

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The National Institute on Ageing (NIA) Looks Forward to Working with this Federal Government's First Minister of Seniors

July 18, 2018, TORONTO – On the heels of the Ontario election and ahead of next year's federal election, the governing Liberals in Ottawa have announced today a cabinet shuffle. The move includes the addition of a Minister focused on issues that affect older Canadians, signaling the importance these issues will have in the upcoming election, and recognizing that older Canadians are the fastest growing and most active voting block in Canada. The Honourable Filomena Tassi, an Ontario MP, has been appointed to serve this new role.

The newly created Minister of Seniors would be a significant first step towards implementing a National Seniors Strategy for the current government. In 2017, older Canadians started to outnumber younger Canadians for the first time in our history. Furthermore, in the coming two decades, Canada's older population is expected to double. The way we approach Canada's coming of age will require greater coordination and mobilization of efforts across government departments, as well as between the private and public sectors.

Canada's ageing population needs a champion in the federal government who will address the many and varied needs of seniors and people approaching retirement. The new Minister of Seniors is a significant first step towards that goal.

"We've been very pleased with the action the federal government has already taken on our policy recommendations, especially in the area of support for caregivers," said Dr. Samir Sinha, co-author of the National Seniors Strategy and Director of Geriatrics at Sinai Health System and the University Health Network. "With the creation of the new Minister of Seniors, we're looking forward to seeing the issues that affect older Canadians become even more of a focus for this government."

In 2014, [the National Institute on Ageing \(NIA\)](#) on behalf of the Alliance for a National Seniors Strategy released its [National Seniors Strategy](#) to contribute to the national policy conversation around supporting Canada's rapidly ageing population. The strategy recommended many policies to support older Canadians, including around health care services, economic and pension security, supporting the development of age-friendly communities, housing and transportation, and support for caregivers. Many of these recommendations have drawn the current federal government's attention and informed its policies.

“After a period of three years without a Minister of Seniors, the NIA is encouraged by Prime Minister Trudeau’s appointment of Minister Filomena Tassi to that role. Seniors represent a key voter base, but it’s our expectation that today’s news means that the federal government is serious about a leading a concerted and comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of older Canadians, from issues in health care to retirement income security,” said Michael Nicin, Executive Director of the NIA

In the coming years, the population of older Canadians is expected to double. The way we approach Canada’s coming of age will require coordination and mobilization across government departments, as well as between the private and public sectors. A ministry responsible for coordinating this demographic shift can play an invaluable role in the lives of older Canadians and the fortunes of Canadian society. The NIA looks forward to working with the Honourable Minister Tassi to move the ageing agenda forward.

Looking towards the 2019 federal election, the NIA applauds the appointment of a federal Minister of Seniors as a vehicle to further move Canada’s ageing agenda forward. As next year’s election approaches, the NIA in partnership with the Alliance for a National Seniors Strategy looks forward to contributing to the national discussion around Canada’s ageing population with the release of an updated evidence-informed National Seniors Strategy to further inform the federal government’s work, priorities and objectives under the Honourable Minister Tassi and to better inform the overall political discourse.

About the National Institute on Ageing (NIA)

The National Institute on Ageing (NIA) is a new policy and research centre based at Ryerson University in Toronto. The NIA is dedicated to enhancing successful ageing across the life course. It is unique in its mandate to consider ageing issues from a broad range of important perspectives, including those of financial, physical, psychological, and social wellness. The NIA is also focused on leading cross-disciplinary research to better understand the issues that can lead to the development of evidence-informed actionable insights that can meaningfully contribute towards shaping the innovative policies, practices and products that will be needed to address the multiple challenges and opportunities presented by Canada’s coming of age. The NIA is committed to providing national leadership and promoting a collaborative approach that also seeks to continually establish municipal, provincial, federal and global partnerships with other academic centres, and other ageing-related organizations.

To learn more about the NIA visit our website at <http://www.ryerson.ca/nia> and follow us on Twitter @RyersonNIA



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