

Seniors' Chat

Huge Boost for Low-Income Seniors - January 2009

I'm very pleased to tell you about an exciting initiative that provides a huge boost to seniors with low incomes. As of January 1, the provincial government will more than double the **Seniors' Income Plan (SIP)** benefit, which in turn, will double the number of seniors who are eligible for the program.

Financial Benefit

This means single seniors will receive \$190 per month (instead of \$90), and couples will receive \$155 per month each (instead of \$72.50).

For a single senior, the new maximum income is \$16,313.64. For a couple, the new maximum income is \$26,468.64.

We recognize that many seniors on fixed incomes are struggling to deal with higher costs. As a result of our new \$19.5 million investment, I'm happy to say that the number of Saskatchewan seniors who are eligible for SIP will double from 10,000 to about 20,000.

This is the first increase in the SIP benefit since 1992.

Automatic Enrolment

SIP helps seniors with little or no income other than the federal Old Age Security pension (OAS) and Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS). Seniors do not have to apply for SIP. Enrolment is automatic, based upon income reported on applications for the federal GIS or the previous year's income tax return.



Hon. Don McMorris

Health Care Benefits

In addition to these financial benefits, seniors who are eligible for SIP will receive the following health care services:

- one free eye examination per year;
- free chiropractic services;
- reduced deductible on prescription drugs;
- home care subsidy;
- loan of some low-cost devices through Saskatchewan Abilities Council; and
- supplementary health benefits for SIP recipients living in special-care homes.

For more information about SIP, please contact Social Services at 1-800-667-7161 or www.socialservices.gov.sk.ca For information about SIP health care benefits, contact Saskatchewan Health at 1-800-667-7581; in Regina at 787-3317 or www.health.gov.sk.ca

If you have any ideas or concerns about issues relating to seniors, please feel free to write to me at Room 302, Legislative Building, 2405 Legislative Drive, Regina, S4S 0B3, or phone my office at (306) 787-7345. I welcome your comments and look forward to hearing from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don McMorris". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

The Honourable Don McMorris
Minister of Health



Saskatchewan
Ministry of
Health