
Age-friendly Peterborough

Consultation Summary Report



January, 2016



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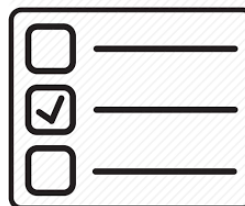


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Executive Summary

The Peterborough Council on Aging (P.C.O.A) is developing an Age-friendly Plan for the Peterborough region. The Age-friendly Plan (the Plan) will outline strategies to support healthy and active aging in Peterborough City and County.

Between February and November 2015, the P.C.O.A gathered input from residents and stakeholders to inform the Plan. Feedback was captured through a community survey and in focus groups with older adults, informal caregivers, and service providers.



1084

Survey Responses

This report summarizes the findings of this consultation process. Key findings are reported for each of the Plan's eight theme areas. Local insights from each County Township are also highlighted.



269

Focus Group
Participants

Some of the highlights of this report, organized by theme area, are:

Transportation

- Nearly 60% of survey respondents indicated that transportation in the Peterborough region is a concern for them as they age.
- Focus group participants identified having access to a range of affordable transportation options as an important feature of their vision for an age-friendly community.
- Survey and focus group comments show support for improvements to active transportation infrastructure, including walking trails and bicycle lanes.
- County participants described a desire to see new regional transportation options based on innovative service delivery models (e.g. non-profit partnerships, drive-share programs).
- Survey and focus group results indicate that snow removal and general road maintenance is an area of concern for residents, particularly those living in the City of Peterborough.

Housing

- Nearly 54% of survey respondents indicated that housing in the Peterborough region is a concern for them as they age.
- Survey and focus group comments suggest that affordability of house prices/rents and property costs (e.g. taxes, utilities) are an important consideration for many residents.
- Survey and focus group comments indicate that the availability of different housing options is a concern for residents, particularly the availability of affordable supportive housing options, including Long-term Care Homes.
- Approximately 58% of survey respondents reported having concerns about their ability to afford necessary home support services in their older years.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

- Focus group participants identified high quality, accessible, parks and greenspace as an important feature of their vision for an age-friendly community.
- Over 46% of survey respondents indicated that they are either ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the accessibility of public parks and greenspace where they live.
- Survey comments and focus group discussions suggest that there is a desire to see more park amenities geared to older adults, including seating areas, washrooms, and paved pathways.
- Survey comments and focus group discussions indicate that residents with limited mobility continue to experience challenges accessing some stores and public buildings.
- Participants expressed concern about feeling unsafe on trails, in parks, and downtown in the City of Peterborough.

Community Support and Health Services

- Approximately 76% of survey respondents indicated that community support and health services in the Peterborough region is a concern for them as they age.
- Focus group participants identified having access to primary health services in a local setting as an important feature of their vision for an age-friendly community.
- Survey comments and focus group discussions suggest that the availability of respite services for informal caregivers is an area of concern for many residents.
- Survey comments and focus group discussions indicate a desire to see additional walk-in medical services available in the region.

Civic Participation and Employment

- 58% of survey respondents identified workplaces not being open to hiring older adults as a barrier preventing older adults from attaining paid employment.
- Survey comments and focus group discussions suggest that most residents feel there is a strong local volunteer culture.
- Survey and focus group comments described some concern about ‘aging-out’ of the volunteer base and a desire to see programs adapted for a new generation of volunteers.
- Survey comments and focus group discussions suggest that residents would like to see improvements made to advertising and promotion of local volunteer opportunities.

Communication and Information

- Survey comments and focus group discussions indicate that reliance on electronic channels for communication is a concern for some residents.
- County participants described inconsistent internet and cellphone coverage as a barrier to accessing information.
- Survey results suggest that few residents have difficulty accessing information from local businesses or municipal administrations.
- Survey comments and focus group discussions suggest that accessing information about health and social service programs is an area of concern for many residents.

- Participants identified the presence of local newspapers as an asset to the community; however, some complaints were received about the timeliness of local media reporting.

Social Participation

- Survey comments and focus group discussions suggest that social participation is seen as an area of strength in the region.
- Nearly 60% of survey respondents indicated that they are either ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the library facilities where they live.
- Survey and focus group comments suggest that social isolation of individuals with chronic health issues, limited incomes, and those who are unable to drive is a concern across the region.
- Over 55% of survey respondents indicated that they would like to see continuing education courses available where they live.
- Approximately 53% of survey respondents indicated that they would like to see walking clubs available where they live.

Respect and Social Inclusion

- 58% of survey respondents indicated that respect and social inclusion in the Peterborough region is a concern for them as they age.
- Focus group participants identified inclusion of older adults and the availability of intergenerational programs as key features of their vision for an age-friendly community.
- Survey and focus group comments suggest that there are mixed perceptions about attitudes towards older adults in the community.
- Survey and focus group comments indicate that there are some tensions between generations in regards to the provision of social supports and programming.
- Participants indicated a desire to see additional training for customer service staff in how to properly serve older adult clients.

