

**NIAGARA AGING STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN
Community Forum**

Thursday, September 11, 2014
Welland Community Wellness Centre

SESSION REPORT
Project Working Paper

Agenda
SWOT Analysis
Visioning Exercise
Suggested Initiatives
Breakout Group Reports

SHERCON ASSOCIATES INC.
www.shercon.ca

September 26, 2014

NIAGARA AGING STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Community Forum

Thursday, September 11, 2014 – Welland Community Wellness Complex

Purpose To review information gathered to date and provide input to emerging recommendations

Agenda

9:00 a.m. **Arrival and Registration**

9:30 a.m. **Session Overview**

- Welcome from the Co-Chairs – Dominic Ventresca and Cathy Fusco
- Project progress report

9:45 a.m. **Environmental Scan**

- Background information
- Findings: Community Focus Groups
Survey of Service Providers
Key Informant Interviews
- “SWOT” analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats)

10:45 a.m. **Break**

11:00 a.m. **Future Directions**

- Visioning exercise – “Niagara in 2020”
- Idea generation activity
- Identification of themes and categories

12:00 p.m. **Lunch**

12:45 p.m. **Moving Forward**

- Assignment to breakout groups based
- Groups develop high-level goals and suggestions

2:15 p.m. **Break**

2:30 p.m. **Group Reports**

- Presentations with discussion and feedback

3:15 p.m. **Closing Remarks**

- Next steps in the project
- Participant feedback
- Closing remarks from the Co-Chairs

Session concludes by 3:30 p.m.

Facilitators: David Sheridan and Deb Ballak

SWOT ANALYSIS

Rotating flip chart activity

Strengths

Demographics, and number of seniors
 Volunteer base
 Diverse range of innovative services
 Communication network
 Diverse location of long-term care homes
 Providers wanting to provide service more than “good enough”
 Strong leadership and advocacy for seniors
 Recognition of need for improvements
 Great goodwill
 Engagement of Brock University and Niagara College
 Current clinics
 Mobile dental bus
 Opportunities for recreation
 Increased spread of Hospice Niagara
 Good fundraising opportunities
 Strong and welcoming communities
 Collaboration of community partners
 Family health teams and CHCs
 Regional transportation initiative
 Dementia care network
 Geriatric complex case resolution
 Francophone services in Welland
 Multicultural
 Bike lands, canal paths, trails
 Wellness centres

Weaknesses

Lack of group homes
 Political infighting among municipalities
 Accountability between governments and service providers
 Lack of PSWs and congruence in training
 Inadequate transportation infrastructure
 Lack of hospice services in south
 Lack of daily Niagara newspaper
 Communication silos among providers
 Lack of high speed internet
 Lack of services for blind community
 Funding is not per capita
 Need for more homecare
 Developing into a two tiered system (with seniors income differentials)
 Coordination of transportation to medical appointments

SWOT ANALYSIS (Cont'd)

Not addressing intellectual needs
 Lack of strong tax base
 Many agencies looking for funding
 Lack of services for hard to serve population
 No geriatrician or psychiatry in NHS
 12 distinct communities with different needs
 Lack of rehab services in south
 Poor at addressing poverty
 LGBT needs overlooked
 Communication and conflicting information on services
 Apathy among seniors and across age groups

Opportunities

Emphasizing value of this exercise
 Social media for seniors
 City planning for walkable communities
 Health link learning opportunities
 Wellness program for people with early stage dementia
 Increased respite
 Computer education and on-line communication
 Adopting Hospital Elder Lite program (HELP)
 Leveraging role of families
 New jobs in service sector
 Better use of skills and talents of older population
 Increasing geriatric mental health services
 Minister responsible for seniors' affairs
 Increased quality assurance
 Marshalling self/group advocacy
 Use of closed schools and churches for housing and recreation
 Reduced transit costs for seniors
 Car maintenance clinics with co-op students
 More health promotion
 Collaboration between community partners

Threats

Costs of utilities
 Shifting Ministry priorities
 Reduced pension and benefit availability
 Ability to pay for future needs
 Political culture that all taxation is bad
 Demographic imbalance (inverted pyramid with seniors at top)
 Seniors accessibility to primary care
 Focus on sickness over wellness

