



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Stocking Stuffers for Seniors Program Helps Curb Loneliness and Isolation Among Seniors During the Holidays

*London Drugs aims to support 15,000 elderly Canadians this holiday season*

**NOVEMBER 19, 2018, Richmond, B.C.** - The holiday season is often a lonely time for many seniors, and [London Drugs](#) is working to change this through the annual [Stocking Stuffers for Seniors](#) donation drive. The Canadian retailer will help approximately 15,000 lonely, isolated, low-income or homeless seniors over the holiday season in partnership with more than 90 care homes or senior organizations throughout Western Canada. An [estimated 1.4 million seniors reported feelings of loneliness](#),<sup>1</sup> and socially isolated seniors are more [at risk of negative health behaviours, have a higher likelihood of falls; and, have a four-to-five times greater risk of hospitalization](#).<sup>2</sup>

Stocking Stuffers for Seniors is a customer-driven donation drive in which people can visit their local London Drugs, choose a tag from the tree that contains the personalized wish list of a local senior. The gifts are then delivered to the seniors before Christmas. Just the act of receiving a gift helps to significantly improve the spirits of a senior and can have lasting mental and physical health benefits.

"When seniors are lonely or isolated, it can significantly compromise their mental or physical health. When they receive a gift at Christmas, it reminds them that someone out there cares about them - even if that person is a stranger they have never met. Stocking Stuffers for Seniors is a very significant program that goes beyond gifts. It has truly changed how younger Canadians view the elderly, and it has helped to remind people to prioritize this population," **says Jimmy Morrison, Community Relations Supervisor, Operation Friendship Seniors Society.**

The donation drive concept originated in BC's Okanagan and expanded to Edmonton in 2015 with a goal to help 40 low-income seniors by providing them with simple gifts such as food, hygiene products or warmth items. The campaign has grown quickly to now include all 80 London Drugs locations in 35 cities across Western Canada. Since the campaign started, gifts for approximately 14,500 seniors have been delivered.

"We know seniors are an often forgotten group during the holiday season, but our customers have shown that this is a group of people they care a great deal about, and want to prioritize during the holidays," said **Clint Mahlman, President & Chief Operating Officer at London Drugs.** "The rapid growth of the Stocking Stuffers for Seniors program is a true testament to the care Canadians have for our aging population. There are many great causes to support during the holiday season, and we are very proud that we have created a program that has resonated with so many people and has become part of their annual family holiday traditions."

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Statistics Canada <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-003-x/2013010/article/11872-eng.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Source: <https://www.canada.ca/en/national-seniors-council/programs/publications-reports/2014/social-isolation-seniors/page05.html>



“There is nothing better than seeing the smile on a senior’s face when you give them their gift that someone lovingly selected for them,” said **Perry Lubberding, London Drugs Store Manager**. “The donated items are only part of the gift we can give them. The true gift is that few minutes we get to spend with them to brighten their day and make sure they know they weren’t forgotten during the holidays.”

For 89-year-old Lucille, receiving her gift last year was a priceless holiday memory. She opened her door to a special delivery of red lipstick, chocolates and a picture frame, as well as a special serenade of the popular Kenny Rogers song “You picked a fine time to leave me, Lucille.”

“The smile and giggle Lucille gave us when we delivered her stocking of gifts was priceless. That’s what this program is all about - special moments for special people who don’t ask for much for Christmas,” says Lubberding.

“This program is so much more than gift-giving,” says Mahlman. “Over the last few years, we have seen hundreds of families participate in the program, and many parents tell us that it’s a great way for their children to learn the importance of giving and supporting a generation of people who have given so much to our society. We hope that by connecting the younger generation with the older generation through a program like this, in future years the number of isolated and lonely seniors will be significantly reduced.”

To support **Stocking Stuffers for Seniors**, visit any [London Drugs](#) between November 19 and December 10 and take a tag with a senior’s wish list from the tree. From there, simply fulfill the items on the list and bring them back to the location where the tag was selected. The gifts will be delivered to seniors before the holidays.

### **10 POPULAR GIFTS FOR SENIORS**

- Books or magazines
- Blankets and throws
- Kitchen essentials
- Candy or chocolate
- Board games or puzzles
- Slippers or warm socks
- Paper towels, tissues, and other paper products
- Warm clothes like gloves and scarves
- Travel mugs
- Gift Cards for groceries and toiletries

Stocking Stuffers for Seniors participants and campaign supporters are being asked to use the **#StockingStuffersForSeniors** hashtag on social media to encourage others to get involved so more elderly Canadians can be supported at the holidays, as well as year-round.



### **About London Drugs**

Founded in 1945, B.C.-based London Drugs currently has 80 stores in more than 35 major markets throughout British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Renowned for its creative approach to retailing, the company employs more than 7,000 people and carries a diverse range of health and consumer electronic products. With its strong commitment to innovation and customer appreciation, London Drugs has established itself as a reputable and caring company and continues to position itself for future growth and development.

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