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**NEWS RELEASE**

## Canada should consider using its postal workers to check in on older adults

*New policy report from the NIA's Ageing in the Right Place research series examines a novel idea for supporting older Canadians living in the community*

**TORONTO, Jan. 27, 2023** — Supporting Canada's growing population of older adults looking to live in their own homes and communities for as long as possible will require new ways of thinking about how to efficiently deliver home and community care services. One option Canada should further consider is turning to an organization that already knows a thing or two about making home visits: Canada Post.

Today the National Institute on Ageing (NIA) releases [Special Delivery: How Canadian Postal Workers Could Better Enable Ageing in the Right Place](#), a new policy report in its groundbreaking [Ageing in the Right Place](#) research series. The report looks to other jurisdictions where postal workers have been offering home supports for older adults for close to a decade — including Japan, France and the UK Channel Island of Jersey — to consider why and how this kind of service could be implemented in Canada.

Regular home visits for older adults can address several challenges that may prevent them from ageing in the right place, including social isolation and better managing health conditions that may worsen without regular monitoring. Postal workers are uniquely suited to offer these supportive visits: they travel door-to-door, even in rural and remote regions; their union has already proposed expanding their offerings to include community supports; a federal review has recommended implementing this as a way to make Canada Post more financially viable, and surveys show postal workers are one of the most trusted professions in Canada.

“With growing health care worker shortages and fewer family members and friends available to provide care and support for their loved ones as they age, we need to look at other sources of potential support to better enable older Canadians age in the right place,” says Dr. Samir Sinha, Director of Health Policy Research for the NIA. “Regular visits by postal workers could become a key preventive and supportive measure in Canada to allow for the early identification of health issues and facilitate the necessary care and support that can potentially allow more older Canadians to age with confidence in their own homes for as long as possible.

Postal services around the world have already begun experimenting with delivering at-home services and supports, ranging from brief check-ins to providing remote monitoring to rentals of supportive tech devices. This white paper examines three locations where these supports are offered in varying forms: Japan, France and Jersey.

“The three programs discussed in this report include different combinations of services, but all have shown substantial success in better enabling ageing in place while also increasing revenue for the postal services involved,” said Spencer Naylor, NIA Junior Research Fellow and lead author of the report. “Canada doesn’t have to start from scratch: we can draw on their experiences to develop a similar program that will meet this country’s unique needs.”

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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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