

The Pulse



an e-memo for all EPC members

CANADIAN INITIATIVE FOR ELDER PLANNING STUDIES



December 1, 2025,

Edition 22 Volume 12

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CIEPS wishes you and your families a joyful and heartwarming festive season, and a Merry Christmas in any way that you choose to enjoy it.

May your days be filled with laughter, meaningful connections, and the kind of magic that only this time of year can bring. We hope you find moments of peace and celebration woven throughout.

Some Seasonal Humour...

What's the Christmas carol seniors find a little too relatable? - “Do you hear what I hear?”

Why does Santa go down the chimneys? - Because it soots him!

Why do Christmas cookies never get into arguments? - They always crumble before it gets serious.

Okay, Okay...on with your December Newsletter!



REGISTRATIONS now open for the 2026 Elder Planning Issues Conference in Niagara Falls, ON...

Sunday May 31 – June 2, 2026

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You can choose to attend either **LIVE** in person or by **LIVE** webcast.

Our 2026 theme is - “Strategic Solutions for a Changing Demographic”

“Strategic Solutions for a Changing Demographic” captures the urgent need for cross-sector innovation as Canada’s population ages. It invites professionals to rethink systems, services, and structures to meet the evolving needs of older adults - while anticipating the ripple effects across families, communities, and the economy.

We believe that aging is not a challenge to be managed - it’s a transformation to be led. This conference equips professionals with the tools, insights, and partnerships needed to lead that transformation.

This theme is not just about reacting to demographic shifts. It’s about leading with foresight, designing with empathy, and collaborating across disciplines.

Through expert-led sessions, interdisciplinary collaboration, and forward-thinking dialogue, the conference aims to spark innovation, strengthen systems, and build a future where aging is supported with dignity, resilience, and strategic foresight.

Why is this conference important for you to attend?

Attending the 2026 "Strategic Solutions for a Changing Demographic" conference is more than just a professional opportunity - it’s a strategic imperative. Here's why this event matters:

- * Aging Population = Urgent Innovation
- * Sharpened Client Strategy
- * Estate & Succession Planning Insights

If you or your company is serious about staying relevant and resilient in the face of demographic change, this conference is where you need to be

Check out the location, agenda, and Keynote presenters here - [2026 Niagara Falls EPIC](#) as the information gets updated.

You will earn up to 30 CE credits for attending.

Please support this conference so that we can continue to bring you presentations that will help you with your aging clients, prospects and families.

2026 EPIC Registrations NOW OPEN.

Heart of the Snowman... *A Short Christmas Story that could be written by anyone you know this year who is facing some sort of a hardship*

Moral of the Story: A single act of kindness can transform lives and ignite a community spirit.

On the outskirts of a quaint village nestled among snow-capped mountains, lived a young boy named Lucas. His family had fallen on hard times after his father lost his job at the local mill. With Christmas approaching, the village was alive with festivities, but Lucas felt only the chill of the winter wind.

One frosty morning, Lucas decided to build a snowman to lift his spirits. He rolled three large snowballs and stacked them. Using pieces of coal for the eyes and mouth and a carrot for the nose, he gave the snowman a friendly face. As a finishing touch, he placed his father's old, worn hat atop its head.

"Wish you could make things better," Lucas sighed, staring into the snowman's coal eyes.

That night, a heavy snowfall blanketed the village. Lucas awoke to a strange sound—a soft whisper calling his name. Peering out his window, he saw the snowman glowing under the moonlight. Rubbing his eyes in disbelief, he hurried outside.

"Hello, Lucas," the snowman greeted in a gentle voice.

"You... you can talk?" Lucas stammered.

"Only on the most magical night of the year," replied the snowman. "I know your heart is heavy. Why is it so sad?"

Lucas poured out his worries. "I just wish I could help my family. We don't even have enough wood to keep the fire going."

The snowman smiled. "Sometimes, the smallest acts can lead to the greatest changes. Take this," he said, handing Lucas a small, intricately carved wooden heart.

"What's this?" Lucas asked.

"A token of kindness. Share it with someone in need."