... Cont'd

SWOT ANALYSIS (Cont'd)

Aging infrastructure and facilities
 Restrictions imposed by funding agreements
 Inability to meaningfully engage the private sector
 Resentment of youth re: taxes to support seniors
 Declining volunteer base due to aging population
 Growing conservatism
 Balancing budgets
 Outsourcing
 Municipal downloading
 Lack of provincial/federal awareness of municipal needs
 Increasing demand
 Economic downturn
 Threat of calamity/emergency planning
 Privatization of hospitals and clinics
 Lack of awareness of issues across age groups
 Increase in dementia clients
 Lack of government action, political will

VISIONING ACTIVITY

Based on a visioning exercise where participants wrote desirable headlines to appear in local media on September 11, 2020

Leadership ...

Niagara Awarded World-Wide Aging Strategy Recognition
 Seniors Flourish in Niagara!
 “Seniors Helping Seniors” Program Model for the Province
 Niagara Region Receives Award From Prime Minister for Their Aging Strategy!
 Niagara Group Asked to Assist In Creating National Aging Strategy
 Niagara Sets the Example for Senior Care
 Niagara Recognized as Top WHO Age Friendly Community
 Niagara Region A Community For All Ages—For Real!
 Niagara: Inclusive for all Ages and Abilities
 The Best of The Best; Niagara Made it Happen
 Seniors in Niagara Leading the Way to Healthier Lifestyles
 New Seniors Advisory Committee to Regional Council

Better Information and Access ...

One Stop Shopping For Seniors—All Seniors Get a Community Navigator
 One Database Created for Seniors
 Voila, A Seniors Handbook Now Available!
 Health Agencies Now Fully Defined and Coordinated
 Active Aging Plan Updated
 Better Than Ever 211 Services!
 Do You Need An Advocate? Free Services Offered For Medical Appointments

Expanded Services ...

OHIP Extends Coverage to Dentistry
 LHIN Funds Dementia Strategy Designed to Meet Growing Need
 Province Agrees to Fund New and Existing Community Wellness Centres
 Geriatric Mental Health Program in Region Adds another Geriatrician
 New South Niagara Hospital Opens
 Waitlists for LTC Non Existent in Niagara
 All Niagara Residents Have Access to a Family Physician
 Caregiver Respite Keeps Families Together
 Niagara Announces First Ever Seniors/Elder Abuse System
 Increase in Psychiatric Services in Niagara for All Age Groups
 Hospice Opens in Welland
 Niagara Announces Goal of One Stop Shopping for Diabetes Care in Each Community
 Doctors Making House Calls for Seniors
 Stores Install Magnifying Glasses for Customers to Read Labels
 Supermarkets Offer Home Delivery Services Throughout the Region
 Exercise Programs Increase and Reduce Alzheimer's Onslaught
 Vascular Disease a Thing of the Past
 Chronic Conditions on the Decline In Niagara
 All Seniors Have the Services They Need to Keep Them in Their Homes
 Senior Centre Launches LGBT Programs
 "Frail Seniors" A Term of the Past

Improved Infrastructure ...

Government Commits to Unlimited Funding For RGI Housing across Niagara
 Housing Meets the Demand of Seniors
 Student Housing Becomes Intergenerational Housing
 LGBT Awards Ceremony Honours Long Term Care Home
 No Wait List for Affordable Housing
 State of the Art LTC Facility Opens Today
 No Longer a Housing Shortage in Niagara
 New Money for Housing Announced
 Two More Nursing Homes to Open in Niagara
 New Seniors Villa Proposed for Smithville
 Niagara Offers More Affordable Housing Options for Seniors
 New Seniors Housing Complex "An Independent Future"
 LTC Homes Open Throughout Niagara
 Affordable Housing Wait Lists Decrease Dramatically
 Old School Repurposed to Multi Level Development for Seniors RGI Housing
 Businesses Feature Wider Aisles, Easier Access
 Public Washrooms Fully Accessible
 Region Expands Inter-Niagara Bus Service
 Niagara Regional Transit Now Covers All of Niagara
 Rapid Transit throughout The Region
 One Transportation Service for Seniors in Niagara
 Regional Transportation Is a GO