The feedback collected through these consultation activities will be brought together with research on current services, programs, and infrastructure to build the Age-friendly Peterborough Baseline Assessment. The Baseline Assessment will form the foundation for the strategies and actions to be set out in the Plan.

The Age-friendly Peterborough Plan is being built through a multi-sectoral community-led planning process. The strategies identified in the Plan will require support and partnership amongst a number of community agencies, municipal administrations, and the general public for implementation. The Peterborough Council on Aging looks forward to further cultivating the contacts and networks needed to successfully steward the Plan through its development and implementation.

1. Introduction

Age-friendly Peterborough Plan

Peterborough has joined communities across Ontario and around the world in creating a local Age-friendly Plan. The Age-friendly Peterborough Plan will help Peterborough City and County see itself from the perspective of older adults in order to identify where and how it can become more age-friendly.

The Peterborough Council on Aging (P.C.O.A) is leading the project, using a framework developed by the World Health Organization (W.H.O). When the plan is in place, Peterborough will become a member of the W.H.O's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities.

According to the W.H.O an age-friendly community is one that supports active aging by “optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age” (World Health Organization, 2007).

Planning Process

The P.C.O.A's Age-friendly Peterborough Committee is following a four-step process to develop our local Age-friendly Plan.

Step 1: Defining local principles

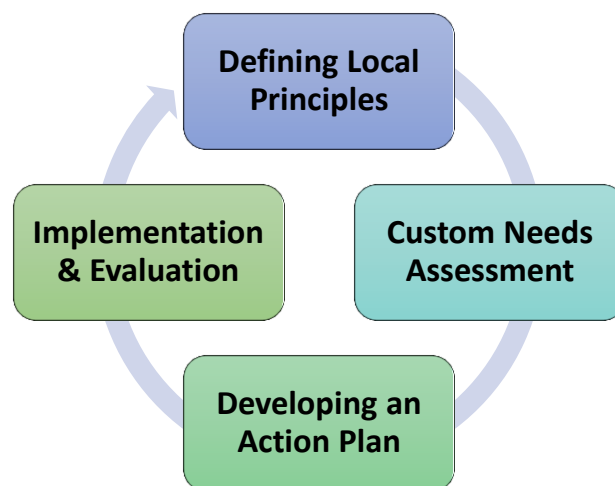
Step 2: Creating a Custom Needs Assessment

Step 3: Developing an Action Plan

Step 4: Implementing & Evaluating Actions

This report presents the findings of the community consultations undertaken as part of Step 2: Creating a Custom Needs Assessment.

The information gathered through these consultations will be used to develop a Baseline Assessment (i.e. needs assessment) of our region's current level of age-friendliness.



Planning Themes

The W.H.O has identified eight areas of community life that directly affect the lives of older adults. These are:

- Transportation
- Housing
- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Community Support and Health Services
- Civic Participation and Employment
- Communication and Information
- Social Participation
- Respect and Social Inclusion

The Plan will recommend strategies and actions to build on strengths and improve services and infrastructure in each of these eight areas.

This report summarizes key findings in each theme area and also highlights local insights for each of the eight townships in the County of Peterborough as well as the Curve Lake First Nation. Full results from the consultation process can be found in the full 'Age-friendly Consultation Data, 2015' report.

2. Methodology

Over 1300 people participated in the Age-friendly Peterborough consultation activities either by completing the community survey, attending a focus group, or both.

Survey

The Age-friendly Peterborough survey was open in Peterborough City and County between February and April, 2015. Subsequent survey distribution in Curve Lake First Nation was completed between August and October, 2015. In total, 1084 responses were received.

The survey was available online and in print. The online version of the survey was distributed through organizational mailing lists including the City of Peterborough corporate mailing list, the Peterborough Regional Health Centre mailing list, and Community Care Peterborough's volunteer mailing list. Hard copies of the survey were distributed at 21 local service offices and made available at 16 local events. 75 surveys were also distributed through Community Care Peterborough's Meals on Wheels program.

The Age-friendly Peterborough survey included over 80 questions aimed to gather information about residents' level of satisfaction with particular community features and service use patterns.

Focus Groups

Public focus groups were held throughout Peterborough City and County as well as on the Curve Lake First Nation Reserve. At least one public focus group was held in each township of the County.

In lieu of a formal focus group with caregivers individual interviews were conducted over four days with informal care providers at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre's Dialysis Unit and Geriatric Assessment and Intervention Network (G.A.I.N) clinic.

In total, 24 public focus groups were held with a total of 200 participants.

