



STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING
Mr Johnathan Davis MLA (Chair), Mr James Milligan MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr Michael Pettersson MLA

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2020-2021
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Nicole Lawder MLA: To ask the Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services

Ref: Seniors, CSD Annual Report, Seniors Unemployment

In relation to:

- 1) Seniors' unemployment and older Canberrans being turned away from jobs is one of the biggest issues facing this age group. What is the ACT Government doing to get seniors back into the workforce?
- 2) How is the ACT Government promoting a more inclusive society for older Canberrans, especially as we enter a post-pandemic economy?
- 3) What is the ACT Government doing to tackle the issue of ageism in Canberra?

MS DAVIDSON: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

- (1) The ACT Government is committed to removing barriers to work and work training for older Canberrans.

Recognising the value of older workers, the Age-Friendly City Plan 2020-24 (the Plan) includes the following actions:

- Pilot a targeted campaign of local businesses to provide employment opportunities for older Canberrans; and
- Promote the purpose and operation of the whole of government flexible work policy, including employment opportunities across whole of government for older Canberrans.

Additionally, the Plan also promotes the value of older volunteers through the following action:

- Improve the volunteer administration system at Transport Canberra and City Services to better support volunteers, including older volunteers.

The last status report on the Plan is available on the Community Services Directorate website: https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/1758221/Age-Friendly-City-Plan-Action-Status-Report-May-Dec-2020.pdf .

Additionally, the ACT Government provides the following to support older workers:

- The Canberra Institute of Technology provides a range of supports and services, including course and career information and advice, financial support opportunities for training and skills recognition for mature workers; and
- The ACT Government delivers the Women Return to Work Program. As part of this, a specific tailored program of workshops and advice for older women is currently being delivered to support mature aged women aged 50 and over into the workforce.

(2) The ACT Government's Age-Friendly City Plan (2020-2024) is a whole-of-government framework to enhance the connectedness, wellbeing and safety of older Canberrans. The Plan includes 33 actions in following four focus areas:

1. Involved, connected and valued;
2. Safe, Secure and free from abuse;
3. Information, services and supports which embrace diversity; and,
4. A city for all ages.

The second progress report on the Plan is due to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly and made publicly available in May 2022.

The ACT Government provides funding to support the following social inclusion initiatives for older Canberrans:

- COTA ACT's Silver is Gold festival, a year-long festival of events to celebrate ageing in a positive and poignant way;
- The Senior's Card, an initiative to provide access to savings on a range of goods and services. The scheme recognises the valuable contribution of older people in their local community and is delivered by COTA ACT; and,
- The annual Seniors Grants Program, to support local projects which enhance the social wellbeing, participation and inclusion of older people in their communities.

The ACT Government has supported the Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services to engage seniors organisations in multiple and ongoing information sessions on COVID-19 to inform the ACT Government's ongoing COVID-19 response.

(3) In addition to the initiatives listed above in response to question 2, the Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing (MACA) provides advice to the ACT Government, through the Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services, on policies and initiatives to support better outcomes for older Canberrans, including on the issue of ageism. The MACA is a platform to ensure the diverse voices and views of older Canberrans inform ACT Government policy, programs and services.

The Human Rights Commission is also available to support any older person who has experienced discrimination on the basis of age.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing

Signature: 

Date: 10 MAR 2022

By the Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services, Emma Davidson MLA