



Newsletter

National Pensioners Federation

March 2017

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73rd NPF Convention in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

73rd NPF Convention Information & Registration

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NATIONAL PENSIONERS FEDERATION

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Deadline for NPF Newsletter

submissions is June 1st

Check us out ...



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To the Readers

All editorial matter published in this NPF newsletter represents the views and opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the NPF or the publication's editor.

Statements and opinions expressed do not represent the official policy of NPF unless so stated.

Have you got an article you would like to submit for consideration?

Please send your articles to the publication's editor, Jean Simpson at jean.simpson@npfmail.ca



Printing of the NPF Newsletter courtesy of Unifor Regional Office 140 Pine Valley Blvd., London ON

President's Message



Promises! Promises!

It is not clear how to make sense of all the political gyration and broken campaign promises in Canada and around the world. It may make some sense if we assume that no matter what political party is in power, global capital will prevail in many major policy discussions. The plans and efforts of global capital are always moving in a direction that benefits them at the expense of everyone else in the world and the environment.

Conspiracy theories are difficult to prove because of a lack of hard evidence. Today they are difficult to avoid because of the overwhelming amount of circumstantial evidence. Can it be a coincidence that political awareness and involvement, positive social change and progressive legislation are so hard to come by while the dismantling of thousands of person-years of work is accomplished by the will of one person or some unelected decision makers? Think of how many examples you can think of that fit this pattern. Now that is the frustrating reality of fighting for a more equitable and sustainable future. I always promote focusing on the positive result you want to achieve instead of the negative roadblocks we always encounter. The first focus will get you where you want to go and the second will bind you where you are. The second focus is collectively caustic because it provides an excuse for not taking personal responsibility or action on what we know needs positive change. There is an alternative view which can be expressed in the term *prospiracy. Instead of the majority feeling undermined by the minority the majority unites to accomplish the changes that will improve the lives and health of our planet and everything that lives here. We must speak up now and not wait till we have less to lose.

Let's consider a couple examples; Proportional Representation and the National Health Accord. - The commitments from Justin Trudeau and the Liberal Party were crystal clear during the election campaign. That election was to be our last election determined by "first past the post". "Most Canadians like current voting system, Liberals' electoral reform survey finds" This was the headline in the National Post article and was a common quote from the people that do not see an issue with compromised democracy and a continually growing inequality of the distribution of wealth. As flawed as many proponents of electoral reform found this survey there is still a clear message if you look at the data. (survey results are available on our website) That is why this report has not been clearly viewed by even the people that took the time to respond to the questions.

Figure 1:1 shows that 67% of respondents are satisfied with the way democracy works in Canada. This result does not match the rest of the responses.

All of the other results show that the clear majority want to see all parties and MP's working together with several parties governing, weighing other points of view, building consensus, sharing accountability and credit. Voters should have more choices on the ballot. Regardless of the number of seats won, no one party should be able to make policy decisions; several parties have to agree before a decision is made. 83% of Canadians agree that Members of Parliament should always act in the interests of their constituents, even if it means going against their own party.

90% agree that there should be a limit to the length of federal election campaign periods.

The recent decision of Prime Minister Trudeau to break his commitment on the last election being the last past the post format is not only contrary to his commitment during the election campaign it is clearly contrary to how Canadians want to be governed. The reasons he gave the decision are completely with

...continued from the President

out merit. Contrary to political pundits this is a major change that Canadians expected. The justification given in parliament to not fulfill his commitment was that there was no consensus among Canadians about what kind of proportional representation we wanted. For this logic to prevail it should have been clear to Canadians throughout the discussions that there must be consensus. Since that is not the case his decision will remain a prominent reminder of his inability to maintain trust until the next election. It is not too late to change and get back on the path that was promised. Do we have the determination to agree and speak with one voice? How can this happen in a democracy that is discussing ways to strengthen democracy?

