

Financial Assistance for Seniors

2011 Seniors Services Conference

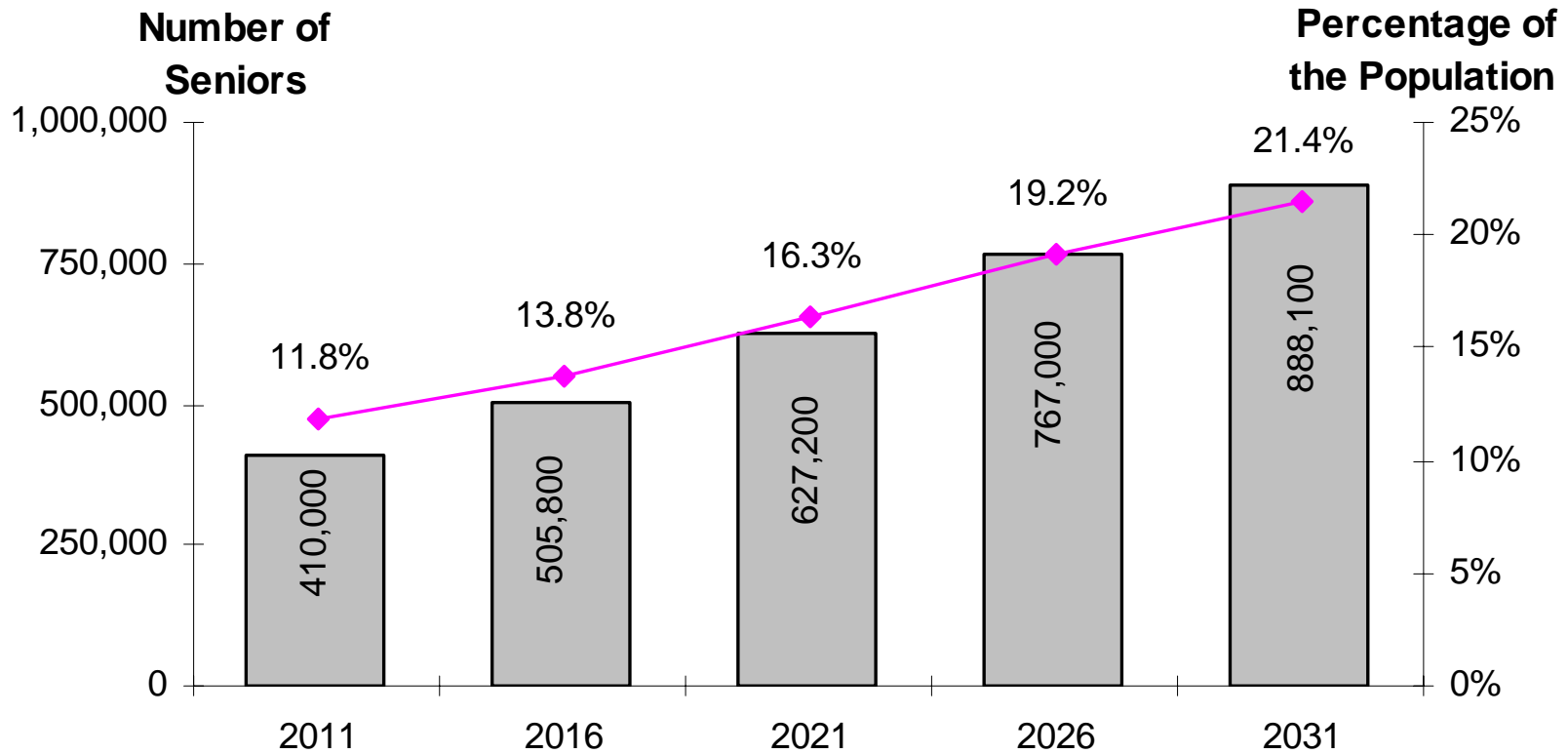


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Seniors and Community Supports



Projected Seniors Population



Current Statistics

- Currently over 416,400 seniors reside in Alberta.
- Net increase of about 1,000 new seniors each month.
- More than 140,000 seniors, approximately 35% are eligible for a cash benefit from Alberta Seniors Benefit.



