



ANNUAL REPORT

Alberta Seniors and Community Supports
2004 | 2005

Alberta

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	1
Minister’s Accountability Statement	2
Message From The Minister	3
Management’s Responsibility For Reporting	5
Overview	7
Chart Of Ministry Entities	8
Operational Overview	9
Summary Of Key Activities In The Past Year	13
Results Analysis	21
Report Of The Auditor General On The Results Of Applying Specified Auditing Procedures To Performance Measures	22
Financial Performance Overview	23
Expense By Function	24
Discussion And Analysis Of Results	25
Forward Looking Information	62
Financial Information	65
Ministry	67
Department	95
Alberta Social Housing Corporation (ASHC)	121
PDD Provincial Board	145
PDD Calgary Region Community Board.....	163
PDD Central Region Community Board	183
PDD Edmonton Region Community Board	203
PDD Northeast Region Community Board	221
PDD Northwest Region Community Board	239
PDD South Region Community Board.....	257
Other Information	275

**Alphabetical List Of Entities' Financial Statements In
Ministry 2004-05 Annual Reports278**
 Entities Included In The Consolidated Government Reporting Entity..... 278
 Entities Not Included In The Consolidated Government Reporting Entity 278
Government Organization Changes 2004-05279
 Other Merged Ministries 279

PREFACE

The Public Accounts of Alberta are prepared in accordance with the *Financial Administration Act* and the *Government Accountability Act*. The Public Accounts consist of the annual report of the Government of Alberta and the annual reports of each of the 24 Ministries.

The annual report of the Government of Alberta released June 29, 2005 contains the Minister of Finance's accountability statement, the consolidated financial statements of the Province and a comparison of the actual performance results to desired results set out in the government's business plan, including the *Measuring Up* report.

This annual report of the Ministry of Seniors and Community Supports contains the Minister's accountability statement, the audited consolidated financial statements of the Ministry and a comparison of actual performance results to desired results set out in the Ministry business plan. This Ministry annual report also includes:

- the financial statements of entities making up the Ministry including the Department of Seniors and Community Supports, and the Alberta Social Housing Corporation and the Persons with Developmental Disabilities Boards, for which the Minister is responsible,
- other financial information as required by the *Financial Administration Act* and *Government Accountability Act*, either as separate reports or as a part of the financial statements, to the extent that the Ministry has anything to report.

MINISTER'S ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

The Ministry's annual report for the year ended March 31, 2005, was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Government Accountability Act* and the government's accounting policies. All of government's policy decisions as at September 22, 2005 with material economic or fiscal implications of which I am aware have been considered in the preparation of this report.

Original signed by

Yvonne Fritz

Minister of Seniors and Community Supports

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER



As Minister of Seniors and Community Supports, it is my pleasure to present our annual report for 2004-05. Last fall, I was honoured to be appointed to this renewed Ministry and am proud of the services we provide to seniors, persons with disabilities and Albertans in need of housing.

The past year has been one of transition. The former Ministry was comprised of three key areas: seniors programs, housing for lower-income Albertans and public guardian services. Changes in November 2004 welcomed the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program, Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) and Community Supports Systems to the Ministry.

This change brought government disability programs under one Ministry for the first time and allows us to better coordinate the services we provide to Albertans.

The AISH program underwent a thorough review by an MLA committee to find more effective ways to meet clients' needs and remain sustainable for the future. Their work resulted in a comprehensive report with a number of recommendations to improve the program for AISH clients.

Changes to the Alberta Seniors Benefit (ASB) program made more seniors eligible for monthly cash benefits and increased the monthly payments to those already receiving benefits. Financial assistance was also provided for the accommodation costs of low-income seniors and people with disabilities living in long-term care facilities.

Health care premiums were eliminated for all seniors in October 2004, and work began on new dental, optical and education property tax assistance programs, which will be introduced in 2005-06.

The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) also underwent a review and developed a 10-year plan for its future direction. A review of the *Dependent Adults Act* and the *Personal Directives Act* also started.

Persons with Developmental Disabilities supported the first-ever Self Advocacy Summit in September 2004, which welcomed more than 250 participants. The *Help Make A Difference* public education initiative promoted diversity and inclusion of persons with disabilities through a series of public service announcements.

We continued our commitment to address affordable housing needs through the Canada-Alberta Affordable Housing Program, which helped create nearly 2,400 units since it was introduced in 2002.

We developed the Rural Supportive Living Program, which will increase the availability

of supportive living options for Albertans in rural areas. Operating grants were provided to support emergency shelters in the province's major municipalities.

In partnership with the Alberta Seniors Citizens' Housing Association and the Alberta Long Term Care Association, the Ministry began developing operating standards for supportive living projects and updating the accommodation standards of publicly funded long-term care facilities.

Through our ongoing research and strategic planning, we will update our programs to anticipate the future needs of our seniors, disabled Albertans and the housing needs of low- to moderate-income Albertans. We will also continue to work with other governments, ministries, community groups, and individuals to monitor and meet the needs of our different clients.

The Ministry continues to work towards our common goal of supporting Albertans to live independently, with dignity and as full members of our communities.

Thank you to everyone who makes the important work of the Ministry of Seniors and Community Supports possible. Your continued dedication and commitment has helped us provide the essential programs and services to Albertans.

Original signed by

Yvonne Fritz

Minister of Seniors and Community Supports

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR REPORTING

The Ministry of Seniors and Community Supports consists of the Department of Seniors and Community Supports, the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta, the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) and the Alberta Social Housing Corporation (ASHC).

The executives of the individual entities within the Ministry have the primary responsibility and accountability for the respective entities. Collectively, the executives ensure the Ministry complies with all relevant legislation, regulations and policies.

Ministry business plans, annual reports, performance results and the supporting management information are integral to the government's fiscal and business plans, annual report, quarterly reports and other financial and performance reporting.

Responsibility for the integrity and objectivity of the consolidated financial statements and performance results for the Ministry rests with the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports. Under the direction of the Minister, I oversee the preparation of the Ministry's annual report, including consolidated financial statements and performance results. The consolidated financial statements and the performance results, of necessity, include amounts that are based on estimates and judgments. The consolidated financial statements are prepared in accordance with the government's stated accounting policies.

As Acting Deputy Minister, in addition to program responsibilities, I establish

and maintain the Ministry's financial administration and reporting functions. The Ministry maintains systems of financial management and internal control which give consideration to costs, benefits, and risks that are designed to:

- provide reasonable assurance that transactions are properly authorized, executed in accordance with prescribed legislation and regulations, and properly recorded so as to maintain accountability of public money,
- provide information to manage and report on performance,
- safeguard the assets and properties of the province under Ministry administration,
- provide Executive Council, Treasury Board, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports any information needed to fulfill their responsibilities, and
- facilitate preparation of Ministry business plans and annual reports required under the *Government Accountability Act*.

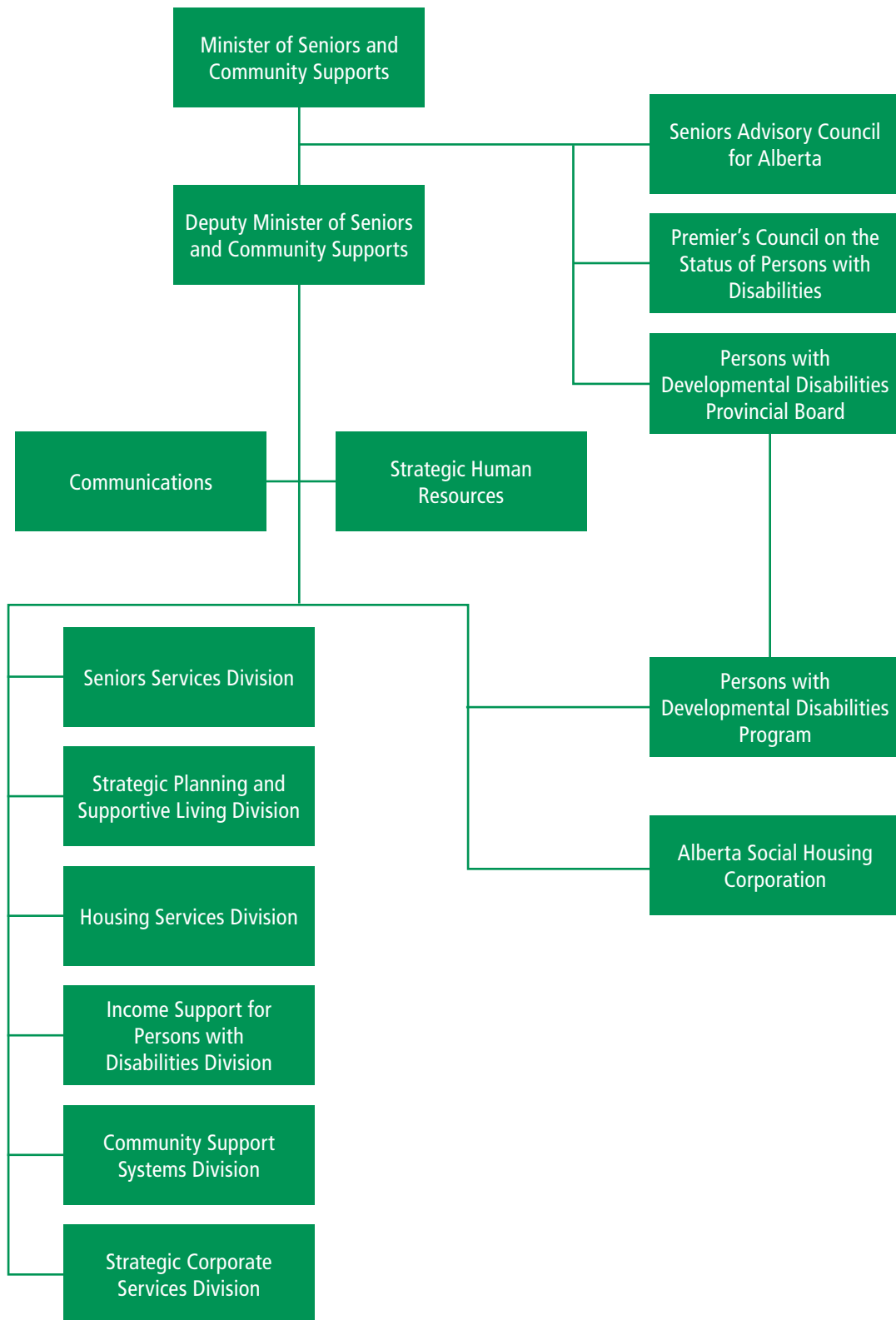
In fulfilling my responsibilities for the Ministry, I have relied, as necessary, on the executive of the individual entities within the Ministry.

Original signed by

Dave Arsenault
(Acting) Deputy Minister
September 22, 2005

OVERVIEW

CHART OF MINISTRY ENTITIES



OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW

SENIORS SERVICES DIVISION

The Seniors Services Division is responsible for planning and delivering the Alberta Seniors Benefit and Special Needs Assistance for Seniors programs. The Alberta Seniors Benefit program provides income-based monthly cash benefits to lower-income seniors. The Special Needs Assistance for Seniors program provides lump-sum cash payments to eligible lower-income seniors who experience financial difficulties or unexpected expenses above their basic living requirements. The division also monitors seniors' financial situations to ensure that programs are addressing the needs of those seniors most in need of assistance.

The division provides information about Ministry programs to seniors, their families and service providers. This information is provided through the Seniors Information Line; Seniors Information Services Offices; publications, such as the *Seniors Programs and Services Information Guide*; and the Ministry's website.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND SUPPORTIVE LIVING DIVISION

The Strategic Planning and Supportive Living Division is comprised of three branches and also provides administrative support to the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta.

The Planning and Research Branch coordinates the Ministry's corporate strategic and business planning and reporting activities. This branch also undertakes planning, policy research, and analysis on issues of relevance

to seniors and the aging population, and works with government and community stakeholders to ensure seniors' issues are considered in government initiatives and strategies. The Supportive Living and Long-Term Care Development Branch develops policy, program recommendations, and standards related to the accommodation portion of supportive living and long-term care facilities.

The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) provides direct guardianship services and support for private guardians of dependent adults who are unable to make personal, non-financial decisions for themselves. The OPG also helps Albertans plan for a time when they may be unable to make their own personal decisions. This planning is done through a legal document called a personal directive.

HOUSING SERVICES DIVISION

The Housing Services Division provides strategic research, analysis, and planning related to emergency shelters, transitional housing, and housing for low-income individuals and families, seniors and persons with special needs. Through management assistance and funding, the division also supports local governments, not-for-profit organizations, and private sector organizations in providing affordable housing options for lower-income Albertans and persons with special needs.

This division delivers information, advice, and referral services on tenancy, maintenance, and security for residents in lower-income

housing. The division also collaborates with the federal government, mainly through agreements with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, for the provision of affordable housing for Albertans in need, and the administration of cost-shared social housing programs.

Under the Canada-Alberta Affordable Housing Agreement, the division administers the Affordable Housing Partnerships Initiative and Sustainable Remote Housing Initiative, two programs designed to provide funding for housing low-income Albertans. As well, the division administers provincial homeless funding and shelter contracts and is responsible for operating the Gunn Centre. The Gunn Centre is a government-owned and -operated transitional housing facility for men who are homeless and are likely to have mental health difficulties, be in recovery from substance abuse, and/or experience other social barriers to self-sufficiency.

ALBERTA SOCIAL HOUSING CORPORATION

The Alberta Social Housing Corporation is an agent of the Crown and operates under the authority of the *Alberta Housing Act*. The corporation is the owner of a substantial portfolio of housing and land assets and facilitates the provision of housing for lower-income seniors and social housing for lower-income families and individuals, and those with special needs.