Our National Health Accord is another disappointment despite the ministerial celebrations about reaching agreements with individual provinces. It is a national example of "divide and conquer". Health care is the most important issue for seniors in Canada. Instead of removing the differences of coverage across the country and improving health care using the recommendations in the Naylor Report (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/health-system-services/report-advisory-panel-healthcare-innovation.html>) we have continued to pave the road for privatization and have failed to build a National Health Care system that provides all Canadians with equality in the health resources they need.

Provincial governments will not have the funds to replace the lost 3% of federal transfer money and will reduce services or privatize them while they blame the federal government. This is clearly not what seniors expected when they welcomed the new federal government that made promises of real change and then took the same approach on health care funding that the previous government had planned. Is it still possible to implement a new National Health Accord?

We must continue to pressure our Members of Parliament. It should be clear that changing the government is not the absolute solution. Strengthening our democracy through education and working together regardless of who is elected is the only way we will overcome the issues we face. Discussions in Committees is progressing on Bill C-277 which is an Act to provide a framework for palliative care and a National Pharmacare Program. These will hopefully provide some new support for seniors as this is the group most affected by these issues.

How did the idea that corporations should have so much power and influence become such a part of our everyday lives? We can see the results that our neighbours now face with a president that runs a country like a corporation. It is understandable that he does this since he has no political experience and is quite successful in the corporate world.

Municipalities, provinces and many other community structures are not corporations; but they are incorporated which means that they must legally function like one. The first corporations were created in the early 1600's. These were the Dutch and British East India Companies. The first municipal corporations were created shortly afterwards in Britain and India. They then spread to the rest of the British empire. When entities that are created to generate profits for individuals are given the same rights as a human person; without the responsibilities, there will always be the same outcome. Individual values win - community values lose. The opposite approach has much more value because when community values prevail then individual values are naturally supported as well. We need to prepare for the major changes that are coming. Corporations and the corporate structures are recognized to be shrinking in their sustainability. I have watched countless opportunities for big money to change direction to promote environmental sustainability, global equality of life and still provide corporate profits over the last 50 years. The results of this are obviously disappointing but the question today is, how many more of these opportunities must drift by while the global picture for most people appears to be getting much more challenging than that of the wealthy? Wealth can be reined in by government and government must be reined in by us. This principal applies to every one of our community realities. These principals do not apply in a state of war. We must speak every day in support of democracy to ensure that we are part of the solution and not part of the problem.

...continued from the President

Our B.C. provincial affiliate COSCO has completed their comprehensive review of their convention in September 2016. The attached link to their comprehensive and universal report will provide abundant information for seniors groups and clubs.

<http://coscobc.org/images/conference2016/COSCO-Conf-2016-Report->

Information regarding the lobbying efforts of the Federation are available on our website. Of particular interest are the efforts on the CPP expansion (Senate Committee Bill C-26), our Health Care Lobby participation with the Canadian Health Coalition, our CRTC lobby regarding Fair Access to Broadband and Next Generation -911.

Also available on our website is information regarding our annual convention; call letter, registration and hotel information. We continue striving to improve our website to provide important information for our members. Please visit **www.nationalpensionersfederation.ca** to update your groups contact information.

<https://www.exposingtruth.com/conspiranoia-versus-prospiracy/>

Herb John

2nd Vice-President



Caring For Canadians– All Classes Count

Health Care in Canada seems to vary according to each provincial government in power and negotiated circumstances leading to the manner in which agreements with the federal government was reached. In addition, coverage varies according to age, income, administration, location, health region (s) and accessibility.

Ironically, health concerns, issues and diseases don't seem to have these segregated divisions. Also, the structure, physiology and longevity of taxpayers is not really subject to political

The National Pensioners' Federation is working hard to try to ensure that all Canadians have proper access to required health care to ensure quality of life. The executive and members across Canada continually monitor all the provincial programs, issues and deficiencies in health care programs. On an annual basis, the member organizations bring forth resolutions in an attempt to assist the governments in providing practical, essential and accessible health care for the citizens.

