



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA

The Cabinet Office

Statement from the Premier of Bermuda, the Hon. David Burt, JP, MP

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen of the media. Thank you for being here this afternoon.

As you may recall from the Progressive Labour Party platform, we made a commitment to our seniors.

Let me quote from the platform, “Every government has the responsibility to ensure that its senior population enjoys a quality of life that reflects the value we place on them as citizens. The PLP is proud that it introduced FutureCare for our seniors to assist them in their golden years. The PLP will continue to ensure that our seniors are able to live in dignity.”

Living with dignity should not depend how much money a senior has at his or her disposal. As a country, we have a moral and social responsibility to care for our seniors and ensure they have access to affordable healthcare, a decent place to live and services that support them as they age.

Seniors are an important segment of our community. It is not enough to say it, but we must demonstrate it, by implementing and crafting policies and legislation that will provide care for those Bermudians who are currently 65 years and older and prepare for those who turn 65 in the coming days, months and years ahead.

Mindful of our budget challenges, we must develop long-term, sustainable solutions that will provide for those who have worked hard and served our community.



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To this end, we have created an **Ageing Well Committee**. The committee will operate under the guidance of the Cabinet Office to focus on seniors and ageing. They will review the ageing well strategy which has already been developed. The committee will hold public consultation sessions and begin implementing the strategy. This committee will also develop a Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Seniors.

It is important to bring all those who have responsibilities for our seniors' wellbeing together. The committee will be a government and private sector collaboration. The committee will also serve as a watch dog for residential care homes and nursing homes. They will also address the issue of senior abuse.

This is a significant undertaking. I have asked Mr. Derrick Burgess, JP, MP, to chair the committee. He has a wealth of experience as a union leader. As a Government Minister he served in several ministries – Immigration, Works and Engineering and Transport. The critical element he brings to the position is he is passionate about the issues facing seniors and has the drive and focus to help make a difference. He publicly advocates for seniors and the issues facing them. He will serve as this government's voice and conscience on issues impacting our seniors. In addition to these qualities, he is also a senior.

Members of the Ageing Well Committee will include individuals from the following ministries and organizations – some are here today:

Ageing and Disability Services

Health Insurance Department

Pensions

Department of Financial Assistance

Ministry of Transport



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National Security

Ministry of Health – Long Term Care consultant

Policy and Strategy Section

Seniors' organizations

Community based service providers

And a Gerontologist

I now invite the Chairman of the Ageing Well Committee MP Burgess to say a few words.

Thank you.

In closing, I thank each person who has stepped forward to be a part of this committee. They are making a significant contribution, sharing their time and expertise. As a country, we are extremely grateful.

We will now take questions from the media.