

## **Proposed Resolution #8: Ageing in Place: Resources for all Canadians to Age at Home and in Community Settings**

### **National Committee Name**

Advocacy Standing Committee

### **Title of Proposed Resolution**

Ageing in Place: Resources for all Canadians to Age at Home and in Community Settings

### **Resolved Clauses**

**RESOLVED**, That CFUW urge the federal, provincial, territorial, regional, municipal, and Indigenous governments to:

- a) Increase targeted funding for older adults' high-quality, accessible, affordable, and person-centred community services to enable ageing in place at home or in their preferred community setting;
- b) Ensure funding is allocated equitably in communities, allowing them to build older adult services specific to their context, while taking into consideration cultural diversity and the specific needs of rural, remote, and urban settings;
- c) Clearly articulate the parameters of funding and ensure accountability and the on-going monitoring of the appropriate distribution of resources with transparency to the public;
- d) Encourage collaboration among all levels of government in developing, funding, and evaluating a variety of in-home and community care options;
- e) Ensure that research and practice address the current and emerging needs of older adults in a manner that allows continuous support in home and community settings, and;
- f) Continue to engage with stakeholders, including, but not limited to, healthcare providers, clinical bodies, and the National Seniors Council, to ensure ongoing up-to-date research and best practices are available from, and for, health care professionals and other stakeholders.

**RESOLVED**, That CFUW urge the federal government to:

- a) Provide allocated resources and funding for older adults and/or their families who need additional care supports, and;
- b) Grant federal subsidies for needed renovations to existing housing to enable ageing in place.

### **Background**

There are two resolutions on Home Care in the CFUW Adopted Resolutions Book: **Inclusion of Home Care Services under the Canada Health Act – 2005** (CFUW Burlington | CFUW Hamilton) and **Accountability in Home Care Delivery – 2005** (CFUW Fredericton).

These 2005 adopted resolutions form a foundation for this proposed CFUW 2024 Resolution. This new resolution will recognize the impact of the growing seniors' population along with the current needs of seniors with a focus on current research, policies, and legislation needed to make the necessary changes for seniors to age at home and in community with government financial support they will provide equitable services for all older persons in Canada. Equity is defined as *in the simplest terms, means fairness, which is not necessarily the same thing as equality. It's not about everybody getting the same thing, **equity** in this case is having resources distributed so each person is able to get what they need to improve the quality of their situation.*

### **Current Discussion and Research: Aging in the Right Place: Equitable Resources for all Canadians to Age at Home and in their Community Settings**

This resolution presents research and practice that address current and emerging needs for seniors in Canada to ensure equity for seniors through continuous support in home and community settings. Provisions are included for dedicated Federal/Provincial/Territorial funding that includes a common framework and guidelines and public accountability for their use.

The research and examples of current work show that several organizations in Canada which support seniors aging in place are actively involved in finding answers to this dilemma. Federal funding and guidelines should provide support to structures to provide a framework for coordination and equity across Canada.

#### **Research**

Canada is an outlier among developed countries, spending only \$1 on home care for every \$6 on Institutional Long Term Care. Most other OECD countries spend roughly equal amounts. In countries and/or regions where there is at least 50/50 funding split on these costs, there is evidence of high quality and positive outcomes that enable seniors to have choices that support them financially to age in place in community.

*“The great majority of seniors want to age well and in place, in homes and communities they can call their own. They want to be able to choose where they live and the structure of their living arrangements.” (Drummond et al 2020).*

As this extensive report states: *“It's evident today that both Federal and Provincial/Territorial Governments need to put in place plans that will transform practice so Seniors in Canada can age in home and community. There should continue to be a variety of options and models that are driven by Federal/Provincial/Territory funding*

*agreements that includes local providers and enable seniors to choose where they want to spend their final years.”*

In a survey of Ontario seniors, 90% of seniors in this province want to live at home as they age. (Home Care Ontario, August 2020) *“Virtually all Ontario seniors want to stay at home as they age, and they are looking to the government to help them do it,”* concluded Sue VanderBent, CEO of Home Care Ontario.