In addition, NPF has established a Health Care Committee with representatives from the different regions of Canada to effect this goal. Kathleen Jamieson from BC will serve as the chair of this committee. She brings a wealth of experience and knowledge from her involvement with the BC Health coalition. JoAnn Lauber, Winnie Fraser-MacKay (PEI), and Alma Johnston – Tynes (Nova Scotia) are the other committee members. I will be the executive liaison representing (Sask).

The committee is working hard to establish a meaningful assessment of health care in Canada, prioritize needs, and to bring forth recommendations for action to NPF for presentation at the AGM scheduled for Nova Scotia this fall.

Mike Kaminski

National Pensioners
Federation



Fédération Nationale
des Retraités

73rd Annual NPF Convention

October 3 - 5, 2017

“DoubleTree by Hilton Dartmouth”

Hotel Registration Deadline: September 3rd

(to qualify for discount group rate)

101 Wyse Road, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3A 1L9

Hotel Reservations 902-463-1100

(Only Use the Number above)

Rate: \$139.00 CAD/plus tax

E-mail reservations@hiharbourview.ca

Use Block code **FSP** or under booking name **National Pensioners' Federation**
(When the online registration information becomes available it will be on NPF website)

Delegate Registration Deadline: August 31

(Registration Fee \$125.00 each per delegate and visitors)

Resolutions Due Date: August 1

Convention Registration: October 3 (afternoon)

Meet & Greet: October 3 (evening)

Convention: October 4 & 5

Banquet: October 4 (evening)

Registration forms will be mailed and are on the website.

For more details, please check our website at

www.nationalpensionersfederation.ca

73rd CONVENTION

October 3 - 5, 2017

“DoubleTree by Hilton Dartmouth” Nova Scotia

CREDENTIAL

Delegate: _____

Address: _____

Group/Club#: N _____ Group/Club Name: _____

Secretary: _____

PRESENT TO THE CONVENTION CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

NATIONAL PENSIONERS FEDERATION

73rd CONVENTION

October 3 - 5, 2017

“DoubleTree by Hilton Dartmouth” Nova Scotia

DELEGATE REGISTRATION

FEE: \$125.00

Name: _____

Address: _____

Group/Club#: _____ Group/Club Name: _____

Secretary: _____ E mail _____

PLEASE NOTE: If your Group/Club is sending an additional delegate(s), please photocopy this form as needed. Cut and return the registration portion (bottom) with a cheque (\$125.00 per delegate) payable to “National Pensioners Federation”. Mail to: **NPF TREASURER**, 2186 Stanfield Road, Mississauga, ON L4Y 1R5, **Att’n: Mary Forbes**

HAVE YOUR DELEGATE(S) BRING THE CREDENTIAL (TOP PORTION) TO THE CONVENTION

1st Vice - President's Message



The Post Truth Era

We are living in a new political age. Facts are fiction, fiction passes for fact. The more controversial a politician pronounces a new (alleged) policy, the more likely it will receive media coverage. Facts, evidence and reasonable analysis is usually absent. The 45th President of the USA employed this show business strategy without much, or any, sound understanding of sound public institutions or policy. And far too many of the media went along for the ride without critical analysis. Yes, there were exceptions, but usually in the less prominent news outlets.

Predictably, the new Trump administration is floundering in incompetence, outright lies on an almost daily basis and leaks to the media. Worse, we have

arguably the most destructive Cabinet in decades. A Secretary of the Energy Dept. who once campaigned to abolish it. There is the head of the Environmental Protection Agency who does not like safeguarding regulations. There is the Education Secretary who has spent a lifetime not fond of public education systems and stated that there should be guns in schools in the event of grizzly bear attacks. You cannot make up this stuff. Then there is the previously fired army general who was appointed National Security Advisor. He lasted only five weeks before being forced out over being a stranger to the truth when it came lacking forthrightness about his communications with Russian officials. Health Care? Too destructive to imagine in a western leading nation. The list of questionable appointees and destruction of social programs goes on and on.