Programs for Seniors

- Alberta Seniors Benefit
- Special Needs Assistance for Seniors
- Dental & Optical Assistance for Seniors
- Education Property Tax Assistance for Seniors



Alberta Seniors Benefit



Alberta Seniors Benefit - ASB

- Provides monthly cash benefits to eligible low-income seniors.
- Benefit year is July 1 to June 30; eligibility is based on prior year's verified income.
- Must be 65 or older, Alberta resident for 3 months, Canadian citizen or landed immigrant, have income within the program thresholds.



Applying

- Applications sent to seniors three months before their 65th birthday
- Seniors only need to apply once (lifetime enrollment)
- gateway to enrollment for the Dental, Optical and Education Property Tax Assistance for Seniors programs



Income Thresholds & Benefits

Income Eligibility Thresholds	Maximum Monthly Benefit
Single \$24,600 or less	Single \$280
Couple \$40,000 or less	Couple \$420
Benefits for seniors living in long-term care and designated supportive living facilities are calculated to provide a senior with \$265 discretionary income based on monthly accommodation charges of \$1,700.	



Dental & Optical Assistance for Seniors



Dental & Optical Assistance

- Provide assistance toward eligible basic dental services and prescription eyeglasses.
- Basic dental includes checkups, cleanings, fillings, extractions, root canals, dentures.
- Claims processing is administered by Alberta Blue Cross.



Income Thresholds & Coverage

Total Annual Income	Dental Coverage	Optical Coverage
Single \$24,600 or less Couple \$49,200 or less	Maximum	Up to \$230 every 3 years
Single \$24,601 to \$31,675 Couple \$49,201 to \$63,350	Partial 99% - 10%	Up to \$115 every 3 years
Single over \$31,675 Couple over \$63,350	<i>Not eligible</i>	<i>Not eligible</i>



Applying

- Seniors registered with Alberta Seniors Benefit are automatically enrolled in the optical and dental programs
- All other seniors can apply directly
- Seniors only need to apply once (lifetime enrollment)



Reimbursement

- Service provider may bill Alberta Blue Cross directly and senior pays the difference between what is covered by the program and the total bill.

OR

- Senior pays the full bill and submits the original receipt to Alberta Blue Cross for reimbursement.



Education Property Tax Assistance for Seniors



Education Property Tax Assistance

- Provides a rebate to senior homeowners to cover the year-to-year increases in the education portion of their property taxes



Education Property Tax Assistance

- Rebate is the difference between the senior's base year amount and the amount in following years.
- Base year is the latter of the following:
 - 2004
 - Year prior to turning 65
 - If moved, first full year of paying property tax or house complete by January 1.



Applying

- Seniors enrolled in ASB are automatically enrolled for Education Property Tax Assistance.
- Program works with many municipalities to collect seniors' property tax information.
- If required, seniors will receive a letter requesting property tax information.
- Administers some municipal rebates.



Special Needs Assistance for Seniors



Special Needs Assistance - SNA

- Provides financial assistance to eligible, low-income seniors for **allowable** expenses.
- A special need is defined as a one-time extraordinary personal expense that is required to meet the needs of a low-income senior.
- Maximum benefit available is **\$5,000** per benefit year.



