**EXPAND THE NEW HORIZONS FOR SENIORS PROGRAM**

CNA wants the federal government to promote healthy and active aging by making it part of its New Horizons for Seniors Program.

**What is “healthy and active aging”?**

It refers to preventive activities and programs that help seniors maintain or improve their health. The biggest benefit of these activities is that they can reduce falls, which is the leading cause of injury-related hospitalizations among Canadian seniors. Exercise programs that improve balance and strength are one of the most effective and low-cost ways to improve a person’s stability. They also help manage chronic diseases and improve seniors’ social engagement.

**What is the New Horizons for Seniors Program?**

It’s a federal initiative that offers funding to organizations that develop programs to help seniors contribute to the quality of life in their communities. Currently, funding is granted for projects that fall under five objectives — promoting volunteerism, mentoring, elder abuse awareness, social participation and capital assistance. CNA wants to add a sixth objective — healthy and active aging.

**How would the health-care system benefit?**

Adding healthy and active aging to the New Horizons for Seniors Program would increase the number of projects and activities that promote preventive health-care services. These could include those that enhance mobility (e.g., with accessible exercise, group physiotherapy, balance and healthy aging classes) and improve steadiness (e.g., with yoga and tai-chi).

As we get older, falls can mean acute injury, traumatic brain injury, chronic pain, the onset of long-term care and even death. Post-fall syndrome can also lead to fear and anxiety about additional falls, loss of independence, frailty and social isolation.

**Additional resources**

- Canadian Physiotherapy Association — The Value of Physiotherapy: Falls
- Public Health Agency of Canada — Seniors’ Falls in Canada: Second Report

**For more information, visit cna-aiic.ca**