So, what have we learned from the American experience? Provocative comments are likely to receive free publicity. Racists will hear code words that appeal. Opponents with well thought out policy will be insulted and ridiculed. Then the biggest prize of all: election to office to act on building walls; both literally and figuratively. Can it all happen in Canada? No problem. The Conservative Party (Official Opposition with some 99 MP's) has 2 front runners that invoke the new strategy of false issues. Kelly Leitch, with her Canadian Values "policy" for new immigrants is the leading student of the Trump strategy of staking out the bigoted voters (somehow always welcome in her party). Never mind that there are no practical or realistic assessments to be made on one's state of mind when foreigners can rehearse the "acceptable" or "correct" answers. One may wonder if admitting to disliking hockey and beer disqualifies one or will lower the point score. All truly ludicrous and unworkable. But on she goes with the media willing to parrot her messaging for her.

The other darling contender of the media, Kevin O'Leary, runs on a one man show for Prime Minister. He will determine all big issues, no need for a competent team. An example of his appeal to hatred (in this case directed at folks who have anti-union animus) is entirely unconstitutional.

Article 2 d) of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects the Right to Association. The Supreme Court of Canada has consistently included trade unions' existence - as well as the right to strike - as being included in such protection. Unless the Constitution is changed, O'Leary may as well be promising free trips to Mars as announcements to get rid of unions are without reality. But the media goes along, covering O'Leary's show business style. Contenders such as Michael Chong or Maxime Bernier with real policies to promote get far less media coverage. Have many Canadians seen Erin O'Toole or Andrew Schner covered by the media, much less the pack of also ran behind them?

The lesson for Canadians here is beware the false prophets. Millions of Americans are about to lose health care coverage, protection for the environment and probably a good part of their social security system. Not to mention the reputation of the USA in the opinion of everyone worldwide. Enough of the downside of the Trump administration consequences on average workers, their families and all the rest of us.

...continued from the Vice-President

The point here is do we want this type of political discourse to successfully unfold in Canada? The media, not all to be fair, is still rushing to publicize outrageous pronouncements. It is time for fact check analysis becoming a regular part of such coverage. Citizens are not well served by sensational news being the priority. We already have the proof south of the border that decency, integrity and objective commentary is not a hallmark of lightweight mavericks. Unfortunately the goal of providing good government becomes a lost outcome when the “populists” succeed with such negative tactics. What can we do to prevent this from happening here? It is time to demand better from our politicians and journalists.

Barry Thorsteinson



Health Committee

A new NPF health committee was set up in January, 2017. The four members of this health committee are: Kathleen Jamieson (BC) Chair, Alma Johnston - Tynes (NS), Winnie Fraser-MacKay (PEI), and JoAnn Lauber (BC). Mike Kaminski (Sask) is the liaison to the NPF executive.

The purpose of the Health Portfolio is to identify issues, opportunities and concerns that impact seniors' health and to ensure the implementation of member generated resolutions.

The Health Committee has decided to begin by researching and writing three background papers for their first report. The papers focus on NPF resolutions:

Dental Care for all seniors; 2) Quality Primary Care; and 3) The Health Accord.

The intention is that these papers will be both useful current resources for NPF members and also aid the Executive in preparing position papers on these or related issues. A draft report should be available in mid April.

Respectfully submitted by
Kathleen Jamieson,
Chair, NFP Health Committee

Did you know you may advertise in this newsletter?

Business card - \$25
One quarter page - \$40
One half page - \$75
One full page - \$150

Don't Plan for Seniors

...

Plan with Seniors

Treasurer's Report



Improving

How time flies, March already. Winter hasn't been too bad in Ontario but doesn't appear to want to leave.

