHC	 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.	 Work underway
YHC	 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).	 Work underway
HSS	 2.6	Through collaboration and engagement, explore a homeshare project.	 Not started

### Independent and assisted living options

YHC	 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.	 Work underway
YHC	 2.8	Explore partnerships with First Nation governments and rural communities to develop culturally relevant housing options for Elders, guided by the Safe at Home Action Plan.	 Not started

### Long-term care homes

HSS	 2.9	Maintain high-quality infection control practices in existing and future long-term care homes.	 Complete
HSS	 2.10	Uphold a home-based and culturally safe philosophy in partnership with long-term care home residents and their families.	 Work underway
HSS	 2.11	Continue to plan for the future to ensure sufficient, high quality, long-term care capacity.	 In Planning

Timeline key

 Short-term

 Medium-term

 Long-term

### Yukon Housing Corporation

YHC	 2.12	Implement a seniors' engagement program in corporation-owned seniors' housing buildings.	 Work underway
YHC	 2.13	Work towards de-labeling Yukon Housing Corporation units to destigmatize social housing and improve quality of life for seniors.	 Work underway
YHC	 2.14	Enable a client-focused partnership between clients, Yukon Housing Corporation and Yukon Home Care.	 Not started
YHC	 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).	 Work underway

## ■ Pillar 3: Transportation

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

HSS	 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.	 Work underway
HSS	 3.2	Work with the City of Whitehorse to improve Handy Bus services.	 Work underway
HSS	 3.3	Work with NGOs to develop volunteer-driver programs.	 Not started
HSS	 3.4	Provide advice and tools to municipalities to develop age-friendly infrastructure (e.g. sidewalks, ramps).	 Not started
Ec Dev	 3.5	Develop partnerships with First Nation governments and the private sector to increase transportation options within and between communities.	 Work underway

## ■ 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.

### Support for caregivers

HSS	 4.1	Implement the Shine a Light on Dementia program to provide education and training to support caregivers.	 Complete
HSS	 4.2	Promote and enhance the adult community day program.	 Work underway
HSS	 4.3	Look at implementing a caregiver benefit program for low income caregivers who care for low income older adults.	 Not started
EDU	 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.	 In Planning

### Home first

HSS	 4.5	Expand and support Home First and reablement approach throughout Primary Care and Yukon's hospital system.	 In Planning
CS	 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.	 In Planning

### Virtual care

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

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

HSS	 4.9	Open Wind River Hospice at the Whistle Bend Place long-term care home.	 Complete
HSS	 4.10	Implement the Rural, In-Home, End-of-Life Care Funding Program.	 Complete
HSS	 4.11	Expand the Embedding a Palliative Approach to Care model throughout long-term care homes.	 Work underway

**Timeline key** Short-term Medium-term Long-term**Navigation of programs and services**

HSS	 4.12	Together with the Yukon Council on Aging, and other NGOs, increase awareness of services at the Seniors Information Centre.	 In Planning
HSS	 4.13	Through partnerships, improve transitions of care throughout the health and social services system.	 Work underway
HSS	 4.14	Engage Yukoners in a review of the Travel for Medical Treatment Program.	 Complete
HSS	 4.15	Complete a service evaluation to ensure that adult protection services are effective and accessible.	 Complete
HSS	 4.16	Work with NGO and academic partners to implement the NavCARE or similar program to support increased volunteer-based supports for seniors at home.	 Not started

**Prevention**

HSS	 4.17	Implement best practices for ongoing vaccination schedules for seniors.	 Work underway
HSS	 4.18	Through partnerships, explore options for a geriatric model of care from primary to specialized care.	 In Planning
HSS	 4.19	Launch a public education campaign to reduce the stigma associated with dementia and provide information about prevention and treatment.	 In Planning
HSS	 4.20	Provide education for seniors and Elders about the interactions of medication with alcohol and other substances.	 Not started

**Financial Supports**

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