

# PRESENTATION KIT

## THE REMAINING LIGHT



A DOCUMENTARY FILM ABOUT HOW WE CARE FOR SENIORS

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## THE REMAINING LIGHT

A FILM BY GOH IROMOTO & SHANNON DAUB

The Remaining Light and this kit are available at [policyalternatives.ca/bcseniors](http://policyalternatives.ca/bcseniors)

Please feel free to photocopy or distribute the materials in this presentation kit and to screen The Remaining Light in public settings, including classrooms. Permission is not required, but we'd love to hear how you are using the film.

You can request additional copies of the DVD and this kit by contacting us at 604.801.5121 x 222, or by email at [bcseniors@policyalternatives.ca](mailto:bcseniors@policyalternatives.ca)

Presented by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and the Hospital Employees' Union. This kit, and CCPA's education and outreach activities on seniors care, are generously supported by:



[www.uwlm.ca](http://www.uwlm.ca)



[www.heu.org](http://www.heu.org)



[www.bcgeu.ca/seniorscare](http://www.bcgeu.ca/seniorscare)



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The CCPA is an independent, non-partisan research institute concerned with issues of social and economic justice.

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# THE REMAINING LIGHT

## Introduction to The Remaining Light and This Kit

More and more seniors — and younger people with aging parents and grandparents — are concerned about the state of seniors care in BC. Most people, however, are unsure what they can do or who they can talk to. This video is intended to help start a conversation about seniors care in your community. It is a way to bring people together to share common concerns, learn more about seniors care, and find ways to advocate for better, more effective services.

Whether your connection to the issue of seniors care is as a family member, recent retiree, health care worker, educator or concerned citizen, we hope this video will speak to your concerns. It explores what is important to all of us as we age: a caring community, dignity and respect, and access to services if and when we need them.

The video takes the viewer on a journey through the home and community care system in BC, looking at the continuum of services provided in settings other than hospitals and doctors' offices. The film explores the role that palliative care, long-term care, home-based services and outreach programs all play in helping to keep seniors healthy, and supporting them as they age and die. The film features the stories of seniors, their families, and people who care for seniors day to day.

The Remaining Light is the culmination of six years of research into the restructuring of community health services in BC by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. A list of research studies and the summary of findings from our most recent report, *An Uncertain Future for BC Seniors*, is included in this kit.

Complete copies of these studies are available free at [www.policyalternatives.ca/bcseniors](http://www.policyalternatives.ca/bcseniors). (Printed copies are also available on request, see contact information below.)

This kit also includes tools that maybe helpful to you and others in your community interested in improving seniors care:

- A copy of The Remaining Light (a 30-minute documentary film).
- A discussion guide with questions you can use after screening the film.
- Background information about the BC Ombudsperson's investigation into the state of seniors care, and ideas about how you can support her call for a stronger and more accountable system.

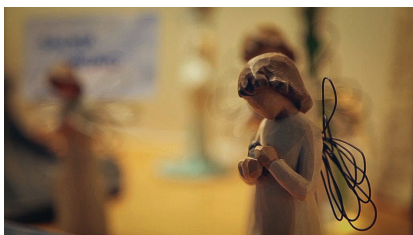
Here are some ways you can help to raise awareness about these important issues:

- Organize a community event where you show *The Remaining Light*, and host a discussion afterwards about peoples' experiences in your community. This event could be small (in your living room, or at a local seniors centre) or large (at a community hall or other gathering place). Depending on your location, the CCPA may be able to help arrange a guest speaker.
- Sign up to find out when the Ombudsperson releases her second report. Simply send an email to [bcseniors@policyalternatives.ca](mailto:bcseniors@policyalternatives.ca). When her report comes out, it is vital that the public actively supports her recommendations.
- Talk with other people and organizations in your community about how the Ombudsperson's recommendations can — if implemented — create a stronger and more accountable system of seniors care.
- Raise the issues from the film that are relevant in your community with the mayor and municipal council.
- Identify key decision-makers in your community with whom you can share your concerns about seniors care. For example, you could write a letter or ask to meet with your MLA and/or city councillors, talk with the local newspaper, meet with health authority officials and planners at the area hospital, discuss the issues with other community leaders, etc.

