



## **Motion M-106 Seniors**

### **Member's Objective :**

- Firstly, it requests that the government recognize the increasing importance of tailoring policy objectives and outcomes to seniors as the population becomes increasingly aged.
- Secondly, it requests that the federal government point out and re-affirm what action it is currently taking to help improve the lives of seniors.
- Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, it requests that the federal government ask the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development to begin a study on the development of a pan-Canadian **National Seniors Strategy**, something that the Canadian Medical Association, the 40,000 medical practitioners it represents, and over 49,000 Canadians have who have demanded that the federal government take the lead in the creation of a National Seniors Strategy.
- Finally, M-106 requests that the federal government broaden the mandate of the National Seniors Council to allow it to undertake reviews and analysis on their own initiative, rather than only by the request of the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, or the Minister of Health. This would allow the National Seniors Council to provide more timely and relevant information to the Ministers and Canadians alike, as it would enable the Council to better represent the diversity of experience and expertise of its members with proactive research and reporting.

### **Members' Rationale :**

- It was very important for me to focus my private members business on improving income security, quality of life, and access to care for seniors at home in Nickel Belt and across Canada. I hear constantly in Nickel Belt the need for more services to our Seniors. 2015 was the first year that Canadians aged 65 and older formed more of the population than Canadians aged 14 and younger, and the proportion of seniors relative to the rest of the population is expected to rise every year into the foreseeable future. We need to ensure that the federal government takes this significant demographic shift into account when it develops and implements policy.

## Marc Serré

Member of Parliament / Député  
Nickel Belt



- In 2015, seniors formed 15 per cent of the population of Canada, but accounted for 45% of health care spending across the country. By 2035, seniors are expected to form 25 per cent of the population, and account for 60% of health care spending—this sort of strain on our system, our seniors, and their caregivers is unsustainable, and I believe that we need to act now and to plan ahead to ensure that seniors are guaranteed a high quality of life and dependable access to programs and services, now and well into the future.

### **Key Facts & Statistics :**

#### **Canada's population is aging.**

- Statistics Canada reports that over 15% of our population at the last census was over 65; it was 7.6% in 1960.
- For the first time there are more people aged 65 and older than there are children aged 0-14 years.
- Based on population projections, the share of Canadians 65 and older will continue to rise. By 2024 they will account for 20.1% of the population
- By 2036 seniors are expected to make up 25% of the population.
- People aged 85 years and over make up the fastest growing age group in Canada — this portion of the population grew by 127% between 1993 and 2013.
- Statistics Canada projects, based on a medium-growth scenario, there will be over 62,000 Canadians aged 100 and older by 2063.

#### **Canada's health care system was not built to meet the challenges of an aging population**

- While population aging is a modest driver of increasing health care costs (estimated at 0.9% per year), health care spending per person does increase with age as seen in 2013:
  - Age 65 to 69: \$6,298
  - Age 70 to 74: \$8,384
  - Age 75 to 79: \$11,557
  - Age 80 and older: \$20,917
- The Conference Board of Canada has estimated 2.4 million Canadians 65 years and older will need continuing care, both paid and unpaid, by 2026 —a 71% increase since 2011.



### **Inequities of care exist across the country**

- There are significant variations in availability of care among the provinces and territories including rural and urban areas.
- A Health Council of Canada report on the state of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis seniors' health noted that these populations did not receive the same level of care as non-Aboriginals do for a number of reasons including poor communication and collaboration, and disputes between different levels of governments
- In 2014, provincial and territorial health expenditures were estimated to represent, on average, 34.8% of total government expenditures on health care.
  - Health as a proportion of total government program spending was 38% on average with Nova Scotia and Manitoba at the top of the range at 45.8% each, with Quebec the lowest at 29.7%; Nunavut was the highest among the territories at 28.7%.

### **The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) and its “Demand a Plan” Campaign for a National Seniors Strategy**

- According to a 2015 public poll commissioned by the CMA and administered by Ipsos Reid, 9 in 10 Canadians “agree that Canada requires a National Seniors Strategy to address needs along the full continuum of care.” 83% of respondents also felt that such a strategy would benefit the entire health care system.
- At the August 2015 CMA annual meeting, physicians called for the development of a national seniors strategy that would include several elements:
  - the development of innovative and alternative models/partnerships that can provide services and resources for patients’ seamless transition through the continuum of care;
  - evidence-based hospital practices that better meet seniors’ physical, cognitive and psychosocial needs;
  - improved training, resource allocation and incentives to help primary care physicians develop robust, around-the-clock services for frail and elderly Canadians living in the community;
  - a coordinated national approach to reduce polypharmacy in the elderly;
  - the development of guidelines and standards for the use of tele-monitoring technology; and,
  - the inclusion of adequate, evidence-based support for family caregivers.
- Leading up to and since the 2015 federal election, the CMA started a campaign called “Demand a Plan” where over 49,000 Canadians sent over 75,000 letters to Members of Parliament (as of February 2017) urging the federal government to lead the way in designing a National Seniors Strategy.