



## BCCPA: All Hands-on-Deck Message Guide

B.C. is at a seniors-care crossroads. By 2036, more than one in five British Columbians will be over the age of 65 and our care system isn't ready for them. Without immediate action, our seniors—who have contributed so much to our communities—will face inadequate care and support in their most vulnerable years.

Now more than ever, B.C. needs leadership and action for our growing seniors' population. The time to act is now. The future of our elders' well-being depends on it.

### Supporting Messages:

- **The Numbers:** "The Conference Board of Canada projects that B.C. will need over 30,000 new long-term care beds by 2035 for our aging population. This demographic shift underscores an urgent and pressing issue: the province's current long-term care infrastructure is insufficient to meet the impending demand."
- **Honouring Contributions:** "Our seniors have played a pivotal role in building and nurturing the communities we enjoy today. They have shaped our culture, economy, and society. It is our responsibility to honour their contributions by ensuring they have access to high-quality care and support as they age. This means investing in sustainable care solutions today to safeguard their well-being for tomorrow."
- **The Cost of Inaction:** "Without decisive action now, the cost of inadequate care will be immense—not only for our seniors, but for our entire province. Rising healthcare expenses, overburdened caregivers, and compromised quality of life for our seniors are just a few of the consequences. Proactive planning and investment are essential to prevent this crisis from becoming a reality."
- **All Hands-on-Deck:** "The current situation demands strong leadership. Challenges with providing seniors living, wellness and care are getting too big for the government alone—this requires all hands on deck. We need both the government and private sector to work together, setting aside differences, to meet the demand."
- **Building a Sustainable Future:** "We have the power to meet the challenge before if we act now. By investing in long-term care infrastructure and models of high-quality care, we can build a system that will withstand the demands of our aging population. Let's work together to build a future where every senior in B.C. can enjoy their later years with the care and respect they deserve."

- **The Support is There:** "A majority of British Columbians (62%) say the development of a comprehensive plan to address the aging population will impact the way they vote, including 73% of those aged 55 and over, and 64% of those in the Fraser Valley, Interior & Island."

### Action 1: Implement an 'aging in the right place' tax credit

- "Our seniors have contributed so much to our communities. We can honour this by enabling them to age with dignity and comfort. Political leaders can support this by making home-support services and independent living supports more affordable."
- "Many seniors wish to age at home or in their community, but often need additional support to do so. Formal home health services and independent living environments can be expensive."
- "An 'aging in the right place' tax credit would reduce the cost of preferred living arrangements for seniors. It would also reduce financial and caregiving pressures on family members."
- "The tax credit would help prevent premature transitions to assisted living or long-term care. Providing seniors with the resources they need to age where they wish also promotes well-being, which has the knock-on effect of alleviating pressure on the healthcare system by reducing, delaying or eliminating the need for more costly services."

### Action 2: Build 5,000 new long-term care beds by 2028

- "There is a need *today* for long-term care beds in B.C. The waitlist for publicly funded long-term care beds has more than doubled in five years, with 3,430 seniors waiting and a 40 percent increase in 2022 alone."
- "This is to say nothing of the challenges coming down the pike with an aging population. By 2036, more than 1 in 5 British Columbians will be over the age of 65."
- "We simply do not have the capacity to meet the impending demand for long-term care beds. Some estimates suggest that B.C. will need 30,000 new long-term care beds in the next ten years. When you consider that today's capacity is just over 50,000 beds, this number is staggering."
- "We owe it to our seniors—who have played a pivotal role in building and nurturing the communities we enjoy today—to prepare. To provide them with the high-quality care and support they deserve. We're calling on political

- parties to recognize this and commit to building 5,000 new long-term care beds by 2028.”

### **Action 3: Implement a continuous RFP model for long-term care providers**

- “The capacity needs over the next decade are significant. This is getting too big for the government alone–this requires all hands on deck. We need both the government and private sector to work together, setting aside differences, to meet the demand.”
- “The private sector is standing by to pitch in to meet the demand for new seniors’ care residences across the province. This is the time to be working together to solve this generational challenge.”
- “The government can enable this partnership by implementing a continuous RFP model, which would see proposals accepted on a rolling basis instead of at specific intervals or for specific communities. This would encourage more participation and ensure the most efficient use of taxpayer dollars.”

### **Action 4: Create a redevelopment fund for aging long-term care infrastructure**

- “Some of B.C.’s long-term care homes are over 30 years old and in need of modernization. These are no longer meeting the needs of residents nor staff.”
- “Some still have shared washrooms and bathing areas, crowded dining rooms, small hallways, and noisy nursing stations situated too close to residents’ rooms. Additionally, some residences lack modern HVAC systems, which are crucial for minimizing the impacts of heat domes and poor air quality from wildfire smoke.”
- “Our seniors deserve better. We need to do what we can to help seniors age with dignity and comfort in environments that support their needs. A redevelopment fund would allow operators to modernize these facilities and ensure they meet today’s operational and quality standards.”
- “Investing in the renovation of long-term care homes reflects a commitment to improving the quality of care and living conditions for B.C.’s aging population.”