*“With everything that is going on in the world right now, it is paramount that home care is supported the way seniors expect it to be, and this includes additional home care funding, wage rates that pay professional home care workers at parity with other parts of the health system, and tax relief for seniors and families who purchase additional care supports.” (ibid)*

BC Seniors Advocate, Isobel Mackenzie, (02-2023) provides a comprehensive review of this province’s home support services and finds they need fundamental restructuring. This review demonstrates that the program is not keeping pace with the needs of a growing seniors’ population and the service remains unaffordable to many seniors.

**The report includes five recommendations:**

- 1) Eliminate the Financial Barrier to Home Support Access,
- 2) Increase Respite Care,
- 3) Standardize and set targets for all aspects of service-delivery,
- 4) Modernize Care Plans and
- 5) Measure, Monitor and Report on Performance.

These goals are open enough to allow provincial governments to work in their own context and at the same time work towards equity of service for seniors across Canada.

The National Seniors Council

Appointed by the Government of Canada, The National Seniors Council (NSC) engages with seniors, stakeholders, and experts to provide advice to the Government of Canada on current and emerging issues and opportunities related to the health, well-being, and quality of life of seniors.

On October 6, 2022, Ministers of Health and Seniors directed the National Seniors Council to set priorities to convene and serve as an expert panel to examine and to further support Canadians who wish to age within the comfort of their own homes. The outline of this project includes research, convening experts and consulting with seniors, their caregivers, and representatives of organizations serving or advocating for seniors.

The CFUW National Study Group has reached out to various members of this panel and have appreciated the insight and expertise gained. It will be important to keep up with the details of this project.

Currently, the National Seniors Council works with a variety of health professionals and service providers to engage in on-going conversations that keep the current research and practice at the forefront. As this issue becomes part of a wider conversation, it is likely that more health professionals and other related groups will take part in these conversations.

### **Models of Practice for Aging in Place**

**Stats Canada** (Home care use and unmet home care needs in Canada, 2021) states that formal home care includes services that a person may receive because of health conditions that limit daily activities. The following are included in the array of services needed: nursing care, meal preparation, someone to help with bathing or housework.

Formal care does not include care from family, friends, and neighbours.

Aging in Place care also can include community programs during the day that focus on physical and social interaction.

A model that illustrates a variety of ways that communities can support seniors in community is United Way BC's Therapeutic Activation Program for Seniors (TAPS), which enriches the physical and mental well-being of older adults through a range of therapeutic physical and recreational activities, accompanied by nutritious lunches, all within a trusted social environment. There are other community day program examples in other provinces, too numerous to enumerate here.

**The Age Well at Home** (Government of Canada Backgrounder, 2023) initiative has 71 pilot projects that commenced in 2023 (2021 budget) in various jurisdictions. The pilot projects have been extended until 2025-2026 and focus on seniors' nutrition, transportation needs and socialization. The CFUW National Study Group looks forward to on-going reports on these projects. This Initiative is currently in place through the Ministry of Seniors.

CFUW supports this extensive pilot initiative and as these programs emerge it is critical that we have provincial and territorial funding and structures in place to enable communities to put provincial and local leadership in place to coordinate planning as successful programs continue to emerge.

## **Housing**

Although this resolution does not formally address housing, the following models assume that communities must pay attention to the housing needs of older persons in a variety of settings. This includes affordability, and a balance between new housing and keeping present housing repaired to ensure health and safety conditions are kept up to standard.

## **Models of Housing for Seniors**

In the McMaster study on housing in November of 2022, the authors describe a wide variety of community-based housing models that support aging in place (Bain, 2022). Each model described illustrates ways we can improve planning in community housing at all levels of governments. The models described include ways that all older persons could have access to affordable and appropriate housing that will integrate with formal and in form support and services needed for an ageing population who want to live in home and community.