Confused but hopeful, Lucas took the heart. The next day, he went into the village. He noticed Mrs. Thompson, an elderly woman who lived alone, struggling to carry her groceries.

"Let me help you with that," Lucas offered.

"Thank you, dear," she smiled weakly.

At her doorstep, Lucas handed her the wooden heart. "For you," he said.

Her eyes welled up. "This is beautiful. I have something for you too." She disappeared inside and returned with a basket filled with firewood and freshly baked bread. "Consider it a thank you."

Surprised, Lucas accepted the basket and rushed home to tell his parents. Warmed by the fire that night, his family shared the bread and felt a glimmer of hope.

Word of Lucas's kindness spread through the village. The next day, Mr. Harris, the mill owner, knocked on their door.

"I heard about your situation," he said to Lucas's father. "I could use a good worker like you."

Overjoyed, his father accepted the job offer. As the village came together to support them, Lucas realized that his small act of kindness had sparked a chain reaction.

That night, Lucas visited the snowman.

"Thank you," he whispered. "But how did you know?"

The snowman winked. "Kindness begets kindness. Remember that, and you'll always have the true spirit of Christmas in your heart."

As dawn approached, the snowman slowly melted away, leaving behind a shimmering patch of snow in the shape of a heart.

**The Reality: Christmas Presents, in this Economy?
How Some People are Shifting Their Spending...***from
an article posted on CBC News, Nov. 17, 2025*

Some Canadians preparing for a more modest Christmas this year

Hark, can you hear it?

It's barely audible over the sound of a zillion people muttering, "isn't it too early for this?" while sipping holiday lattes, but it's there: the sound of Christmas spending panic.

And this year's holiday season approaches amid [soaring grocery](#) prices, trade tensions and [economic uncertainty](#). Which is why some people say they're planning a [more modest Christmas](#), whether that involves

spending less, giving fewer or more intentional gifts, relying more on charitable services or scaling it all down.

On social media, for instance, [influencers](#) and [frugal bloggers](#) are encouraging people to "de-influence" their holidays by forgoing the matching family jammies, reusing Christmas decorations, sticking with affordable advent calendars and buying second-hand gifts.

"I can't afford the kind of Christmas you see online," said one U.K. money and family influencer in a TikTok video Thursday. "It's not normal to spend hundreds just to make it look perfect for social media."

And in real life, some Canadians are preparing to buckle down. Becky Field, 34, who lives in Ottawa, told CBC News she's had to get creative with gifting after the expense of buying a second car so her husband could get to work set them back.

"With groceries at an all-time high, as well, gifts didn't really make it into our budget," Field said.

She's always valued not gifting in excess, but she recently decided to give only items that are thrifted or sourced from her neighbourhood "buy nothing" groups. Her kids — three boys ages 7, 5, and 3 — started a tradition last year where they go to a thrift store and each pick out one gently used stuffy to give each other.

She re-uses paper grocery bags for gift wraps and saves points from their "exorbitant" grocery bills to pay for gifts for others when used isn't an option.

"We don't want to purchase an item, even second hand, that will be used for a short moment in time then discarded or passed along — giving into that dopamine hit we all get with a gift," Field said.

"To us, this doesn't seem like a good way to make use of an ever-dwindling portion of our budget."

Canadians spending less on excess

Several recent [surveys](#) and [forecasts](#) tell a similar story. While they can't necessarily be projected as truly representative of the overall Canadian population, the recurring patterns across different surveys from different sources suggest the presence of an emerging trend: amid [rising prices](#), many Canadians are planning to spend less.

A brand new report by Money Mart, for instance, says the majority of the 1,511 Canadians they polled via Angus Reid said inflation will impact their holiday spending this year, and more than a third plan to spend less — especially on gifts.

Another [survey by insolvency firm Harris & Partners released last Tuesday](#) shows most respondents are preparing for a more modest Christmas, with the majority saying they plan to cut back on Christmas spending this year, and more than half saying they felt anxious about how to afford it.

"For a large number of people, there is simply less financial flexibility available," CEO Josh Harris said in a [news release](#).

In October, consulting group PwC Canada's [holiday outlook](#) noted that the majority of Canadian consumers they polled plan to cut back to make every dollar count, "making hard choices about where to spend their money."

