

Atlantic Seniors Housing Needs Conference

***From Research to Action: The Nova Scotia
Example***

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Seniors


NOVA SCOTIA

From Research to Action: The Nova Scotia Example

- **Introductions** – Name, Organization, Why you are here?
- **Age-Friendly Community Quiz**
- **Interactive Group Exercise** – What aspects of your community are Age-Friendly?
- **Presentation** – **From Research to Action: The Nova Scotia Example**
- **Interactive Group Exercise** – What improvements could be made to enhance the age-friendliness of your community?
- **Interactive Group Exercise** – Places, Policy and People:
Creating Age-Friendly Communities

From Research to Action: The Nova Scotia Example

- Department of Seniors – Background
- Population Aging – Nova Scotia Statistics
- Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia
- Nova Scotia's International and National Involvement Promoting Age-Friendly Initiatives
- Age-Friendly Community Development – Department of Seniors Community Grant Initiatives
- Models of Practice

Department of Seniors

- Nova Scotia Seniors' Citizens Secretariat was established in 1980 by an Act of the Nova Scotia Legislature
- The Nova Scotia Department of Seniors was created in September 2007 by an Order in Council
- The Seniors' Secretariat Committee of Cabinet Ministers remains in tact to oversee the work of the Department and coordinate government services and programs for seniors
- The committee is comprised of 7 cabinet ministers representing the following Departments: Seniors, Health, Community Services, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, Labour and Workforce Development, Health Promotion and Protection and Justice

NS Department of Seniors Mission Statement

- The mandate of the Department of Seniors is to facilitate the planning and development of services and programs for seniors by:
- coordinating plans, policies and programs presented by departments of the provincial government
- developing plans, policies and programs for and with seniors in partnership with the responsible departments of government, other provincial parties and voluntary seniors' groups

NS Department of Seniors

- The provincial department responsible for seniors
- Serves as a single entry point
- Provides information and consultation for seniors and government
- Role includes consultation, coordinating, planning, policy development and development of programs and services for seniors

Population Aging – Nova Scotia Statistics

- Most recent census data indicates that there are 138,220 seniors in Nova Scotia
- Nova Scotia has the highest percentage of seniors in Atlantic Canada (15.4 %) and the highest in Canada, followed by New Brunswick at 15.2 % (Statistics Canada, 2007).
- The percentage of seniors in the province's population will nearly double by 2026 (Statistics Canada, 2007)
- Each month 700 Nova Scotians turn 65 (Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia, 2005,p.8)
- In the US, it is estimated that by 2011, “...every 20 seconds a baby boomer will turn 65.” (The Gerontological Society of America, *gerontology news*, January 2009, p.1)

Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia

- In order to respond to the challenges resulting from an aging population, the Department of Seniors released the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia* in 2005
- The *Strategy* is a 10-15 year guide for planning for Nova Scotia's aging population
- With **9 goals and 190 societal actions**, the *Strategy* provides a comprehensive guide to identifying pro-active approaches to responding to our rapidly changing demographic

Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia

- “Positive Aging” is a broad concept. It means that seniors: can remain self-reliant; have access to appropriate and affordable housing; have access to a range of services and can participate in their community; have access to affordable and accessible transportation; are able to make healthy lifestyle choices and; have access to appropriate preventative health and social support services throughout their life

(Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia, 2005, p.11)

Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia

- The Vision of the *Strategy* is:

“Nova Scotia is an inclusive society of caring communities that supports the well-being of seniors and values their contributions.”



(Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia, 2005, p. 25)

Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia

- **More than 1,000** Nova Scotians provided direct input into creating the *Strategy*
- 9 Strategic Goals:
 - Celebrating Seniors
 - Financial Security
 - Health and Well-Being
 - Maximizing Independence
 - Housing Options
 - Transportation
 - Respecting Diversity
 - Employment and Life Transitions
 - Supportive Communities

Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia

- A quote by Henry Ford highlights the importance of creative thinking:

“If I had asked the people what they wanted, they would have said faster horses.”

- The Task Force on Aging asked Nova Scotians what they wanted – some said ‘faster horses’ – but many more told us that meeting challenges requires new and sustainable ways of doing things

(Strategy for Positive Aging
in Nova Scotia, 2005,p.3)

Nova Scotia's International and National Involvement in Promoting Age-Friendly Initiatives

- As part of its work on the *Strategy*, the Department of Seniors has led 2 initiatives in the province that examined ways to make our communities more age-friendly
- An Age-friendly community is a community where **policies, services, programs and structures** related to the physical and social environment are designed to **support** and enable **older people to live in a secure environment**, enjoy good health, and continue to participate fully in society (Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide, World Health Organization, 2007) **It is a community for all ages**

Nova Scotia's International and National Involvement in Promoting Age-Friendly Initiatives

- An age-friendly community also **promotes active aging**, which is, “the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance the quality of life as people **age.**” (Active Ageing: A Policy Framework, World Health Organization, 2002)

Nova Scotia's International and National Involvement in Promoting Age-Friendly Initiatives

- In 2007, the World Health Organization (WHO) initiated the Age-Friendly Cities Project; this project was jointly funded in Nova Scotia by the Department of Seniors and Halifax Regional Municipality
- Halifax, Nova Scotia was one of 4 Canadian cities that participated. In total, 33 cities in over 22 countries participated

Nova Scotia's International and National Involvement in Promoting Age-Friendly Initiatives

- The second age-friendly project in 2007, *Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities Initiative*, was a project of the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors
- The goal was to identify concrete indicators of an age-friendly community and produce a practical guide to stimulate community development initiatives and policy changes to make communities age-friendly
- 86 Nova Scotians (seniors, caregivers and service providers) were involved in both projects through focus groups

