



ALLIES IN aging

CONNECTING SENIORS ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES

ESDC Final Conversation
November 12, 2019



Family
Services
NORTH SHORE
Changing lives together



**SOUTH VANCOUVER
NEIGHBOURHOOD
HOUSE**

FUNDED IN PART BY THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA'S NEW HORIZONS FOR SENIORS PROGRAM. **Canada**

Objectives

Uncover and share existing knowledge and expertise related to working with isolated seniors over the age of 75 in the Metro Vancouver region

Identify isolated seniors, understand their needs, and help connect them to the appropriate services

- **Population:** Age 75+, disability, low income and/or language, cultural barriers
- **Area:** Specific neighbourhoods in Metro Vancouver with high concentrations of target population
- 60,000 age 75+ = 18,000 (30%) at risk
- **Method:** Intentional connections at critical turning points



Projects and Partners



Allies in Aging collaborates to connect seniors across our communities through leadership, outreach, transportation, training and advocacy.

Neighbourhood Based	Regional Approach
Seniors Hubs South Vancouver Neighbourhood House	Seniors on the Move Evaluation Burnaby Community Services
Welcoming Seniors' Spaces Burnaby Neighbourhood House	Volunteer Impact Backbone Extension Family Services of the North Shore
Funded Partners Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST), Burnaby Seniors Outreach Services Society, Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House, Collingwood Neighbourhood House, <i>411 Seniors Centre Society</i> , Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House, <i>Immigrant Services Society</i> , Kiwassa Neighbourhood House, Little Mountain Neighbourhood House, MOSAIC, Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, North Shore Multicultural Society, North Shore Neighbourhood House, Seniors Services Society, SHARE Family and Community Services, Silver Harbour Seniors Centre	
Leveraged Stakeholders Alzheimer Society of B.C., bc211, Community Response Network, Fraser Health, ICBC, Insight Driving Solutions, Libraries, medical offices, MODO Car Co-op, MVT HandyDART, Pain BC, Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network, Nurse Next Door, SFU Gerontology, SPARC BC, The Bus Co-op, TransLink, Telus, United Way of the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Coastal Health, West End Seniors Network	

Outcomes



Population Outcomes	Reduce seniors isolation by reducing the proportion of seniors 75+ who do not: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have support for daily living when they need it (by 38%)2. Participate in activities (by 23%)3. Feel connected (by 35%)4. Feel valued (by 24%)			
Project Outcomes	Seniors are identified, their needs are understood and they are connected to appropriate services.	Seniors are engaged in meaningful opportunities for participation, which leads to strengthened social networks.	Service providers work collaboratively to effectively support seniors through age-related changes.	Key stakeholders influence public policy and advance innovative partnerships to support lasting systemic change.

Outputs

Key Deliverables	Planned	Actual
1. Partners – funded and (unfunded)	26	26 17 (240+)
2. Meetings	41	232+
3. E-Newsletters		24
4. Impact stories	12	23+
5. Training/learning events	33	65 + 4 gatherings
6. Training modules/curriculum		17 topics +
7. Conference	200 - 300	250
8. Outreach Toolkit		Nov. 21
9. Evaluation	Complete Dec. 2019	
10. Communication Plan	Asset sharing, website	
11. Sustainability Plan	Completed Sept. 2019	
12. Volunteers trained	1700	1815+
13. Service Prov. Trained	550	459+
14. Seniors served	5400	15,034+

Project-Level Changes for Seniors

Demographic profile of seniors involved with Allies in Aging projects

Average age	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 74
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 73% female• 27% male
Living situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 54% live alone• 44% live with partner, spouse, family or friends
Immigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 35% born in Canada• 59% came to Canada more than 5 years ago
Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 61% less than \$24K• 18% more than \$24K
Language spoken at home	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 60% English
Challenges with daily living due to language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes: 17%• No: 81%
Challenges with daily living due to physical, mental or emotional challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes: 37%• No: 60%

Project-Level Changes for Seniors

After engaging with Allies in Aging projects, seniors were more likely to report that they:



Evaluation



Successes achieved in measuring performance and/or evaluating project outcomes

- ☑ Reached target seniors to collect data (500 project level and over 500 population level and impact stories)
- ☑ Found evidence of impact among project partners
- ☑ Gained support and trust from project partners to evaluate
- ☑ DE approach was effective

Challenges encountered in measuring performance and/or evaluating project outcomes

- ☑ Project partner evaluation fatigue
- ☑ Staff turn-over among partners
- ☑ Post survey data challenging to collect
- ☑ Reliance on quantitative data and an inadequate survey tool (questions and scale)