In addition, four topic-specific focus groups were held with service providers in each of the following areas: Transportation, Housing, Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, and Community Support and Health Services. In total, 69 professionals representing over 30 organizations participated in these meetings.

Focus group discussions were structured around three open ended questions: What is your vision for an age-friendly community?; What is working well in the Peterborough region to serve older adults?; What could be improved in the Peterborough region to better serve older adults?

3. Participant Demographics

Demographic information about participants was collected through survey questions and a participant information form distributed at public focus groups.

Information collected from all public session participants included: location of residency, age, gender, and income. Survey participants were asked additional questions about the use of mobility aids, housing type and tenure, living arrangements, and access to health benefits and pensions plans.

Demographic information was not collected from service provider focus group participants and is not included in the figures below.

Location of Residence

Of the 1084 survey respondents, 56% indicated that they live in the City of Peterborough, 38% in the County of Peterborough (including Curve Lake), and 6% identified living outside the Peterborough region or did not specify their location of residence.

Of the 200 public focus group participants 36% indicated that they live in the City of Peterborough, 44% in the County of Peterborough, and 20% identified living outside the region or did not specify.

Municipality	Survey	Focus Groups	All Participants
Asphodel-Norwood	19	15	34
Cavan Monaghan	54	6	60
City of Peterborough	610	72	682
Curve Lake	23	11	34
Douro-Dummer	38	15	53
Havelock-Belmont Methuen	16	7	23
North Kawartha	24	8	32
Otonabee-South Monaghan	29	11	40
Selwyn	163	10	173
Trent Lakes	47	5	52
Outside the Peterborough Region / N.A.	61	40	101
Total	1084	200	1284

Age, Gender and Income

Though the Age-friendly Peterborough survey was open to all community members, the majority of respondents (78%) were over the age of 55. Focus group marketing targeted those over the age of 55; however, no specific restrictions were placed on registration. While some focus group participants were under the age of 55, most (83%) were over the age of 55.

At 68% of survey respondents and 72% of focus group participants, more women engaged in the Age-friendly Peterborough consultation process as compared to men.

The most commonly reported income bracket for survey participants was \$40,000-\$64,000, while focus group participants most commonly reported annual incomes between \$15,000 and \$39,000.

Other Characteristics

- 84% of survey participants indicated that they are able to get around unassisted.
- 24% of all survey participants reported living alone, with more reporting living alone in the City (27%) than the County (19%).
- 75% of survey participants stated that they live in a house.
- Over half of all survey participants reported owning their own home without a mortgage, with more reporting living without a mortgage in the County (58%) than the City (45%).
- Only 8% of respondents reported not having access to any form of a pension plan.
- 63% of survey respondents indicated that they have access to extended health benefits.
- 80% of survey respondents stated that they had lived in the Peterborough region for over 10 years, of this 15% indicated that they have lived in the region for their whole lives.

Limitations

Though efforts were made to reach vulnerable populations of isolated seniors, including those with medical or mobility limitations, and those confined to the home, the sample group for the consultation activities still represents a more mobile and active segment of the community.

Overall, efforts to reach residents of the County of Peterborough were successful; however, some local townships remain underrepresented in the consultation findings, in particular Havelock-Belmont-Methuen and Otonabee-South Monaghan.

Project partners at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre and Community Care Peterborough were very successful in distributing the survey to their organizational contact lists. As a result, individuals affiliated with these organizations may be over represented in the consultation findings.

The following groups are slightly over-represented in our data as compared to local demographics:

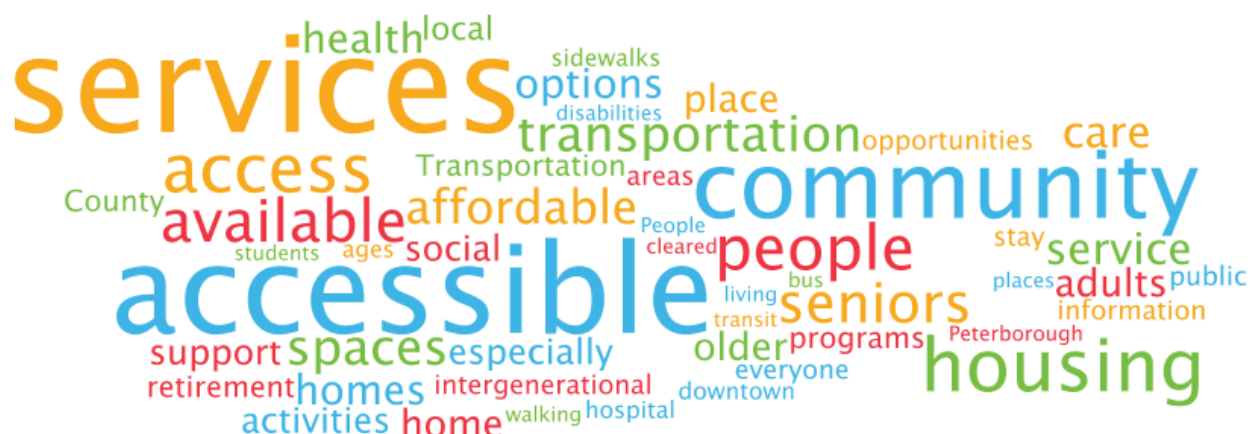
- Women
- Individuals living alone
- Home owners
- Individuals over the age of 55

4. Overall Findings

Vision for an Age-friendly Community

At the start of the public focus groups, participants were asked to share their vision for an age-friendly community.

- Transportation
- Community Support and Health Services
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings



- Availability of rural transportation options.
- Opportunities for intergenerational connection and skills-sharing.
- Access to primary health services and community support programs.
- Accessibility of public spaces and infrastructure.
- Feelings of safety and community belonging.

At the start of each section of the Age-friendly Peterborough survey respondents were asked about their level of concern with each planning theme area.

- Community Support and Health Service; 36.6% 'very' concerned, 39.4% 'a bit' concerned
- Transportation; 27.8% 'very' concerned, 32.1% 'a bit' concerned
- Respect and Social Inclusion; 21.5% 'very' concerned, 34.7% 'a bit' concerned
- Housing; 21.4% 'very' concerned, 32.3% 'a bit' concerned

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5. Theme Area Findings

Transportation

Transportation was consistently identified as an area of concern in survey responses and focus group discussions. The ability to get around the community to access services and participate in social events was recognized by participants as an important feature of an age-friendly community.

Promoting Active Transportation

Though nearly all survey respondents (89%) indicated that they drive as a means of transportation, comments from participants indicate support for active transportation (e.g. bicycling, walking) infrastructure and program improvements. Many participants linked their support to the promotion of healthy aging.

“I want to remain as physically active as I can. Active commuting/transportation is an excellent way to do this. Make it a priority.”

(Survey Respondent, City of Peterborough)

Rural Transportation Options

County participants also emphasized the need for other, motorized, transportation options to travel both within the County and to destinations in the City of Peterborough. In responding to what qualities of public transportation they would like to see improved, 73% of County respondents identified ‘availability of service’ as one of the top three qualities of public transit they’d like to see improved.

Survey comments and focus group discussions also highlighted the possibility of using non-traditional service delivery models to provide affordable transportation options for County residents. These included the use of public/non-profit partnerships, or private drive share programs.

“There is no public transportation in Bridgenorth that I am aware of, so if I am unable to drive due to age I would have to sell my home and move.”

(Survey Respondent, Selwyn Township)

Some County participants linked their ability to age-in-place in their community of choice with the availability of transportation options.

Peterborough Transit Service

City participants focused on improvements to existing Peterborough Transit services in their feedback. While bus drivers and transit staff were often described as being helpful and courteous to users, the overall functioning of the service was often critiqued in survey responses and focus group discussions. Among the most pressing concerns were the frequency of bus service, the routing of buses through the main terminal, and the condition and maintenance of transit stops. Some complaints were also received about the local handi-van service, including difficulties faced by users because of advance booking requirements and lengthy pick-up scheduling windows.

Snow Removal

Snow removal and winter maintenance of roads and sidewalks was identified as an issue for many survey respondents and focus group participants, particularly those in the City of Peterborough. Nearly 46% of City survey respondents identified snow removal as one of the top three qualities of roads they'd most like to see improved, and over 65% of these respondents identified it as one of three qualities they'd like to see improved for sidewalks and trails.

"Inadequate snow removal - sidewalks and streets - seniors won't venture out."

(Service Provider Focus Group, Transportation)

Participants further noted that inadequate snow removal poses safety concerns and can lead to social isolation.

Maintenance of Transportation Infrastructure

The 'condition and repair' of transportation infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, trails) was also identified as a high priority for improvement by all survey respondents. Nearly 79% of survey respondents selected 'condition and repair' as one of the three qualities of roads they'd most like to see improved. 57% of survey participants also identified 'condition and repair' as one of three qualities of sidewalks and trails they'd most like to see improved.

Housing

Housing Affordability

Issues of affordability (home prices, rents, taxes, and utility costs) were cited among the most important factors influencing participants' housing decisions.

Nearly 55% of survey respondents selected 'affordability of home prices/rents' as one of the three most important factors for them when thinking about housing in their older years. Additionally, 44% of survey respondents identified 'affordability of property taxes' as one of the three most important factors in response to this question.

"Housing for seniors in Peterborough is very limited to the people who have a higher income bracket."

(Survey Respondent, City of Peterborough)

Affordability also emerged as a theme in survey comments and focus group discussions, with many participants describing a lack of housing choices for those with more limited budgets.

Housing Options and Availability

Many participants indicated a desire to see more variety of housing options available in the region, including co-housing models. Survey and focus group comments suggest that residents see a lack of housing options for older adults in the region as a concern. While 34% of survey respondents

identified a ‘house’ as their desired form of housing in their older years, nearly 36% identified either condominiums or apartments as their top housing choice for later in life.

The availability of assisted and supportive living options, including transitional housing and long-term care beds, was also identified as a significant issue in survey responses and focus group discussions. Of particular concern within these discussions was the impact that a shortage of these facilities will have on people’s ability to remain in their community of choice, and the social dislocation that may result from a move later in life.

“Although our next step in accommodation would be a retirement home it is entirely possible that there would eventually be a need for a long term care facility. This is not available in HBM and there is already a significant need for such a facility.”

(Survey Respondent, Havelock-Belmont -Methuen)

Affordability of Home Support Services

The desire to remain at home in later years was heard from many focus group participants and survey respondents. Over 57% of survey respondents stated that they either didn’t know or had no plans to move in their later years.

Focus group discussions often linked the ability to stay at home with the availability and affordability of home support services.

What supports do you think you will need to live safely at home in your older years? (Top three choices in order)

City Participants	County Participants
Cleaning services	Transportation services
Yard maintenance	Yard maintenance
Transportation services	Cleaning services

Significantly, approximately 58% of all survey respondents stated that they were concerned about their ability to afford necessary home support services later in life.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Extent and Quality of Parks and Greenspaces

Overall, participants reported high levels of satisfaction with public parks and greenspace in the Peterborough region. Parks and greenspace were often cited in focus group discussions about what is working well in the Peterborough region and over 46% of survey respondents indicated that they were either ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the accessibility of public parks and greenspace.

Comments received from survey respondents and focus group participants demonstrate that while many people are satisfied with the availability of parks and greenspaces, there is considerably less satisfaction with the availability and diversity of park amenities. The top three features of public parks and greenspaces that survey participants indicated they would like to see improved were washrooms, seating areas, and pathways.

Accessibility of Stores and Public Buildings

Survey and focus group participants noted concerns over the accessibility of some buildings, particularly stores and public service buildings. Parking, washrooms and entrances were identified as the three features of buildings that survey participants would most like to see improved.

Comments received indicate that some participants have had difficulty accessing stores and services in their communities because of a lack of accessible features.

“When I had to push my husband in his wheelchair it was very difficult to get into some stores downtown.”

(Survey Respondent, City of Peterborough)

Availability of Parking and Accessible Parking Spaces

Survey and focus group participants identified parking, particularly accessible parking, as a desired improvement for downtown areas and buildings. Approximately 51% of survey respondents identified parking as one of three qualities of commercial downtown areas they would like to see improved. A further 59% of survey respondents identified parking as one of three qualities of buildings they would most like to see improved.

Focus group discussions often emphasized the need for additional accessible parking downtown and at service buildings. Design and ease of use of accessible parking spaces was also a concern noted in some focus group discussions. One suggestion for improving parking for seniors was to establish seniors’ designated parking spaces close to building entrances or curb cuts.

The cost of parking at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre was also highlighted as a concern for focus group participants.

Perceived Safety

Public safety and policing was the second most cited negative theme area in focus group discussions. Participants emphasized the need for a better sense of safety downtown, in parks and on trails. Suggestions for improvement in this area emphasized community policing practices and neighborhood watch-type programs.

Community Support and Health Services

Availability of Community Support Services

Overall, consultation participants appear to be somewhat satisfied with the availability of community support programs where they live. A slightly higher proportion of survey respondents indicated some level of satisfaction with the availability of community support programs as compared to those who indicated some level of dissatisfaction (32% ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’, vs. 22% ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’).

Survey comments and focus group discussions suggest that participants are relatively happy with the community support services provided by organizations such as Community Care Peterborough and V.O.N.

While at a broad stroke community support services were identified as satisfactory to many, concerns persist about the availability of in-home care supports. Of particular concern in this area is the availability of timely and appropriate in-home respite care.

“We are lucky to have Community Care in our township. Without them, a lot of people would not be able to live here”

(Survey Respondent, Asphodel-Norwood)

Rural Service Access

Participants from the County of Peterborough expressed concern over local access to health services. Some suggestions received from focus group participants to improve rural service access included co-locating services in a ‘hub’ delivery setting and providing mobile health services where and when appropriate.

“Everything is in Peterborough; there is not much in the townships.”

(Focus Group Participant, Asphodel-Norwood)

Access to Health Clinics and Family Physicians

Participants identified the availability of local health care clinics in Peterborough County as a significant asset. The Buckhorn Health Centre, Morton Health Clinic, and Curve Lake Health Centre were all identified as working well in focus group discussions.

Though the distribution of primary care clinics across the region was seen as an asset to the community, the availability of walk-in services was identified as one area for improvement. City participants, in particular, identified the need for additional walk-in clinics in the community. First Nations participants in the City of Peterborough further identified the need for an aboriginal-centered health care clinic to serve First Nations clients living off-reserve.

“We would have our own health centre, so we don't have to deal with the barriers. It would be centrally located and be modelled off of Anishnawbe Health Toronto.”

(Focus Group Participant, ‘Vision’, Nijikiwendidaa)

Improved Service Coordination

Though survey responses to questions about communication between service providers were mixed, coordination and communication between service providers did emerge as an area of concern in focus group discussions.

Participants described difficulties identifying where to access services and

“Communication is a huge problem. Whether it's lost referrals or general bookings for clinics it seems like you are constantly chasing all services”.

(Survey Respondent, City of Peterborough)

difficulties getting information relayed between service providers.

Providing supports for system navigation and the use of electronic health record systems were identified as a possible ways to improve service coordination for all patients in Peterborough City and County.

Civic Participation and Employment

Bias against Older Workers

Survey and focus group participants identified a number of barriers to older workers' employment. Based on survey responses the top three cited barriers to older adults attaining paid work in the Peterborough region were:

- Workplaces are not open to hiring older adults
- Lack of suitable opportunities
- Lack of awareness about opportunities

Focus group participants also identified concerns about perceived bias against older workers, and described apparent tensions between generations in the workplace.

Strong Volunteer Sector

Survey comments and focus group discussions indicate that residents see the local volunteer sector as quite strong. Nearly 69% of survey respondents indicated that they participate in volunteer activities, and nearly 48% indicated they were not looking for volunteer opportunities because they 'do enough already'.

Comments from surveys and focus group participants spoke to the sense of a strong culture of volunteering in the community with many, varied, volunteer opportunities available. A number of local volunteer-run programs and committees were also singled out as making positive contributions to the community, including breakfast programs, library volunteers, beautification committees and church groups.

"The climate of volunteerism is strong."

(Survey Respondent, City of Peterborough)

While overall responses indicate the presence of a strong local volunteer sector some participants warned of the need to change and adapt volunteer programming to meet the needs of younger seniors and a new generation of volunteers.

Advertising and Promotion of Volunteer Opportunities

Advertising and promotion of volunteer opportunities were consistently identified as key barriers to older adults' participation in volunteer activities. 67% of survey respondents identified a 'lack of awareness about opportunities' as a barrier to older adults' participation in volunteer work.

Survey and focus group comments identified the need for better advertising of volunteer opportunities in the community. Some focus group participants suggested advertising volunteer opportunities in the local paper, on local TV stations, and on bulletin boards.

Communication and Information

Reliance on Electronic Communications

For many older adult participants the reliance on electronic communications (e.g. websites and email) created a barrier for them to access news and information. While the majority of survey respondents reported being ‘very comfortable’ with the use of computers and the internet, survey respondents over the age of 75 reported lower levels of comfort with these communication tools.

“Inconsistent internet and cellphone signal coverage.”

(Focus Group Participant, North Kawartha)

Focus group participants also identified inconsistency of internet and cellphone coverage as a barrier to information access in some locations in the County of Peterborough.

Difficulty Accessing Health and Social Service Information

Based on survey responses, access to business and local government information does not appear to be a concern for many residents, with over 50% of respondents indicating that they either do not, or do not usually have difficulty accessing information from local businesses or their local municipality.

“There could be more information circulating in the community about the services and programs available.”

(Focus Group Participant, Selwyn Township)

Focus group participants, however, often identified difficulty accessing information from health and social service providers.

One suggestion that was made to improve access to information, including information from health and social service providers, was to establish a central access point for information relevant to seniors.

Local Media Coverage and Reporting

The presence of local media outlets, particularly local newspapers, was discussed often in focus group sessions. For many participants the availability of local media reporting was seen as an asset to the community. Over 50% of survey respondents (54.6%) stated that they use local newspapers to access information about community events and news. Many participants were also satisfied with the free delivery of newspapers to some households.

Though the overall availability of these news outlets was discussed in a positive light, the timeliness of information was singled out as an issue to be addressed. Many survey and focus group comments described frustration faced by residents in hearing about local events after they have already occurred.

“Newspaper reports after the event happens. Not much advertising about the event.”

(Survey Respondent, City of Peterborough)

Social Participation

Social Infrastructure in the Community

Community (activity) centres were identified as one of the three most important kinds of facilities to promote social participation of older adults by 79% of survey respondents. The presence of these facilities across the region was identified as an asset by many participants.

Libraries were also identified as one of the most important kinds of social facilities by 50% of survey respondents. Over 58% of survey participants also indicated that they were either ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the library facilities where they live.

