

Atlantic Seniors Housing Research Alliance

Projecting the Housing Needs of Aging Atlantic Canadians

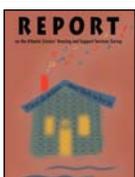
About ASHRA



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 the role of health in housing decisions. For more information about the ASHRA project and its research activities, visit www.ashra.ca.

Seniors' Health Impacts Housing

Facts about Seniors' Health and Housing

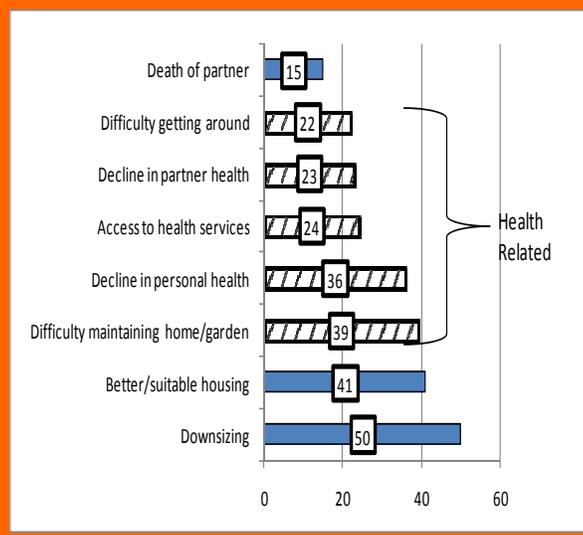


Results from ASHRA's survey of more than 1700 Atlantic Canadian seniors show that the majority of seniors report good to excellent health (68%). Despite this finding there is a high prevalence of arthritis, heart-related conditions, and diabetes; long-term conditions that can impact a senior's ability to remain in his/her own home.

- 53% of seniors have arthritis
- 26% of seniors have a heart-related condition
- 20% of seniors have diabetes
- 36% of seniors who planned to move identified personal health as one of the reasons
- 23% of seniors who planned to move identified health of their partner as one of the reasons

Seniors' Reasons for Moving

(only seniors who planned to move; select responses)



Coping with Daily Activities of Living

The prevalence of chronic conditions, such as arthritis, increases with age and can affect one's ability to perform daily activities of living; thereby, their independence. Among seniors who reported a serious problem with performing activities of daily living, the following posed the greatest challenges:

- Going up and down stairs
- Doing chores around dwelling

Seniors are resilient and develop coping strategies as a way to remain in their own homes. However, day-to-day challenges may influence housing decisions. Moreover, almost half of seniors report a change in health status in the last 5 years, indicating that while the present for some may be manageable, the future may be less so.



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 health issues/limitations and the impact of health status on their housing situation.

"And I [am living on the] ground floor, and I have arthritis...I am using lots of heat...It's still cold."

Multicultural Senior

Disabled Senior

"...I have arthritis, severe arthritis. It's not bad now, but it's painful, and I can't lift and rake and do any of that, so we hire people to do this."

"Maybe there's more people out there in our community that still have the turn knobs...that are not aware that there are these handles that you can just push down on and off you go."

Rural/Remote Senior

Disabled Senior

"We currently have our own home but that, because of my health, is not going to be able to be kept in three years' time...it's getting harder and harder."



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