

What can Canada learn from Australia about supporting its ageing population?

Latest NIA report on Ageing in the Right Place takes stock of Australia's long-term care landscape

TORONTO, April 13, 2023 — Canada isn't the only country grappling with the changes presented by an ageing population. Two years ago, in response to a Royal Commission inquiry looking into the challenges this posed for long-term care (LTC), Australia began overhauling its LTC and home care systems for older adults. As these reforms start to take effect, do they hold any lessons for Canada?

To answer this question, the National Institute on Ageing (NIA) has published a new report called [Caring for an Ageing Australia](#) that explores the structural, logistical and financial aspects of Australia's LTC and home care systems, and how they relate to the country's broader health care and social security supports. This is the first in a series of reports looking at how other countries are trying to meet the needs of their ageing populations, as part of the NIA's [Ageing in the Right Place](#) research series.

“By exploring how other economically advanced countries are supporting their ageing populations, Canada can potentially learn from other approaches and identify opportunities to better support older Canadians,” says **Dr. Samir Sinha**, Director of Health Policy Research at the NIA.

In March 2021, Australia's landmark Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety delivered its final recommendations to the Australian Parliament after a three-year-long inquiry. The inquiry uncovered numerous shortcomings, such as difficulties in accessing LTC services, issues with workforce support and planning, substandard care practices and multiple systemic problems. Of its 148 recommendations, 126 were accepted or accepted in principle. Some of these have already been implemented, including minimum staffing standards, a new funding model for LTC homes, and additional home care supports to shorten waiting lists for care.

“Australia is still in the early stages of reforming how it cares for its ageing population,” says **Dr. Anna Grosse**, lead author of the report and NIA Junior Research Fellow. “Over the coming years, Canada will have the opportunity to observe how Australia approaches this challenge and can learn from its successes and shortfalls.”

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About the Ageing in the Right Place Research Series

Supporting more older Canadians to age in their own homes and communities for as long as possible, commonly referred to as “ageing in place,” will be essential to better caring for Canada’s ageing population. Yet doing so effectively requires more responsive systems and services that allow for what the National Institute on Ageing calls Ageing in the Right Place: “The process of enabling healthy ageing in the most appropriate setting based on an older person’s personal preferences, circumstances and care needs.” This [ground-breaking research series](#) presents a practical framework to understand the concept of Ageing in the Right Place (AIRP) and what is required to make it work, and highlights existing best practices and new opportunities that can reduce unnecessary long-term care home admissions and better support the implementation of successful AIRP policies and programs across Canada and beyond.

About The National Institute on Ageing

The [National Institute on Ageing](#) is a think tank at Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University) focused on the realities of Canada’s ageing population. Follow us on Twitter [@NIAgeing](#) and support our call for a National Seniors Strategy [@NSS_Now](#).

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