Gen Z and millennials, in particular, planned to spend less on gifts this year, the PwC report said.

More demand for charitable services

As Canadians feel the pinch, many charities are already reporting greater demand this year.

For instance, the Food Bank in Barrie, Ont., just [launched a holiday campaign](#) to try to meet the need as demand has outpaced donations. In Edmonton, several local charities [told local media](#) the level of need has grown, and that thousands have applied for festive food hamper and grocery card programs.

The [Salvation Army](#) in Weyburn, Sask., is rolling out a "toy store" initiative that allows parents to select donated gifts for their children. The [Single Parent Association of Newfoundland and Labrador](#) reported in October that 1,200 kids were already signed up to receive Christmas presents, up from 800 to 900 kids at most in previous years.

And in Winnipeg, climbing food prices have increased the [demand for holiday hampers](#) compared to previous years, with its Christmas Cheer Board receiving hundreds of calls within hours of opening last week.

"The unfortunate reality is that that need increasing year-over year has become just an expectation rather than something that's a surprise any longer," Shawna Bell, the executive director of the Christmas Cheer Board, told CBC Winnipeg.

'Doesn't have to cost anything'

With consumers projected to spend less or with more intention, some businesses are adapting. Costco, for instance, said it was cutting down on seasonal offerings to focus on essentials, according to [media reports](#).

A number of retailers are [rolling out early Black Friday Sales](#). And [IKEA Canada's holiday campaign](#) urges shoppers to give people "something they actually need."

Reuters notes that [toy manufacturers are rushing](#) into the "blind box" trend as an affordable gift option. Blind boxes are sealed boxes with a collectible "mystery" item inside, usually part of a themed series. Some only cost a [few dollars](#), making them appealing stocking stuffers.

This comes as U.S. market research provider Circana anticipates sales volume for toys may fall by as much as 2.5 per cent during the peak shopping months of November and December.

But for some shoppers like Field, the mom of three in Ottawa, it's not necessarily about the gifts, but the message.

"The economic situation we're in has forced me to get creative with gift-giving, but in turn, has reminded me what these seasons are really about," she said.

"Reminding someone that they are noticed and appreciated doesn't have to cost anything."

How Much Each Generation Is Planning to Spend This Holiday Season...*from an article found on the internet written by Crystal Mayer and Jenna Klaverweiden*

The crisp in the air and the endless variations of pumpkin-spiced beverages can only mean one thing: The holidays are just around the corner. While people across the globe are expected to pull out their pocketbooks over the next two months for everything from gifts to decor, the amount of [money](#) that they will spend is a little less certain.

According to auditing firm [PwC](#), consumer behavior may be shifting, in some cases significantly. PwC expects to see a 5% drop in holiday spend overall, driven primarily by young adults. Here is how much each generation is [planning to spend this holiday season](#).

Gen Z

The 2025 Holiday Outlook survey found that Gen Z respondents expected to reduce their [holiday spending budget](#) by 23%, the largest decrease among all generations. Young adults in this generation expect to spend \$1,357 in 2025, down from \$1,752 last year. Factors such as a tough job market, uncertain economic conditions and major life changes may all affect this change in spending.

Gen Z not only plans to spend less during the holidays but also are more conscious about the things they are buying. The study showed that 63% of Gen Z respondents were choosing resale and upcycled items, citing a focus on sustainability and health and wellness.

Millennials

While Gen Z shoppers intend to spend substantially less this holiday season, millennials are expected to spend around the same amount as in 2024. Millennial-aged respondents said they planned to spend \$2,190 this holiday season compared with \$2,222 in 2024, representing just a 1% drop.

One thing millennials and other generations are expected to spend more on this year is gift cards. Research from [Blackhawk Network](#) found that 46% of Gen Zers and millennials, worried about [rising prices](#), are planning to buy gift cards instead of physical items. Additionally, the PwC survey found that 52% of respondents overall said they planned on giving gift cards to family members, and 47% said they would give them to friends this holiday season.

The findings are consistent with a 2025 forecast from [Mastercard](#), which expects to see “higher than normal” gift card sales this year.