INCOME SUPPORT FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES DIVISION

The Income Support for Persons with Disabilities Division is responsible for the

policy, planning, and delivery of the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program. AISH is an income and health benefits program for adult Albertans with a permanent disability that severely impairs their ability to earn a living. In addition to a monthly living allowance, AISH provides health benefits, which include premium-free Alberta Health Care Insurance, prescription drugs, essential diabetic supplies, optical, dental, emergency ambulance services, and the waiver of the co-payment fee for Alberta Aids to Daily Living.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SYSTEMS DIVISION

The Community Support Systems Division focuses on advancing the quality of life for persons with disabilities and promoting the safety of vulnerable adults who receive government-funded care services. The Alberta Brain Injury Initiative works to address the needs of adults with acquired brain injury by improving service coordination and access to community supports. The Gaps in Services Initiative undertakes program and policy development related to persons with disabilities, such as fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, Asperger syndrome, and autism, who often fall outside of existing government programs.

The Office for Disability Issues leads the government response to the Alberta Disability Strategy and supports the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities. The Protection for Persons in Care Branch contributes to the quality of life for vulnerable adults who receive government-funded care services from facilities such as hospitals,

nursing homes, seniors' lodges, and group homes, by investigating allegations of abuse and making recommendations to enhance safeguards and prevent abuse from occurring in the future.

STRATEGIC CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION

Strategic Corporate Services consists of Financial Services, Strategic Information Technology, and Strategic Office Support. Financial Services provides support to the Ministry in financial planning and analysis, budgeting, financial payment systems and processes, and financial accountability and reporting. Strategic Information Technology provides expertise in developing and maintaining information technology systems that are critical to the success of the Ministry in delivering its programs and services. Strategic Office Support coordinates the materials and facilities required to deliver Ministry programs and services, as well as services provided by the Alberta Corporate Service Centre, including payment of accounts, records management and administrative support.

STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCES

Strategic Human Resources provides leadership, advice, and consulting services in the planning, development, and delivery of all Ministry human resource programs, policies and practices that contribute to the Ministry's ability to effectively realize its business plan goals. Strategic Human Resources also manages the delivery of human resource services that take place through corporate

service providers in the areas of staffing, classification, employee relations, training and development, and occupational health and safety.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communications provides advice and support to the Minister and the Ministry on providing clear and timely information to the public about the key initiatives, programs and services of Seniors and Community Supports. Communications also provides consulting services in issues management, strategic planning, media relations, writing, publishing, and website content.

PERSONS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES BOARDS

Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Boards consist of a provincial board, which is an agent of the Crown, and six community boards. The mission of the PDD Boards is to create an Alberta where adults with intellectual disabilities are included in community life.

The Provincial Board develops, implements and evaluates a provincial plan for the delivery of services for adults with intellectual disabilities. The Provincial Board establishes policy and standards for these services and monitors service quality. Community boards develop regional plans to support adults with intellectual disabilities based on community priorities, regional needs and direction of the Provincial Board, and oversee and evaluate the delivery of services.

PERSONS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PROGRAM

Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Program funds agencies to provide services to persons with intellectual disabilities. These services assist persons with intellectual disabilities to live, work, and participate in communities like other Albertans. Services vary based on the unique needs of the individual, and include community living services, community access supports, and employment supports.

Community living services include residential services to help persons with intellectual disabilities live in the community. Community access supports help with participation in community and personal development activities. Approximately one third of adults served by PDD participate in PDD-funded employment support programs, which include employment preparation and placement supports.

In addition to these supports, PDD funds government-operated facilities to provide 24-hour care to persons with severe disabilities.

PREMIER'S COUNCIL ON THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities champions improvements in the lives of Albertans with disabilities by listening to the concerns of the disability community and communicating those concerns to government. The council does this by focusing on policy development, advocacy and evaluation of policies and programs that affect Albertans with disabilities.

SENIORS ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR ALBERTA

The Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta brings the views of seniors to the attention of government. The council makes recommendations to the government on the coordination of policies and programs relating to seniors and responds to government reports and specific requests for advice. It is also responsible for coordinating annual Seniors' Week celebrations.

SUMMARY OF KEY ACTIVITIES IN THE PAST YEAR

The following provides a summary of some of the key activities the Ministry engaged in during 2004-05. This summary highlights key program initiatives, improvements in efficiency, consultations with stakeholders, and outsourcing initiatives.

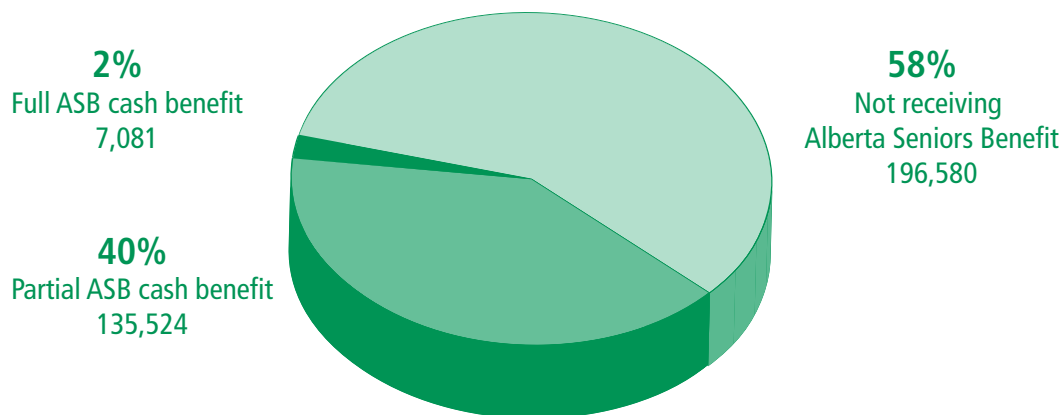
Core Business 1

Provide services, programs, and planning for seniors and the aging population

SENIORS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Of the nearly 340,000 seniors living in Alberta, the Ministry provided approximately 142,600 low-income seniors with the Alberta Seniors Benefit (ASB). Eligible seniors received a monthly cash benefit, averaging approximately \$149 per household (consisting of one or two seniors).

PERCENTAGE OF SENIORS RECEIVING ALBERTA SENIORS BENEFIT (AS OF MARCH 2005)



The Ministry responds to the needs of lower-income seniors in long-term care by providing enhanced benefits under the Alberta Seniors Benefit program. Approximately 8,100 seniors in these facilities received an average of \$235 per month in additional benefits to assist with their accommodation fees.

Internally, the Ministry implemented a document imaging system for ASB client records. This system improved the speed at which staff assisting seniors can access records and increased the security of personal information. The Ministry also continued to promote payment of the ASB by direct deposit. Approximately 69 per cent of seniors now receive their ASB payments through direct deposit, reducing the administrative costs of producing and mailing cheques each month.

In 2004-05, the Ministry received almost 31,000 applications for the Special Needs Assistance for Seniors program. The program provided benefits to approximately 21,000 households for a total annual expenditure of approximately \$33 million. Over the year, approximately 26,500 seniors received support from this program.¹ Individual benefits ranged from \$50 to \$5,000.

SENIORS INFORMATION SERVICES

In 2004-05, the Ministry responded to more than 156,000 telephone calls, assisted nearly 52,500 seniors through in-person contacts and had more than 1.5 million visits to the Seniors and Community Supports website. The Ministry provided 143 presentations and information displays, and distributed more than 143,000 publications and forms to seniors, seniors' organizations, and other Albertans.

CONTINUING CARE ACCOMMODATION

Continuing care takes place in the home, in supportive living settings, and in long-term care facilities, and consists of health care, personal care, and other services based on assessed need. Because responsibility for continuing care is shared among a number of ministries and non-government organizations, addressing quality in continuing care requires extensive partnership and collaboration. During 2004-05, the Ministry developed partnerships and collaborative initiatives to address specific quality and access issues.

Seniors and Community Supports partnered with Infrastructure and Transportation and Health and Wellness to develop the Rural Supportive Living Program, which will result in increased availability of supportive living options for persons in rural areas. The government consulted with seniors' housing operators and regional health authorities to implement this \$50 million program, which will result in approximately 750 new supporting living units in 2005-07.

The Ministry provided funding and worked with the Alberta Senior Citizens' Housing Association and the Alberta Long Term Care Association on two standards projects. The first was to develop accommodation standards for supportive living, including seniors' lodges. The second was to update the accommodation standards of publicly-funded long-term care facilities. Both projects included development of approaches to improve the accountability of facility operators.

¹ The number of seniors is greater than the number of grants because couples submit one application.

Core Business 2

Support the provision and ongoing management of basic housing and emergency shelter for lower-income Albertans

SUPPORT FOR SUBSIDIZED HOUSING OPERATORS

In Alberta, there are approximately 40,000 subsidized housing units administered by 177 local housing operators. The Ministry provided financial, administrative, and technical support to these groups as well as administered long-term operating agreements and managed the flow of housing subsidies. In administering these programs, the Ministry plays a stewardship and accountability role with an emphasis on working in partnership with local housing providers to create sustainable housing solutions.

To ensure local housing operators have adequate funding and operate effectively, the Ministry conducted operational, audit, and business plan reviews and revised the processes for these reviews. The Ministry conducted 23 operational reviews, 173 audit reviews, and 51 business plan reviews. The Ministry also worked closely with emergency shelter operators and conducted reviews of monthly reports, quarterly reports, and year-end statements to ensure the necessary funding was available for operators to provide adequate shelter to persons in need.

To support housing operators in addressing local housing needs, the Ministry transferred provincially-owned land and buildings, which are no longer efficient or effective for social housing programs, to local housing operators for nominal amounts. Local housing operators then use these lands/buildings for the purpose of affordable housing.

The Ministry encouraged communities to develop plans that proactively identify local needs and develop locally-based solutions for housing and related services. In 2004-05, the Ministry began development of a new methodology to assess the extent to which community housing plans address the overall housing needs of their communities.

Changes were made to the way eligibility for seniors' subsidized housing is determined. Previously, housing operators were required to collect a variety of information from seniors to calculate income to determine eligibility. To improve consistency and fairness, the Ministry now requires that seniors' income be determined using line 150 from the previous year's income tax Notice of Assessment provided by the federal government.

CAPITAL PLANNING INITIATIVE

To ensure the housing portfolio remains viable for future use, the Ministry presented capital project submissions for review to the Alberta Government's Capital Planning Initiative Committee, which prioritizes all provincial government capital projects for funding. These projects included:

- Continuation of the Canada-Alberta Affordable Housing Program (to support the construction of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income Albertans);
- Seniors Supportive Housing Incentive Program (to support the construction of seniors' supportive housing for low- and moderate-income seniors); and
- Preservation of the existing social housing portfolio.

All three projects received a priority rating and a request for funding was submitted through the annual budget process.

Core Business 3

Provide programs, services, and supports to enable appropriate substitute decision-making

The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) provided personal decision-making services to approximately 1,800 dependent adults in Alberta. The OPG also provided information and support to approximately 8,000 private guardians in 2004-05. In addition, the OPG responded to more than 2,700 queries from the public about personal directives, up from 2,360 in 2003-04. A total of 317 presentations on personal directives were provided to the public. This indicates a growing interest among Albertans in planning for the future using tools such as personal directives.

In 2004-05, a 10-year plan on the future directions of the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) was developed. Development of the plan involved consultations with dependent adults, private guardians and other stakeholders, as well as a review of legislative models of guardianship used in other jurisdictions. The consultations identified key areas for further development, including a review of the mandate of the OPG. The review, completed in December 2004, recommended new approaches to supporting dependent adults and private guardians and to promoting personal directives.

Internally, improvements were made to the Office of the Public Guardian Information System (OPGIS). The changes enable staff to manage cases more effectively and provide better service to clients.

Core Business 4

Provide programs, services, and supports for persons with disabilities

ASSURED INCOME FOR THE SEVERELY HANDICAPPED (AISH)

The AISH program was introduced 25 years ago to address unique financial and health needs of Albertans with a permanent disability that severely impairs their ability to earn a living. The Ministry provided benefits to more than 31,600 clients in 2004-05. The average caseload has grown from approximately 29,750 two years ago, an increase of almost 2,000 cases, or approximately six per cent.

A review of the AISH program was announced in September 2004. The program review was initiated in response to legislative requirements and to address concerns raised by clients, community stakeholders and other Albertans. The goal of the review was to make the AISH program more responsive to client needs, while ensuring the program remains available to those most in need. The AISH Review provided an opportunity for the government to listen to Albertans and their families who depend on the AISH program as well as the community and disability organizations that work with people who receive AISH benefits.

Operating efficiency of the AISH program was enhanced by development of an online policy manual. Staff members and the public now have access to the most current and accurate information about the AISH program, including policy directives, regulations, and legislation. By accessing the manual online, staff members are no longer required to print and maintain a hard copy of the manual and AISH staff throughout the province have access to the same information.

SUPPORTS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The Alberta Brain Injury Initiative (ABII) focused on providing personal support to persons with acquired brain injury and connected them with services in their community. The ABII also helped communities understand the impact of brain injuries on individuals, families, and communities while helping brain injury survivors reach their potential. The Ministry published and distributed 10,000 copies of the second edition of the *Alberta Brain Injury Survivor Guide*, as a tool to assist brain injury survivors and their families.

The Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities hosted the first ever Provincial Roundtable on Disability Issues. This event brought together 67 people from 46 disability organizations to discuss issues, assist in setting priorities, and provide input on planning the work of the Office for Disability Issues (ODI). Participants indicated that the ODI should

focus on raising awareness across government about persons with disabilities and improving communication between government and the disability community. To improve the accessibility of buildings and other infrastructure, the Ministry, in cooperation with Municipal Affairs, established and chairs the new Barrier-Free Design Sub-Committee of the Safety Codes Council of Alberta. The Barrier-Free Design Sub-Committee makes recommendations to government on how to improve accessibility.