I am working hard with Union Strategies to make our accounting process as automatic and easy to use as possible. We are using an existing Computer Programme which is being modified to suit our needs. This involves a fair amount of data input on my part but hopefully once we have everything in place I will have more time for other tasks. The receipt process for dues received is part of this, please be patient you will receive receipts

for monies paid.

I read in the Toronto Star that nursing homes feed Senior Residents on \$8.33 a day, Ontario Prisoners are allotted \$9.73 a day. Nursing home Residents rarely get enough fresh fruit, vegetables and nutritious meals. I have a Friend in an Extended Care facility I have seen her lunch. Fall vegetables they look like mush and who knows what kind of vegetables they are. Canned fruit, fish fingers. She does receive a banana now and again. Apparently an increase of 33 cents a day for each Senior Resident would be enough to supply fresh fruit and vegetables daily. The last increase was in 2014.

Again Senior Persons are at the bottom of the food chain. It is time that the Governments recognized the contribution the Persons have made to the economy and treats them with the respect they deserve.

Community Chapters: A new initiative

The economy is changing and Unifor has been instrumental in assisting to form Community Chapters. Community Chapters are a new way in which Workers can have some of the benefits of a Union even if there is no Union in the workplace.

Community Chapters are associated with an existing Local Union and Members have access to knowledge of employment standards and other applicable legislation, health and safety training and rights under the law. Also access to space and other local union resources and a connection to area resources as needed.

As Members of a Community Chapter for at least 1 year Workers have access to Health and Dental Plans and Group Home and Auto Insurance at a discounted rate.

Dues collected from Community Chapters are not retained by the Union they are returned 100% to the Community chapter to aid in implementation of their plan of action.

Unifaith Community Chapter which represents United Church Ministers and other Faith workers nationally was launched in 2014. For more information : <http://www.unifaith.ca/>

The Canadian Freelance Union representing self employed media and communication workers e.g. graphic designers, photographers, illustrators, editors, authors, writers, public relations practitioners, I.T. workers, owner operators, freelance translators now represents over 350 workers. For more information : www.canadianfreelanceunion.ca

Travelling by public transportation and speaking to Workers in low income jobs I know how important Community Chapters are because so many people I spoke to were in low income employment, were new immigrants and had no knowledge of their rights as Workers and were afraid to speak out.

More information on Community Chapters: <http://www.unifor.org/en/about-unifor/community-chapters>

Mary Forbes

NATIONAL PENSIONERS FEDERATION GROUPS & CLUBS

The NPF financial year is from January 1st through December 31st (the calendar year). Club/Group dues listed below are based on the calendar year and are to be paid each year in January.

Please complete this Submission Form (Club/Group address and contact) and submit your dues as early as possible.

Annual Club/Group membership dues:	Select	()
Club/Group under 100 members	\$35	()
Club/Group from 100 to 500 members	\$75	()
Club/Group from 501 to 1,000 members	\$125	()
Club/Group with over 1,000 members	\$350	()
Donations would be appreciated	\$_____	()

The NPF depends on your financial support in order to continue our advocacy efforts.
Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call or write the Treasurer. *Thank you*

Please print contact information clearly.

Group/Club Name and Number: _____ # _____

Club Address: _____

City: _____ Prov: _____ Postal code: _____

Contact person

Name: _____

Address: _____ Prov: _____ Postal code: _____

Email address: _____

Application/payment may be submitted on this form or you can make your payment through PayPal on our site www.nationalpensionersfederation.ca If you wish to become supporters dues are as follows:
Individual \$25 – Families \$35 All forms are available on our web site.

