

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 12, 2020

BREAKING: Sage Senior's Association to alter services for seniors amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sage Seniors Association is a multi-service senior-serving organization providing vital programs and services to seniors in the greater Edmonton area. After careful consideration, Sage has decided to significantly alter its programming and services in response to the increasing threat of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While the risk remains relatively low in Edmonton, seniors are at greater risk of being impacted by the virus, and extra care is advisable at this time. The level of risk to seniors is high enough that the organization is taking steps to help keep the people they serve healthy and safe.

Most significantly, Sage has decided to limit access to its building until further notice. Effective Monday, March 16, only people with appointments will have access to the building. All other programming is being postponed or considered for alternate forms of delivery. The programs affected by the limit to access include:

- Income Tax Clinic
- Drop-In Counselling
- Walk-in appointments for the Housing and Assessment program
- English as Another Language classes
- All recreation and social programming
- Day trips and outings
- Volunteer programming and events

Staff and volunteers will be working throughout the day March 12 and 13 to contact the volunteers, program participants, members, and clients who will be directly impacted by this decision. A Pandemic Planning Committee has been established and is meeting regularly to ensure a considered, proactive, and timely response to the pandemic as it continues to evolve.

“We recognize the need for a measured approach to our response to this risk that is informed by public health officials,” says Karen McDonald, Executive Director of Sage Seniors Association. “We also know that community-based seniors serving organizations can take a lead in ensuring that the most vulnerable people in our community are actively taking steps to protect themselves from this threat. Social distancing is a critical factor in limiting the speed at which this pandemic impacts our province and our health care system. We are actively redirecting staff resources to appropriately supporting seniors during this challenging time.”

Even though access to the building will be limited, Health Services and Social Work Services will remain available by appointment. The Seniors Safe House will also continue to operate as normal.

Sage is working with staff, partners, stakeholders, and other community-based organizations to find innovative ways of delivering the programs and services seniors want and need to stay well in their communities during the pandemic. Changes to programs and services will be posted daily at www.mysage.ca.

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