

# Impacts of the Aging Canadian Population on Housing and Communities

Josée Dion, Urban Planner  
Senior Advisor,  
Research and Information Transfer  
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)

Partners in Aging Forum  
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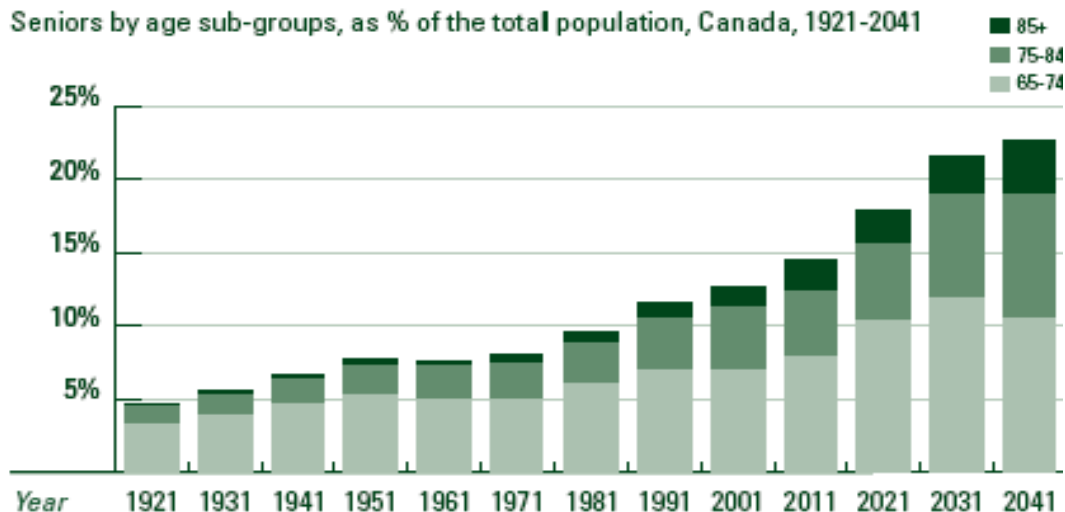
# Main objectives



- Identify the changes in the pattern of housing needs and preferences for requirements.
- Review the main environmental adaptations or modifications to maximize people's ability to participate in society.

# Canada's demographics

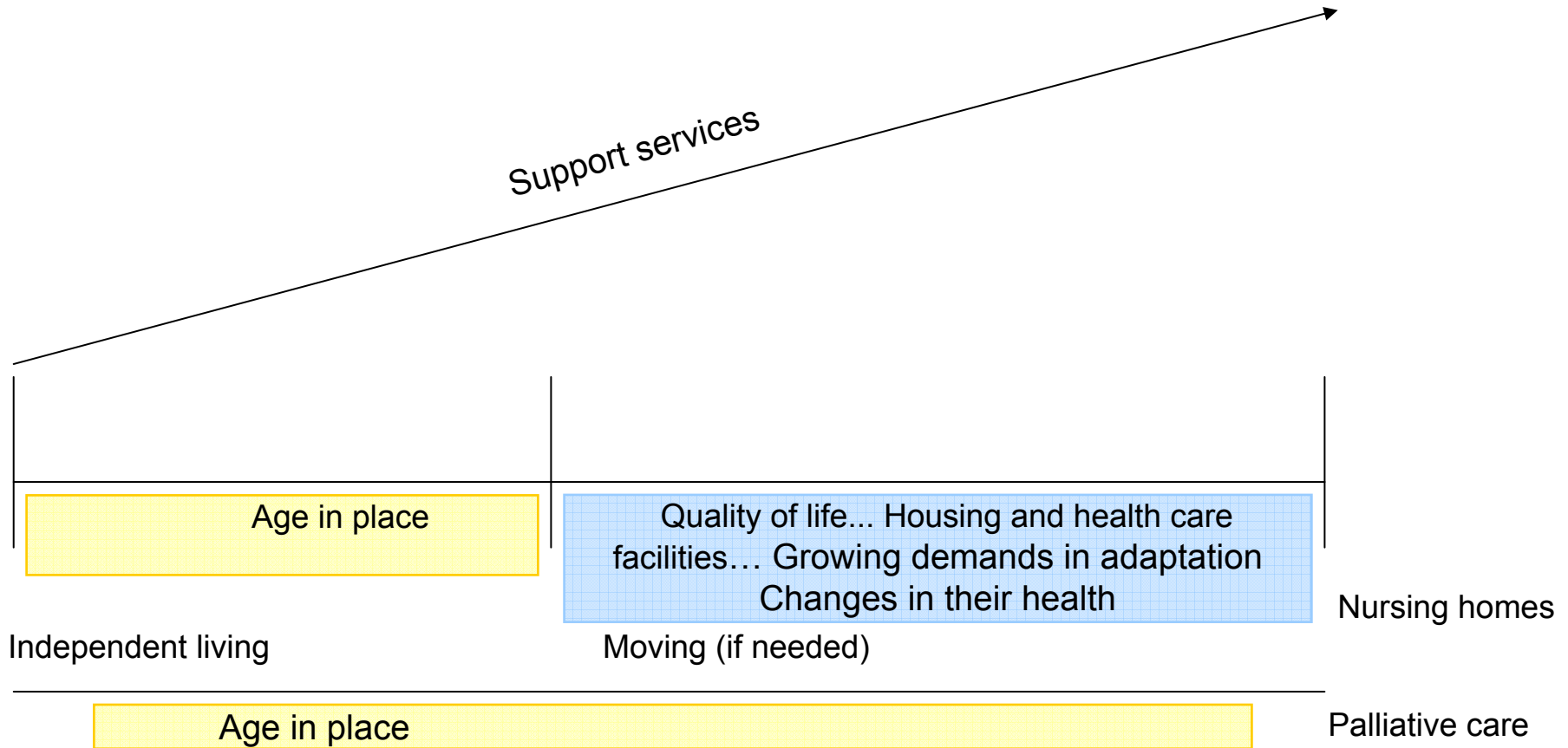
**Aging population will see people aged 65+ more than double from 4.1 to 8.7 million in the next 25 years**