Promoting Positive Aging and Age-friendly Communities

- Nova Scotia believes that ensuring age-friendly communities is an excellent policy approach to responding to demographic change and population aging
- Age-friendly communities benefit all ages
- Age-friendly communities are “supportive communities”

Age-Friendly Community Development – Department of Seniors Community Grant Initiatives

- Following its international and national work on age-friendly initiatives, in 2008, the Department of Seniors made a commitment to supporting community-based solutions to population aging by developing 3 grant initiatives for non-profit community organizations in Nova Scotia:
 - Positive Aging Fund
 - Age-Friendly Communities Program
 - Senior Safety Grant

Age-Friendly Community Development – Department of Seniors Community Grant Initiatives

- The ***Positive Aging Fund*** supports non-profit community-based organizations in their delivery of programs which advance the *Strategy for Positive Aging* by promoting the health, well-being and community participation of seniors. This grant is available to a maximum of \$10,000 and will cover up to 100% of the project's costs.

Age-Friendly Community Development – Department of Seniors Community Grant Initiatives

*Some Positive Aging projects funded from
our fall 2008 call for proposals:*

- **Caregivers Nova Scotia Association
and Gerontology Association of Nova
Scotia** Province of Nova Scotia

["Supporting Seniors Living Well with a
Chronic Condition: A Health Promotion
Program for Caregivers" -
intergenerational training program
targeted to senior caregivers in Nova
Scotia]

Age-Friendly Community Development – Department of Seniors Community Grant Initiatives

*Some Positive Aging projects funded from our
fall 2008 call for proposals:*

- **Paq'tnkek First Nation** Paq'tnkek First Nation
[Active living program and workshops geared
toward frail seniors]
- **Regroupement des aînées et des aînés de
la Nouvelle-Écosse** Argyle, Clare, Cheticamp, Île-Madame,
Pomquet
[Workshop information forums on health and
wellbeing for seniors in Nova Scotia's Acadian
and francophone regions]

Age-Friendly Community Development – Department of Seniors Community Grant Initiatives

- The ***Age Friendly Communities Program*** assists municipalities to create and adapt accessible structures and services to promote healthy active aging. This age-friendly initiative is based on the Department's national and international work on age-friendly communities. This grant is available to a maximum of 50% of the project costs up to \$5,000; municipalities must match the funds contribution in cash or in kind.

Age-Friendly Community Development – Department of Seniors Community Grant Initiatives

*Some Age-Friendly projects funded from
our fall 2008 call for proposals:*

- **Municipality of the County of Inverness** [Construction of an age-friendly gazebo in Community Garden in Port Hood, Inverness County]
- **Municipality of the District of Chester** [Inter-generational outdoor fitness circuit located at the Chester Area Middle School]

Age-Friendly Community Development – Department of Seniors Community Grant Initiatives

*Some Age-Friendly projects funded from
our fall 2008 call for proposals:*

- **Municipality of the District of Lunenburg** [Age-friendly information collection from seniors, age-friendly upgrades to the trail surface at the Municipal Activity Recreation Centre, installation of benches along existing trails, production of newsletters to outline senior specific municipal information]

Age-Friendly Community Development – Department of Seniors Community Grant Initiatives

- The ***Senior Safety Grant*** is a new initiative of the Departments of Seniors and Justice. The grant supports:
 - the enhancement and/or expansion of existing Seniors' Safety Program's services;
 - the expansion of Seniors' Safety Programs to areas not currently served;
 - and professional development for program coordinators.

Age-Friendly Community Development – Department of Seniors Community Grant Initiatives

- Seniors' Safety Programs promote education and awareness about crime prevention, senior abuse, safety and health issues and enhance communication between seniors and police. Seniors' Safety Programs advance the *Elder Abuse Strategy* by providing resources and supports that respond to senior abuse. This grant is available to a maximum of \$20,000.

Age-Friendly Community Development – Department of Seniors Community Grant Initiatives

*Some Seniors' Safety Programs funded from
our fall 2008 call for proposals:*

- **Annapolis County Seniors' Safety Program Association** Bridgetown

[The first Seniors' Safety Program established in the province in 1996 in response to a series of home invasions in the Annapolis Valley]

- **Eskasoni Elders Safety** Eskasoni

[An intergenerational Seniors' Safety Program to enhance the relationship between Eskasoni elders and youth to improve elders' safety]

Age-Friendly Community Development – Department of Seniors Community Grant Initiatives

- All 3 Grant initiatives support age-friendly community development by supporting the health, well-being, community participation and safety and security of seniors
- All 3 grant applications ask applicants to **identify how they have involved seniors in the planning and delivery of their proposed initiative**

Age-Friendly Community Development – Department of Seniors Other Initiatives

- The Department of Seniors has begun work to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) to solidify the commitment of the province and municipalities to create age-friendly communities
- The Department will promote the age-friendly communities concept to municipalities and the business community through the delivery of information sessions to municipal units and Nova Scotia Chambers of Commerce members

Models of Practice

Models of Practice include:

- identifying opportunities and developing proactive responses;
- working collaboratively with other government departments, stakeholders, seniors and community-based organizations and the business sector;
- and involving seniors in the policy development, planning and delivery of community-based responses

Models of Practice

- Community-based responses to population aging must promote age-friendly initiatives
- Seniors must be intricately involved at every step in the development of policies and programs to meet their needs
- An age-friendly community is a community for all ages

Thank You!