The Ministry also participated in Alberta Transportation’s Advisory Committee on Barrier-Free Transportation and worked with the Calgary Regional Partnership to develop an accessible transportation plan.

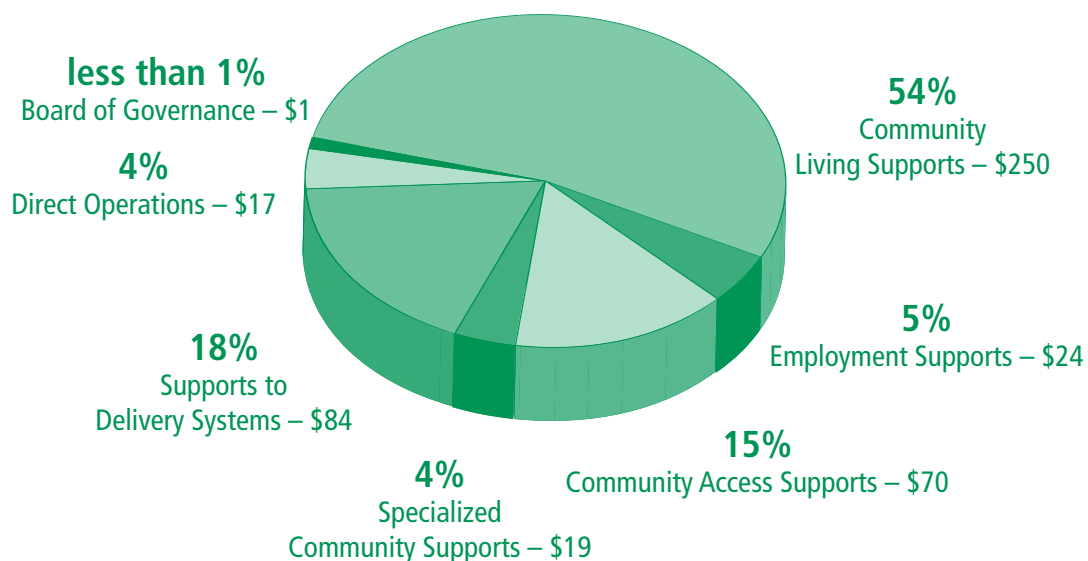
The Ministry partnered with the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission and Global Television on the *Help Make a Difference* campaign, a series of public service announcements that promote diversity and inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of community. In these public service announcements Albertans with disabilities share their experiences and aspirations.

The Ministry supported the Alberta Disability Strategy recommendation for increased awareness of disabilities by celebrating the International Day of Disabled Persons in December 2004. During this celebration, the Ministry recognized Albertans whose work enhances the lives of persons with disabilities.

In 2004-05, Persons with Disabilities (PDD) funded services for approximately 9,100 adult Albertans with intellectual disabilities. The range and extent of services provided varied based on the unique needs of the individual.

PDD PROGRAM COSTS

Distribution of the budget by program in millions



PDD provides funding support services to assist individuals with intellectual disabilities to live, work, and participate in the community as valued, contributing citizens. More than 90 per cent of the population supported by PDD lives in the community.

Within the PDD program, Community Living Supports provided both to community-based service providers and government-operated facilities made up the majority of PDD's expenditures in 2004-05. Staff provided support to assist adults with intellectual disabilities to live successfully in a wide range of home settings. Approximately 95 per cent of all individuals funded by PDD were supported in community-based homes rather than facilities.

Employment programs assist individuals with intellectual disabilities to prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment in the community. Approximately one third of adults with intellectual disabilities served by PDD received employment supports last year and these programs represented five per cent of PDD program costs.

Community Access Supports fund staff to assist adults with intellectual disabilities to make meaningful connections in the community, including recreation, hobbies, and volunteer activities.

Specialized Community Supports were non-staff based services that provided unique supports and services, such as professional assessments, to enhance an individual's access to the community, when there were no equivalent public resources available.

While most PDD-funded services are provided by contracted community service providers, the PDD program does operate a small number of services directly in the Edmonton, Central, and Calgary regions. A large majority of government staff employed by PDD boards work in government-operated facilities, which provide 24-hour care for individuals with intellectual disabilities, most of whom have lived there for many years. Unique facility-related expenses incurred in direct operations to government-owned residential services made up four per cent of the 2004-05 budget.

Administrative and financial support for program delivery systems made up 18 per cent of PDD's budget in 2004-05. Less than one per cent of PDD's 2004-05 budget went to provincial and community board governance.

PROTECTION FOR PERSONS IN CARE

Protection for Persons in Care received 554 reports involving 779 complaints of suspected abuse. Of the total complaints, 52 per cent involved emotional harm, 20 per cent bodily harm, 19 per cent failure to provide the necessities of life, five per cent subjecting to sexual contact, three per cent misappropriating funds and one per cent related to inappropriate medication administration. Protection for Persons in Care investigated the complaints and made recommendations to agencies and facilities. All recommendations focus on preventing abuse from occurring in the future.²

² The number and type of complaints were compiled using the Protection for Persons in Care Information System.

RESULTS ANALYSIS

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL ON THE RESULTS OF APPLYING SPECIFIED AUDITING PROCEDURES TO PERFORMANCE MEASURES



To the Members of the Legislative Assembly

In connection with the Ministry of Seniors and Community Supports' performance measures included in the *2004-2005 Annual Report of the Ministry*, I have:

1. Agreed information from an external organization to reports from the organization.
2. Agreed information from reports that originated from organizations included in the consolidated financial statements of the Ministry to source reports. In addition, I tested the procedures used to compile the underlying data into the source reports.
3. Checked that the presentation of results is consistent with the stated methodology.
4. Checked that the results presented are comparable to stated targets, and information presented in prior years.
5. Checked that the performance measures, as well as targets, agree to and include results for all of the measures presented in Budget 2004.

As a result of applying the above procedures, I found one exception. There was no survey data available for one measure *Satisfaction, by Persons with Developmental Disabilities, with PDD-Funded Services*. Therefore, I was not able to complete procedures 2 to 5 above for this measure. Management states, in the Results Analysis Section under goal 7, why survey data was not available.

Procedures 1-5, however, do not constitute an audit and therefore I express no opinion on the performance measures included in the *2004-2005 Annual Report of the Ministry of Seniors and Community Supports*.

Original signed by
Fred J. Dunn
FCA
Auditor General

Edmonton, Alberta
July 29, 2005

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

The financial results for the Ministry of Seniors and Community Supports, for the year ended March 31, 2005, include the activities of the Department of Seniors and Community Supports and the Alberta Social Housing Corporation. More detailed information can be found in the financial statements.

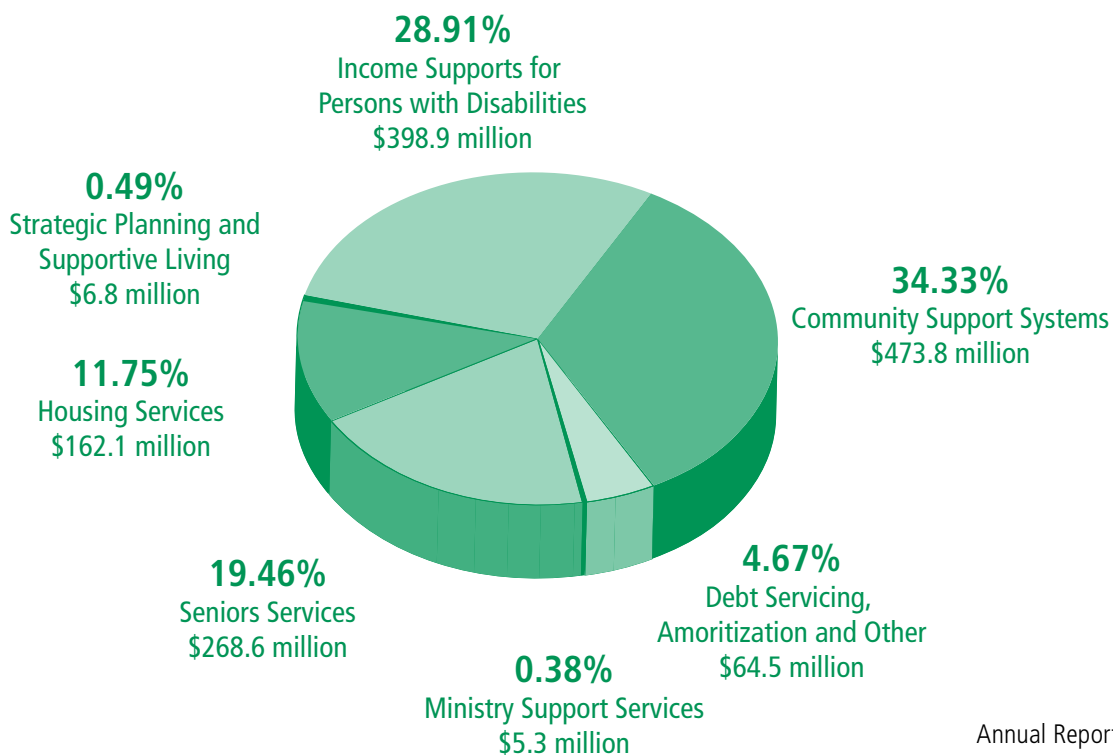
In 2004-05, the Ministry of Seniors and Community Supports spent \$1.380 billion against a budget of \$1.356 billion. The \$1.380 billion in expenditures includes enhancements to the Alberta Seniors Benefit program and seniors supportive living projects that were funded by Alberta supplementary estimates totalling \$34.5 million. Further details on 2004-05 program expenditures are provided in the Integrated Results Analysis section.

New programs joined the Ministry in 2004-05. Income Support for Persons with Disabilities administers the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program. Community Support Systems includes program development for persons with disabilities, the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, Protection for Persons in Care, and the Brain Injury Initiative, as well as financial assistance provided to Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Boards.

As shown in the chart below \$1,374.7 million, or over 99 per cent of Ministry expenditures in 2004-05 were spent on programs and services. Ministry support services makes up only 0.38 per cent of total expenditures.

SUMMARY OF MINISTRY EXPENSE - \$1.380 BILLION

Distribution of the Ministry Expense in millions



Direct grants to individuals and organizations made up almost 70 per cent of total expenditures. These grant payments consisted of:

- \$383.5 million for Income Support and Health Benefits under the AISH Program;
- \$259.7 million to provide financial assistance and support to eligible lower-income seniors through programs like the Alberta Seniors Benefit, Special Needs Assistance for Seniors, and seniors project grants;
- \$130.4 million for housing program grants, including \$51.2 million in expenditures under the Canada-Alberta Affordable Housing Program Agreement; and
- \$149.3 million for grants paid by the PDD Boards and the Alberta Social Housing Corporation.

EXPENSE BY FUNCTION

Function	in millions		
	2005		2004
	Authorized Budget	Actual	Actual
Social Services	\$ 1,204.3	\$ 1,192.5	\$ 1,103.3
Housing	144.8	146.1	132.1
Debt Servicing Costs	41.3	41.2	43.5
	<u>\$ 1,390.4</u>	<u>\$ 1,379.8</u>	<u>\$ 1,278.9</u>

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Core Business 1

Provide services, programs, and planning for seniors and the aging population

GOAL 1

Seniors in need have access to financial supports that enable them to live in a secure and dignified way.

Income is one of the major determinants of health and well-being. The income assistance and health benefit programs provided by the Ministry help seniors to live with dignity by enabling them to make their own financial decisions, secure their basic living needs and continue as participating and contributing members of the community.

STRATEGY 1.1

Continue to identify potential improvements to income-based seniors' benefits that are responsive to changing needs, and that result in improved fairness and simplified eligibility and administration.

Investment into benefits for seniors increased to \$226 million annually. More seniors are now eligible for cash benefits through Alberta Seniors Benefit (ASB) and seniors already receiving cash benefits saw an increase. Changes to ASB for lower-income seniors resulted in an additional 17,000 seniors receiving a monthly cash benefit. Seniors who were already receiving the monthly cash benefit received on average an increase of \$23 per month. Single seniors with an income of \$21,000 or less and couples with a combined income of \$33,000 are now eligible for ASB. The increases came into effect in July 2004. The changes also brought senior homeowners up to the same maximum benefit level as others, such as renters.

The full health insurance premium exemption for all seniors, regardless of income, came into effect October 1, 2004. A single senior can now save up to \$528 and a senior couple up to \$1,056 each year.

The Ministry worked with Alberta Blue Cross to develop a delivery system for a new dental care program and introduced the administrative changes required to support the enhanced optical benefits for implementation in April 2005.

Plans were also developed in 2004-05 to assist senior homeowners by reimbursing year-to-year increases in the education portion of their property taxes. The new program was announced in August 2004 and will be implemented in April 2005.

STRATEGY 1.2

Examine approaches to providing supports for seniors that respond efficiently, effectively, and flexibly to individual needs.

The Ministry worked to ensure that, where possible and appropriate, Albertans were provided assistance to remain living in their communities. For example, the Ministry developed flexible solutions for a number of low-income individuals with brain injuries who were unable to afford the cost of supportive living available in their communities.