Gen X

Another generation expected to spend slightly more this year during [the holiday season](#) is Gen Xers. The PwC 2025 Holiday Outlook found that Gen Xers expect to spend \$1,483 in 2025, up slightly from the \$1,454 they planned to spend when surveyed before the 2024 season.

A [Deloitte](#) survey on holiday spending also projected an increase in Gen X spending for the 2025 holidays. According to the study, Gen X respondents expected to increase their spending by 3% this year compared with 2024.

Baby Boomers

While baby boomers are projected to spend the least of any generation this holiday season, the PwC survey found that the generation expects to spend more than they did last year. Baby boomer respondents said they plan to spend \$1,180 for the 2025 holiday season, a 5% increase from the \$1,126 they expected to spend last year.

Unlike Gen Zers, who plan to spend 39% of their budget on gifts for themselves, boomer respondents said they plan to spend 67% of their budget [on gifts](#) for family members.

From Sunshine to Snowfall: Ways to Manage Mental Health as the Seasons Change... *from an article found on the McMaster University portal on October 22, 2025*

As autumn settles in and daylight hours shrink across Canada, many people notice their mood and energy dip. While it's common to feel a bit slower in the darker months, some experience a more serious condition called Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) which is a type of depression triggered by seasonal changes.

SAD can cause symptoms like sadness, low motivation, trouble concentrating, and loss of interest in activities you normally enjoy. The good news: there are proven ways to manage SAD and protect your mental health through fall and winter.

7 ways to manage Seasonal Affective Disorder

1. **Get natural light daily** – Try to spend time outside, especially in the morning. Even on cloudy days, exposure to daylight helps regulate your mood and sleep cycle.
2. **Brighten your environment** – Use bright indoor lighting or a **light therapy lamp** to mimic natural sunlight.
3. **Stay physically active** – Regular movement is a powerful mood booster. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days.
4. **Eat for energy** – Fuel your body with whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and omega-3-rich foods like salmon or walnuts.
5. **Keep a steady sleep routine** – Go to bed and wake up at consistent times to support your body's internal clock.
6. **Stay socially connected** – Schedule time with family or friends, join a community group, or volunteer. Connection helps reduce feelings of isolation.
7. **Reach out for help** – If symptoms persist, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional. Treatment options like therapy, medication, and light therapy can make a real difference.

And remember, you are not alone in feeling this way. Seasonal Affective Disorder is common in northern climates, and help is available. Small daily changes can have a big impact on your overall well-being.

Top 2025 Christmas Gifts For Seniors Blend Comfort, Connection, And Creativity—Think Cozy Tech, Personalized Keepsakes, And Engaging Experiences....

Here's a curated list of thoughtful, practical, and joy-sparking gifts for the senior in your life this holiday season:

Comfort & Daily Ease

- Heated slippers or ergonomic pillows – Ideal for cold Canadian winters and everyday relief.
- Touch bedside lamp with speaker – Combines soft lighting and music for relaxation.
- Sofa armrest organizer – Keeps remotes, glasses, and books within easy reach.

Engagement & Entertainment

- Wheel of Fortune word puzzles or trivia books – Fun and mentally stimulating.
- Digital picture frame – Rotates family photos and can be updated remotely.
- Craft kits or hobby supplies – From knitting to model building, these encourage creativity.

Home & Tech Upgrades

- Electronic weather station – A sleek, useful tool for tracking local conditions.
- Wireless key finder – A lifesaver for misplaced items.
- Smart home devices – Large-button remotes, voice assistants, or motion-sensing lights.

Foodie & Culinary Gifts

- Private chef experience or Cozymeal gift card – A luxurious, at-home dining treat.
- Instant Pot 7-in-1 cooker – Simplifies meal prep with one-touch cooking.
- Yeti Rambler mug or bowl cozy – Keeps drinks and meals warm and spill-free.

Nature & Wellness

- Hummingbird or squirrel-proof bird feeder – Adds joy to backyard birdwatching.
- Essential oil diffuser or massage tools – Promotes relaxation and wellness.
- Fitness tracker (e.g., Fitbit Versa) – Encourages gentle movement and health monitoring.