SUGGESTED INITIATIVES

Structured brainstorming activity where ideas were generated on a free-response basis. Participants then allocated “votes” to priority items

Item	Score	Services/ Supports	System	Policy/ Planning
1. Dementia care and support	54	x		
2. Support and respite for families/in-home care givers	42	x		
3. Economic strategy to cover implementation of ideas	38			x
4. Coordinated volunteer service to visit isolated seniors	36	x		
5. Proactive vs. reactive health care	32			x
6. Bylaw to require age friendly action committees in each community	28			x
7. Government subsidies for staying healthy at home	27			x
8. Transportation master plan for every community	27			x
9. More home care providers	25	x		
10. Better mix/choice of seniors housing options in own neighbourhoods	23	x		
11. Health services coordinator in each community	22		x	
12. Tax breaks/financial supports for families caring for seniors	20			
13. Safe walkable cities	20	x		
14. Action plan to attract physicians to region	19			x
15. Action plan to keep experts in Niagara	18			x
16. Communication network to get information out	17		x	
17. More specialized medical expertise re: seniors	16	x		
18. Lobby government re: policy on in-law/granny suites	16			x
19. Educational curriculum to include seniors information	14		x	
20. Family physician education on resources	13		x	
21. Increased fitness and nutrition education	13	x		
22. Recognition/action on age discrimination	13			x
23. Engage business community	13		x	
24. Increase LTC staff	12	x		
25. Redistribute funding from institutional to community care	12		x	
26. Ensure providers understand each other's roles	11		x	
27. Larger street signs	11	x		
28. Adequate health care plans for seniors	10			x
29. Better access to alternative health care	10	x		
30. Free transportation for seniors	10	x		
31. More hospice facilities	9	x		

Item	Score	Services/ Supports	System	Policy/ Planning
32. Improve active transportation infrastructure	9	x		
33. Schools as integrated community hubs	9		x	
34. Replace regulatory barriers with facilitative mechanisms	8			x
35. Seniors forum on policy development	8			x
36. More affordable advertising to promote seniors programs and activities	8		x	
37. Consistent home care	7	x		
38. Include sexual orientation and gender identification in assessments	6			x
39. Use of schools for seniors activities	6		x	
40. More seniors programs during the day	6	x		
41. Develop outcome measures for elder seniors	6			x
42. Dementia/mental health relationship building	5		x	
43. Open up rail system	5	x		
44. Tax subsidies for downtown business	5			x
45. Better access to mental health services	5	x		
46. Regional program for people being discharged from emergency	5		x	
47. Student involvement in senior buddy program	5		x	
48. Free immunization for seniors	5	x		
49. Simplify/coordinate applications for services	5		x	
50. Abolish doctor refusal of patients	5			x
51. Convert student housing to intergenerational housing	5	x		
52. GO trains for Niagara	5	x		
53. Political accountability for promises	4			x
54. Bike and scooter lanes on major streets	4	x		
55. Cultural inclusion including First Nations	4			x
56. Expand arts culture	4		x	
57. Fall prevention programs	4	x		
58. Reinstate seniors detective at NRP	4	x		
59. Increase education for LTC staff	3		x	
60. Service agency consolidation	3		x	
61. Community paramedic program	3	x		
62. Cyclist education	3	x		
63. National veterans affairs independence program	3	x		
64. Senior subsidy for all social programs	3	x		
65. More knowledge about pharmaceuticals	3	x		

Item	Score	Services/ Supports	System	Policy/ Planning
66. Equitable access for marginalized populations	3		x	
67. Encourage more natural food	3	x		
68. Education on race, religion and culture	3		x	
69. Indoor pools	3	x		
70. Healthy food choices in hospital	3	x		
71. Task group to address agency overlapping	2		x	
72. Volunteers to fill system gaps	2	x		
73. Public health senior information package	2	x		
74. Fee YMCA membership for seniors	2	x		
75. More animators and facilitators	2	x		
76. Lobby government for full census	2			x
77. Eliminate phone system automation	2		x	
78. Involve colleges and universities in research	2		x	
79. Integration of seniors in broad community	2		x	
80. Assistance with downsizing	2	x		
81. Public/private partnerships for education	1		x	
82. Education for seniors on social issues	1	x		
83. Drop-in centres for seniors	1	x		
84. Implement elder programs in acute care	1		x	
85. Service continuum aligned with target groups	-		x	
86. Innovative partnerships supported by LHIN	-		x	
87. Parking	-	x		
88. Accurate statistical data on number of seniors	-		x	