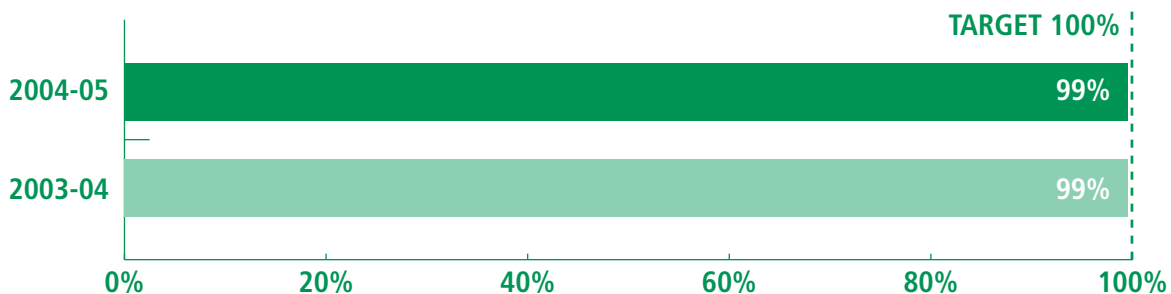
GOAL 1 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Measure 1.a: Percentage of seniors provided with the opportunity to apply for Alberta Seniors Benefit.

It is important that seniors have the opportunity to apply for benefits for which they are eligible. The Alberta Seniors Benefit (ASB) program helps lower-income seniors maintain their independence and live in a secure and dignified way. Although some eligible seniors may choose not to apply for ASB (the program is voluntary), if it can be demonstrated that seniors have been made aware of the program, have received an application package and have made a decision whether to submit an application, the Ministry has succeeded in communicating the program.

The Ministry provides a contact and feedback mechanism to ensure all eligible seniors are given the opportunity to apply for ASB.³

PERCENTAGE OF SENIORS PROVIDED WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY FOR ALBERTA SENIORS BENEFIT



Source: Alberta Seniors and Community Supports, Seniors Services Division

Note 1: The target established for this measure in the 2004-07 Ministry business plan was “To be Determined”.

³ This mechanism adds additional steps to previous efforts informing seniors of the Alberta Seniors Benefit program. All Albertans continue to receive an Alberta Seniors Benefit program application package three months before their 65th birthday or when they move to Alberta and apply for health insurance. In addition, the Ministry mails an information sheet and business reply mail card to all seniors who have not applied for benefits, asking them whether they intend to apply. They are also given the option of receiving a new application form. The information obtained during this follow-up is used to measure seniors’ “opportunity to apply”.

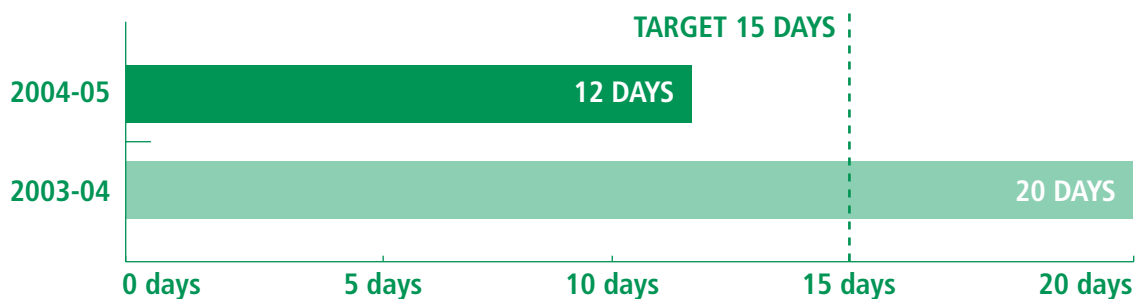
Results and Analysis

The percentage of seniors provided with an opportunity to apply for Alberta Seniors Benefit was 99 per cent.⁴ Although no target was established for this measure in the 2004-07 Ministry business plan, a target of 100 per cent was adopted internally.

Measure 1.b: Assessment time for Special Needs Assistance for Seniors program applications.

This measure calculates the number of working days the Ministry takes to assess applications to the Special Needs Assistance for Seniors program. For seniors who apply to the program for assistance in meeting extraordinary expenses or financial emergencies, timeliness of access to financial assistance is an important aspect of an applicant's ability to live in a secure and dignified way.

ASSESSMENT TIME IN WORKING DAYS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANCE FOR SENIORS PROGRAM APPLICATIONS



Source: *Alberta Seniors and Community Supports, Seniors Services Division, Special needs Assistance for Seniors Information System.*

Note 1: The target established for this measure in the 2004-07 Ministry business plan was "To be Determined".

Results and Analysis

In the 2004-05 fiscal year, the average number of working days it took to assess an application to the Special Needs Assistance for Seniors program was 12.⁵ Although no target was established for this measure in the 2004-07 Ministry business plan, a target of 15 working days was adopted internally. Performance in this measure exceeded the internal target by three working days.

In 2003-04, an increase in the number of program applications received as a result of funding assistance for increased utility costs affected the average assessment time. A reduction in the volume of applications received partly explains the significant achievement in assessment time for 2004-05.

⁴ Results are based on a response rate of 62 per cent of the approximately 10,600 households contacted. Results are valid for the entire population within +1/-1 per cent, 99 times out of 100.

⁵ Results were calculated using data from the Special Needs Assistance Information System. The results identify the number of working days from the received date to the decision date. Applications that required additional information from an applicant were excluded.

GOAL 2

Information provided by the Ministry on programs, services, and initiatives for older Albertans is accessible, accurate and consistent.

Every year, the Ministry receives and responds to thousands of letters and e-mails from seniors and other Albertans. Correspondence ranges from specific questions about program applications to general inquiries and concerns regarding Ministry policies and programs. In addition to written correspondence, the Ministry provides information services to the public through the Seniors Information Line, Seniors Information Services Offices, publications, and the Ministry website. Quality information about programs and services enables seniors, their family members, and service providers to learn about supports for which seniors may be eligible, and assists them in making informed choices concerning housing, living situations, and service needs.

STRATEGY 2.1

Review Ministry-wide processes for delivering information to seniors, their families, and service providers to enhance efficiency and consistency.

The Ministry joined Seniors Information Services Offices in Grande Prairie and St. Paul with the Office of the Public Guardian office. This enabled clients to access Ministry programs and services through one office, supporting the *one point of contact* approach to client service. Staff members involved in the merger have improved their understanding of Ministry programs, helping them to provide consistent and accurate assistance instead of referring clients to another office. The merger also created efficiencies in accommodation and equipment costs.

The Ministry continued to foster a working relationship with federal and provincial partners in front line delivery of services. These relationships support the Ministry's ongoing commitment to provide effective and economical delivery of information to seniors and service providers in a manner most convenient to them. For example, the pairing of regional information officers with federal information officers to present workshops and information sessions allows the Ministry to better present Albertans with the information they need on federal and provincial programs for seniors.

STRATEGY 2.2

Identify new opportunities and partnerships for educating communities, governments, service providers, and individuals on issues relating to seniors and the aging population, such as active living, fraud prevention, lifelong learning, seniors' contributions, retirement planning, and healthy aging.

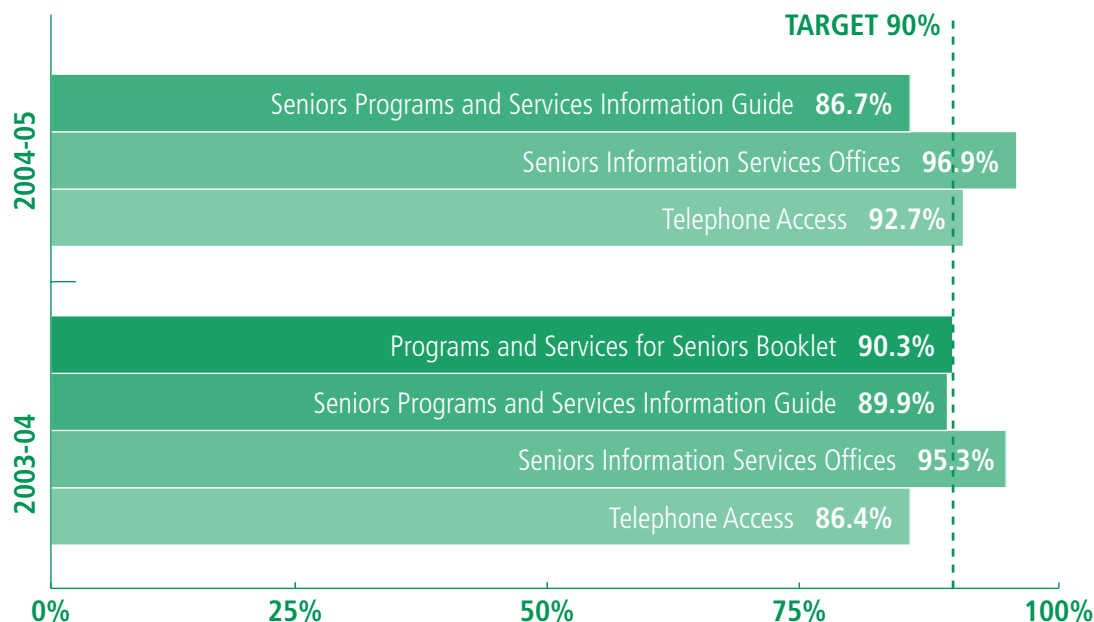
The Ministry continued to support the Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Network (AEAAN), a province-wide network of professionals dedicated to increasing community awareness of abuse of older adults and the resources available to address it. The Ministry participated on a subcommittee of AEAAN, which developed a Community Resource kit. This kit contained a CD-ROM with two PowerPoint presentations and speaking notes, an elder abuse training video, a listing of Alberta resources, and several online website links and national resources. The kit was designed to educate Family and Community Support Services offices, seniors agencies, and RCMP Family Violence units.

GOAL 2 PERFORMANCE MEASURE

Satisfaction with information services provided.

This measure assesses clients' satisfaction with information services provided to seniors by the Ministry through its public service channels. The Ministry's goal is to help seniors become well-informed about programs and services for which they may be eligible and which contribute to their independence and well-being.

SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION SERVICES PROVIDED



Source: Alberta Seniors and Community Supports, Seniors Services Division

Results and Analysis

Survey results indicate that for telephone access and Seniors Information Services Offices the target of 90 per cent was exceeded.⁶ Satisfaction in telephone access increased from 86.4 per cent in 2003-04 to 92.7 per cent in 2004-05. Satisfaction with the Seniors Information Services Offices also increased from the previous year, rising from 95.3 per cent in 2003-04 to 96.9 per cent in 2004-05.

In 2003-04, the previously titled *Programs and Services for Seniors* booklet, saw a name change to the *Seniors Programs and Services Information Guide*. For the 2003-04 reporting period, survey results for both publications are provided.⁷ The 2004-05 results for the *Seniors Programs and Services Information Guide* fell short of the target by 3.3 per cent.⁸

⁶ Data for this measure is collected through client satisfaction surveys. The satisfaction of callers to the Seniors Information Line, and visitors and callers to Seniors Information Services Offices, is assessed by telephone questionnaires of randomly selected clients who had contacted the Ministry on the previous day. The surveys are conducted during a two-week period, twice a year, and include questions about courtesy, knowledge and promptness of service, as well as overall satisfaction with information provided. The top two survey categories of a six-point scale, very satisfied and satisfied, were combined for an overall rating of satisfaction.

⁷ Satisfaction data for the *Programs and Services for Seniors* booklet was collected between April 2003 and March 2004. Satisfaction data for the *Seniors Programs and Services Information Guide* was collected between July 2003 and March 2004.

⁸ Satisfaction data for the *Seniors Programs and Services Information Guide* is gathered from completed and returned self-administered questionnaires included with the guide. A questionnaire included with the guide invites users to evaluate its content and usefulness.

GOAL 3

Government policies, programs, and plans effectively anticipate and respond to the needs of current and future seniors.

The Ministry researches, monitors, and analyzes trends, issues, policies and programs within Alberta, across Canada, and globally. The Ministry collaborates with other ministries, jurisdictions, and community organizations to draw attention to demographic trends and works to ensure that any potential impact of proposed program or policy activities on current or future seniors is fully understood and considered. This collaborative approach helps the government to develop policies that are sensitive and responsive to changing demographics and emerging issues.

STRATEGY 3.1

Partner with other ministries and other levels of government to facilitate the development of projects in the areas of healthy aging, safety and security, family violence, transportation, financial planning, work and the workplace, rural development, and family caregiving.

Stemming from the cross-ministry Health Sustainability Initiative, the Ministry led a Healthy Aging task group. The task group recommended expansion of the Home Support Exercise Program, which assists frail seniors in improving their fitness and strength through exercises specifically designed for older persons. The recommended expansion was implemented through the Alberta Centre for Active Living, which trained staff in all nine health regions to administer the exercise program.

The Ministry participated with Infrastructure and Transportation and stakeholders to develop a Traffic Safety Plan, which set targets for road safety, and developed a plan to achieve these targets by 2010. The Ministry's contribution to this initiative ensured that the interests and needs of seniors and the aging population were reflected in the planning process.

The Ministry collaborated with Children's Services on the Family Violence and Bullying Roundtable. The Ministry's contribution helped heighten awareness of abuse of older adults as an integral part of the cycle of family violence. As a result, strategies identified in the subsequent cross-ministry business plan for the prevention of family violence included consideration of abuse of older adults.

A Place to Grow: Alberta's Rural Development Strategy, in which the Ministry participated, included objectives and priority actions for engaging and supporting seniors. These priority actions are intended

to expand the range of service options available to seniors living in rural areas. The strategy was published in February 2005. The Ministry will participate in the implementation phase of the strategy, scheduled to begin in 2005-06.

STRATEGY 3.2

Improve analysis of data on seniors' incomes to provide a basis for forecasting future income support needs of seniors.

Through its co-leadership of the cross-ministry Health Sustainability Initiative with Health and Wellness and Finance, the Ministry analyzed the impact of drug and other health care and supportive living costs on seniors' disposable income. This helped identify seniors at risk of financial hardship and will provide a basis for policy development.