If payment is made using this form, please mail to:

**Mary Forbes, NPF Treasurer
2186 Stanfield Road
Mississauga, ON L4Y 1R5**

3rd Vice-President



Liaison Officer- Housing Portfolio

Recently, the Housing Committee helped craft a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau. The intention was to congratulate the Prime Minister on his government's proposed improvements on Adequate and Affordable Housing. Besides those bouquets, additional areas NPF are pursuing on behalf of our membership and by extension, Canadian seniors, were embroidered into the letter. NPF's Housing Committee report contained five items with recommendations covering funding, social housing, affordability,

homelessness and First Nation Housing was forwarded to government. President Herb's report will address these as well as other activities he has participated in as NPF's Representative. NPF's Housing Committee has reviewed previous Convention resolutions and will be filing a report. Like all NPF Committees, recommendations as well as resolutions can be made to the Executive. As the Executive Liaison Officer for Housing, I wish to thank the Committee & Chair Barb Mikulec for their fine work.

I have had the opportunity to promote NPF by way of the Nova Scotia saga on Pharmacare, but first a little history. It was February 2016, when the NS Liberal government reacted to a massive senior community response and rejection of a new method to finance Pharmacare. It was based on one's income and worst case scenario, a 300% increase. Besides withdrawing, not cancelling, their proposal, a promise was made to hold consultations with seniors and their organizations. As their previous plan was not going forward & Pharmacare had to have direction.

Plan B was introduced. The government not only maintained and continued the same program of 2015-16 for 2016, they also moved the Annual Income rate up to \$35,000.00, ranging from no premium to a reduction in premium. Annual Premium for a senior 65+ is \$424.00. Everyone pays the co-pay on each prescription until it reaches \$382.00, from that point, one's prescriptions would be free for the remaining part of the year. But where's the consultation, you say. In February 2017, the government met with seniors' organization, the Group of IX, concerning the proposed questionnaire & format for the consultation process. The presentation was not acceptable so it's back to the drawing board for government. But wait, again it's that time of year and something has to be done about Pharmacare. Would you believe, the government has just announced that Pharmacare will remain the same for 2017-2018.

The discussion on NS Pharmacare mirrors those discussions on a National Pharmacare program but most Provinces, including Nova Scotia, has made an agreement with the government on this issue. The Atlantic Provinces have come together to determine if they can harmonize their programs & obtain a better price for prescription drugs. This is a step up from earlier discussions.

As this is Canada's 150 Anniversary and NPF Convention is being held in Halifax this Fall, come on down, have some fun and get the rest of the story.

Bernie LaRusic

The future depends on what we do in the present

Member at Large



Two Ways to Improve Your Life Part 2

This is the second of two articles to encourage seniors to actively maintain their health and wellness. The previous article dealt with the positive aspect of healthy eating; this one focuses on physical activities, the other half of a two-step approach to aging well.

If you are ready to start your own fitness program, consider if you are in it for the TREATS. You will have more

success if you create a program that encompasses these elements. It should be TIMELY, REGULAR, ENJOYABLE, APPROPRIATE, THOROUGH, SATISFYING.

Consider how you might define these six principles:

TIMELY - you should be focused, use your time wisely. Set a time frame and keep to it. It is easier when you know there is an end to the session.

REGULAR - you should exercise at the same time, either every day or for three days a week. You should aim for 30 minutes of increased heart rate in each session. Develop a schedule you can tolerate and maintain. Even 3 ten-minute sessions will work.

ENJOYABLE – you should enjoy your workout; if not, you will not continue. Start off easily with no strain. Seek a partner to support and challenge you. Incorporate some music.

APPROPRIATE - your activities should accommodate your age and ability. For facilities, use what you have. No cast-iron weights? Heft a can of soup.

THOROUGH – you should aim for a range of motion. Focus on various muscle groups, upper and lower body. Stretch! Slowly increase resistance.

SATISFYING – you should see progress and feel better – after a short time of concentrated effort. You may even lose weight.

Any program to increase strength or endurance comes with a caution to check with your health practitioner before you start.

Try to put more physical activity into your daily life. Walk as often as you can. Use the stairs where you are. Park farther away from the store entrance. Breathe deeply. Stretch out as you vacuum or dust. Any physical activity will increase your blood flow, and some of that blood flow will reach your brain.

