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# More local seniors able to join adult day programs

CALGARY – More than 500 additional seniors in the Calgary and Edmonton areas are now able to get out of their homes at least once a week for a day of socialization and recreation, providing respite for their caregivers, with the expansion of adult day programs offered by Alberta Health Services (AHS).

An investment of \$9 million over three years will be used to expand hours for existing adult day programs and to launch new adult day programs in both cities.

“Adult day programs are an integral part of our seniors strategy,” says Cheryl Knight, Executive Director of Seniors Health for AHS.

“They promote physical activity and socialization; prevent feelings of isolation; offer basic health care services; and give caregivers extra time to tend to their own needs. Making more space in adult day programs is good for Alberta seniors and good for their families.”

Approximately 3,000 seniors currently participate in 83 adult day programs across the province.

Both types of adult day programs – basic and comprehensive – typically provide programming once or twice a week, for about six hours per day.

Basic adult day programs provide basic health care, recreation and socialization to seniors who require support, and respite services for caregivers.

Seniors with complex health needs can be served in comprehensive adult day programs, which offer medical monitoring and treatment, medication assistance, rehabilitation, transportation and in-home personal home care.

Both basic and comprehensive adult day programs will be expanded.

“Many seniors who wish to remain in their home don’t have regular opportunities to get out of their home and enjoy the sort of activity and interaction needed to maintain one’s health and enjoy a good quality of life,” says Knight.

“As an added bonus, seniors in our adult day programs are monitored by health professionals who may be able to identify and treat medical issues before they become serious – potentially so serious that seniors would be unable to remain at home.

“By getting seniors out of their homes once or twice a week, we’re helping seniors stay in their homes longer and providing caregivers with a needed break to ensure they can stay well while continuing in their caregiving role.”

Janice Philo is grateful that her mother, Noreen, has the opportunity to visit an adult day program at Beverly Centre – Lake Midnapore in south Calgary twice a week.

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“My mom really wants to stay in her home and wants her independence but, without the day program, she wouldn’t go out unless we took her out, and she would have very little interaction with others,” says Janice.

“When she got into the program, I could tell that she liked it. You can see that there’s been a lot of interaction between the people in the program and that she’s got friends there. That has really taken a lot of stress off my mind.”

To see if you or a loved one could benefit from an Adult Day Program in your community, call our home care line in Calgary Zone at 403-943-1920.

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than four million adults and children living in Alberta. Its mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.

- 30 -

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