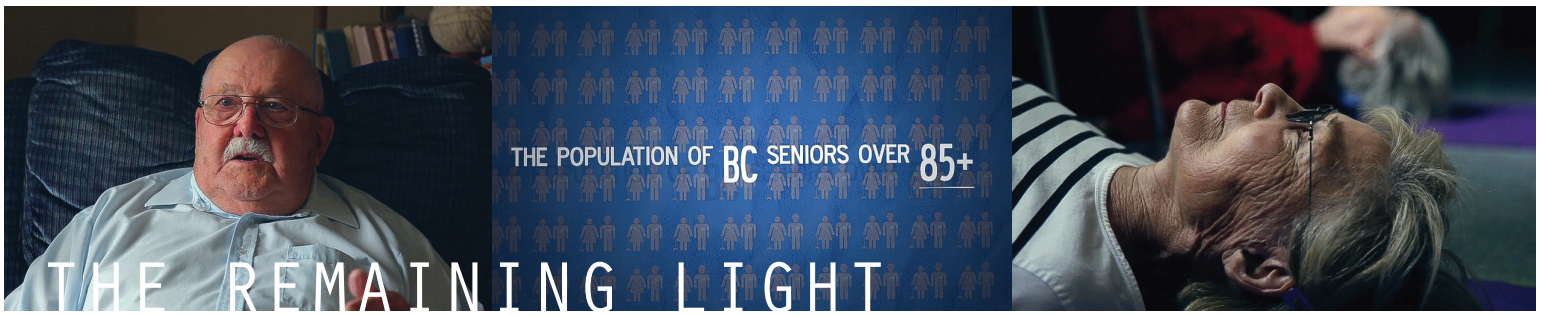
We also invite you — and anyone who shares your interest in this issue — to contact us to:

- Share your reaction to the film, and let us know how you are using it.
- Request additional copies of the video and/or this kit.
- Request a speaker to talk about seniors care with a group or at a public event.

Contact: [bcseniors@policyalternatives.ca](mailto:bcseniors@policyalternatives.ca), 604-801-5121 x 222.



The Remaining Light  
is also available online,  
[www.policyalternatives.ca/bcseniors](http://www.policyalternatives.ca/bcseniors)



## Discussion Guide

**NOTES TO THE FACILITATOR:** Screening this video for a group of people (whether small or large, in your living room, at a community hall or in a seniors' centre) can help begin a discussion about the quality of seniors care and support services in your community. It can help to connect individuals and groups concerned about these issues who want to learn more, raise public awareness, and make changes to better support seniors as they age.

After viewing the video, we encourage you to use some of the questions below in facilitating a discussion. Depending on the size of your group, you may want to ask people to introduce themselves before you delve into the issues. You could ask each of them to provide a short answer in the first question (i.e. What is your response to the video?) as part of that introduction.

1. What is your response to the video?
2. What have we experienced in our community, and how does it relate to the film?
3. Do seniors experience difficulties in accessing home support, home nursing and home rehabilitation services in your community? What impact does this have?
4. Are there problems related to staffing levels and service quality at the long-term care facilities and/or assisted living sites in your community?
5. Are there specific challenges in accessing palliative care services in your community?
6. Given this discussion, what do you see as the most pressing issue for seniors in your community?

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** You may want to ask each person to answer this question either in a round or by writing their answer on a post-it note and then putting it up on a flip chart. As the facilitator you could then summarize the two or three top issues identified by the group.

**NOTE TO THE FACILITATOR:** The remainder of the questions focus on what the group might be interested in doing to address these key issues and/or how they might use this video to broaden the discussion on seniors care issues in your community.

7. Are there people and/or organizations in our community who you think should see this film?

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** We encourage you to request additional copies of the film and/or this kit if your group would like to distribute copies to people or organizations they identify.

8. What are our stories, and how could we share them to raise awareness about these issues?

9. Based on what emerged in the previous discussion, what is the story we want to tell and how would we tell it?

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** Encourage people to imagine they are talking to a group of friends or acquaintances and want to find a way to talk about the film and discussion in a way that is engaging and interesting. They could also imagine they are talking to someone from a health authority or the local newspaper.

10. Who are the decision-makers, leaders, care providers and others involved in seniors care who we could talk to about our concerns?

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** Examples include MLAs, health authority officials, hospital planners, etc.

11. How many of you would like to continue to meet to work on the key issues we have identified?

12. Are there speakers from the community or health system that we could invite to come to speak to our group about any of these issues?

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** Depending on your location, the CCPA may be able to arrange a speaker.

13. The BC Ombudsperson has spent the past two years investigating problems in seniors care in BC, and her final report will be published this spring. What can we do to support her call for a stronger and more accountable system of seniors care?