The focus of these two articles on eating well and being physically active is to encourage seniors to take control of and be responsible for their lives as they age. If the concept that 70 is the new 50 holds true, prepare now for your future. What new recipes and TREATS have you lined up?

Doug Edgar

Together Seniors can make a Difference!

Do I really need this medication?

Deprescribing

By: Janet Currie, MSW

Most seniors are responsible people! We vote more and have the lowest level of debt. We take our cars in for tune-ups and we visit our doctors regularly. But what many of us don't do is to ask questions about the medicines we take.

This is something Herb John, the President of the National Pensioners Federation, realized about himself as he grew older. "I realized that I need to be more responsible for my own health decisions and to become informed about the medications I take. I began to see that, even though my doctors had opinions that were important, only I know what is best for me." In Herb's view, "All drugs have the potential to cause harm and I have the right to ask whether there are non-drug alternatives to handling a health problem."

Herb said that becoming more informed about drugs is something some seniors can find challenging. "Seniors can lose confidence as they age and as they develop health problems. They can feel that they may not have the analytical ability to make decisions about their health and may worry about making the wrong decisions". Seniors view their doctors as experts. They may fear that their doctors will be offended if they bring up concerns about their prescription drugs.

Many seniors take multiple drugs and it is easy to get confused about what drugs are being taken or why. There is useful information about medications on the internet but it is difficult to figure out what is trustworthy. (Hint: websites ending in .edu, .gov, .org are usually government, educational or non-profit organizations. Commercial organizations often end with .com).

What can seniors do to become more informed and engaged in decisions about their prescription drugs? According to Herb John, seniors can begin with small steps.

- ◆ First, make a list of all the medicines you are taking including ones you buy yourself and prescribed drugs. Include both the brand and generic name of each prescription drug (e.g. Ativan/lorazepam). Ask your pharmacist to print out your medication list.
- ◆ Bring someone with you to appointments with doctors and pharmacists to help express your concerns and remember the responses.
- ◆ Ask your doctor and pharmacist to review your medications on a regular basis – what drugs are you taking and why? Could any health symptoms be associated with some of the drugs (e.g. increased falls, sleepiness, insomnia or pain)? Could some drugs be reduced or eliminated?
- ◆ Remember that over-the-counter drugs can also cause adverse effects, especially if you take them regularly.
- ◆ Do your own research but be skeptical of what's on the web. The Beers list describes drugs that are inappropriate for seniors (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jgs.13702/pdf>) MedStopper provides information on appropriate drugs (<http://medstopper.com/>) as does <https://rxisk.org/>. Worst Pills/Best Pills (www.worstpills.org) provides an overview of the risks and benefits of many drugs, including drugs that should be avoided by seniors. You can subscribe to it for a small fee online.
- ◆ Don't stop taking a prescription drug without medical advice. Some drugs, such as those prescribed for sleep, pain and anxiety, can cause symptoms if not reduced slowly.

Canadian seniors receive more drugs than any age group. Our bodies are more sensitive to drugs and we often need lower doses. The more drugs we take, the more likely it is that we will experience side effects and/or drug interactions which can be serious.

Always remember that when considering a drug seniors have the right (and responsibility) to ask the following three questions:

- ◆ What will happen if I take this drug?
- ◆ What will happen if I don't?
- ◆ Is there another way of handling my health problem?

This article was written by Janet Currie, MSW

Thanks to Johanna Trimble and Herb John for their input into this article

Johanna and Janet are patient and medication safety advocates in Vancouver BC.

