

## Summary

- Some New Brunswick seniors do not use government or community services that could benefit them because information about the services can be difficult to find or is unclear.
- To address this, Social Supports NB (SSNB) collaborated with seniors and their caregivers to create a user-friendly [website](#) that shares all available resources in one place. This website includes digital tools designed to facilitate access to services, such as online applications for Long-Term Care and the Home First program, and a long-term care decision aid calculator.
- The goal of this initiative was to simplify the process of finding information, ensuring more people can access the services they need.
- This project evaluated whether the SSNB website improved access to information, and whether users were satisfied with the digital tools.
- From its launch in July 2020 to the project's end in December 2022, 293,497 people used the SSNB website, 88% of whom browsed in English and 11% in French.

<b>HSPF Focus Area</b>	Developing innovative care pathways
<b>Project Start &amp; End Date</b>	July 2020 – December 2022
<b>Organization/Agency</b>	Department of Social Development
<b>Location</b>	New Brunswick (Virtual)

## Indicator Impact / Outcome / Result

*No statistical analyses were performed by the project team to determine if the results presented in this table are significant. All results should be viewed with caution.*

### Long-term care eligibility

Responses from a satisfaction survey embedded in the long-term care decision aid calculator showed that 80% of respondents found the tool easy to use, 82% felt it was helpful, 44% received unexpected results, and 53% did not plan to apply for supports through the long-term care program as a result.

- The project team did not report the number of participants who responded to this survey.

The project team indicated that there was an increase in the number of eligible referrals to the long-term care program between July 2021 when the long-term care online application launched and the project's end in December 2022. No data was provided to demonstrate this increase.

- The increasing number of seniors in NB may have contributed to the rise in eligibility, but no statistical testing was done to confirm.

### In-home services caseload

Long-term care program clients who were receiving in-home services increased from 37.6% in July 2020 to 39.6% in December 2022.

### Health services access

In April 2021, 55% of the front-line staff surveyed (i.e., long-term care social workers, discharge planning nurses, needs assessors, and workers from community organizations that support seniors; 105 respondents) were familiar with the SSNB website, which amounts to 58 people. By February 2023, this number increased to 106 people, representing 33% of the 321 respondents.

- Of those who were familiar with the website, 88% found the content and tools easy to use, 94% found them both easy to understand and useful, and 94% liked the overall appearance of the website.

## Indicator Impact / Outcome / Result

<b>Website Access</b>	Between August 2020 – December 2022, the SSNB website had:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 293,497 users</li><li>• 397,146 sessions</li><li>• 837,375 page views.</li></ul>

The SSNB website was launched with 17 total webpages. By December 2022, the content coverage grew to include 112 webpages.

### Methods and Comparison

- Three surveys on the SSNB website measured accessibility and user satisfaction.
- Long-term care program metrics, like eligible referrals and in-home service caseloads, showed the website's effect on service usage.
- SSNB website metrics, including total users, sessions, page views, and webpage development, tracked website use over time.
- No statistical analyses were performed. Therefore, all results should be viewed with caution when used to inform decision-making.

### Conclusions and Lessons Learned

- The project team collaboratively developed a consolidated website for long-term care needs, which was shown to be user-friendly, useful, accessible, and growing in exposure.
- There was not enough data to know if the website impacted the number of people who applied to or received services.
- Partnership development with 2-1-1 and Saint Thomas University/University of New Brunswick allowed web developers to integrate and promote existing tools through a singular web portal rather than creating new ones.
- Delivering website content at an eighth grade reading level in both official languages was necessary to make the information accessible.

### Recommendations

- The project team recommends future SSNB website content be delivered at an eighth grade reading level to improve accessibility.
- Website content should be expanded to support other population groups (e.g., youth in care, adoptive parents, people with disabilities). Doing so could alleviate pressure from the existing resource navigation service, 2-1-1.

### Next Steps

- The Department of Social Development has filled and funded a full-time position responsible for managing and growing the SSNB website to incorporate other services.
- Focus has shifted from creating new content to auditing existing content, marketing SSNB, website improvements (design elements, resolving programming errors), and increasing accessibility.
- The SSNB website is being modified, as per participant feedback, to include client, partner, and employee portals, which will improve access to Department of Social Development services by allowing clients to apply for services online and interact with their healthcare and social service providers virtually.
- 3110 low-income seniors who do not have access to the internet will be receiving application forms and information via a benefits bundle mailout.

### Disclaimer

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