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** You could tell people more about the Ombudsperson's investigation at this point—see the backgrounder included in this kit. Specific actions are suggested in the backgrounder.

14. How else do you see working on the key issues you have identified?



## Backgrounder: Supporting the Ombudsperson's Investigation into Seniors Care in BC

### Origins of the Investigation

While on an outreach tour around the province in early 2008, Kim Carter, the BC Ombudsperson, heard extensive public concern about seniors care. To find out more about the problem, she asked the public to let her know if they had concerns about the care of seniors that were not being reasonably or fairly addressed by provincial authorities. In less than two months she received 50 individual complaints.

As a result of these complaints, the Ombudsperson initiated a **province-wide systemic investigation into seniors care** in August 2008. The investigation focused specifically on issues of access to information, access to services, quality of care, standards of care, monitoring, and complaint processes in home support, assisted living and residential care.

To download the reports or contact the Ombudsperson, visit [www.ombudsman.bc.ca/seniors](http://www.ombudsman.bc.ca/seniors).

### First Report: Focus on Licensed Residential Care Facilities

In December 2009 the Ombudsperson issued **the first report of two reports**. It noted that “the response to this investigation was unparalleled in the history of the office.” Since initiating the investigation, her office received more than 600 responses to the questionnaire posted on its website, spoke to 300 people by phone, and opened more than 200 individual complaint files.

This initial report focused on BC’s most vulnerable seniors—those requiring 24-hour care in residential care facilities. The report identified three interrelated areas where “straightforward changes could quickly improve the quality of life for these seniors.” The Ombudsperson recommended that the provincial government:

1. Legislate a bill of rights for seniors in long-term care. In addition, she recommended that the government monitor, evaluate and report every year on how well these rights are being upheld.
2. Establish a single website with information about every licensed residential care facility in the province, including the number of staff working in different occupations (e.g. as nurses, care aides, activity aides), ownership, social activities, extra charges to seniors, previous complaints, standards of care and more.

3. Provide family members and residents with a greater say in their care by:
  - Expanding the role of family and residents' councils, and entrenching this expanded role in legislation or regulation;
  - Establishing a staff position in each facility and health authority to assist and respond to family and residents' councils in a timely manner; and
  - Providing support to establish regional family and residents' councils.

Unfortunately, the provincial government's response to the Ombudsperson's first report has been very disappointing. It did agree to implement the first recommendation—and the government has passed a [Residents' Bill of Rights](#). However, it did not comply with the most important aspects of this recommendation—to monitor, evaluate and report annually on compliance with the bill of rights. The provincial government also agreed to establish guidelines for residential care facility operators on how they would support resident and family councils, but did not agree to mandate family councils, provide staff to support these councils, or set up a website with information about every care facility.

Taken together, the Ombudsperson's recommendations would be relatively easy and inexpensive to implement. And while many community organizations responded very positively to the publication of this first report, no one has organized a province-wide citizens' response to the report or to the government's failure to endorse the report's key recommendations.

### **Second Report: Comprehensive Review of Seniors Care Due in 2011**

This year, the Ombudsperson will release her second and much more comprehensive report. It will cover all home and community care services, including home support and home care, assisted living and residential care.

### **It is Now Up to Us**

As the Ombudsperson has been clear time and again, her job ends when these reports are released. After that it is up to us as citizens to support her recommendations. By reaching out to community organizations, municipalities, retiree groups and others from around the province, we can do just that.

Here are some actions you can take to help:

- Organize a community event where you show *The Remaining Light*, and host a discussion afterwards about peoples' experiences in your community. This event could be small (in your living room, or at a local seniors centre) or large (at a community hall or other gathering place). Depending on your location, the CCPA may be able to help arrange a guest speaker.



- Sign up to find out when the Ombudsperson releases her second report. Simply send an email to [bcseniors@policyalternatives.ca](mailto:bcseniors@policyalternatives.ca). When her report comes out, it is vital that the public actively supports her recommendations.
- Talk with other people and organizations in your community about how the Ombudsperson's recommendations can—if implemented—create a stronger and more accountable system of seniors care.
- Identify key decision-makers in your community with whom you can share your concerns about seniors care. For example, you could write a letter or ask to meet with your MLA and/or city councillors, talk with the local newspaper, meet with health authority officials and planners at the area hospital, discuss the issues with other community leaders, and more.
- Let us know what you're doing. Contact [bcseniors@policyalternatives.ca](mailto:bcseniors@policyalternatives.ca), 604-801-5121 x 222.