“Woodview has a small community centre where one plays cards or can do line dancing.”

(Focus Group participant, North Kawartha)

Survey comments and focus group discussions show some variation in the level of satisfaction with libraries across Peterborough County, with some township residents describing high levels of satisfaction with their facilities while others felt underserved by their facilities.

Social Isolation

Social isolation emerged as a key area of concern for both survey respondents and focus group participants. Participants identified people living alone, those with chronic health issues, limited incomes, or without access to a vehicle as particularly at risk of becoming isolated. Some younger participants described their fear of becoming isolated in their later years.

Suggestions were made to develop programs which could identify those at risk of becoming isolated (due to loss of licence, health deterioration, or loss of spouse/family) and provide direct support through at home visiting and community outreach.

“Some seniors are very isolated and lonely and would benefit from local activities that encourage positive conversation.”

(Focus Group Participant, Selwyn Township)

Expanding Programs and Services

Overall those who participated in our consultation activities appear satisfied with the social programs and services available in the Peterborough region. Many described the benefits they enjoy from participating in any number of seniors’ groups and clubs present throughout the region.

Though the availability of social clubs, community dinners, and other similar programs was identified as an asset in the community some specific gaps in programming were identified. Over 50% of survey respondents identified a desire to see continuing education courses and walking clubs in their community (55% and 53% respectively).

The use of school facilities for seniors' based programs was also mentioned on multiple occasions in focus group discussions.

Affordability

With only 16% of respondents identifying that they were either 'unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied' with the affordability of social activities, affordability in this sector did not clearly emerge as an area of concern for survey respondents.

Comments on surveys and in focus group discussions, however, did identify concerns about the affordability of some specific programming, particularly recreation programs and gyms memberships.

"I feel the gym/wellness center charges are too high and therefore do not go to those places."

(Survey Participant, City of Peterborough)

Respect and Social Inclusion

Mixed Attitudes towards Older Adults

Survey responses indicated quite a high rate of satisfaction with attitudes towards older adults, with over 66% of survey respondents responding that they either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that older adults are valued members of their community.

Comments on surveys and in focus groups describe more mixed attitudes towards older adults in the community. Some respondents described tensions they felt between generations, while others reflected negatively on what they perceived as a focus on serving older adults within the local service culture.

"Peterborough feels very geared towards older adults and seniors - and not for young adults."

(Survey Participant, City of Peterborough)

Customer Service Training

Customer service, and the treatment of older adults by service staff was an area of concern for some. Though 59% of survey participants either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that customer service staff treat older adults with respect, comments from participants indicated some dissatisfaction in this area. Of particular concern was the treatment of

"Education on how to serve people of all abilities is needed, i.e. speak directly to someone who is hard of hearing and don't assume they can't lip-read."

(Focus Group Participant, Council for Persons with Disabilities)

people with hearing loss, cognitive impairments, or mobility challenges.

Intergenerational Programming

Inclusion across age and ability was a consistent theme in survey comments and focus group discussions. Some participants described the benefits of existing programs (e.g. senior-led breakfast programs in schools) while others spoke about their desire for additional opportunities to bring members of different generations together in social programs. Participants singled out housing facilities and schools as possible partners in the creation of new intergenerational programs.

“There are not too many intergenerational activities, it would be nice to have more in school programs where older adults could provide history lessons or share stories.”

(Focus Group Participant, Caregiver Interviews)

6. Local Highlights

The highlights below represent feedback provided by survey respondents and focus group participants filtered for each local township in the County of Peterborough and the Curve Lake First Nation. Variations from general County trends are identified along with any specific feedback provided by participants. Due to the small sample size of some townships, exact figures (counts and percentages) are not included.

Asphodel-Norwood

- Overall, participants from Asphodel-Norwood reported being satisfied with transportation infrastructure, including roads, sidewalks, and trails.
- Lighting in commercial downtown areas and public parks was identified as a desired area for improvement by residents.
- Overall satisfaction with the availability of community support programs was high, with specific mention made of the positive impacts of the local Community Care Peterborough office.
- The need for walk-in medical services and additional family physicians or registered nurses was highlighted in focus group discussions.
- Focus group participants made specific mention of the desire for a therapy pool for seniors, which could also serve surrounding areas both within Peterborough County and surrounding Counties.

Cavan Monaghan

- The need for better transportation linkages was highlighted by participants from Cavan Monaghan, with specific reference made to travel to and from the local GO bus stop.
- Survey respondents identified ‘gathering spaces’ as one of the three top improvements they’d like to see made to the commercial downtown area in Cavan Monaghan.
- More participants reported feeling that housing in the area is affordable to them.

- Availability of condominium style housing for seniors was identified as an area for improvement.
- Overall satisfaction with local health and community services was high, with participants expressing that there have been improvements in the area.
- Access to specialized health services and testing (e.g. blood clinics) was identified as an issue.

