

Atlantic Seniors Housing Research Alliance

Projecting the Housing Needs of Aging Atlantic Canadians

About ASHRA



The Atlantic Seniors Housing Research Alliance (ASHRA) is an alliance with representatives from universities, seniors' organizations, government departments, housing developers and service providers from the Atlantic Provinces, including Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador. The project was designed to build a detailed picture of aging Atlantic Canadians and their potential living arrangement needs over the next 20 years, and examine emerging options in housing choices, support services, and policies that can effectively meet them. Three key research products have emerged from the ASHRA project, including the **Report on the Atlantic Seniors' Housing and Support Services Survey (2007)**; **Focus Group Report (2008)**; and **Case Studies (2008)**. This information sheet is one in a series providing information on the key messages that have been extracted from the project results. The focus of this fact sheet is to highlight the ASHRA Survey and Focus Group findings in relation to seniors' participation in seniors' programs. For more information about the ASHRA project and its research activities, visit www.ashra.ca.

Most Seniors do not Participate in Seniors' Programs

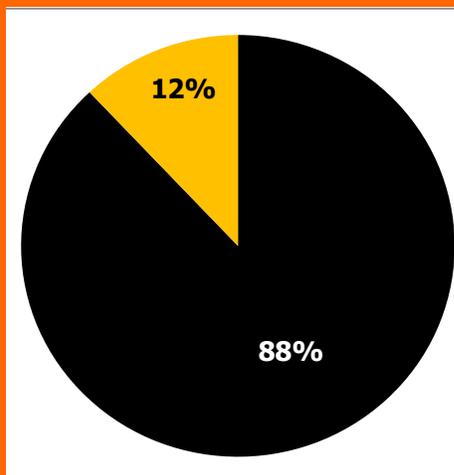
Facts about Seniors' Program Participation



Results from ASHRA's survey with more than 1700 Atlantic Canadian seniors suggest that seniors have low participation levels in seniors' centres or other organized community programs geared toward seniors, despite availability in their local communities. These programs can provide seniors with access to recreational and leisure activities, as well as health and social services to support them staying in their own homes and communities.

- Only 12% of Atlantic Canadian seniors attend a seniors' centre or other seniors' program, despite almost two-thirds (64%) having a centre in their community.
- Less than half (38%) of seniors would attend a seniors' centre if available in their community.

Participation in Organized Seniors' Programs



- Seniors who do not participate
- Seniors who do participate

Factors Influencing Participation

There are several factors that may influence seniors' participation in programs that could support their health and well being and, in turn, influence their housing decisions. Transportation, timing, fees, and program relevance are such considerations.

Understanding who participates in such programs and who does not may help to shape future programs and activities. Of the close to 200 Atlantic Canadian seniors who participated in available seniors' programs:

- Two-thirds were women (66%)
- Average age was 74 years; age range was 63 to 95 years



Voices of Specific Populations

In 2007, ASHRA researchers conducted 15 focus groups with specific populations, including Francophone, Rural/Remote, Aboriginal, Disabled, and Multicultural seniors. Participants discussed the benefit of participating in recreational/social activities and their interest in accessing these various activities to help them stay connected to others.

"Where I live at the moment, its really good for my well-being because it's close to the swimming pool."

Multicultural Senior

Disabled Senior

"Makes me feel good because they have all kinds of activities. Well, tonight is bingo night...They have crafts on Tuesday afternoons, and tomorrow night they're having what they call karaoke night."

"I need some stimulation and easy access to everything. A lively place."

Francophone Senior

Disabled Senior

"...I wish I could get out more. I wish I could learn how to do things...and also be able to go bowling maybe, or to a movie, you know."



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada

