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Media Release

New report identifies barriers to the well-being of older women in British Columbia that require action

for immediate release

Vancouver, 8 March 2017 —The Canadian Centre for Elder Law will release a new report today, on International Women’s Day. The report, entitled *We are not all the Same: Key Law, Policy and Practice Strategies for Improving the Lives of Older Women in the Lower Mainland*, explores ways to reduce the challenges older women face in their daily lives.

The report shares consultation findings from speaking with older women from diverse communities, provides research on key barriers to well-being identified by older women, and concludes with thirty strategies for law, policy and practice reform aimed at improving quality of life for older women.

The report specifically includes the experiences from groups of older women who are more socially marginalized, including Indigenous women, women over the age of 80, women living with a disability, and elder lesbians and queer older women.

“There is much discussion these days about how our population is aging. But we have seen little attention to the unique experiences of older women, and limited law and policy reform to address the poverty and inequality of older women in our communities,” says CCEL National Director Krista James. The CCEL report aims to lay a research foundation that will allow governments to take action for positive change.

The report identifies structural barriers to equality that require systemic change and enhanced access to justice and services. It identifies a number of strategies that could address these barriers including raising Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement rates, developing a publicly-funded national Pharmacare program, implementing comprehensive training to address racism, ageism and cultural competency within government and health services, and providing legal representation to grandmothers who are the primary caregivers of their grandchildren or great-grandchildren.

The report is part of the Older Women’s Dialogue Project, an initiative led by the CCEL and the West Coast LEAF since 2011. The consultations and report were funded by the Vancouver Foundation.

The report can be downloaded [on the CCEL website](#).

The CCEL is a national, non-profit body dedicated to exploring legal issues that impact us as we age. The CCEL conducts scholarly law reform, legal research and writing, legal education, and public outreach.

West Coast LEAF is a provincial non-profit organization whose mission is to achieve equality by changing historic patterns of discrimination against women through BC based equality rights litigation, law reform, and public legal education.

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