Interventions



- ☑ Connecting seniors with different generations
- ☑ Connecting seniors with peer support services
- ☑ Engaging seniors to be volunteers
- ☑ Connecting seniors with community support services
- ☑ Public awareness campaigns focusing on social isolation
- ☑ Technological enhancements to promote social networks
- ☑ Technological integration to enhance access to services
- ☑ Facilitating access to information through the use of technology
- ☑ Collaborations with cities to transform transportation services to facilitate seniors' mobility
- ☑ Implementation of new services such as help lines to fill gaps in existing services for seniors
- ☑ Other: Increase volunteer and staff expertise and capacity

Interventions with Impact

Leadership

- Seniors started as program participants and then, with staff support and training, they became program developers and leaders and built cross-region, peer-to-peer relationships
- Collective approach resulted in staff building cross-sector and cross-region relationships, which strengthened support networks and learning, increased access to effective resources and influenced program evolution.



CONNECTING SENIORS ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES

October 2019



Community Impact

"Before I found this group, I was very alone as I am a widow and my children live elsewhere. Our amazing leader, Mojgan T-N., drew me in by asking me to sing for the group. Now, it is my joy to come every week." (Paraphrased from translation by group leader; photos provided by the group.)

Every Wednesday morning, a group of Persian seniors gathers in Coquitlam to share language, music, poetry, conversation, learning, and food. Members told Mariam Larson, Allies in Aging Backbone Lead, that their time together is precious, providing connection and support they cannot find anywhere else. As one member said, *"Before, we were orphans. Now, we are family."*

Gina Hortelano, from **SHARE Family and Community Services**, helped them get started through the **Welcoming Seniors' Spaces** project. She supported their dynamic volunteer leader in finding an inclusive meeting place, organizing people, and connecting with community resources. **Seniors on the Move** connected them to transportation options, which led to group bus trips. Outreach approaches inspired, in part, by **Seniors Hub**, and **Volunteer Impact** training helped them grow from a few people to 35 - 40 meeting every week.

Members contribute in different ways, by reading Farsi literature or poetry, singing or playing instruments, sharing advice with newcomers, or providing food. They all expressed deep appreciation for their volunteer leader, recognizing the time and effort it takes to support and sustain their gatherings.

Success Story: Seniors Hubs



Teresa

Female
88 years old
Lives with her daughter
Immigrant from China
Visible minority
Connected with: Seniors Hubs

Teresa's Words

How did you first become involved with AiA partner programs?

I went to the neighbourhood house after an operation for a knee replacement. I'm alone at home. I live with my daughter but she is working. My case manager was trying to get me into a day program. When I couldn't go so she got me into the Neighbourhood House.

What program activities do you participate in?

I exercise and go on outings. I have learned a lot about the history of Vancouver by going on outings.

I really do appreciate that I am able to join the Neighbourhood House. I now have the chance to go to day programs. I go three times a week and they are good to me.

What difference do the programs make for you?

I need a walker, I can't go out alone. I now have the chance to go to places and to meet people and to exercise. This has helped me a lot. I feel quite happy. I have met people. We eat lunch together at the same table.

Survey Results: Changes in Teresa's Experience of Isolation Due to AiA

- 25↑% in having someone to help when needed
- 67↑% in having someone to count on to listen
- 17↑% in feeling valued by family & friends

Interventions with Impact

Outreach

- Structured, intentional, creative developmental approaches, i.e. setting up in food banks, seniors' housing, expanded door-to-door knocking, "helpers in their own community"
- Challenged traditional notions of how to reach people, i.e. strategic team approach, persistence, patience: Learned how to better understand the people we can't reach
- InWithForward ethnographic initiative influenced outreach approaches



CONNECTING SENIORS ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES

February 2018

Community Connections

Our first February highlight was being on [CBC's Early Edition](#). The interview touched on seniors' social isolation and our collective effort to reduce its impact. One of the people who heard the interview reached out to find support for her 80+ mother. Allies in Aging partners responded swiftly to connect with them.

Allies in Aging also participated in Burnaby's Caregiver Expo. **Volunteer Impact** fact sheets in different languages were popular and **Seniors on the Move** fielded questions about the new ICBC testing process.

One more highlight included InWithForward work. After a kick-off session, they spent an intensive ten days with seniors in our communities. Their approach sparked curiosity and insights about segmentation, pain points and a "what if...?" perspective. We'll be able to share their report in a few weeks.



