

**October 1st is International Day of the Older Persons and National Seniors Day.**

Every year, on October 1<sup>st</sup>, we recognize International Day of the Older Persons, as well as National Seniors Day. It is a time to recognize seniors all over the World, for the contributions they have made, and continue to make. It is a time to show appreciation and in today's world, it is especially important that we do so.

This year has brought many unforeseen challenges to seniors in Newfoundland and Labrador. A snowstorm led to a State of Emergency and forced people inside their homes for many days, as fears rose around obtaining practical items such as groceries and medications, and the daunting task of snow removal. The calm after the storm showed many incidents where communities banded together to help out their neighbours; providing support, meals and snow removal. Seniors were both the recipients of this kindness, as well as the driving force behind many of these initiatives.

Then, on the heels of a State of Emergency came COVID-19, a global pandemic that once again forced everyone into their homes. Isolation, loneliness, fear of the virus and the unknown, became the reality for many people throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, but one of the hardest hit groups were seniors. As people in the Province slowly learn to live with this new "normal", many seniors continue to be impacted. Many social and recreational activities remain cancelled, contact with loved ones is restricted, or at least very different than before, and fear of the virus remains real.

These events act as a reminder of the power of connection and kindness. Today is a great day to reach out either physically or virtually, make a connection, and show that you care.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Brake, PhD  
Seniors' Advocate