



Gift of Time *Awareness* campaign launched to target social isolation during the festive season

Public reminded to reach out to seniors living in care homes, or living alone over December

December 5, 2018 — This year let's be more aware and take aim at social isolation among MB. seniors during the festive season. The "Gift of Time" *Awareness* is being promoted by Long Term & Continuing Care Association of MB. (LTCAM) as a way to raise awareness of the loneliness and social isolation many seniors face, during a time when many families and friends are celebrating.

The Awareness Campaign reminds members of the public to reach out to seniors living in a care home, or living alone at home. The best gift you can give during the festive season is the "gift of time".

"There is no easy solution when it comes to the challenge of social isolation among seniors, but raising awareness is a vital first step," says LTCAM ED Jan Legeros "This is an important conversation. When people are celebrating the festive season with loved ones, this is the best time to remind the public to reach out to a senior."

Social isolation among seniors has been the subject of prominent public inquiries such as by Canada's National Seniors Council, and the U.S. Senate Aging Committee. A widely-cited study determines that the negative health impact of social isolation is equivalent to smoking up to 15 cigarettes per day. Both urban and rural communities across the continent have struggled on what to do about social isolation among seniors.

"There is indeed a growing awareness among our political leaders of the cost of social isolation on our public healthcare system," says Legeros. "However, we have to convince governments of the benefit of investing in initiatives that enhance quality of life among frail and elderly seniors."

LTCAM's Gift of Time campaign will be promoted online and through social media during the month of December.

Additional information and resources on the subject of social isolation among seniors, including copies of the campaign advertisements can be accessed at http://www.ltcam.mb.ca/options_socialization.htm

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About LTCAM: Incorporated in 1959, LTCAM is a non-profit, private, member-based association representing the continuum of long-term care: Home Care, Independent Living with Services, Supportive Housing and Personal Care residences.  