Personalized & Sentimental

- Nine-opening circular photo frame – A beautiful way to showcase family memories.
- Framed retirement slogan or custom keepsake – Adds a personal touch to their space.
- Scratch-off world travel map – Inspires stories and reminiscing.

Experience-Based Gifts

- Concert tickets, museum memberships, or family outings – Create lasting memories.
- Cooking classes or food tours – Great for seniors who love learning and tasting.

Here are even more 2025 Christmas gift ideas for seniors, with fresh inspiration from current trends and thoughtful touches:

Cognitive & Creative Stimulation

- Large-piece jigsaw puzzles with Canadian landscapes – Beautiful and manageable for aging hands and eyes.
- Adult coloring books with nature or nostalgia themes – Paired with ergonomic pencil grips.
- Subscription to Storyworth – Weekly prompts that turn into a printed memoir.

Subscription Boxes & Monthly Joy

- Tea or coffee sampler boxes – Curated blends delivered monthly.
- SnackCrate or Universal Yums – International treats for adventurous palates.
- Artisan goods from local makers – Support Canadian small businesses with curated gift boxes.

Wellness & Mobility

- Balance training tools or resistance bands – Gentle fitness aids for aging in place.
- Mobility-friendly gardening kits – Raised planters or indoor herb gardens.
- Weighted blanket with breathable fabric – Promotes calm and better sleep.

Tech That's Actually Senior-Friendly

- GrandPad tablet – Designed specifically for seniors with simplified interface.
- Voice-controlled smart plugs or thermostats – Easy home automation.
- Bluetooth hearing aid accessories – Stream audio directly from TV or phone.

Memory-Making Experiences

- Train trip through Canada or VIA Rail gift card – Scenic and relaxing.
- Cooking class with grandkids – Intergenerational bonding through food.
- Museum or botanical garden membership – Encourages gentle outings and exploration.

Custom Keepsakes

- Personalized calendar with family photos and birthdays – Practical and sentimental.
- Custom crossword puzzle featuring family names and memories – Unique and fun.
- Engraved wooden recipe box with heirloom recipes – A legacy gift.

3 Ways We Can “Dance” Our Way to Better Health...

from an article found on the McMaster University portal on November 5, 2025

The Bottom Line

Dance is art and exercise for the body and mind!

Research highlights that different dance-related activities can decrease falls, boost brain health, and improve physical function in different groups of older adults.

Before picking a style and setting to dance in, speak with your healthcare team about any considerations or concerns and how to optimize safety and effectiveness.

Dance helps us express our emotions, tell our stories, showcase our cultures, and celebrate moments of happiness. Be it at a recital, wedding, concert, class, or our home, dance is an art form that we can enjoy in a diversity of settings. But beyond being beautiful, fun, and accessible, dance and dancing have also become areas of interest for researchers. If you're wondering why, the answer is our health. That's right, researchers are looking into how dance and dancing can help improve various areas of our health—like falls, cognition, and physical function, to name a few. Click on the links below to learn more.

1. Decrease falls

The risk of falls, especially fatal falls, increases as we age. Exercise is an important element of fall prevention. Dance-based mind-motor activities, such as Tai Chi, are types of exercise. Research shows that

Tai Chi may decrease the number of healthy older adults who fall, as well as the number of falls they experience. Evidence further suggests that engaging in dance-based mind-motor activities 3 or more times a week over 12 to 24 weeks may provide the greatest benefits. That said, more research is needed on the optimal frequency and length of exercise and different dance-based mind-motor activities.

2. Boost brain health

In older adults, declining cognitive function is a leading cause of disability and death. Research shows that combining brain training and physical activity can improve cognitive function in older adults living with or without mild cognitive impairment. What's more, it seems that engaging in these activities simultaneously—versus one after the other—may be most beneficial. Dance is one example of an activity that allows people to engage in exercise and brain training at the same time. More research is needed on the most effective frequencies, durations, and lengths of programs that combine these activities.

3. Improve physical function

Across Canada, more than 18 million people play video games. Exergames are active video games that require players to engage in physical activity. As the individual plays, performance is tracked, and feedback is relayed using motion sensors and other technologies. Dance exergames, which involve dancing to music, are one category of exergames. Research shows that dance exergames can improve multiple components of physical function in older adults—including dynamic balance, reaction time, and movement time. More research is needed to further confirm these findings.