Success Story: Welcoming Seniors' Spaces



Phuong

Female

69 years old

Lives with partner/spouse

Immigrant

Visible minority

Connected with: Welcoming Spaces

Phuong's Words

How did you first become involved with AiA partner programs?

I live close by, so I noticed the programs from just walking by and being curious.

What program activities do you participate in?

I started Tai Chi after my retirement, Monday to Thursday mornings. After that, I learned about other programs and joined them too. Now I also do dancing, knitting, laughter yoga, volunteering and sit on a seniors advisory committee. Sometimes we organize our own group trips. We went to Bowen Island and did some hiking and had dinner together.

Have any aspects of your life changed during since you have been involved with the programs?

My daughter and son somewhat recently moved out, so now it is just my husband and I.

What difference do the programs make for you?

The programs give me a chance to make new friends. Everyone that comes to Tai Chi is so nice. I have more friends now than before I retired. I feel less lonely now that I have more people in my life. My schedule is so full now, so I don't feel lonely anymore. It keeps me busy, active and feeling good.

Interventions with Impact

Transportation

- Initial concept focused on direct services (drivers, buses, shuttles, etc.) but didn't have the resources to meet needs and changed focus to service systems and policies.
- Launching cross-sector steering committee at the start was critical – engaged transportation and insurance providers, I&R specialists, and academics. This shifted the entire project to focus on behavioural change, i.e. driver transitioning, neighbourhood accessibility, sector advocacy.



Success Story: Seniors on the Move



Janice

Female
Volunteer Driver
Connected with: Seniors on the Move

Janice's Words

How did you first become involved with AiA partner programs?

Janice is a retired letter carrier. After a few years into retirement she looked into volunteering. Her daughter connected her with the Burnaby Community Services' Meals on Wheels program. Seeing her passion for helping seniors, the outreach coordinator asked Janice if she would be interested in driving seniors. Since Janice used to work in a care home in her teens, she loved listening to seniors' stories and she knew the city well from her days as a letter carrier she knew this would be right up her alley.

What difference do the programs make for you?

Janice feels this volunteer role is meant for her. It's a completely natural fit and I love it! For me, it meets everything I could hope to gain. I want to feel useful – there is a beginning, middle and end to every drive. I know that I have made a difference for that person in their day. They have gotten something helpful and they have had an interaction. I love this generation and their stories. They have all these memories from the war. I love listening to their stories. They also feel good knowing that someone is interested. Janice has driven as many as four seniors a day when there was a shortage of drivers. Now that there

are enough drivers she drives about three seniors a week. *I love the connection I get with people. The seniors ask for me. I know that driving them to where they need to go is a stress that's gone for them.*

Have any aspects of your life changed during since you have been involved with the programs?

In addition to feeling more connected herself Janice explains that she has learned the difference between empathy and compassion. Empathy isn't always the greatest. It can actually be detrimental. It's helped me learn that I'm doing all that's right for right now. I see things that I wish I could change for the seniors I meet but I am happy knowing that I am making a difference in their life today.

Tell me about a positive memory you have from engaging with the program.

My most amazing memory was that I got two ladies together who hadn't seen each other in twenty years. I was driving them both and as I listened to their stories I just knew that they had to have known each other. One lady used to be the coordinator of a music event and one was a singer. I asked if I could connect them and they both said yes! When they met they talked to each other and their conversations brought back amazing memories.

Interventions with Impact



Training

- Built connections, expertise and capacity
 - Meals-on-Wheels volunteer became a generalist on seniors' risk factors, engaged with clients differently and shared expertise with other drivers.
 - Trained senior volunteers launched knitting circles, art groups, pie-connection-group, ukulele group for people living with dementia
 - Staff collaborated on training and community events
- Broad curriculum approach and development of cohesive training resources, some in multiple languages, was invaluable.



Success Story: Volunteer Impact



SHARED LEARNING EVENT

for volunteers & service
providers who work
with older adults



Becoming Allies with LGBTQ2S+ Older Adults

Presentation by Island Health and BC Community Response Network.

When: Mon. Sept 16 9:40am – 3:30pm

Where: 6550 Bonsor Ave, Burnaby
Bonsor Rec Centre

Cost: Free! Please register, as space is
limited. Lunch will be provided.

- Learn ways to ally with LGBTQ2S+ older adults
- Build outreach expertise and support
- Strengthen cross-community connections

Register by Mon. Sept 9

Click here to register via [Eventbrite](#)

Questions? Email quenneville@familyservices.bc.ca, or call 604-985-8713 (Tues-Thurs)

Only registration for the full day will be accepted.

Our goal is to reduce social isolation among seniors in Metro Vancouver.



