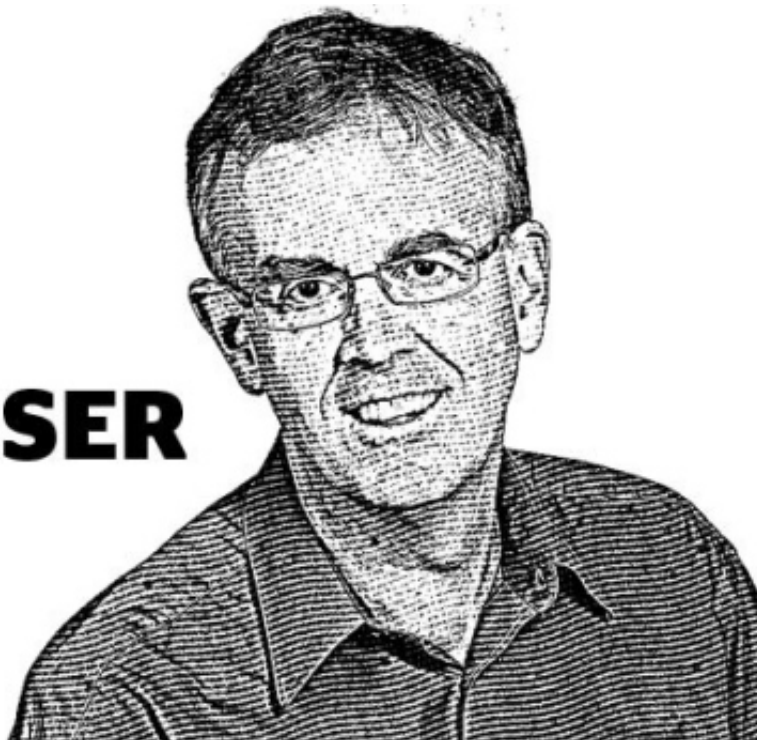


# OLDER AND WISER: New tools help seniors age well

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## Older **AND WISER** Tom Carney



Sometimes a column almost writes itself. I had that thought recently when my editor sent me a copy of a B.C. Ministry of Health press release highlighting some new tools to help British Columbians age well.

The late Bette Davis once said, "Aging isn't for sissies." That's a bit harsh but growing older is a part of life.

There are nearly three times as many people over the age of 65 living in B.C. today compared to 35 years ago and the older population is projected to double over the next 25 years.

So finding resources to help seniors stay healthy throughout their longer lives is important.

The latest version of the B.C. Seniors' Guide is now available in print, PDF and a new ebook format and contains information on a range of topics from transportation to housing, health services and healthy living.

The items that draw the most questions from my readers, Fair Pharmacare, Medical Services Plan (MSP) premium assistance, the Home Adaptations for Seniors Independence program (HASI), Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER), the bus pass program and the B.C. Seniors Supplement, which tops up the federal Old Age Security/Guaranteed Income Supplement, are all well covered.

The B.C. Seniors' Guide also includes a comprehensive directory with telephone numbers and website information for frequently used resources.

Chinese, Punjabi and French versions will be ready in the spring.

A new ebook version is available and a downloadable EPUB document has been developed for the growing proportion of older adults using e-readers. I'm assuming that an EPUB is an electronic document and not a new place to go and have a drink but I'd be happy either way.

I keep two other directories close at hand. The RCMP's Seniors Guidebook to Safety and Security is designed to help seniors and their caregivers recognize elder abuse, frauds and scams.

The aptly named Seniors Directory: A Resource for Seniors Living on the North Shore is produced by the North Shore News in partnership with the North Shore Community Resources Society ([nscr.bc.ca](http://nscr.bc.ca)). The 2016 edition of the seniors directory is available now.

Finally, I think every household should have a guide that helps seniors and their family members develop an estate plan. These are usually available at no charge from your financial institution.

Aging Well is a new website from the B.C. government's Healthy Families Initiative and is designed for British Columbians in their early 50s and 60s to plan for a healthy future. The site, which was developed with input from seniors, includes videos, articles and quizzes about preparing for the years ahead.

Topics covered include, wellness, finance, transportation, housing and social connections, although my preference would have been to cover these topics in a little more depth.

The latest edition of the B.C. Seniors' Guide is available for free by calling 1-877-952-3181, toll free throughout British Columbia.

To access a copy online visit [gov.bc.ca/seniorsguide](http://gov.bc.ca/seniorsguide).

You can find the Aging Well website at [healthyfamiliesbc.ca](http://healthyfamiliesbc.ca).

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