

# Pensions make ¢ents



Client Rose Bard and massage therapist Lyn Birkett in Radium, where bighorn sheep roam freely.



*"There are a large number of pensioners who live in the East Kootenays and contribute to the economy of each community"*

— Rose Bard, plan member

## Kootenay retirees rely on massage therapist to keep them in good health

**RADIUM HOT SPRINGS, BC** —Rose Bard and Lyn Birkett can't resist making goofy faces at each other when they pose for a photo on the golf course where Lyn's business, Rising Sun Massage and Spa is located.

Rose, a retired nursing administrator and member of the Municipal Pension Plan, has been a client for eight years. She keeps coming back not only because Lyn is so good at what she does, but because she appreciates that Lyn specializes in seniors and First Nations, and makes her service affordable.

"Approximately 70 per cent of clients are retirees, which makes them very important to my business—not to mention how much I enjoy seeing them," says Lyn.

As an orthopedic massage therapist, Lyn offers a mobile service for those who can't get to her and treats local golfers, elders at the Akisqnuq and Shuswap First Nations, and handicapped seniors at Mount Nelson House in Invermere.

She and Rose, who retired from the Interior Health Authority, share a commitment to seniors' health care. Rose now volunteers her time helping seniors from Cranbrook to Radium navigate the health care system. She appreciates that she can make an impact on her community in retirement, both by volunteering and by spending her pension in the community.

"I spend my pension income locally. There are a large number of pensioners who live in the East Kootenays and contribute to the economy of each community," Rose says.

Retirees like Rose are contributors to the BC economy because, when they spend their pensions in their community, they support local businesses and local jobs. Rose's pension income also has a positive effect on the province's gross domestic product (GDP), a measurement of how well the economy's doing.

In 2014, BC public sector pension plans made in excess of \$3 billion in direct payments to beneficiaries, and 97 per cent of those beneficiaries were BC residents. The payments supported \$1.66 billion in provincial GDP and 31,000 jobs in the province, according to *Assessing the Economic Impacts of Pension-Income Spending in British Columbia*, a report prepared by Urban Futures.

Together, Lyn and Rose are contributing to the health of their community, one massage at a time.

2014

## Economic impacts of BC public sector pension plans

In excess of  
**\$3 billion**

BC public sector pension plans made in payments to beneficiaries.

Economic impact of pension income spending from BC public sector pension plans on provincial GDP.

**\$1.66 billion**

**\$310 million**

Total government tax revenue from BC public sector pension income spending.

BC public sector pension recipients who were residents of BC.

**97%**

Pension income spending from the BC public sector pension plans had as **strong** an economic impact on provincial **GDP** as the **forestry** and **logging** industry.

**31,000**

Number of jobs supported by pension income spending from BC public sector pensions.

All findings from *Assessing the Economic Impacts of Pension-Income Spending in British Columbia*, prepared by Urban Futures, July 2015. Click [HERE](#) for the full report.