Source: "Canada's Aging Population" by Health Canada and the Interdepartmental Committee on Aging and Seniors Issues, 2002

- Society reshaped by demographic and socio-economic trends
- Growing number of persons living alone
- Near-retirees continue working beyond retirement age
- Aging population: change the pattern of housing needs, nature of services, transportation requirements
- Increasing participation by women in the workforce

# Continuum of housing and services



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# Key points



- Communities need to give more thought to the implications of an aging society on housing and on the way our communities perform.
- Profound impacts on the form and function of communities, particularly suburbia.
- Full continuum of housing and service choices for seniors is required. Most prefer to age in place (affordable housing).
- Seniors themselves must be fully engaged in this transformational process

# Housing types

- Convertible housing or FlexHousing™
- Creation of mixed and affordable housing / visitability
- Secondary suites / accessory suites / garage suites
- Duplex, triplex, ground-oriented row housing, apartments and small detached one-storey homes



# Distinct housing needs



- Home adaptations
- Increasing need for in-home help
- Support for caregivers



# “Two-generational” house

- Significant supply of rental housing in many cities, towns and rural communities
- Private, self-contained unit within an existing dwelling





# “Two-generational” house

- Main advantages
  - Optimizing housing stock and infrastructures
  - Producing affordable housing
- Taxes saved can go towards retrofit, repair or renovation, where appropriate
- This can reduce operating costs and arrest the deterioration of housing
  - Reducing social isolation
  - Providing accessible support services and social and recreational activities

# Cognitive capacity and home adaptation

*Research: “Adapting your Home to Living with Dementia”*



1. Bridge the gap between research and practice.
2. Empower families to access and use formal supports according to their needs.
3. Support and encourage individuals and families to strengthen their skills and strategies to cope with dementia.



# Conclusions



- **Changes and supports are required if existing housing stock is to meet the needs.**
- *Appropriate adaptations* to facilitate mobility, improve safety and security, and to permit the performance of everyday tasks without strain or injury.
- *Improved access to needed services*, for example, through tailored transportation options and mechanisms, routing and scheduling; in-home help schemes; improved location of services.
- *Proper housing management practices*—both community and voluntary mechanisms to help seniors in home maintenance, advise them on ways to maximize the use of the equity in their home, and mechanisms such as of property taxes.



# Conclusions



## **New housing and infrastructure needs must be addressed.**

New housing and infrastructure needs include:

- A wider range of housing choices—with innovation facilitated

by flexibility in planning regulations and zoning.

- Convenient support services within or near existing housing.

- Accessible community facilities and amenities for older people.

- Opportunities for “active living” and voluntary involvement.

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