

# Human Rights and Ageing:

*Advocating for an  
Equitable Future*

## PROGRAM

📅 October 3 - 5, 2025  
📍 Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel  
✉ [conference@coscobc.org](mailto:conference@coscobc.org)

[Coscobc.org/conference/](https://Coscobc.org/conference/)



Learn more:



Funded in part by the  
Government of Canada's  
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United Way  
British Columbia



Community Savings  
the unions' credit union



# DAY 1: Saturday, October 4, 2025

## REGISTRATION OPENS:

Friday, October 3, 2025 at 6:00pm with Wine and Cheese Reception  
Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel - 7511 Westminster Highway, Richmond BC

<p><b>7:30am</b> REGISTRATION AND CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST</p>	<p><b>AFTERNOON THEME:</b> Health Care for Older Adults</p>
<p><b>WELCOME AND GREETINGS:</b></p> <p><b>8:30am</b> <b>Leslie Gaudette</b> - President, Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC (COSCO BC)  <b>Alec Dan</b> - Musqueam First Nation - <i>Welcome</i>  <b>Malcolm Brodie</b> - Mayor, City of Richmond - <i>Letter of greetings</i>  <b>Trish McAuliffe</b> - President, National Pensioners Federation</p> <p><b>8:50am</b> <b>Terri Van Steinburg</b> - Conference Facilitator:  <i>Overview of conference, and what we hope to achieve</i></p>	<p><b>1:30pm</b> Entertainment: Re: Sisters</p> <p><b>1:45pm</b> <b>KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Stephanie McLean</b>  Secretary of State for Seniors</p> <p><b>2:15pm</b> <b>KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Kasari Govender</b>  BC Human Rights Commissioner</p> <p><b>2:45pm</b> <b>PANEL DISCUSSION: Continuum of Seniors Health Care in Community</b>  Moderator: Louise Holland  <b>Paul Adams, BC Rural Health Network</b> - Team-based primary care and Community Health Centres  <b>Jeff Moss, Jewish Seniors Alliance of BC</b> - Home Support Advocacy Campaign  <b>Lisa Dawson, Independent Long Term Care Councils Association of BC</b> - Grass-roots advocacy in support of resident and family councils in long-term care  <b>Penny MacCourt, Action for Reform of Residential Care</b> - Quality of Life for Seniors in LTC</p> <p><b>3:45pm</b> COFFEE BREAK</p> <p><b>4:00pm</b> Workshops:</p> <p>5. <i>Team-based Primary Care and Community Health Centres</i> - Paul Adams</p> <p>6. <i>Home Support Advocacy Campaign</i> - Jeff Moss</p> <p>7. <i>Grass-roots advocacy in support of resident and family councils in long-term care</i> - Lisa Dawson</p> <p>8. <i>Quality of life for seniors in LTC</i> - Penny MacCourt</p> <p><b>5:00pm</b> RECESS</p>
<p><b>MORNING THEME:</b> Ageism and Human Rights</p> <p><b>9:00am</b> <b>KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Susie Chant,</b>  Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors Services and Long-Term Care</p> <p><b>9:30am</b> <b>KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Margaret Gillis,</b>  President, International Longevity Centre (ILC) Canada and co-founder of the Canadian Coalition Against Ageism</p> <p><b>10:00am</b> <b>PANEL DISCUSSION: Ageism and Human Rights</b>  Moderator: Margo Greenwood - Senator for British Columbia  <b>Olive Bryanton</b> - Advocate for rights of older people and Social Researcher, U of PEI.  <b>Jacky Leung</b> - Program Director, S.U.C.C.E.S.S.  <b>Margaret Young</b> - Immediate Past Chair, Global Alliance on the Rights of Older Persons (GAROP) &amp; Founder &amp; Age Knowledge  <b>Zena Simces</b> - Board member, International Longevity Centre, Canada.</p> <p><b>11:00am</b> COFFEE BREAK</p> <p><b>11:30am</b> Workshops:</p> <p>1. <i>UN Convention and Rights of Older Persons</i> - Margaret Gillis and Margaret Young</p> <p>2. <i>Understanding Ageism: An Age-Friendly Lens</i> - Olive Bryanton and Zena Simces</p> <p>3. <i>Cultural Perspectives on Ageism and Human Rights</i> - Jacky Leung</p> <p>4. <i>Indigenous Perspectives on Ageism and Human Rights</i> - Margo Greenwood</p> <p><b>12:30pm</b> LUNCH</p>	<p><b>EVENING EVENTS:</b></p> <p><b>5:30pm</b> NO HOST BAR</p> <p><b>6:30pm</b> <b>75th Anniversary Gala Dinner with MC: Andy Ross</b>  - Rose Gellert String Quartet  - Special 75th Anniversary Video  - Charles Demers</p>