Whether we have two left feet or can stay on beat, dance is for us to enjoy! From salsa to square dancing and our homes to dance classes, there are so many different styles of dance to explore and settings to practice them in. Remember to speak with your healthcare team about how you can safely engage in this activity (e.g., is there a need for supervision, adapting movements, an optimal setting, etc.) before starting.

Nutrient-Rich Holiday Menu Ideas for Older Adults...

Building on our understanding of seniors' nutritional needs, here are seven delicious and nourishing holiday menu options that balance festive enjoyment with optimal nutrition for older adults.

Traditional Favorites With Healthy Modifications

Transform beloved holiday classics into nutrient powerhouses without sacrificing flavor. Prepare turkey with herbs instead of salt for heart-healthy protein. Swap mashed potatoes with cauliflower or sweet potato

mash for added vitamins A and C. Lighten stuffing with [whole grain bread](#), extra vegetables, and reduced butter. Create gravy using low-sodium broth thickened with pureed vegetables instead of flour and fat. Serve [cranberry sauce](#) with reduced sugar, letting natural fruit sweetness shine through. These simple modifications maintain familiar tastes while boosting nutritional value significantly.

Plant-Based Festive Options for Seniors

Plant-based holiday dishes offer exceptional [nutrition for seniors with dietary](#) restrictions. Serve stuffed [acorn squash](#) filled with quinoa, cranberries, and [walnuts](#) for a protein-rich main course with omega-3 fatty acids. Create hearty lentil Wellington with flaky whole grain pastry as a satisfying entrée packed with fiber and protein. Offer mushroom and herb risotto made with [brown rice](#) for B vitamins and minerals. Roast colorful vegetable platters with [olive oil](#) and herbs for antioxidants and visual appeal. These plant-forward options deliver essential nutrients while accommodating various dietary needs without creating separate “special” meals that might make seniors feel excluded from celebrations.

Creating Senior-Friendly Textures and Portion Sizes

For seniors, the physical experience of eating can significantly impact their enjoyment and nutrition intake during festive meals. Adapting textures and portion sizes ensures that holiday dining remains both accessible and pleasurable for older adults.

Addressing Swallowing Difficulties With Appetizing Solutions

Dysphagia affects up to 22% of seniors, making texture modification essential for safe, enjoyable festive meals. Create moisture-rich dishes by incorporating natural gravies, broths, and smooth sauces that enhance swallowing ease without sacrificing flavor. Transform traditional holiday foods into senior-friendly options by pureeing vegetables into vibrant, flavorful soups or preparing mini quiches with finely diced ingredients. Soft-cooked fruits like [cinnamon](#) apples and poached pears offer festive dessert alternatives that maintain dignity while addressing swallowing concerns. Always maintain visual appeal through colorful presentation and familiar shapes to stimulate appetite despite texture modifications.

Balancing Flavor Enhancement Without Excess Salt

Senior taste buds typically require 2-3 times more flavor intensity than younger adults, yet many need to limit sodium intake. Enhance holiday dishes with robust herb combinations like [rosemary](#) and thyme for roasted meats or sage and parsley for stuffing. Incorporate naturally flavor-intense ingredients such as caramelized onions, roasted garlic, and mushrooms to create depth without salt. Citrus zests, vinegars, and fruit juices can brighten dishes while providing the acidity that helps flavors pop. Try salt-free seasonings like smoked paprika, cumin,

or [cinnamon](#) to create memorable flavor profiles. Consider preparing dishes with separate seasoning options so individuals can adjust to their taste and dietary needs.

Incorporating Memory-Boosting Foods Into Celebration Menus

Nutrition plays a powerful role in brain health, especially for seniors. Certain [foods contain](#) compounds that support cognitive function and may help preserve memory. By incorporating these brain-boosting ingredients into festive meals, you're offering more than just delicious food—you're providing nourishment that supports mental well-being. Here's how to enhance your holiday menus with memory-supporting foods that still capture the festive spirit.

