

Seniors

Seniors represent approximately 16% of the Island population. While they are not among the lowest income groups on the Island, they often face increased costs for medications, housing, home supports and transportation while living on a fixed income.

Government is taking steps to stabilize or reduce costs for seniors who wish to remain in their own homes and communities:

- The PEI Energy Accord reduced the cost of electricity by 14% since 2011, and mandated that rates remain stable through 2013. This represents a savings of \$4 million for seniors alone.
- By freezing residential property tax assessments in 2007, and tying increases to the consumer price index, government provided seniors with more stable property tax assessments.
- Low income seniors are able to take advantage of the Seniors' Property Tax Deferral Program which allows them to defer their property taxes while they live in their homes.
- The Seniors Home Repair Program assists seniors to continue to live in their own homes. Since its reintroduction in 2007, this program has assisted 1,500 Island seniors. In 2009, the income ceiling for the program was increased from \$30,000 to \$35,000.
- Government provides 1,094 seniors housing units with rent fixed at 25% of a senior's income. The provincial and federal governments, along with private partners, have added 159 new seniors units since 2007.

Islanders have one of the most comprehensive seniors drug programs in Canada. All seniors are eligible for the program once they turn 65. In 2010, the medication co-pay for the Seniors Drug Program was reduced by 25%, making medications more affordable for 18,000 Island seniors.

Since 2007, funding for home-based care has increased by \$6.5 million, or 55%. Many of these services are vital to seniors such as personal care, respite, nursing care and physiotherapy.

Government is replacing five provincial manors and expanding a sixth, at a cost of \$63 million.

Investments in long-term care increased from \$56 million in 2008 to \$69 million in 2012, or 23%. Government provides an average of \$155 per day per resident living in long-term care. There were 40 new long-term care beds added in 2011, bringing the provincial complement to 1,051 beds.

In any given month, approximately 370 seniors are receiving subsidy towards their costs to reside in a community care facility.

Government provides funding for a Seniors Secretariat, which awarded \$50,000 in grants this year to seniors' organizations carrying out seniors focused projects in Island communities. Funding of \$20,000 was also provided to expand the highly successful Computing for Seniors Program.

