



August 04,2020

## **Federal Government Department of Finance 2021 budget consultation submission**

I am writing on behalf of the 411 Seniors Centre in Vancouver B.C. We are a 44-year-old organization in Vancouver BC dedicated to the well-being of those aged 55 and older. We are a community hub where people meet, socialize, and organize around issues important to seniors. Our centre is vibrant and active with a full set of advocacy, education and social programs. Even during COVID19, we continued to address the needs of seniors.

The 411 Seniors Centre also runs a robust information and referral program to assist seniors.

We know that most of our members spend the income supports they receive in their communities. This supports businesses in their neighbourhoods and helps to create economic stability.

We are pleased to participate in the Federal Government Department of Finance consultation process for the 2021 budget.

Our recommendations for the upcoming Federal Budget are:

1. There needs to be core funding for Seniors Centres and for community based nonprofit seniors serving organizations. On a daily basis, even prior to COVID-19, our centre provided an important place for seniors to meet, learn, and have fun. This combats the scourge of senior social isolation and enhances the social determinants of health for seniors. Both before and during COVID 19, our Seniors Centre was a place for seniors to get assistance with a myriad of concerns ranging from applying to for their federal income benefits, to dealing with housing issues and to accessing other important programs and services. The 411 Seniors Centre runs a free income tax clinic and in 2019 we assisted over 2,000 seniors to file their income tax. We are currently running an income tax clinic with COVID 19 protocols in place. We do not receive federal financial assistance for this.
2. We do not want to see any rollbacks to current benefits provided to seniors. The COVID-19 crisis has illuminated how important the Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement to seniors. Any rollback or diminishing of these benefits would harm seniors.



3. We want the Federal Government to live up to their repeated promises to implement a National Pharmacare program.
4. We would like to see an increase in the amount of GIS low income seniors receive.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours truly,

Marion Pollack  
President, 411 Seniors Services Society