The Ministry developed data models to determine how additional funding for the Alberta Seniors Benefit program could most effectively enhance benefits for lower-income seniors. This resulted in an increase in the maximum benefits and the qualifying income thresholds. Data models were also developed to determine the impact of programs assisting seniors with dental and optical expenses and increases in education property tax.

STRATEGY 3.3

Identify and implement the legislative amendments required for Seniors and Community Supports to assume full responsibility for long-term care accommodation.

Initial legislative amendments were made to transfer authority for long-term care accommodation from Health and Wellness to the Ministry. This year, the Ministry acquired legislative responsibility for setting accommodation rates and rules for resident trust accounts in nursing homes, and joint legislative authority with Health and Wellness to require reports from nursing home operators.

STRATEGY 3.4

Partner with other ministries, regional health authorities, and facility operators to develop mechanisms for monitoring and improving the quality of long-term care accommodation.

Under contract with the Ministry, the Alberta Senior Citizens' Housing Association developed standards for seniors' supportive living accommodation.

The Ministry also contracted with the Alberta Long Term Care Association to develop accommodation standards for long-term care facilities.

For both these standards projects, the Ministry suggested possible accountability and quality improvement mechanisms for operators.

This work led to an accountability framework for accommodation standards in supportive living and long-term care facilities that will be implemented in the coming year, following approval, consultation, and appropriate legislative changes.

STRATEGY 3.5

Facilitate the shift from facility-based to community-based services by supporting the development of affordable seniors' supportive housing, appropriate income supports, and access to community services for lower-income seniors.

In 2004-05, the government announced a commitment of \$50 million to the Rural Affordable Supportive Living (RASL) program. The purpose of this program is to build affordable supportive living projects that will relieve pressure on long-term care facilities in communities outside of Edmonton and Calgary. The Ministry issued a call for proposals, in partnership with Infrastructure and Transportation and Health and Wellness, and nearly 120 projects representing approximately 4,000 supportive living units were received. The program will proceed to the next phase in 2005-06.

GOAL 3 PERFORMANCE MEASURE:

Satisfaction of departments and agencies with the Ministry's collaborative activities and contribution to joint initiatives.

The Ministry's collaborative activities with other departments and agencies assist in policy work that takes into account the needs of current and future seniors. These activities include membership on joint working groups and initiatives, and the provision of information, advice and analysis of issues relating to seniors. Satisfaction of government departments and agencies is a measure of the quality of the Ministry's services in this area.

Results and Analysis

Participants in the satisfaction survey were asked to evaluate the Ministry's performance in terms of collaborative activities and contributions to joint initiatives or objectives of relevance to seniors. To evaluate overall satisfaction with services provided by the Ministry of Seniors and Community Supports during the past year, the top two categories of a six-point scale, *very satisfied* and *satisfied*, were combined for an overall satisfaction rating of 79.5 per cent. Based on 39 responses, 31 respondents were satisfied overall, six respondents were *slightly satisfied*, one respondent was *slightly dissatisfied*, one respondent was *dissatisfied* and no respondents reported being *very dissatisfied*.⁹ The results fell short of the target of 90 per cent.¹⁰

The relatively small size of the population surveyed influences the validity of the results. Small populations tend to magnify differences among respondents, which may result in exaggerated rather than truly representative results.

⁹ Satisfaction data were gathered by a telephone survey of 39 stakeholders. The survey was conducted by a private research company. To select the list of survey participants, Ministry staff members reviewed their files and projects from 2004-05 to identify all stakeholders who met predetermined criteria for inclusion. The final list of stakeholders included Government of Alberta employees, employees of other provincial governments and the federal government, and representatives of organizations and agencies that work in seniors services. The survey was conducted between April 12 and April 30, 2005.

¹⁰ The measure reported in 2003-04 was "*Satisfaction of departments and agencies with the Ministry's leadership and collaboration, and with the information, advice, and analysis received*". This measure assessed satisfaction in the areas of both seniors and housing. The measure was adapted in 2004-07 to reflect changes to the goal, which was revised to refer to seniors only. The methodology has changed sufficiently to prevent meaningful comparisons between results from 2003-04 and 2004-05.

Core Business 2

Support the provision and ongoing management of basic housing and emergency shelter for lower-income Albertans

GOAL 4

Provincially-owned and -supported housing is efficiently and effectively managed and appropriately utilized.

Seniors and Community Supports is responsible for a housing portfolio that enables access to emergency shelter, and to subsidized housing for Albertans who cannot afford to pay full market rent for their accommodation. To fund and administer this housing portfolio, the Ministry partners with the federal government, through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and housing operators, such as municipalities and non-profit housing organizations.

STRATEGY 4.1

Ensure effective governance structures are in place for the community-based provision of seniors', family, and special purpose housing in urban, rural, and remote communities.

The Ministry reviewed the activities of housing operators to ensure programs are delivered within the Ministry's legislative requirements and that housing operations are financially sustainable.

The Ministry entered into agreements with project sponsors that require affordable housing grant recipients to submit annual reports. These annual reports must demonstrate that recipients continue to provide affordable housing for low-income Albertans.

STRATEGY 4.2

Create effective linkages with community organizations for the purpose of transferring ownership/management of provincial housing.

To meet the increasing need for more affordable housing, the Ministry works with local housing operators to transfer ownership of select properties from the Ministry to the operators for nominal amounts. Once transferred, housing operators adapt old housing units into new units or use the asset as collateral to build additional affordable housing. Property transfers to local housing operators are made in support of community plans.

Seniors and Community Supports transferred ownership of 72 housing units to municipalities and not-for-profit housing operators. The Ministry also transferred ownership of the Sunshine Lodge in Drumheller, the Wild Rose Lodge in Grande Prairie, and the Rundle Lodge in Calgary to assist in meeting needs identified in local community plans. In rural and remote communities, 32 units directly managed by the Ministry that were no longer required for social housing were sold. In Calgary, management of the Sunalta Emergency Shelter was transferred to the Calgary Drop-In Centre Society to assist in the consistent delivery of the shelter program.

The Ministry also transferred ownership of property to tenants at the completion of long-term lease-purchase or rental agreements to enable low-to moderate-income Albertans to make the transition to affordable housing. This year, the Ministry transferred ownership of five Rural Housing units, three vacant lots, seven housing units under the Rural Emergency Home Program, two Métis Housing units, and nine Rural and Native Housing units to tenants who fulfilled and concluded the terms of their agreements. Two units were also sold on the open market.

STRATEGY 4.3

Develop a flexible approach to managing the Ministry's housing portfolio that takes into account changing resident needs, within financial resources available.

The Ministry amended the *Social Housing Accommodation Regulation* to ensure seniors lodge residents aged 65 and over have a minimum of \$265 per month in disposable income after paying for their lodge accommodation. Legislation was also amended to provide pro-rated rent refunds to seniors who need to move to another facility for additional care and support.

At Gunn Centre, a new case management model was implemented requiring each individual admitted to the centre to establish a path to independence. Staff work with residents to develop an individualized plan. These plans focus on the clients' existing strengths and abilities while building external supports to enhance each individual's ability to move to, and maintain, residence within the community. The plans specify strategies for skill development and supports related to daily living skills, education and employment, financial planning, personal coping and physical health, and the formation and maintenance of positive social relationships. This new case management model promotes integration back into the community by encouraging individuals to use their full potential for change and personal growth.

The Ministry also worked with housing operators in Vegreville, Hinton, Grande Cache, Vilna, Vermilion, and Wainwright to support creative supportive living facilities. In several locations, dining and kitchen additions were added to facilities to support the needs of aging seniors.

In Calgary, the Ministry worked with the Calgary Housing Company and the Westgate Family Shelter Group to help find more permanent housing for homeless families.

Lodge Assistance Grant funding was increased from \$5.50 to \$6.50 per day for each eligible low- and moderate-income resident. This increase provides additional financial support to the housing operators managing lodges and limits the need for rental increases to seniors.

STRATEGY 4.4

Monitor operations and business practices of housing operators to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

For many Albertans, social housing is the only housing option. Since the Ministry's social housing portfolio is managed by 177 local housing operators, it is important to ensure that operators are efficient, cost-effective, and make best use of funding to provide quality housing and services to families, seniors, and individuals in need.

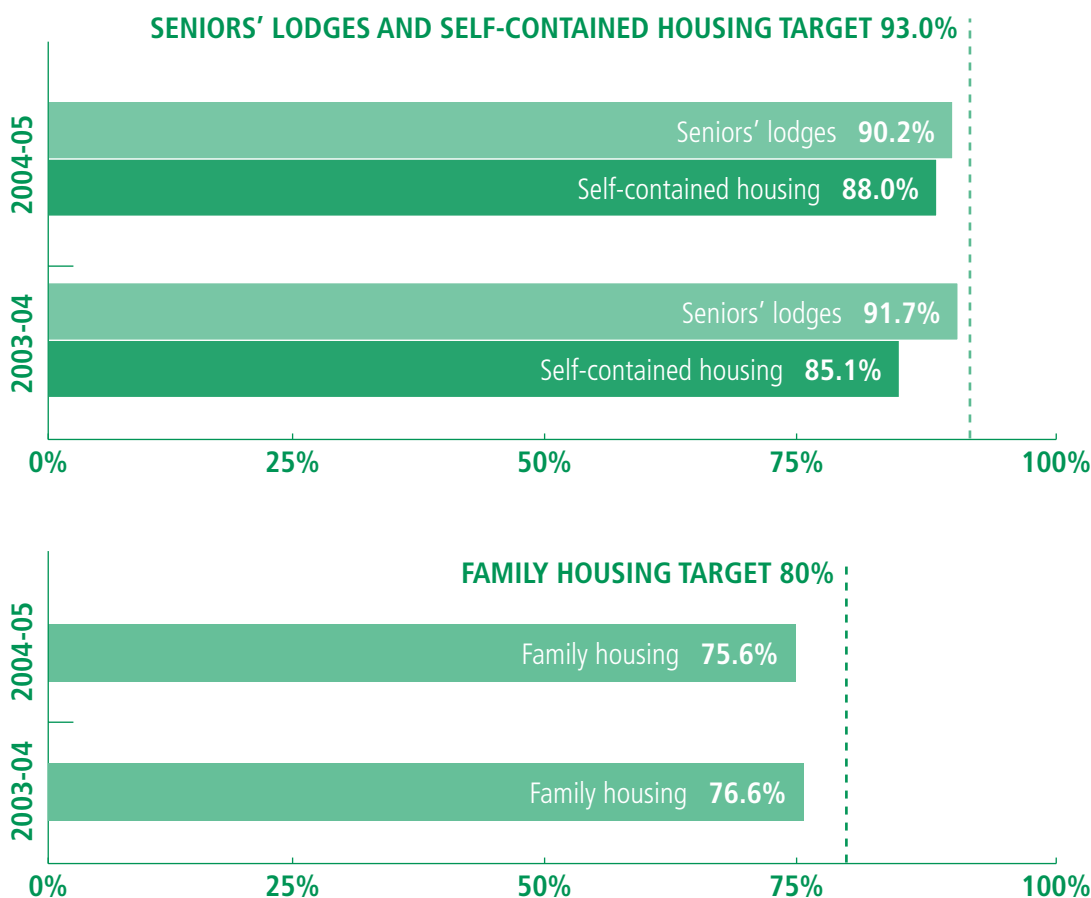
Seniors and Community Supports made changes to its operational and business plan reviews. Reviews ensure local housing operators are operating effectively and within legislative requirements set by the Ministry and to ensure that funding is in place to adequately maintain housing facilities. Issues identified, such as not targeting housing to Albertans in need and budget over-expenditures, were identified by the Ministry and corrective actions were taken as required. The department revised its process for initiating operational reviews to increase the number of reviews done of higher-risk operations. The department also introduced new procedures, timelines, and templates to improve the completion of business plans by housing operators and to increase the number of reviews done by the department.

GOAL 4 PERFORMANCE MEASURE

Quality of accommodation provided by housing operators, and where appropriate, services provided, as indicated by satisfaction of residents.

This measure assesses satisfaction of residents with the quality of accommodation in seniors' lodges, self-contained housing, and family housing. It provides a means of verifying that the residents of provincially-owned or -supported housing are receiving safe, adequate, suitable, and affordable housing that is properly managed and maintained.

QUALITY OF ACCOMMODATION PROVIDED BY HOUSING OPERATORS, AND WHERE APPROPRIATE, SERVICES PROVIDED, AS INDICATED BY SATISFACTION OF RESIDENTS.¹¹



Source: Alberta Seniors and Community Supports, Housing Services Division, Housing Satisfaction Study, 2005.

¹¹ Satisfaction was determined through a survey conducted by a private research company. A random sample of clients from the Ministry's housing programs was surveyed by telephone about their overall satisfaction with the quality of their accommodation. Approximately 1,200 telephone interviews (approximately 400 for each resident group) were completed with residents of seniors' lodges, self-contained housing and family housing. The survey also measured a number of variables to assess the quality of accommodation including overall condition, safety and affordability, and services provided by the housing management body. The results from the top two categories of a six-point rating scale *very satisfied* and *satisfied*, were combined to obtain an overall rating of satisfaction. The research was conducted in February and March 2005 over a two-week period. Results based on a sample size of 400 are accurate within +/- 4.9 per cent, 19 times out of 20.

Results and Analysis

Survey results indicate that 90.2 per cent of lodge residents, 88.0 per cent of self-contained housing residents and 75.6 per cent of family housing clients were satisfied overall with their accommodation. These results are based on approximately 400 telephone interviews for each resident group.

