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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health

### **Seniors will benefit from age-friendly grants**

VICTORIA – Seniors in 25 communities throughout B.C. will benefit from grants for policies and projects that will support leading active and independent lives in their communities.

“Our government is committed to creating opportunities for more older adults in B.C. to be actively engaged within their communities and stay connected in the ways that matter to them and keep them healthy,” said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. “Every year, I look forward to seeing the plans and projects from these grants come to fruition because they help more communities across the province become more age-friendly. I thank the BC Healthy Communities Society for its work on promoting the Age-friendly Communities program and helping people develop their ideas that will benefit seniors in their local neighbourhoods.”

Through the Age-friendly Communities (AFC) program, a total of \$500,000 in age-friendly grants are being awarded across 25 communities in B.C. this year. Six Indigenous communities are among the grant recipients.

“Age-friendly grants help bring people together in our communities, building inclusion, participation and connection for seniors,” said Harwinder Sandhu, Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors' Services and Long-Term Care. “These grants enable plans and projects that support older adults to age in place and live active, socially engaged and independent lives.”

The AFC program has two grant streams to help local and Indigenous governments achieve the vision of building age-friendly communities:

- Stream 1 focuses on completing age-friendly assessments and action plans; and
- Stream 2 focuses on implementing age-friendly projects identified in the community’s action plan for programs, services or initiatives.

Of the 25 grants awarded this year, 16 grants were awarded in the planning stream, and nine grants were awarded toward the project stream.

“BC Healthy Communities Society is thrilled to be working in co-ordination with this year’s recipients of the age-friendly grants,” said Jodi Mucha, executive director, BC Healthy Communities Society. “The plans and projects supported by these grants are led by local and Indigenous governments, and will bring positive impacts for seniors, and communities as a whole as they consider ways aging with connection and dignity.”

The AFC program is a partnership between the provincial government and BC Healthy Communities Society (BCHC), which is a provincewide not-for-profit organization that facilitates the ongoing development of healthy, thriving and resilient communities.

“Pouce Coupe is excited to have received a Stream 1, Age-friendly Communities planning grant to work toward a more age-friendly community and help seniors in our community remain in their home,” said Sandy Stokes, chief administrative officer, Village of Pouce Coupe.

The B.C. government is actively preparing for an aging population to ensure older adults can age actively in place in their home communities. The Province continues to advance age-friendly plans throughout BC, through the Age-Friendly BC Strategy, in collaboration with key stakeholders, to engage, strengthen and support communities.

**Quick Facts:**

- By 2031, approximately one-quarter of the province's population will be 65 or older.
- In 2023, 25 communities received age-friendly grants across both streams.
- Of the successful communities, 13 were rural and remote, six were new to receiving age-friendly funding and six were Indigenous communities.

**Learn More:**

For a backgrounder listing 2023 AFC Successful Grant Recipients, visit:

[https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/2023AgeFriendlyGrantRecipients\\_Nov15.pdf](https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/2023AgeFriendlyGrantRecipients_Nov15.pdf)

For more information about the Age-friendly Communities Program, visit:

[www.bchealthycommunities.ca/programs/age-friendly-communities](http://www.bchealthycommunities.ca/programs/age-friendly-communities)

For more information about BC Healthy Communities, visit:

<http://bchealthycommunities.ca/>

To learn more about the B.C. Seniors' Guide, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/seniors/about-seniorsbc/seniors-related-initiatives/bc-seniors-guide>

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