

# Canadian Declaration on Active Living and Older Adults

## In Acknowledgement

of the United Nations General Assembly's designation of 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons; and

## In Appreciation

of the significant contribution that older adults make everyday to Canada as a nation; and

## In Recognition

of the importance of active living for human development, as a way of life in which physical activity is valued and integrated into daily life.

We, as Canadians, embrace the following Guiding Principles as a reflection of our values, beliefs, and philosophical underpinnings as we strive to attain our collective vision of *an active society where all older Canadians are leading active lifestyles, thereby contributing to their physical health and overall well-being.*

### Principle 1

It is recognized that active living is essential for daily living and a cornerstone of health and quality of life.

### Principle 2

There is a need for more positive attitudes toward aging, with realistic images that depict older adults as respected, valued, and physically active members of society.

### Principle 3

Older adults should be encouraged to participate in decision-making and leadership positions, in all phases of program or service development and delivery.

### Principle 4

Through coordination and collaboration, consistent messages and programs pertaining to active living can have a significant impact on society and lead to long-term, positive change.

### Principle 5

Issues, interests, and needs of older adults in their community must be identified; and accessible, affordable active living activities and programs must be designed to meet those needs.

### Principle 6

While it is recognized that aging and learning are both life-long processes, it is appreciated that, for some, pre-retirement years may be a key time to re-focus on active living and well-being.

### Principle 7

Canada is a society for all ages, therefore programs and services should be developed which accommodate older adults' choice to be with others.

### Principle 8

There is a need to identify, support, and share research priorities that apply to active living and aging.

### Principle 9

There is a need for education and promotion of the health benefits of active living as a way of life for older adults.