## ABOUT COSCO:

Established in 1950, the Council of Senior Citizens' Organization (COSCO BC) is an umbrella organization made up of over 60 seniors' organizations and individual associate members. Registered under the Societies Act since 1981, COSCO BC has grown and now represents more than 80,000 seniors across British Columbia.

COSCO BC is run by volunteers, with activities coordinated through an elected Board of Directors. As the voice of BC seniors, our mandate is to promote the well-being of seniors and their families, advocating for policies that allow seniors to remain active, independent, and fully engaged in the life of our province. The organization is non-partisan, but politically active, advocating for seniors' needs no matter who is in power.

## DAY 2: Sunday, October 5, 2025

<p><b>7:30am</b> <i>CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST</i></p> <p><b>8:30am</b> Opening remarks and Introductions: Terri Van Steinburg - <i>Overview of Day 2</i></p> <p><b>MORNING THEME:</b> Inequality, Social Connections and Age-Friendly Communities</p> <p><b>8:45am</b> <b>KEYNOTE SPEAKER:</b> Dan Levitt, BC Seniors Advocate</p> <p><b>9:15am</b> <b>PANEL DISCUSSION: Understanding Inequality for Seniors in BC</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Alison Silgado - Seniors Services Society of BC Iglika Ivanova - BC Society for Policy Solutions Laura Kadowaki - United Way of BC Carole Christopher - Society Promoting Environmental Conservation Kai Okazaki - Social Planner, City of Burnaby Grand Chief Stewart Phillip - First Nations Perspective</p> <p><b>10:15am</b> <b>PANEL DISCUSSION: Seniors' Centres: At the Nexus of Aging and Community</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Anthony Kupferschmidt Mei Fang - SFU Department of Gerontology, Seniors Centres in Age-Friendly Cities Andrew Wister - SFU Department of Gerontology, Senior Centres and Social Isolation Janet Marren - Prince George Council of Seniors, Northern and Rural seniors centres/programs Connie Newman - Manitoba Association of Seniors Centres, Social Prescribing and Deprescribing</p> <p><b>11:15am</b> <i>COFFEE BREAK</i></p> <p><b>11:30am</b> <b>Workshops:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. <i>Research projects and Seniors Centres</i> - Andrew Wister and Mei Lin Fang</li> <li>10. <i>COSCO Health And Wellness Institute: Workshop Overview</i> - Barb Mikulec</li> <li>11. <i>Successes and Challenges for Northern and Rural Seniors Centres</i> - Janet Marren and Lori Dennill</li> <li>12. <i>Connecting seniors to community programs</i> - Connie Newman</li> </ol> <p><b>12:30pm</b> <i>LUNCH</i></p>	<p><b>AFTERNOON THEME:</b> Transportation</p> <p><b>1:30pm</b> Entertainment: MOSAIC Seniors Choir and Musical Theatre Troupe</p> <p><b>1:45pm</b> <b>KEYNOTE SPEAKER:</b> Eric Doherty, Human Rights, Ageing and Transportation</p> <p><b>2:15pm</b> <b>PANEL DISCUSSION: Transportation</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Tim Larsen Chris Fudge - BC Transit Sarah Ross - Translink Paul Adams - Executive Director, BC Rural Health Network Farinaz Rikhtehgaran - B.E.S.T. Better Environmentally Sound Transportation</p> <p><b>3:15pm</b> Reflections on the role of COSCO BC the Voice of BC Seniors since 1950 - Trish McAuliffe, President, National Pensioners' Federation <i>Note: coffee available in lobby from 3:00 pm (no break)</i></p> <p><b>3:30pm</b> <b>DISCUSSION: Advocating for an Equitable Future; Strategies for Healthy Ageing</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Terri Van Steinburg <i>Time for participants to contribute to the discussion, and offer suggestions for equitable and healthy ageing, based on the last two days presentations and discussions.</i></p> <p><b>4:00pm</b> Leslie Gaudette and Terri Van Steinburg Thanks to our supporters and sponsors of the conference</p> <p><b>4:10pm</b> Mei Fang - Rapporteur Summary report of what we have achieved at this conference</p> <p><b>4:25pm</b> Wrap up with next steps for conference follow up</p> <p><b>4:30pm</b> <i>ADJOURNMENT</i></p>
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The COSCO Seniors' Health and Wellness Institute provides free workshops on 48 topics on healthy living, legal and financial, personal planning and safety.