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FUNDED IN PART BY THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA'S NEW HORIZONS FOR SENIORS PROGRAM. 

Integrated, collaborative

- 66 participants (56% volunteers)

Reported:

- Expanded awareness of challenges faced by LGBTQ2S+ seniors
- Strengthened insight that will positively influence how they can be better allies with LGBTQ2S+ seniors
- Increased understanding that 'coming out' can be complex, ongoing process
- Will not assume everyone is heterosexual and cisgender
- Expanded outreach skill to better support LGBTQ2S+ seniors
- Will be more accepting and open, ask more questions to support individual needs
- Will learn about resources and community groups in their area



- Increased community awareness and understanding of seniors' isolation, risk factors and effective interventions.

- ## + Evaluation

Evaluation team embedded throughout and across initiative strengthened Allies in Aging as a whole. Partners developed expertise that strengthened programs, partnerships, and grant applications.



Implementation Challenges

- Broad geography with diverse priorities and gaps made alignment challenging
- Time required for governance, branding, committees, constant communication
- Volunteer recruitment and retention
- Difficulty managing expectations of partners with different levels of capacity and funding



August 2019



Community Connections

Photo: Partners' Gathering at Burnaby Neighbourhood House

PARTNERS' GATHERING

Staff and senior leaders from across the region gathered at Burnaby Neighbourhood House in early August. Participants reflected on how being part of Allies in Aging strengthened their capacity and effectiveness in reaching and connecting with isolated seniors. They also recognized the steep collective impact learning curve (especially when new staff came on board), and the importance of backbone support.

Highlights of being Allies in Aging partners included:

- Trying and testing new ideas shared across 30+ partner organizations;
- Applying what we learned through shared evaluation; and
- Growing from place-based projects to regional initiatives that increased seniors' connections.

Collective impact model



Common agenda

- AiA reached shared vision for change and established common goals
- Goals/objectives of AiA are clear among partners
- Partners understand how each other's work supports AiA's goal

Backbone function

- Backbone successful in supporting alignment of existing activities and pursuit of new opportunities towards AiA goals.
- AiA successful in including partners from multiple sectors
- Partners are engaging external stakeholders in regular meetings and integrate their feedback into the overall AiA strategy

Continuous Communication

- Partners communicate /coordinate efforts regularly with each other

Mutually Reinforcing Activities

- AiA partners worked together to reduce isolation, shifted activities to align with shared goals, filled service gaps/reduced duplication

Shared measurement

- Evaluation results provided partners with timely data and used evaluation findings to inform strategies and actions
- Shared measurement supported continuous learning

Success Story: Collective Impact



“The learning and educational tools from Allies in Aging contributed to my sense of integrity, confidence and visibility as a senior volunteer. I developed incredible connections, and they gave me the tools to run with it. The LGBTQ2S+ session opened my eyes...”

(Senior volunteer Hub leader who is now connected with West End Seniors Network, Front Steps program for youth aging out of care, SFU SWAN Walkability...)

Collective Events

- MOSAIC Multicultural Seniors Events
- InWithForward ethnographic work
- Innoweave Accelerator Impact sessions
- Partners Gatherings
- Shared Learning Events
- Presentations: Friesen Conf., CAG, Seniors' Summits
- Allies in Aging in Action Conference

Success Story: Collective Impact



ALLIES IN aging

IN ACTION
CONFERENCE

February 28, 2019

CONNECTING SENIORS ACROSS OUR
COMMUNITIES

HEARTS and MINDS
TO SHIFT CULTURE
FOR SOCIAL
IMPACT

CARING
ADVERSITY
= INNOVATION!

there is a
PASSIONATE ARTISAN
FOR SOCIAL
GOOD IN all
of US

WHO IS YOUR
ROLE MODEL
for staying CONNECTED?

FOR BOLD
CHANGE

CONNECTION
AND CARING

FALL IN
LOVE
With the
ISSUES

VICKIE
CAMMACK

KEYNOTE

let me tell you
a STORY
about 2 people
who transformed
CONNECTION

TRUE
BELONGING

PLAN

NETWORKS
OF CARE
FOR ADULTS WITH
DISABILITIES

RDSP
INITIATIVE

... INCUBATOR

but we realized
BEING GREAT...
isn't ENOUGH!



THINK LIKE A
MOVEMENT...

FINDING
SOLUTIONS-
because SOMEONE
WHO IS VULNERABLE
+ YOU CARE
ABOUT NEEDS
"PASSIONATE ORDINARIES"

How can our
MOVEMENTS
IMPROVE
BEAUTY?