This is the fifth year the survey of housing residents has been conducted using the same methodology, questionnaire and rating scale.¹² Reported satisfaction rates for seniors lodge residents and family housing residents have remained stable from year to year while levels for self-contained housing residents have fluctuated. Satisfaction for 2004-05 increased to 88.0 per cent from 85.1 per cent in 2003-04 in the self-contained resident group. Only 18 residents of seniors' self-contained housing gave reasons for dissatisfaction; this is an insufficient sample to provide meaningful conclusions regarding the change in satisfaction levels. Of the 18 residents, the primary reason cited for dissatisfaction was the small size of the apartments (22 per cent).

Satisfaction levels for family housing fell slightly from the previous year and remain below the target of 80 per cent. The Ministry will continue to work towards the targets set for these measures (93 per cent overall satisfaction for seniors' lodges and self-contained housing residents, and 80 per cent for community housing) as it strives to ensure that provincially-owned and –supported housing efficiently managed and well-maintained.

¹² The wording of this performance measure was revised slightly from the measure reported in the previous year's annual report of "Satisfaction of housing residents with the quality of accommodation and, where appropriate, services provided by housing operators: seniors lodge residents; self-contained housing residents; and family housing residents." The revision was made to put more emphasis on the quality of accommodation.

GOAL 5

Development of a range of housing for lower-income Albertans is supported by the Ministry.

Seniors and Community Supports works with housing organizations and other levels of government to identify housing needs and generate capital to increase the supply of, and access to, affordable and low-cost housing options for lower-income families and individuals and persons with special needs.

STRATEGY 5.1

Encourage and support the development of community housing plans in high-growth, high-need areas that are based on local needs and established priorities, and direct resources accordingly.

While housing needs may exist throughout Alberta, the Ministry identified seven major communities as having particularly high needs due to high growth within the province. These communities are Edmonton, Calgary, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Red Deer, Grande Prairie, and Fort McMurray. The Ministry worked with these seven communities to develop and update plans tailored to each community. These community plans identify the local housing needs and strategies for meeting those needs. Existing housing, new housing under the Affordable Housing Partnership Initiative and services funded by the Ministry in these communities were targeted to the needs identified in the community plans.

Community plans were updated in all seven communities. Specific attention was given to the creation of a range of housing solutions for individuals and families to move people through the housing continuum. The Ministry recognizes seven steps along the housing continuum: absolute homelessness; emergency shelters; transitional housing; special needs housing; supportive housing; social housing; and market housing. The Ministry's goal is to move people through the continuum to be as fully involved in, or as close to, obtaining market housing as possible. Community plans also focused on the creation of additional transitional housing units through the Affordable Housing Partnership Initiative.

STRATEGY 5.2

Create effective linkages with stakeholders, housing operators, other ministries, and other levels of government to facilitate development and delivery of affordable, appropriate housing.

In 2004-05, the Ministry supported affordable housing by allocating grant funding totalling \$51.2 million (\$25.6 million each from the federal and provincial governments) under the Affordable Housing Partnership Initiative, part of the Canada-Alberta Affordable Housing Program.¹³

As of March 31 2005, the Ministry had committed to providing 1,162 new affordable housing units to benefit communities such as Calgary, Camrose, Canmore, Edmonton, Fort McMurray, Stony Plain, Villeneuve, Hythe, Red Deer, and Rocky Mountain House. The Ministry also began negotiations with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation for a second phase of this agreement.

In addition to encouraging community plans in Alberta's major urban communities, the Ministry worked with other communities to create affordable housing. New housing units have been built in 25 communities through cooperation between the Ministry, local governments, local housing operators, developers, and other partners. Projects that received funding support included special needs housing for persons with physical and mental disabilities, housing for seniors, and housing for low-income working individuals and families. In rural and remote communities, affordable housing is often lacking, due in part to non-existent real estate markets and a lack of conventional financing. This has been partially addressed through the development of housing under the Sustainable Remote Housing Initiative, another component of the Canada-Alberta Affordable Housing Program.

Combined with a commitment of \$1.35 million in 2003-04, a funding agreement with Wabasca/Desmarais Housing Authority Society in 2004-05 will result in the creation of 18 units in the communities of Wabasca, Calling Lake, Sandy Lake, Chipewyan Lake, Peerless Lake, and Trout Lake for families in need of affordable housing.

A total commitment of \$1.1 million between 2003 and 2005 and approval of the application of the Aseniwuche Winewak Nation of Canada for funding will result in the creation of 15 units in the Grande Cache area for families in need of affordable housing.

¹³ The Canada-Alberta Affordable Housing Program is an agreement between Alberta and the federal government to provide matching funds for the creation of affordable housing.

STRATEGY 5.3

Review emergency shelter funding to determine if it is properly targeted and shelters are appropriately resourced.

Throughout Alberta, a growing number of people are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and it is increasingly difficult for emergency housing operators to keep up with demand. The Ministry has worked with local housing operators and other levels of government to develop an effective response to homelessness. In the 2004-05 fiscal year, the Ministry provided approximately \$15.8 million to support emergency/transitional shelter operations.

STRATEGY 5.4

Facilitate access to coordinated housing and support services for persons with special needs to enable them to live in appropriate and stable community-based accommodation.

Many Albertans require unique housing to address special needs such as wheelchair access. Grants totalling \$765,000 were provided to 187 Alberta residents under the Home Adaptation Program to help make their homes wheelchair accessible.

To assist older Albertans, the Ministry met with the Calgary Health Region to discuss supportive living needs and develop joint programming in Calgary. In partnership with the Calgary Housing Company and the City of Calgary, the 70-unit Manchester project was constructed to provide supportive living for older Albertans who would otherwise have difficulty finding housing that addresses their needs. Manchester Seniors is expected to open for occupancy by the end of May 2005.

GOAL 5 PERFORMANCE MEASURE

Number of seven major high-need, high-growth communities within the province that have plans for responding to the housing needs of their citizens.

There is a shortage of affordable housing in Alberta's seven high-growth high-need urban communities. The Ministry is encouraging communities to assess housing needs of specific populations and develop community-based solutions to address the housing gaps. These plans are a necessary step towards developing new housing in these high-need areas.

Results and Analysis

Since 2000, the Ministry has provided \$3 million annually to seven major communities, to support the National Homelessness Initiative. All seven major high-need, high-growth communities have updated or completed new plans for responding to the housing needs of their citizens. Although the 2004-07 Ministry business plan stated the target as "To be determined", the Ministry has achieved its goal and this measure is replaced in the 2005-08 business plan by measures of the number of affordable housing units developed and the number of working days on the social housing wait list for applicants who are determined to be in critical need.

Core Business 3

Provide programs, services, and supports to enable appropriate substitute decision-making

GOAL 6

Albertans' best interests and well-being are served through appropriate and timely substitute decision-making.

Adult Albertans who are unable to make their own personal decisions may be provided with a court-ordered guardian as a substitute decision-maker under the terms of the *Dependent Adults Act*. Where possible, private guardianship by family members or other private individuals is encouraged, as in most cases this is seen to be in clients' best interests. Where no appropriate private party is available, a Public Guardian may be appointed. A Public Guardian may also be appointed as decision-maker of last resort under the *Mental Health Act*.

The Ministry, through the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG), also encourages adult Albertans to make personal directives, which may name a substitute decision-maker in the event the person becomes unable to make personal decisions.

STRATEGY 6.1

Review Community Involvement Program services to ensure contracts provide for efficient, appropriate, and effective services.

The Ministry's Community Involvement Program contracts with community agencies to provide information on guardianship and to assist individuals with applications for guardianship. Recommendations from the 2004-05 OPG Mandate Review will provide the foundation for the formal review of the Community Involvement Program in 2005-06.

STRATEGY 6.2

Examine methods of information provision to enhance the quality and consistency of information provided to Albertans on legislation relating to substitute decision-making.

Information on the Ministry website relating to guardianship and the *Personal Directives Act* was revised and updated. In addition, new presentation displays with the OPG's vision and key messages were developed.

The OPG developed a training package on personal directives, including posters and a *Personal Directives Act* kit to encourage more Albertans to write personal directives. The six posters addressed youth, seniors, young families, cultural groups, Aboriginal peoples, and health professionals. The kit included a CD-ROM and was circulated to approximately 1,800 community organizations across Alberta. In addition, the OPG updated all printed materials relating to guardianship and personal directives.

The Ministry initiated a partnership with the Ministry of Justice to address service coordination to Albertans who receive services from both the OPG and the Office of the Public Trustee. The objective of this partnership is seamless service to guardians, dependent adults, and other members of the public.

STRATEGY 6.3

Begin consolidating issues around the *Dependent Adults Act* and *Personal Directives Act* in preparation for full legislative reviews in 2007 and 2008.

The *Dependent Adults Act* is 27 years old and is being reviewed to ensure that it meets the current and future needs of dependent adults and their decision-makers. In preparation for the review, a Legislative Review Steering Committee was established jointly with Justice (Office of the Public Trustee). Public consultations will take place in 2005-06.

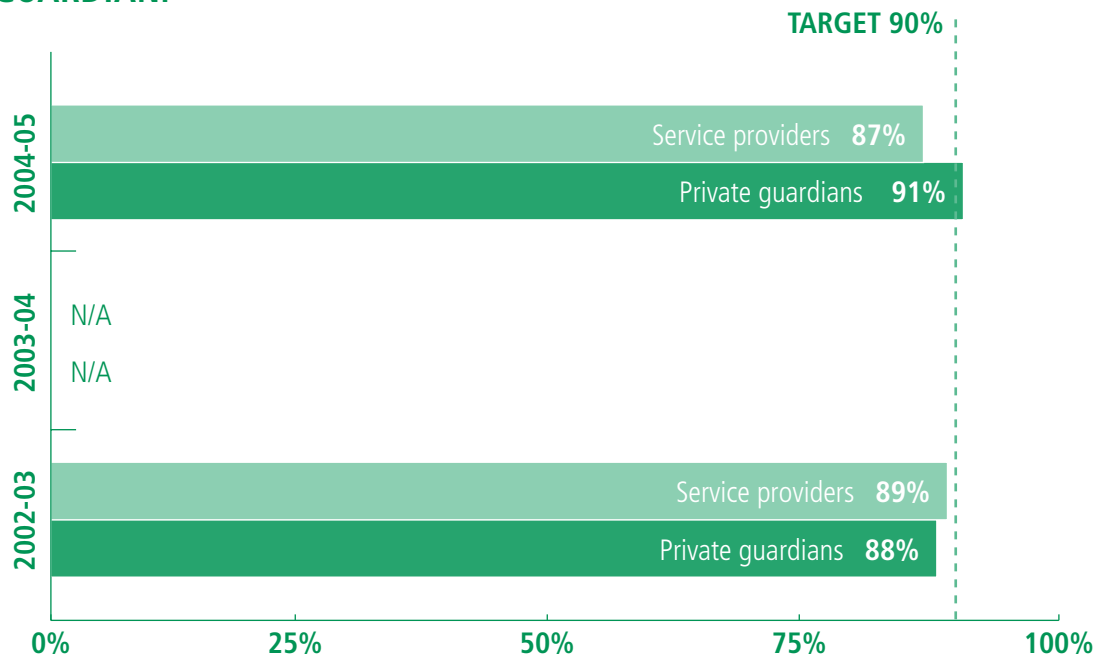
The *Personal Directives Act* was proclaimed in 1997. As more Albertans are choosing to prepare personal directives, the legislative review will identify ways to improve the Act's clarity and examine ways to simplify its implementation. To prepare for the review, a *Personal Directives Act* Legislative Review Steering Committee was established, with representatives from health authorities and the Alberta Long Term Care Association. Public consultations will take place in 2005-06.

GOAL 6 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Measure 6.a: Satisfaction with supports and services provided by the Office of the Public Guardian.

This measure assesses the satisfaction of service providers and private guardians of dependent adults with the supports and services they receive from the Office of the Public Guardian. Dependent adults are those who have been deemed unable to make their own personal decisions by the courts. A guardian is a court-ordered substitute decision maker. A private guardian is usually a family member or a friend.

SATISFACTION WITH SUPPORTS AND SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC GUARDIAN.¹⁴



Source: *Alberta Seniors and Community Supports, Strategic Planning and Supportive Living Division, Office of the Public Guardian Satisfaction Survey Report, 2005.*

Results and Analysis

The satisfaction of service providers in 2004-05 was 87 per cent. Satisfaction decreased slightly from the previous year with satisfaction reported at 89 per cent.¹⁵ As a result of the small sample size and the potential for sampling error, it is not possible to determine if this drop reflects a decline in the satisfaction of all service providers.¹⁶

¹⁴ Satisfaction was determined through a survey conducted by a private research company. The survey used a four-point scale and the top two categories *very satisfied* and *somewhat satisfied* were combined for an overall satisfaction rating.

¹⁵ This satisfaction survey is conducted biennially. The 2002-03 survey was conducted during the last week of January 2003, while the 2004-05 survey was conducted over three days at the end of May 2005.

¹⁶ Service providers were selected at random and contacted by telephone three days after an introductory letter was mailed. A total of 100 service providers from a list of 444 were surveyed resulting in survey accuracy to within +/- 8.6 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

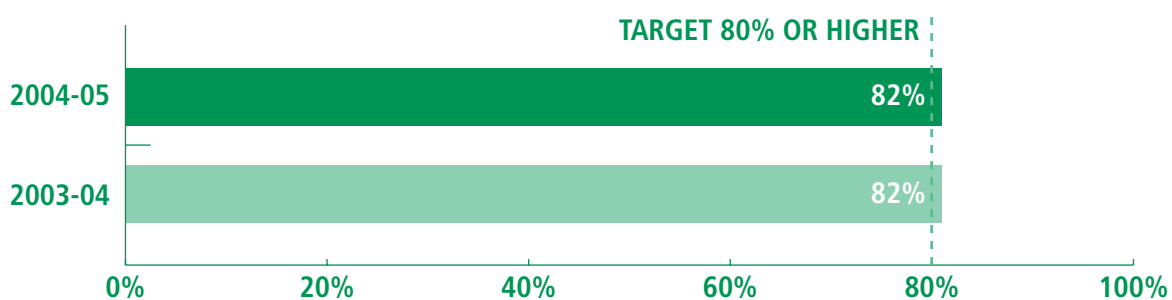
In 2004-05, 91 per cent of private guardians expressed satisfaction with the Office of the Public Guardian. Although the sample size was not large enough to determine a statistically significant change in the satisfaction of private guardians compared to the previous year's satisfaction of 88 per cent, increased consultation with this group may account for rising levels of satisfaction.^{17, 18} Starting in 2005-06, the surveys for this measure will be conducted annually rather than biennially.