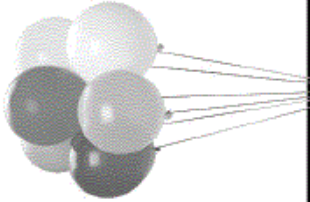
For more information on seniors and safe medication use and deprescribing see the website of ***The Canadian Deprescribing Network*** www.deprescribing.org

Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

Dartmouth is a community and former city in the Halifax Regional Municipality of Nova Scotia, Canada. Dartmouth is located on the eastern shore of Halifax Harbour. Dartmouth has been nicknamed the City of Lakes, after the large number of lakes located within its boundaries. On April 1, 1996, the provincial government amalgamated all the municipalities within the boundaries of Halifax County into a single-tier regional government named the Halifax Regional Municipality. Dartmouth and its neighbouring city of Halifax, the town of Bedford and the Municipality of the County of Halifax were dissolved. The former city of Dartmouth forms part of the urban core of the larger regional municipality and is officially designated as part of the "capital district" by the Halifax Regional Municipality. At the time that the City of Dartmouth was dissolved, the provincial government altered its status to a separate community to Halifax; however, its status as part of the metropolitan "Halifax" urban core existed prior to municipal reorganization in 1996.



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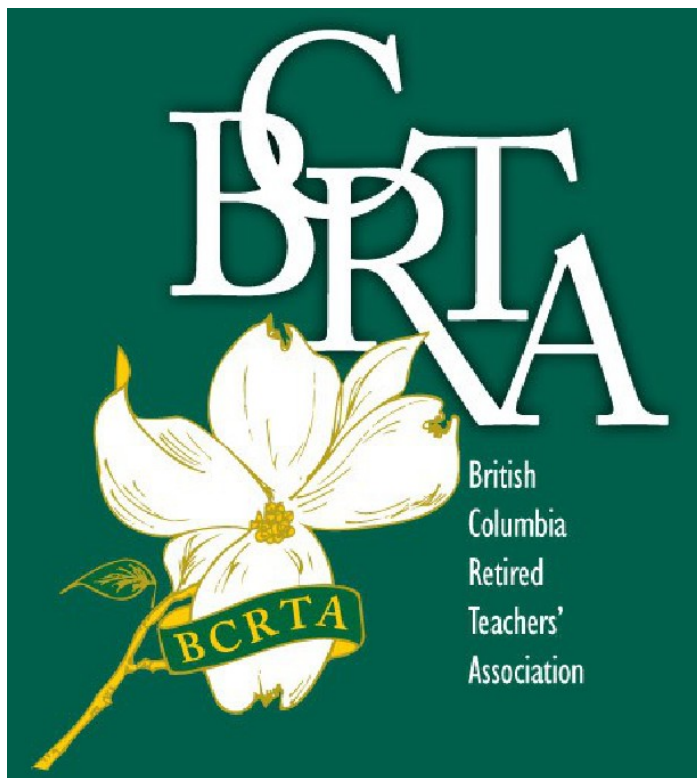


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OBJECTIVES

National Pensioners Federation is an organization devoted entirely to the welfare and best interests of Canada's elderly.

1. To promote and establish and foster Seniors' Centres (called Clubs or Groups) and Regional and Provincial Seniors' groups throughout Canada.
2. To provide education for persons in the retired and senior citizens age group and other individuals interested in aging, and the status and well being of seniors.
3. To reach out to seniors who are lonely, or isolated, or at risk.
4. To provide programs which promote healthy active lifestyles for seniors, thus sustaining mental and physical health.
5. To assist in developing the knowledge that seniors should learn during their aging process, through promotion of educational experiences.
6. To research the aging process, and any problems and benefits pertaining to the aged that might be of interest to the Federation and to use the knowledge gained from that research to educate seniors and any other party or parties who are or might become interested in these concerns.
7. To provide opportunities for seniors to utilize their volunteer and leadership skills for the benefits of all persons.
8. To consult with other private and public organizations which offer similar services in order to gather any educational information that will add to knowledge and be of use to seniors and the public.
9. To Lobby the Canadian Federal Government to discuss and enact legislation that will provide a safe, economically just lifestyle, which would include adequate housing, health care, pharmacare, transportation and social inclusion.



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