Omega-3 Rich Seafood Appetizers

Omega-3 fatty acids are essential for brain health and have been linked to reduced cognitive decline. Create elegant seafood starters that showcase these beneficial nutrients while setting a festive tone.

Try serving smoked salmon pinwheels with cream cheese on whole grain [crackers](#) as an easy-to-eat appetizer. Prepare mini [crab cakes](#) using minimal filler and bake instead of frying them for a healthier option. Offer a simple [shrimp cocktail](#) with a yogurt-based dipping sauce to reduce sodium while maintaining flavor. These seafood options provide brain-healthy fats in portion sizes that won't overwhelm seniors' appetites before the main course.

Colorful Antioxidant Vegetable Sides

Vibrant vegetables aren't just visually appealing—they're packed with antioxidants that protect brain cells from oxidative stress. The more colorful your vegetable selection, the wider the range of cognitive benefits.

Roast a rainbow of vegetables like purple beets, orange carrots, and red bell peppers with [olive oil](#) and herbs for a memory-supporting side dish. Create a festive spinach salad with berries, [walnuts](#), and a light vinaigrette featuring brain-healthy ingredients. Prepare [sweet potatoes](#) with [cinnamon](#) and a touch of [maple syrup](#) instead of marshmallows for a nutrient-dense alternative to traditional casseroles. These colorful additions bring both visual appeal and brain-boosting properties to the holiday table.

Incorporating Nuts and Seeds Creatively

Nuts and seeds contain vitamin E, healthy fats, and antioxidants associated with better cognitive performance and reduced mental

decline. These versatile ingredients can be incorporated throughout your menu.

Add crushed [walnuts](#) to stuffing for texture and brain-healthy omega-3s. Create a festive trail mix with unsalted nuts, [dark chocolate](#) pieces, and dried cranberries as a pre-dinner snack. Use almond flour to thicken sauces or as partial flour replacement in baked goods for added nutrition. Sprinkle pumpkin seeds on soups and salads for a zinc boost, which supports brain cell communication.

Berries and Dark Fruits in Desserts

Berries contain flavonoids that improve blood flow to the brain and may delay memory decline. Their natural sweetness makes them perfect for lightening traditional holiday desserts.

Serve a mixed berry parfait with [Greek yogurt](#) and a light drizzle of honey as a protein-rich dessert option. Create a no-bake cherry crisp using frozen dark cherries and a [granola](#) topping for antioxidant benefits. Offer [dark chocolate](#)-dipped strawberries as an elegant treat that combines flavonoids from both ingredients. These fruit-forward desserts satisfy sweet cravings while supporting cognitive health.

Herb-Infused Main Dishes

Herbs like [rosemary](#), sage, and thyme contain compounds that may enhance memory and protect brain cells. These traditional holiday herbs add both flavor and cognitive benefits.

Season your turkey or main protein with a robust herb rub featuring [rosemary](#) and sage instead of salt-heavy seasonings. Create an herb-infused [olive oil](#) drizzle to finish dishes and add brain-healthy fats. Use fresh thyme in gravy and sauces for enhanced flavor without excess sodium. These aromatic additions stimulate both appetite and cognitive function through their scent and nutritional properties.

Memory-Supporting Beverages

Hydration is crucial for brain function, but the type of beverages you serve can provide additional cognitive benefits.

Offer cranberry spritzers made with unsweetened juice and sparkling water for antioxidant power without excess sugar. Serve hot spiced tea with cinnamon and cloves, which contain compounds that may support brain health. Create a festive pomegranate punch that's rich in memory-protecting polyphenols. These beverages help maintain proper hydration while delivering brain-supporting nutrients.

CEIPS/EPC Member Benefits

By now you have received the EPC Special Bulletin highlighting the NEW added EPC Member Benefits that are available for you as an EPC member in good standing.

We have put together some great partnerships for you to consider. Please contact the individual companies for further details.

Check them out here - [EPC Member Benefits](#)

UPDATED 12th Edition EPC Materials are NOW Available

The NEW 12th Edition (2024) updated EPC materials have now been released.

The CIEPS faculty have been working relentlessly over the past 8 months to update the EPC Curriculum and information that each chapter contains.