Curve Lake First Nation

- More participants reported walking as one the forms of transportation they use to get around.
- Lighting of roads and sidewalks was identified as a desired area for improvement.
- Overall, participants reported lower levels of concern about housing in their older years; however, specific mention was made of the need for more dedicated seniors housing for those unable to live on their own and without family.
- Availability of seating areas, services and businesses were identified as areas for improvement for the commercial downtown area.
- Outside of medical services provided on reserve, participants described negative experiences accessing health services at the hospital and in primary care clinics.
- A suggestion was made to create an Aboriginal Liaison position at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre to support cultural sensitivity training and awareness amongst staff.
- The V.O.N day program on reserve was identified as an important community asset; however, the need for additional programming space was noted.
- Participants identified the need for additional cultural programming space in the City of Peterborough.

Douro-Dummer

- Recreation equipment in parks was identified as one of three areas for improvement by survey respondents.
- Availability of seating areas, services and businesses were identified as two of the three areas for improvement in the commercial downtown areas.
- More respondents identified pool facilities as an important social/recreation facility to promote social participation amongst older adults.
- Overall, participants expressed lower levels of satisfaction with recreational and cultural facilities in the municipality.
- More emphasis was placed on expanding the availability of walking clubs, with a desire to see more local walking/cycling trails available in the municipality.
- Overall, higher levels of satisfaction with opportunities for social participation were noted, with some concern over affordability.

Havelock-Belmont-Methuen

- Survey participants from Havelock-Belmont-Methuen rated snow removal higher as an area for improvement than other local township respondents.

- Overall, participants reported lower levels of satisfaction with trails and sidewalks.
- More survey respondents from Havelock-Belmont-Methuen reported wanting to live in a long-term care facility or retirement home.
- More concerns were noted over housing affordability and availability.
- Specific mention was made of the need for a new long-term care facility and/or retirement home in the municipality so that residents can stay near friends and family.
- More emphasis was placed on the availability of community meals and walking clubs.
- Specific mention was made of the need for additional support for the existing seniors' club.

North Kawartha

- Condition, lighting and availability of sidewalks and trails were rated highly as an area for improvement.
- Availability of seating areas, services and businesses were identified as areas for improvement for commercial downtown areas.
- Fewer participants reported experiencing difficulty accessing information from the township and local businesses.
- Overall, participants reported higher levels of satisfaction with libraries and recreation facilities.
- Specific mention was made of the need for a therapeutic pool for older adults.
- Participants reported feeling that older adults are included in decision-making and respected in the community.
- Participants reported a desire to see additional housing options in the municipality, particularly affordable seniors' apartments.

Otonabee-South Monaghan

- Signage of roads was rated highly as an area for improvement by residents.
- Overall, participants expressed lower levels of satisfaction with the accessibility of outdoor spaces.
- Overall, participants reported lower levels of satisfaction with recreation facilities.
- Participants expressed satisfaction with the availability of social programs through churches and at community centres.
- Specific mention was made of the need for improved taxi service and/or the expansion of volunteer driving services.
- The local food movement was identified as an asset to the community.

Selwyn

- Lower rates of people reporting difficulty accessing information from local municipality.
- Pool facilities identified as one of the more important social/recreation facilities for older adults.
- Desire for public transportation options linking Young's Point, Selwyn, Bridgenorth, City of Peterborough.

- Desire for additional, affordable, seniors-focused apartment buildings, condominiums, and assisted living facilities.

Trent Lakes

- Participants reported a desire for more sidewalks, cycling routes, and walking trails, particularly in village of Buckhorn.
- The diversity of housing options was identified as an area for improvement with residents expressing a desire to see affordable apartment/condominium style living and communal housing options in settlement areas.
- Participants reported higher rates of volunteerism, and a desire to see more volunteer opportunities in the community.
- More participants reported feeling well informed about community events.
- Overall, participants reported higher levels of satisfaction with recreation facilities.
- Buckhorn community centre singled out as an important asset to the community.
- Participants expressed a strong sense of community cohesion and neighbourliness.

7. Next Steps

The information collected from public stakeholders will be brought together with local policy and service availability studies to inform the development of the Age-friendly Peterborough Baseline Assessment. The Baseline Assessment will identify areas of strength and areas for improvement across all eight planning themes and in each local area covered by the Plan.

Based on this assessment, the Age-friendly Peterborough Plan will identify where and how the Peterborough region can become more Age-friendly. The goal of the Plan is to promote healthy and active aging across the region, ensuring every citizen has the opportunity to live a high quality of life regardless of age or ability.

The Peterborough Council on Aging looks forward to working with community partners to shape and implement the strategies of the Age-friendly Plan. Together we will work to make Peterborough an inclusive and welcoming community for people of all ages.



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