Income Thresholds

Total Annual Income	Funding Level
Single \$20,200 or less Couple \$31,800 or less	Primary and secondary items
Single \$20,201 to \$24,600 Couple \$31,801 to \$40,000	Primary items only
Single over \$24,600 Couple over \$40,000	<i>Not eligible</i>



One-Time Only Items

■ Primary Items

- Appliances (fridge, stove, bed)
- Home repairs (furnace, house roof)
- Lift chair
- Medical trips
- Funeral costs

■ Secondary Items

- Orthotics
- Respite care
- Home repairs (exterior door, soffit)



Ongoing Items

■ Primary Items

- Celiac diet assistance
- Diabetic supplies
- Medication dispensing fees
- Nutritional beverage
- Personal response service
- Podiatry costs
- Prescriptions medications

■ Secondary Items

- Housekeeping and yard maintenance
- Laundry costs



What's New

Effective August 2011

- Estimates and/or receipts can be submitted without an SNA request form
- Senior must be enrolled in the Seniors programs
- Receipts/estimates must include name, address, and Personal Health Number (PHN)



Applying

- Approximately three weeks to review a request for assistance – longer at busy times of the year.
- When a decision has been made, the senior will receive a letter notifying him or her of the decision (a receipt may be requested).
- Benefits are then deposited directly to the client's bank account.



Information Resources



Information Resources

- Alberta Supports Contact Centre
 - Toll-free in Alberta **1-877-644-9992**
 - Edmonton and area 780-644-9992
 - Monday – Friday, 8:15 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- Offers translation services for callers with language barriers.



Website

www.seniors.alberta.ca

- Access the following resources
 - Benefit estimator
 - Forms and publications
 - Searchable database
 - Resource for elder abuse and fraud awareness
 - Reports and announcements



What's New

- Application Checklist – Turning 65
 - List of federal, provincial programs and application timelines
 - www.seniors.alberta.ca/Seniors/docs/ApplicationChecklistTurning65.pdf



DSL/LTC Information Portal (DLIP)

- ASB and AISH provide eligible DSL and LTC residents with income supports to assist with the costs of accommodation fees and to provide residents with discretionary income.
- To standardize the collection of admission information an information portal is currently being rolled out to facility operators and should be completed later this fall.

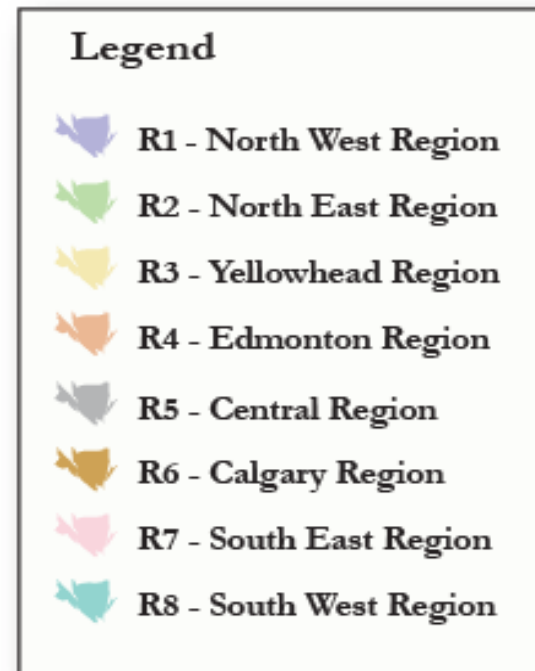


DLIP Portal

- Benefits of the DLIP Portal
 - Admission data can be provided in real-time
 - Will help ensure eligible residents receive their benefits in a more timely manner.



Seniors Information Services Offices



Reaching Out

- **Mission** - train, educate and consult with community agencies and all levels of government to meet the needs of Alberta's seniors.
- **Vision** - to create opportunities that help older Albertans access programs and services within their communities.



Who we work with

- Family & Community Support Services
- Social workers, caregivers, & volunteers
- MLA offices
- Municipalities
- Housing management bodies
- Alberta Health Services
- Seniors and family members



Services

- Support organizations and agencies that work with seniors.
- Visit communities to provide
 - presentations and displays about seniors' programs
 - training sessions and workshops
 - assistance developing resource areas for seniors
- Offer in person assistance on an appointment basis.



Thank you

Questions?

Alberta

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