Visit [www.seniorshelpingseniors.ca](http://www.seniorshelpingseniors.ca) for more info.

COSCO is a proud affiliate member of the over one million member National Pensioners' Federation, which advocates for seniors at the national level.

[www.nationalpensionersfederation.ca](http://www.nationalpensionersfederation.ca)

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## CONFERENCE REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION

This milestone event offers a important opportunity to address the pressing challenges facing our community of older adults. Together, we'll honour 75 years of shared accomplishments and shape a bold, forward-looking vision for COSCO BC; one that meets the needs of today and anticipates the possibilities of tomorrow.

By participating in this two-day conference, you will help form public policies that recognize the vital importance of human rights in promoting healthy ageing for all Canadians.

### **Insightful ideas. Evidence-based facts. Time to reflect. Cutting-edge research on issues that impact us all.**

You'll experience all this and more from our outstanding lineup of speakers and presenters.

Just as vital, a series of interactive workshops will invite participants to share their experiences and wisdom.

We encourage you to join us to learn, contribute, and help shape an equitable future for all through inclusive, sustainable, and age-friendly communities.

### **Who should participate?**

A broad range of individuals and organizations committed to the well-being of older adults, including:

- **Seniors and seniors' advocates**
- **Municipal leaders and planners**, including councillors, social planning staff, parks and recreation professionals, and health authority representatives
- **Elected officials**, including MLAs, Members of Parliament, and First Nations leaders
- **Representatives from federal and provincial departments focused on seniors' issues**
- **Non-governmental organizations**, including social planning councils, senior and community centre staff, agencies supporting older adults, unions, and advocacy groups

## **A SPECIAL REQUEST**

- We encourage **municipal councils** to support the participation of representatives from seniors' advisory and age-friendly committees.
- We invite **provincial ministries** to sponsor delegates from seniors' coordinating bodies, and we urge unions to sponsor members who work directly with or advocate for older adults.

## **Register early!**

Join Us for This Timely and Important National Conference.

Mark your calendar for **Saturday, October 4, and Sunday, October 5, 2025**, at the **Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel**, located at **7551 Westminster Highway, Richmond, BC, V6X 1A3**.

### **Registration Fee:**

- *General Admission: \$300*
- *Seniors and Students: \$250 (discounted rate)*
- *Virtual (plenary sessions only) \$75.00*

### **Your in person registration includes:**

- *All conference materials*
- *A welcome reception on Friday, October 3*
- *Two lunches*
- *Our 75th Anniversary Conference Gala Dinner*
- *Four coffee breaks throughout the event*

The recommendations and actions emerging from the conference will be compiled into a **comprehensive report**, shared with all participants, and used to inform and guide the future work of COSCO.

## **REGISTRATION DEADLINE:**

Please submit your registration by  
**September 12, 2025.**

### **For more information, contact:**

- **Terri Van Steinburg** at [conference@coscobc.org](mailto:conference@coscobc.org)
- **Leslie Gaudette** at [pres@coscobc.org](mailto:pres@coscobc.org)
- **Or visit our website:** [www.coscobc.org/conference/](http://www.coscobc.org/conference/)

*This conference venue has a **maximum capacity of 400 participants**.*

*As past COSCO conferences have reached full capacity, we strongly **encourage you to register early** to secure your spot.*

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**Limited financial assistance** may be available for seniors requiring support with attendance expenses.

To request an application form, please contact

**Terri Van Steinburg** at [conference@coscobc.org](mailto:conference@coscobc.org)