Canada Homeshare, Seniors Co-housing and NORCS (Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities) are only examples of the wide range of plans being developed across Canada.

## **Summary**

The number of seniors who are active in several high-profile organizations including CFUW, media attention and focus on research has created a **momentum for Aging in the Right Place across Canada**. Under the umbrella of Aging with Dignity, federal funding to support guidelines and an accountability framework with Provinces and Territories, equitable and coordinated programs can be put in place and begin to create equity for all seniors in Canada. This will take time and encouragement and advocacy at all governmental levels.

Leadership, including those with lived experience, will be key to success to implement the changes needed to enable all Canadians to age in the place within each circumstance and context. This proposed Resolution urges CFUW at all levels to work in partnership with Canadian organizations who advocate for funding to enable aging in home and community.

It is encouraging to see that issues around aging in the right place are being considered. Implementation is key. "Every senior deserves to age in health, in safety and in dignity". (Age Well at Home Initiative)

## **Implementation**

All three levels of CFUW (National, Provincial Councils and Local Clubs) can provide education programs for members to be aware of current needs and funding needed to accomplish the goals of this Resolution.

CFUW National can:

- Work with partners and allies such as the Canadian Health Coalition, Retired Teachers, Retired Nurses, CARP and others with a stake in retirement and aging with dignity.
- Work with key national and federal entities – Ministry of Health, Ministry of Seniors, the National Seniors' Council – to advocate for funding to Provincial and Territorial Governments that enhances existing home care and community care services and provides equitable support including, but not limited to:
  1. well trained and well compensated staff and services that enable high quality, accessible, affordable, continuity of care for aging in place in home and community settings.
  2. accountability for the appropriate distribution of the resources to ensure continuity and equity so all seniors in Canada can age in the right place according to their needs.

In addition, CFUW National can advocate for increased and targeted funding to provincial and territorial governments for high-quality, accessible, affordable, and equitable services for seniors to enable aging in place in home and community settings.

This can include, but are not limited to:

- Suggesting guidelines that ensure funding is allocated equitably, allowing communities to build seniors' services specific to their context.
- Clearly articulating the parameters of funding and ensuring accountability in the appropriate distribution of resources.
- Funding models that encourage collaboration among all levels of government to develop, fund, and use a variety of options in home and community care that allow seniors to age in the right place.
- Providing tools for Provincial Councils and Local clubs to advocate in their respective areas.
- Encouraging continuing research and pilot projects to address the current and emerging needs of seniors in a manner that allows continuous support in home and community settings. (CFUW National Study Group)
- Continuing to engage with the National Seniors Council to ensure their work provides up-to-date research and best practices from the health professional point of view (CFUW National Study Group)

**Provincial Councils and Individual Clubs** can:

- a) Work with CFUW National to enhance and support the work above.
- b) Educate their members on the elements of Aging at Home and in Community as outlined in this Resolution.
- c) Educate their members on local models that provide seniors with coordinated, equitable delivery of services that promote Aging in Place in home and community through targeted Federal/Provincial Bi-lateral Funding Agreements and other National, provincial, and local resources available.
- d) Provide tools that include template letters to contact and write to MLA's and MPs to encourage each government entity to work on this project on Provincial/territorial agreement that can enable funding for Aging in Home and Community.
- e) Provincial Councils can identify and distribute information on models that provide a variety of services for seniors as they age from Independence to Dependence.

**Local clubs can:** educate members on Aging at Home and Community models that provide:

- Equity for all seniors in their community,
- Projects with club members to identify models of care in their community that are available to all Seniors based on Provincial and municipal funding,
- Local strategies that urge local municipal governments to provide leadership and coordination of home and community care services.

**CFUW members can:** write personal letters to their local MP and MLA/MHA/MNA/MPP to request funding and policies as above.

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