PRICKLY! STUBBORN!
--invites everyone
to SLOW DOWN...
and CARE
BECAUSE OF
MARTHA--
SHE WAS THE
NEIGHBOURHOOD

there is
BEAUTY
when someone
moves from
ISOLATION...
INTO
CONNECTION

and CREATE A
LEGACY OF
belonging



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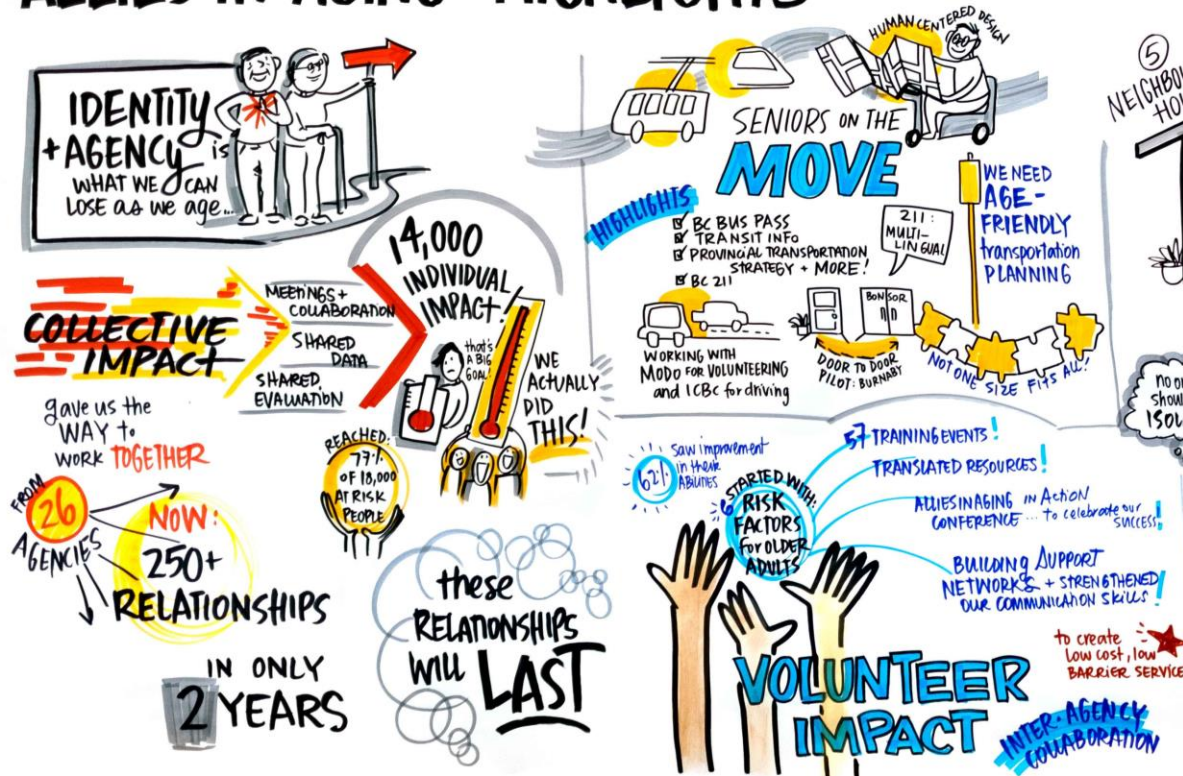
February 2019

LIVE GRAPHIC RECORDING
Sam Bradd

Drawing
Change

Success Story: Collective Impact

ALLIES IN AGING : HIGHLIGHTS



PROJECTS



Success Story: Collective Impact



Collective Impact Challenges

- Steep, long learning curve to using collective impact
- Adapting shared evaluation approach to fit diverse projects
- Staff turnover
- Bringing on new partners
- Competitive funding landscape



Sustaining Impact



Leadership

- Joint applications, activities, events, training
- Volunteer “Block Captains”

Outreach

- Community of practice
- Outreach Toolkit
- Reallocation of resources

Transportation

- Stakeholder strategies to integrate or allocated work within their organizations
- Policy advocacy

Training: Resources online

Advocacy: Partner collaboration

Grant Co-applicants: All four lead agencies were successful in getting United Way funding; reviewer commented on the high quality of Allies’ applications



Closing Story

Persian Seniors Group

- Partner staff supported senior leader
- Meet weekly, 35 – 40 people
- Share language, literature, music, food
- Support new immigrants in transition
- Members contribute in different ways
- Challenge: Space, Farsi-speaking presenters, uncertainty

“Before, we were orphans. Now, we are family.”