Measure 6.b: Percentage of dependent adults with private guardians.

Guardians may be private, or if no private guardian is willing or able to undertake this task, a public guardian is appointed through the Office of the Public Guardian. This measure calculates the percentage of dependent adults who have private, as opposed to public, guardians.

Private guardianship is generally preferred over public guardianship. In most cases, family members or other persons with an emotional bond to the dependent adult are in the best position to serve in his or her best interests. Public guardianship should only be considered when no private guardian is able, willing or appropriate to take on the task. In general, private guardianship is possible and appropriate in approximately 80 per cent of guardianship cases.

PERCENTAGE OF DEPENDENT ADULTS WITH PRIVATE GUARDIANS.¹⁹



Source: *Alberta Seniors and Community Supports, Strategic Planning and Supportive Living Division, Office of the Public Guardian Information System.*

¹⁷ The Office of the Public Guardian sent a letter to a randomly selected sample of 1,000 private guardians. Those receiving the letter were asked to undertake a web survey. Those who did not have access to the Internet were advised that they could telephone the Office of the Public Guardian and request to be included on a list of private guardians to be interviewed over the telephone.

¹⁸ A total of 123 participants completed the survey on the Internet, while 45 participants completed the survey by telephone. In total, 168 individuals responded to the private guardian survey. Of the 168 respondents, 146 completed the survey question related to satisfaction. Accuracy of the results of this survey are within +/- 8.0 percentage points 19 times out of 20.

¹⁹ Statistics on the number of court ordered public and private guardians are compiled by the Office of the Public Guardian. The percentage of private guardians is calculated from these statistics.

Results and Analysis

As of March 31, 2005, there was a total of 10,061 dependent adults. The Public Guardian acted as guardian for 1,793 dependent adults. There were 8,268 dependent adults with private guardians. The performance target of 80 per cent or higher was achieved with a ratio of private to public guardianship of 82 per cent to 18 per cent. These figures do not include referrals made to the Office of the Public Guardian to act as guardian (1,793 is the number where the Office of the Public Guardian has a current court order to act as guardian).²⁰

Core Business 4

Provide programs, services, and supports for persons with disabilities

GOAL 7

Ensure that Albertans with disabilities have the opportunity to be fully included in the social, economic, and cultural life of the province and that adult Albertans in care are protected from abuse.

Participation in Alberta's social, economic, and cultural life means that persons with disabilities have the opportunity to experience every aspect of the community as valued and contributing community members. The Alberta Disability Strategy recommends improved coordination, integration and effectiveness of government programs and services to eliminate obstacles and barriers to participation in community life.

Through the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program, the Ministry provides Albertans who have a severe disability that prevents them from working to earn a living with a living allowance and health benefits that help them meet their needs and live as independently as possible. The Ministry is also responsible for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD), which funds and delivers programs that assist persons with intellectual disabilities to live, work, and participate in community life. In addition, through Protection for Persons in Care, the Ministry works to enhance safeguards for vulnerable adults by investigating allegations of abuse involving adults who receive services from government-funded agencies.

²⁰ The decision on whether to appoint a private or public guardian is ultimately made by the courts, not by the Ministry, in accordance with the requirements of the *Dependent Adults Act*. The decision depends on the availability, in each case, of an appropriate potential private guardian and on what is deemed to be in the best interests of the dependent adult.

STRATEGY 7.1

Review the AISH program in the context of other government supports and implement changes to ensure responsiveness to client needs and program sustainability.

A review of the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program began in September 2004. The AISH Review focused on renewing the program and improving the entire package of benefits available to AISH clients. Ministry staff supported the work of the MLA AISH Review Committee in preparation for its report and recommendations, including cost analysis and coordinating opportunities for public, stakeholder, and staff input.

During the review, a discussion guide with a questionnaire containing ideas for changes to AISH was distributed. The guide was sent to approximately 32,000 AISH clients, 4,000 disability organizations/community groups and was also available to the public online. Over

18,000 questionnaires and 130 written submissions were received. Additionally, approximately 500 individuals participated in two public meetings held in Edmonton and Calgary.

The report and recommendations were prepared by the MLA AISH Review Committee and submitted to the Minister in February 2005. Recommendations from this report included increasing the AISH financial benefit, providing additional benefits for clients with unique needs, and increasing the employment income exemption rates.

STRATEGY 7.2

Further the Alberta Disability Strategy by creating an Office for Disability Issues to work with the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities and government ministries to encourage greater cross-government coordination and more effective delivery of programs for Albertans with disabilities.

The newly created Office for Disability Issues (ODI) was made fully operational and work was started on a government response to the Alberta Disability Strategy.

The *Housing Developments for Persons with Disabilities in Alberta* resource manual was developed and distributed to promote awareness of housing resources available to persons with disabilities.

The Ministry worked with Community Development's Parks and Protected Areas to enhance the accessibility of interpretive programs and facilities in provincial parks. The Ministry provided children with disabilities the opportunity to experience Kananaskis Park and its programs through *Access Kananaskis*, a research project to make the park's interpretive programs and school outreach programs more inclusive. As well, the Ministry provided resources for wheelchair accessible furniture and picnic tables to William Watson Lodge, an accessible wilderness retreat in Kananaskis.

The Ministry contributed to the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission's *Duty to Accommodate Students With Disabilities in Post-secondary Educational Institutions* publication. This document provides general guidelines to accommodate the needs of students with physical and mental disabilities, including creating accessible facilities, providing materials in alternative formats (such as Braille, large print, audio tape, electronic, etc.), adopting flexible evaluation formats, and ensuring that administration and faculty are knowledgeable and supportive.

STRATEGY 7.3

Contribute to the development of programs and services that support the needs of persons with disabilities by responding to the outcomes of the Gaps in Service Project, continuing to support and enhance the Alberta Brain Injury Initiative and by coordinating interdepartmental work on issues relating to the Alternative Communications Strategy.

The Gaps in Service Initiative (Gaps) identified areas of unmet need and collaborative ways to provide services for disabled adults with complex needs who are not always eligible for existing government services. For example, Gaps partnered with other ministries to fund three pilot projects in rural Alberta for adults with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD). These projects extend supports provided for children and youth past the age of 18 to help individuals with FASD successfully make the transition into adulthood.

The Alberta Brain Injury Initiative (ABII) contracted with community agencies to establish 25 service coordinator positions. Service coordinators work with individuals with acquired brain injuries who have been discharged from hospital. They link individuals to community programs, coordinate access to services, enhance the community's ability to support persons with brain injuries, and increase understanding about the impact of brain injury. Over the past year, service coordinators contacted over 1,250 persons with acquired brain injuries across the province.

To assist families and caregivers, the Ministry partnered with the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital to expand Caregiver College, a series of information sessions, through Telehealth (video conferencing) to 21 communities and over 200 participants. The sessions provided information on brain injuries and opportunities to meet others and share experiences. The sessions were consistently filled to capacity.

The Alternative Communication Strategy helped blind, deafblind, and hearing impaired Albertans access government by raising awareness of alternative communication options (audio, online, Braille, larger fonts, signing, etc.).

The Ministry partnered with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind to provide intervenor services for deafblind Albertans in Edmonton and Calgary. Through an intervenor, deafblind citizens can now participate in community activities and programs to increase independence and confidence.

STRATEGY 7.4

Strengthen and initiate consultations with Albertans to assist in the identification and resolution of systemic issues arising from the needs of persons with disabilities and vulnerable adults in care.

The Alberta Brain Injury Initiative (ABII) held 22 Community Action Coalition Process forums throughout Alberta, which allowed brain injury survivors, their families and caregivers, and service providers to set the future direction of the ABII.

STRATEGY 7.5

Improve Persons with Developmental Disabilities Boards' processes for adults with developmental disabilities and their families and guardians to determine the support they need.

Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) worked to ensure PDD-funded services addressed the unique needs of each individual served through an individualized approach to planning. PDD funded pilot projects and training workshops to assist PDD staff, community agencies, families and adults with intellectual disabilities to plan for the supports they need.

PDD provided resources to the Alberta Association for Community Living, to host family leadership workshops and develop family networks in communities across the province. PDD also funded leadership development for adults with intellectual disabilities through the Leadership Today Society and a number of self-advocacy networks across Alberta. As a result, families and self-advocates are better able to collectively advocate for the supports they need as well as have input into policy and strategic directions that impact them directly.

STRATEGY 7.6

Support and strengthen communities' capacity to include persons with developmental disabilities.

PDD contributed to the Northeast Libraries Initiative, a partnership between Athabasca University, Community Development, and the Northern Lights Library System to facilitate community inclusion for adults with disabilities through local libraries. This project helped persons with disabilities to use computer equipment for library access. As a result, several libraries in Northeast Alberta have become more accessible and more inclusive to people with disabilities.

Three Alberta communities that do not have public transportation systems, Peace River, Vegreville and Westlock, were able to start

transportation projects, such as special bus services and conversion of vehicles, with the assistance of PDD Community Capacity grants. These communities will increase access to transportation in their communities for persons who need specialized transportation.

STRATEGY 7.7

Partner with the service sector to ensure adults with developmental disabilities receive quality support that facilitates inclusion.

The PDD Provincial Board requires all PDD-funded agencies to be certified by the Alberta Association of Rehabilitation Centres (AARC) as having met Creating Excellence Together (CET) Standards. CET certification provides assurance that PDD-funded agencies provide quality service for the adults with intellectual disabilities they support. Last year, 77 community agencies that provide PDD-funded services participated in CET surveys.

PDD sponsored a range of workshops and training opportunities for community agency and PDD staff. Skills for facilitating community inclusion, and planning and managing complex-care needs of adults with intellectual disabilities were key topics.

In 2004-05, PDD Provincial and Community Boards partnered with AARC to launch the Workforce 2010 Initiative to ensure individuals with disabilities have access to a well-trained and stable community rehabilitation workforce. In 2004-05 the Workforce 2010 Taskforce completed the creation of job profiles for the field of community rehabilitation, gathering of labour market information, and the development of human resource tools for employers.

STRATEGY 7.8

Work with governments at the provincial, federal and municipal levels to ensure policies are aligned and programs are responsive to persons with developmental disabilities.

PDD worked with other government partners on the Alberta Children's Initiative to support the implementation of a Regional Integrated Case Management Model for children and youth with special needs. This model will improve the coordination of services for persons who require supports from more than one ministry. To further streamline transition for youth with intellectual disabilities into adult services through PDD, the South Alberta Community Board jointly funded a coordinator position with the Southwest Alberta Child and Family Services Authority.

Historically, Human Resources and Employment, Seniors and Community Supports (through PDD), and Health and Wellness have offered separate programs that provide employment assistance to persons with disabilities. In 2004-05, these ministries partnered with Social Development Canada to design and implement employment assistance projects for persons with disabilities that cut across the three provincial ministry mandates. Pilot projects were funded in each of PDD's six regions to demonstrate integrated approaches to providing employment assistance for persons with disabilities.

STRATEGY 7.9

Enhance the effectiveness of community governance for persons with developmental disabilities through the 2nd Century Communities Initiative.

The PDD Provincial Board consulted with stakeholders throughout the province to develop a framework for governance and accountability. This framework clarifies roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities of the PDD Provincial and Community Boards and partners in creating an Alberta where adults with intellectual disabilities are included in community life. Completion of the framework was a successful milestone for PDD's Second Century Communities Initiative that shaped a vision for inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities in Alberta's second century.

STRATEGY 7.10

Provide leadership in safeguarding vulnerable adults in care by responding to and investigating allegations of abuse and developing educational initiatives related to prevention of abuse.

The Ministry investigated complaints of abuse involving adults who receive government-funded care services from agencies such as nursing homes, hospitals, lodges, group homes, and shelters. All allegations of abuse were investigated and recommendations were made to the facilities involved to enhance safeguards for vulnerable adults. The Ministry promoted accountability by requesting that facilities, in collaboration with the appropriate agency or authority, respond to the recommendations. The majority of the facilities involved in abuse complaints responded and indicated that they had made changes and improvements that reflected recommendations made by Protection for Persons in Care.

The Ministry worked to raise awareness and prevent abuse of vulnerable adults by conducting 22 education sessions throughout the year. The sessions had approximately 650 participants, primarily students and service providers who work in health care settings.

STRATEGY 7.11

Enhance the protection of persons in care from abuse and improve the life of adult Albertans in care by implementing the results of the legislative review of the *Protection for Persons in Care Act*.

During the ongoing review of the *Protection for Persons in Care Act* in 2004-05, the Ministry examined how administration of the act could be improved and how the prevention of abuse of vulnerable adults receiving government-funded care services could best be achieved. In response to recommendations made by the Ombudsman, the Ministry initiated administrative changes to the complaints and investigations process emphasizing administrative fairness.

GOAL 7 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Measure 7.a: Satisfaction, by persons with developmental disabilities, with PDD-funded services.