The most updated statistics and information that we have found from multiple sources has been used to make this the most up to date aging program that you will come across today.

We have made the order of the EPC Curriculum so that it flows even better than before. Chapters have been rewritten to better reflect aging trends, ideas, lifestyle improvements and what is trending with our older populations today.

Order your updated copy today - The hard copy version of the 12th Edition EPC Desk Reference materials are available for EPC Designation holders at a reduced cost of \$199 + taxes and shipping is included.

[Visit here](#) to order your set today.

The Advantage of Having a CARP Membership

Let us first go over the [Canadian Association of Retired Persons](#) (CARP) and why it would be good to become a member.

If you are a Canadian citizen aged 50 or older, you can become a member. You will then get senior discounts at several businesses across Canada.

The minimum age requirement depends on the partnering business, but it might be worth spending a little money each year for the membership in exchange for the discounts available. I have listed several 55+ senior discounts in Canada below, and many of them are exclusively available to CARP members.

This list of senior discounts in Canada based on different categories to help you find discounts on specific items, businesses, or services that you can use for the senior in your life.

Did you know that CIEPS is on LinkedIn?

EPC member Paul Fawcett started a group on LinkedIn, and it is now an open group. Why not join it so that you can keep up to date with trending discussions that would be of interest to the Elder Planning Counselor.

Join and share with the group here –[EPC LinkedIn Group](#)

CIEPS/EPC is always looking for interesting articles from the EPC membership for submission to the PULSE.

If you have any interesting articles that you would like to have submitted into the EPC PULSE pertaining to senior issues etc., please send them to me and if suitable, we will put them into the monthly PULSE and give credit where it is due. You can send them directly to me – registrar@cieps.com

Please keep your contact information current with us

To help us keep your contact information up to date, so that you do not miss any timely information, renewal notifications and the PULSE monthly email newsletter, please use our member update form if any of your information has changed. You can access the form here - [EPC Member Update Form](#)

Important notice regarding your EPC Membership dues. Please ensure that your EPC is always in good standing.

When you pay your EPC Membership Dues, please include applicable taxes (GST/HST) for your Province of residence.

If you are sending a cheque for your EPC Membership, please reference that the cheque is for.

Annual renewal fee—\$150.00 + Applicable taxes for the province you reside in. This can be paid by Cheque, Visa, or MasterCard, or email transfer to payments@cieps.com and it will be processed for you.

- If you reside in AB, BC, SK, MB, QC, NT, NU, or YT your yearly renewal is \$157.50 all taxes included.
- If you reside in ON, your yearly renewal is \$169.50 all taxes included.
- If you reside in NB, NL, or PE your yearly renewal is \$172.50 all taxes included.

- If you reside in NS your yearly renewal is \$171.00 all taxes included.

Not sure when your renewal is? Check the date on your EPC Certificate. The date you passed your EPC Qualification examination is your renewal date each year.

We email receipts for renewal payments at the end of the month which you paid your dues.

RENEW SECURELY HERE

Reminder

Remember, only an EPC member in good standing may use the EPC mark, the words EPC Designation, or logo on any advertising, business cards, stationery, signage, voice mail or email. This is in accordance with the CIEPS tenets and standards.

CE requirements when renewing your EPC Designation

CIEPS has a requirement of 30 CE credits annually when you renew your EPC membership.

Lately we have been receiving questions about the Continuing Education requirements when renewing your EPC Designation.

The following should clarify this for you.

If you are in a profession that requires CE Credits, then we accept that number of CE hours towards your EPC Membership renewal.

If you are in a profession that does not require CE Credits, then you do not require any CE to renew your EPC membership.


PLEASE NOTE!

Just a reminder that when you use your credit card to pay for your EPC Renewal fees, or purchase anything from the EPC Resource Library, it will show on your statement as CNDIAN INTIVE FOR ELDR ST... Beamsville, ON. With a phone number of 855-882-3427 do not panic, as this is the Elder Planning Counselor Designation (EPC).

If you would like to stop receiving this publication, please respond to info@cieps.com with the message ***"STOP MY PULSE!"***

To contact CIEPS:

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