BREAKOUT GROUP REPORTS

Self-assigned groups reviewed the SWOT, vision, and list of ideas and were asked to present about five high-level directions related to their theme

Transportation Group

Fit and well seniors:

- Improve infrastructure for active transit – signs, lighting, bike paths, scooter paths, washrooms, benches, connectivity, shade
- Transit that draws on Complete Street Model policy and WHO checklist
- Make transit more affordable
- Reduce transit “stigma”

Those requiring assistance with ADL:

- Accessible vehicles
- Provide shuttle system to high need locations
- Volunteer mentoring to help people learn transit system
- Include caregivers transportation needs

Those requiring 24 hour care:

- Make transportation affordable for individuals and caregivers
- Improve transportation to get to seniors to provide 24 hour care

Housing Group

- Provide more rent geared to income residences
- More small scale senior housing in various municipalities
- More funding for granny suites
- Make existing homes safer through inspections and follow-up
- Provide assistance with house maintenance and repairs

Social/Cultural/Recreation/Education Group

- Coordinate programming, education, recreation and cultural activities
- Offer education topics on topics such as social issues, computer literacy, fitness, pharmaceuticals and other areas seniors want to learn or teach
- Provide a greater variety of recreation options including indoor pools and walking trails
- Offer day programs through libraries and schools
- Raise awareness of programs available

Health Group

- Improve communication on all levels of care
- Increase health promotion/chronic disease management
- Increase dementia care
- Address caregivers health/support
- Provide integrated geriatric specialized services
- Evaluation and quality assurance

... Cont'd

BREAKOUT GROUP REPORTS (Cont'd)

Diversity/Barriers Group

Include francophones, Afro Canadians, newcomers, refugees, people with disabilities, non Christians, Aboriginals and LGBT individuals in the following strategies:

- Provide community education on diversity issues through newspapers, libraries, senior centres, etc.
- Increase engagement of different cultures at community events such as farmers markets, festivals, Canal days
- Provide training to health professionals, businesses, housing providers and schools supported with tool kits
- Leverage existing diversity groups and resources

Leadership and Profile Group

- Increase business engagement and involvement with age friendly issues
- Engage politicians, churches, faith leaders, schools and agencies in bringing message out to the public utilizing leaders in each group
- Reintroduce the census to maximize funds and address differences of each community and duplication of services
- Engage service clubs and youth and ensure all leaders/advocates listed in community guides are involved
- Develop an easy to use marketing strategy all clubs could use in a common way but identifiable with each community

Community Development and Engagement Group

- Asset based community building – identify talents and experience of seniors and encourage them to participate and contribute to community
- Leverage the aging strategy to produce buy-in
- Respect and celebrate local history by presenting lives and stories of seniors
- Create multiple intergenerational collaborations to spark interest of seniors
- Integrate frail seniors, adult developmentally disabled and those with disabilities and mental health issues into active participation
- Actively encourage voter turnout
- Insist on regular engagement of municipal representatives with community
- Run more community forums, including frail elderly in LTC facilities
- Hold intercultural events and celebrations
- Be more imaginative in planning for a diverse population

... Cont'd

BREAKOUT GROUP REPORTS (Cont'd)

Resources and Sustainability Group

An economic strategy is required to move forward with identified issues recognizing there is no new money and a need to prioritize existing funds.

- Foster cross collaboration of existing resources – understanding of existing services and mandates; increased collaboration of volunteer services; partnership agreements; linkages between services; increased consumer awareness; organization of services according to need
- Improve system navigation – coordination of care and service; collaborative approach to enhance coordination, continuity and consistency; better information sharing while respecting privacy of personal information; mandated cost-benefit analysis
- Be proactive vs. reactive – support development of National Dementia Strategy and National Seniors Strategy; increase respite; national strategy to develop hospice and palliative care
- Link data to services – funding allocation in response to statistical data that is accurate and available; responsible client-centred decision making re: shifting resources
- Acknowledge the voice of the client to increase understanding