In the fall of 2003, the Office of the Auditor General noted a weakness in the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) individual satisfaction measure reported in the 2002-03 Community Development Ministry annual report. They noted a risk of bias in the selection of participants in the survey and in the responses given due to the help individuals may have received in filling out the questionnaire. The PDD Boards, individuals receiving services, and their families and guardians also recognized the cognitive and communication limitations that can hinder an individual's ability to respond to a written questionnaire.

PDD advised the Office of the Auditor General that the measure would be dropped in future years until an appropriate methodology could be developed. As planned, the PDD Provincial Board did not conduct the individual satisfaction survey for 2004-05. However, the performance measure remained in Community Development's 2004-07 business plan, as it had already been signed-off in Spring 2004. The Office of the Auditor General has noted this as an exception in its report on page 22.

The PDD Boards recognize that adults with intellectual disabilities, as consumers of the program, should be given the opportunity to provide feedback on their level of satisfaction with services provided. However, because of the nature of their disabilities, it is difficult for many of the individuals receiving PDD-funded services to participate effectively in the survey process.

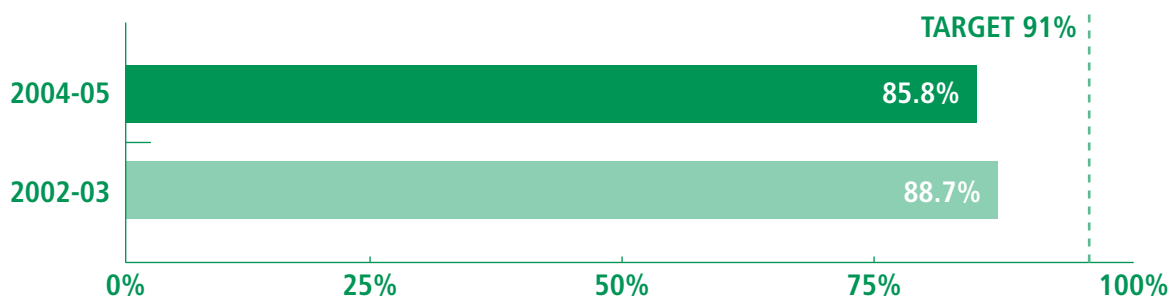
A new measure has been included in the Seniors and Community Supports 2005-08 Ministry business plan, which reports the percentage of individuals exercising control in their lives. This measure comes from the Alberta Association of Rehabilitation Centres' Creating Excellence Together (CET) surveying process, which includes personal interviews with individuals receiving PDD-funded support and their families, regarding the degree to which their services support their quality of life.

Measure 7.b: Satisfaction, by families/guardians of persons with developmental disabilities, with PDD-funded services.

As a significant proportion of the individuals assisted by the Persons with Developmental Disabilities Boards have cognitive and communication limitations, it is essential that they have ongoing support and the involvement of family and/or guardians. The satisfaction of family members and guardians as informed stakeholders with the PDD program provides important feedback on the quality and direction of the program.

This measure reflects overall satisfaction with the program, provincially which facilitates the identification of areas of concern and program improvement. A total of 1,554 completed surveys were received, representing an overall response rate of 37.1 per cent. Of these, 93.0 per cent (1,445) were from family members/private guardians, 4.5 per cent (70) were from public guardian representatives, and an additional 2.5 per cent (39) were from people who identified themselves as “other” (e.g. trustee, monitor, caregiver, or unidentified respondents.)

SATISFACTION, BY FAMILIES/GUARDIANS OF PERSONS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, WITH PDD-FUNDED SERVICES.²¹



Source: *Persons with Developmental Disabilities Provincial Board, PDD Family/Guardian Satisfaction Survey 2004/2005.*

²¹ The satisfaction survey was conducted by an independent research firm and is a full population survey. A written survey questionnaire is sent by mail to all legal guardians (including public guardians) and/or family members (in the absence of a legal guardian) of adults with developmental disabilities receiving services funded by PDD. A total of 4,189 survey forms (4,066 to family/private guardians and 123 to public guardian representatives) were distributed in 2004-05. Public guardian representatives were requested to respond on behalf of only four individuals representatively selected from their caseload, filling one form on behalf of each individual. Responses of *strongly agree* and *agree* were combined to *agreed* and are reported as satisfied. Responses of *disagree* and *strongly disagree* were combined to *disagreed* and reported as dissatisfied.

Results and Analysis

In 2004-05, 85.8 per cent of families/guardians (public and private) reported overall satisfaction with the PDD funded services received by the person to whom they provide guardianship. Satisfaction dropped slightly from 2002-03 and remains below the target of 91 per cent. In their comments, survey respondents linked overall levels of satisfaction with barriers to community living, such as lack of affordable, accessible housing, and transportation.²²

Integrated Results Analysis

This section of the annual report summarizes planned to actual results in terms of financial and non-financial information. The comparison is structured around the Ministry's four core businesses as outlined in the 2004-07 business plan and reflects the transfer of Income Support for Persons with Disabilities and Community Support Systems.

The following information provides an overview of program changes and an explanation of significant expenditure variances. Further information on goals, strategies, and performance measure results is included in the section entitled "Discussion and Analysis of Results". The table below outlines the actual expenditures incurred, in comparison to the resources budgeted, to achieve the goals of each core business.

MINISTRY EXPENSE BY CORE BUSINESS

	Millions				
	2005				2004
	Estimates from business plan	Adjustments (supplementary estimates)	Authorized Budget	Actual	Actual
Core Business 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide services, programs, and planning for seniors and the aging population 	\$245.0	\$30.0	\$275.0	\$273.7	\$228.3
Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seniors in need have access to financial supports that enable them to live in a secure and dignified way. • Information provided by the Ministry on programs, services, and initiatives for older Albertans is accessible, accurate, and consistent. • Government policies, programs, and plans effectively anticipate and respond to the needs of current and future seniors. 					

²² The results are considered to be accurate within a margin of +/- 1.64 per cent, 19 times out of 20.

	Millions				
	2005				2004
	Estimates from business plan	Adjustments (supplementary estimates)	Authorized Budget	Actual	Actual
Core Business 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the provision and ongoing management of basic housing and emergency shelter for lower-income Albertans 	\$220.2	\$4.5	\$224.7	\$227.2	\$212.0
Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincially owned and supported housing is efficiently and effectively managed and appropriately utilized. Development of a range of housing for lower-income Albertans is supported by the Ministry. 					
Core Business 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide programs, services, and supports to enable appropriate substitute decision-making 	\$5.0		\$5.0	\$5.4	\$5.0
Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Albertans' best interests and well-being are served through appropriate and timely substitute decision-making. 					
Core Business 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide programs, services, and supports for persons with disabilities 	\$885.7		\$885.7	\$873.5	\$833.6
Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Albertans with disabilities have the opportunity to be fully included in the social, economic, and cultural life of the province and that adult Albertans in care are protected from abuse. 					
Total Core Business Expense	\$1,355.9	\$34.5	\$1,390.4	\$1,379.8	\$1,278.9

Highlights of changes in the Ministry's spending are as follows:

CORE BUSINESS 1

Provide services, programs, and planning for seniors and the aging population.

Core Business 1 includes program funding for grant payments under the Alberta Seniors Benefit (ASB) and Special Needs Assistance for Seniors programs, as well as funding for Client and Information Services, Planning and Research, and other services that support delivery of seniors programs.

The budget for Core Business 1 increased by \$30 million (from \$245 million to \$275 million) in 2004-05 due to the approval of a supplementary estimate to fund enhancements to the Alberta Seniors Benefit program announced on August 11, 2004.

Expenditures for Core Business 1 increased by almost 20 per cent (from \$228.3 million to \$273.7 million) over the prior year due primarily to the increase in ASB payments following program enhancements described above, as well as additional seniors receiving assistance under the program. In total, the ASB program grew by 17,000 seniors in 2004-05.

This year, 99.5 per cent of the Authorized Program Budget for Core Business 1 (\$273.7 million of the \$275 million authorized budget) was spent on seniors programs and services.

CORE BUSINESS 2

Support for the provision and ongoing management of basic housing and emergency shelter for lower-income Albertans.

Core Business 2 includes major program funding for lodge assistance, support to community and seniors housing providers, rent supplements, seniors supportive housing incentives, the Canada/Alberta Affordable Housing Agreement, special needs housing, and homeless support, as well as funding for services that support delivery of the housing programs.

The budget for Core Business 2 increased by \$4.5 million (from \$220.2 million to \$224.7 million) in 2004-05 due to the approval of a supplementary estimate to fund development of supportive living spaces in Vegreville, Vermilion, and Wainwright. Building affordable supportive housing in rural Alberta is a less costly alternative to long-term care and allows seniors with high health and personal needs to remain in the community.

Expenditures for Core Business 2 increased by 7.2 per cent (from \$212.0 million to \$227.2 million) over the prior year due primarily to the \$4.5 million in Seniors Supportive Housing Incentive Program payments for supportive living spaces as described above, and increased payments under the Canada/Alberta Affordable Housing Program. Funding for the Affordable Housing Program increased from \$41 million to \$51.2 million in 2004-05, and brought the total Ministry commitment for affordable housing units to 1,162.

The budget for Core Business 2 was over-spent by 1.1 per cent. Actual expenditures totalled \$227.2 million, in relation to a \$224.7 million total budget. This was primarily to accommodate program demand for homeless shelters and seniors' lodges. Additional funding was also needed for community housing providers to address increasing operating costs.

CORE BUSINESS 3

Provide programs, services, and support to enable appropriate substitute decision-making.

Core Business 3 consists of funding for the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG).

Expenditures for Core Business 3 increased by eight per cent (from \$5.0 million to \$5.4 million) over the prior year due to costs to develop a 10-year plan on the future directions of the OPG, and increasing costs to provide services to the almost 1,800 dependent adults in Alberta receiving public guardianship services.

CORE BUSINESS 4

Provide supports, services, and planning for persons with disabilities.

Core Business 4 includes major program funding for Community Support Systems and Income Support for Persons with Disabilities. Community Support Systems includes program development for persons with disabilities, the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, Protection for Persons in Care, and the Brain Injury Initiative, as well as financial assistance

provided to Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Boards. Income Support for Persons with Disabilities administers the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program, which provides financial and health benefits to adult Albertans with a permanent disability that severely impairs their ability to earn a livelihood.

Expenditures for Core Business 4 increased by 4.8 per cent (from \$833.6 million to \$873.5 million) over the prior year due primarily to a 5.7 per cent (\$24.9 million) increase in funding provided to PDD, and a 3.3 per cent (\$12.6 million) increase in expenditures for the AISH program. Expenditures for both programs have increased due to cost increases and caseload growth over the past several years. Net caseload growth for PDD has averaged about four per cent annually since 2000-01. The average caseload for AISH has increased by approximately six per cent over two years, from 29,753 in 2002-03 to 31,600 in 2004-05.

Of the authorized program budget for Core Business 4, 98.6 per cent (\$873.5 million of the \$885.7 million authorized budget) was spent on programs and services to support disabled Albertans. The \$12.2 million remaining was due to surplus funds in AISH income support and health benefits, where caseload growth did occur, but not to the extent that had been estimated in the budget.

FORWARD LOOKING INFORMATION

The Ministry experienced many successes during 2004-05. Much of the work undertaken this year provides the foundation for significant enhancements to programs and services that will be implemented in the next fiscal year.

Enhancements to seniors dental and optical benefits and assistance with the education portion of property tax for seniors will be made in 2005-06. Also supporting the province's seniors in the next fiscal year is a \$6 million dollar increase in grants to lodge operators that will help minimize the impact of cost increases to approximately 7,700 low- and moderate-income seniors living in lodges, while ensuring lodge operators can continue to provide quality, affordable housing. The additional funds will help to keep accommodation fees for seniors affordable.

Next year, the Ministry will move forward with developing and monitoring accommodation standards for long-term care facilities and supportive living settings. Public consultations will be held in 2005-06 and progress will be made in implementing these standards, including a system to license/register supportive living facilities and mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing compliance with the standards.

New spending in the next year will include \$25 million (\$12.5 million each from the federal and provincial governments) to develop approximately 500 more affordable housing units.

The sale of land and the transfer of land and buildings in Fort McMurray will result in the development of sustainable affordable housing. Planning and engineering has been started for the development of approximately 600 acres. Another area for development has been identified, which is expected to provide an additional 300 acres for residential housing. The Ministry is currently working with the community to prepare appropriate land strategies for these areas and to reduce housing pressures in Fort McMurray.

Funding for the operation of homeless shelters located in major municipalities throughout the province will rise by \$6 million in 2005-06, bringing total provincial support for transitional and emergency housing to more than \$20 million per year.

The Ministry will also review legislation in the coming year to ensure alignment with the needs of Albertans. Work is continuing on the reviews of the *Dependent Adults Act* and the *Personal Directives Act*. These reviews will involve a series of public and stakeholder consultations focused on gathering the views and ideas of Albertans.

Momentum will continue in enhancing programs and services for Albertans with disabilities. With the completion of the MLA AISH Review, 2005-06 will see the implementation of the approved recommendations, including increases to the living allowance, increases to the earnings exemptions for AISH clients who are in the labour force, and the provision

of supplementary benefits to help cover the costs of additional medical supplies, special transportation, child care, and other special needs.

In 2005-06, the Alberta Aids to Daily Living (AADL) Program will be added to the Ministry. AADL provides assistance to people who have a chronic disability or illness so they can access basic medical equipment and supplies that allow them to be more independent in their home or in a home-like setting.

With so many programs and services benefiting seniors, persons in need of housing, and persons with disabilities under one ministry, a priority for 2005-06 will be to improve the coordination and integration of the programs and services now offered by Seniors and Community Supports to benefit Albertans.

